EMANUEL AX

Tuesday, December 6, 2016, 7:30 pm

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OPENING SEASON 2016/2017

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Dear Chuck and the Hancher Staff,

Congratulations on the opening of the new, Cesar Pelli-designed Hancher Auditorium. It is truly a spectacular design and quite clearly a labor of love. Enclosed is our ad for the inside front cover of your program. Lazare Diamonds and Hands Jewelers are proud to be a part of your new building, your new season and your glorious function, which is creating lasting and life-long memories for our guests and patients alike.

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Bill

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EMANUEL AX

PIANO

Four Impromptus, D. 935 (Op. 142)

No. 1 in F Minor
No. 2 in A-flat Major
No. 3 in B-flat Major
No. 4 in F Minor

Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)

Impromptus

No. 1 in A-flat Major, Op. 29
No. 2 in F-sharp Major, Op. 36
No. 3 in G-flat Major, Op. 51
No. 4 in C-sharp Minor, Op. 66

Frédéric Chopin (1810 - 1849)

Klavierstücke No. 2 in E-flat Major, D. 946

Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 58

Allegro maestoso
Scherzo: Molto vivace
Largo
Finale: Presto non tanto

Steinway Piano

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in modern day Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. His studies at the Juilliard School were supported by the sponsorship of the Epstein Scholarship Program of the Boys Clubs of America, and he subsequently won the Young Concert Artists Award. Additionally, he attended Columbia University where he majored in French. Mr. Ax made his New York debut in the Young Concert Artists Series, and captured public attention in 1974 when he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975 he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists followed four years later by the coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

Always a committed exponent of contemporary composers with works written for him by John Adams, Christopher Rouse, Krzysztof Penderecki, Bright Sheng, and Melinda Wagner already in his repertoire, the 2016/2017 season will feature two newly commissioned works. With the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert, January will bring the world premiere of HK Gruber’s Piano Concerto followed in March by the European premiere with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle. In recitals throughout the season his program will include works by Schubert and Chopin partnered with “Impromptus (2015-2016)” by Samuel Adams commissioned by Music Accord and inspired by Schubert. His ongoing relationship with the Boston Symphony will include visits with them to Carnegie Hall, Montreal, and Toronto; with the Cleveland Orchestra Mr. Ax will appear as the featured artist for their Gala opening concert of the season. As a regular visitor he will return to the orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Toronto, Seattle, Milwaukee, and Detroit.

A Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987, recent releases include Mendelssohn trios with Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman, Strauss’ Enoch Arden narrated by Patrick Stewart, and discs of two-piano music by Brahms and Rachmaninoff with Yeefim Bronfman. In 2015 Deutche Grammophon released a duo recording with Mr. Perlman of sonatas by Fauré and Strauss which the two artists presented on tour during the 2015/2016 season. Mr. Ax has received GRAMMY® Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn’s piano sonatas. He has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with cellist Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. His other recordings include the concertos of Liszt and Schoenberg, three solo Brahms albums, an album of tangos by Astor Piazzolla, and the premiere recording of John Adams’s Century Rolls with the Cleveland Orchestra for Nonesuch. In the 2004/05 season Mr. Ax also contributed to an International EMMY® Award-Winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust that aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In 2013, Mr. Ax’s recording Variations received the Echo Klassik Award for Solo Recording of the Year (19th century music/Piano).

A frequent and committed partner for chamber music, he has worked regularly with such artists as Young Uck Kim, Cho-Liang Lin, Mr. Ma, Edgar Meyer, Peter Serkin, Jaime Laredo, and the late Isaac Stern.

Mr. Ax resides in New York City with his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki. They have two children together, Joseph and Sarah. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Yale and Columbia Universities. For more information about Mr. Ax’s career, please visit EmanuelAx.com.
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TURN HERE

NAVIGATING THE PITFALLS OF TURNING PAGES FOR PIANISTS

By Richard Gloss

Taking a tour as a prospective university student in 1972, the first campus building I entered was Hancher Auditorium. I had no idea the part Hancher would play in my life as the home to two simultaneous careers, the first as Box Office Manager and the second as a regular page turner at concerts.

I began working for Hancher as a student cashier in 1978 and eventually became the Box Office Manager in 1982. My page-turning career developed more randomly while I was pursuing my degree in piano performance. Piano students routinely turn pages for each other in recitals, seminars, and classes. This is where I learned what I liked in a page turner, and learned about others’ preferences as well. By early 1980, I had been page turning often enough that the Office of Arts Center Relations decided it was a good subject for a feature article. Written by Steve Traub, who was a UI journalism student and was working as an intern, it was published in one of the local newspapers.
Unfortunately, my photocopy is missing the date and name of the newspaper. It describes basic things that I did and continued to do, so I am not getting in the way of the performers, the audience, or the music. It mentions obvious concerns, such as not letting your coat flop on the keys, making sure you’re not impeding the pianist reaching all the way to the end of the keyboard, or obscuring their view of the music with your body. Only later did I learn subtler things, like when to stand up to ready the page turn so as not to distract from another performer’s solo or during particularly quiet moments and even when not to do the turning at all. Sometimes these moments would be worked out in advance but often it was a discrete glance, nod, or finger pointing between me and the pianist. This sense of really working with them at times is one of the things I enjoyed most.

After recently reviewing Hancher’s performance history, I can recall turning pages for at least 34 performances or artists. There are several artists and ensembles I remember assisting that actually performed several times during that period but I am not certain I worked with them every time. There were many other music students who generously assisted at Hancher performances. I just happened to be around longer so some audience members recognized me after a time. In addition, I turned pages for more friends and faculty in the School of Music than I can possibly remember.

As for page turning itself, there are two main concerns. The first is the pianist’s wishes about how and when they liked to have pages turned. Requests ranged from extremely detailed instructions all the way to the pianist simply saying “it will be fine.” In the absence of instructions, I usually turned the pages when I would have wanted them turned which is sooner than you would expect. The eyes and mind are far ahead of the hands. Some artists put marks on the music with stars, arrows, or words like “Turn Here.” The most specific procedure was requested by James Galway’s pianist, Phillip Moll. He would look straight up at you at the moment he wanted you to turn. This meant you had to ready the page to be turned and then stop looking at the music awaiting his glance. You then had to turn the page immediately, and he would drop his gaze back to the music. It was a somewhat odd experience.

The second concern was the physical condition of their musical scores and this varied greatly between artists. This is the real source of most of a page turner’s problems. Some scores had very stiff bindings that would not stay open or pages would drift back to the center, especially with any drafts on stage. Pages had to be coaxed back without being too obvious or noisy. Sometimes I had to stand and just hold everything flat. One French publisher’s scores are famously and notoriously printed on paper that feels like pressed sawdust. It tends to break into flakes especially on the corners where you turn. One of my worst moments occurred turning two pages at the same time for my own piano professor who was playing from one of these scores. One artist had all of his music on loose sheets in stacks for each piece that had to be slid sideways as he played. Despite the odds, it went well, and he was appreciative enough to make me take the only bow I was ever offered as page turner.

For the most part, my experiences were uneventful but there were some scary, even embarrassing moments and many very interesting people along the way. Samuel Sanders, who assisted both violinist Itzhak Perlman and cellist Nathaniel Rosen, put fingering numbers on literally every note, every single one. If there was a five note chord in one hand, the numbers 1-2-3-4-5 were carefully written next to the appropriate note and even if the next chord was exactly the same, the numbers were carefully re-written for that chord too. Peter Serkin played from a photocopy of Mozart’s manuscript of the trio he was performing. He told me not to worry because most of it was memorized.
I took it as a challenge and turned the pages exactly as he played the final notes. I regret my youthful smugness, but he was impressed. Isaac Stern's excellent pianist, Robert McDonald, had the habit of singing/moaning along in the manner of the famous pianists Glenn Gould and Rudolf Serkin. Then Hancher Director, Wallace Chappell, received an extremely angry letter from a patron complaining about someone in the audience singing along, and I had to reveal that it was in fact the pianist himself. I had the good fortune to assist Emanuel Ax several times performing with both the Cleveland Quartet and cellist Yo-Yo Ma. He was always gracious and appreciative. I remember for one of his performances, however, I chose to sit in the audience. Unfortunately, the page turner seemed to have some difficulties, and I felt like I had deserted a friend. One of the most difficult composers to deal with for me was Béla Bartók. His music contains many ostinato passages of repeated notes and rhythms with very slight changes, and it is easy to get lost. I had good luck during a performance of the First Violin Sonata but not so good during a performance of the piece called Contrasts. Gilbert Kalish’s frantic nod and irritated look told me I had indeed become lost.

The only time my two careers actually collided was during a performance by a famous singer. As the performance began, it seemed to me that he was having some trouble. At one point the pianist leaned toward me and whispered, “uh-oh!” Shortly after the start of the second or third piece, he continued to have problems and finally stopped. He indicated to his pianist to begin again, and he stopped again soon after. The performance was over and would have to be
An embarrassing moment happened during the duo performance by Miriam Fried, violinist, with pianist Garrick Ohlsson. In one of the slow movements I suddenly developed a dry throat and had to cough. There were a number of loud dramatic accents in this movement which I could see coming, and I attempted to cough discretely at several of these moments. I do not know what the audience noticed but as I overheard the artists in the dressing room during intermission, they certainly noticed. I had the opportunity to redeem myself with Mr. Ohlsson at a later date. He was scheduled to perform a piece called Handwork at a Center for New Music concert. It was written for him by the late William Hibbard, a professor in the UI School of Music, who was once one of my professors and remained a friend until his passing. I had already planned to attend, but on the morning of the concert, I received an unexpected phone call from Bill. He asked if I would turn pages for Garrick at a recording session of the work during the afternoon and again at the concert that evening. I was honored, and it was an extremely enjoyable day for me. Fortunately, Bill had given me a copy of the music and of an earlier recording by Garrick which I listened to and studied several times before the session. They both wrote some very kind notes in my score which I cherish. I learned a few weeks later after a subsequent New York City performance of the piece, Garrick wished his Iowa page turner had been there.
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A 25-year old pianist named Emanuel Ax performs at Clapp Recital Hall as part of Hancher’s 1974-1975 season.

Ax performs with Yo-Yo Ma for the first time on the Hancher stage. The program consists of Strauss, Britten, and Mendelssohn.

Emanuel Ax and The Cleveland Quartet present a program of works by Schumann and Bartók.

Ax and Yo-Yo Ma perform Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Rachmaninoff.

Special guest Emanuel Ax joins the Cleveland Quartet for their Brahms Extravaganza, performing the Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34.

Emanuel Ax performs a benefit concert for Hancher Circle, donating his concert fee.

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12/9  Asleep at the Wheel
  Merry Texas Christmas Y’All!

1/20  The Cleveland Orchestra

1/27  Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion

1/31–2/5  The Sound of Music

2/8–9  Soil, conceived by Michael Sakamoto

2/11  The Ying Quartet with Billy Childs

2/16  Tanya Tagaq in concert with Nanook of the North

2/25–26  MAMMA MIA!

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