



PROGRAM:
LANG LANG
MARCH 20 / 8:00 PM
BING CONCERT HALL

ARTIST

Lang Lang, *piano*

Lang Lang is managed by
Columbia Artists Music, LLC.
1790 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
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Jean-Jacques Cesbron
Ronald A. Wilford

Lang Lang is an exclusive recording artist of
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Lang Lang's performance is generously supported
by Marcia and John Goldman.

PROGRAM

J. S. Bach: *Italian Concerto* in F Major, BWV 971 (pub. 1735)

[Untitled]
Allegro
Andante

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: *The Seasons*, op. 37b (1875–1876)

January: By the Fireside
February: Carnival
March: Lark's Song
April: Snowdrop
May: White Night
June: Barcarolle
July: Reaper's Song
August: Harvest
September: The Hunt
October: Autumn Song
November: Troika
December: Ballroom Waltz

INTERMISSION

Fryderyk Chopin: *Four Scherzi* (1831–1843)

Scherzo No. 1 in B Minor, op. 20 (1831–1832)
Scherzo No. 2 in B-flat Minor, op. 31 (1837)
Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp Minor, op. 39 (1839)
Scherzo No. 4 in E Major, op. 54 (1842–1843)

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please be considerate of others and turn off all phones, pagers, and watch alarms, and unwrap all lozenges prior to the performance. Photography and recording of any kind are not permitted. Thank you.

**JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)**

**ITALIAN CONCERTO IN F MAJOR,
BWV 971 (PUB. 1735)**

Over a 15-year period, 1726–1741, Bach published four collections of keyboard music, demonstrating an extraordinary command of the keyboard styles of the day. Annual publications of a single partita led to Bach's first collection, in which all six partitas—his Opus 1—exhibited his mastery of the suite form. He titled the collection *Clavierübung*, or “Keyboard Practice.” Part Two of the *Clavierübung*, containing the *Italian Concerto* in F Major, BWV 971, and the *Overture in the French Style*, BWV 831, followed during the 1735 Easter fair. Four years later came an eclectic collection of organ music. Then the fourth and final part of the *Clavierübung* presented the *Goldberg Variations* as its crowning glory. The *Italian Concerto* and *Overture in the French Style* brilliantly transfer orchestral music to the keyboard, in the two leading national styles of the Baroque—the Italian and the French. On the title page of the *Concerto nach Italienischem Gusto* (*Concerto after the Italian Taste*), Bach specifies the two-manual harpsichord, allowing him to delineate the solo line of the Vivaldi-like Italian concerto on one manual and the orchestral textures on the other (or on the two together). The *Italian Concerto* sold well and became popular as Bach's only original keyboard concerto for solo instrument. One of his sternest critics, the composer and writer Johann Adolph Scheibe, was forced to admit: “This keyboard concerto is to be regarded as a perfect model of a well-designed solo concerto.”

**PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY
(1840–1893)**

THE SEASONS, OP. 37B (1875–1876)

In January 1866, the 25-year-old Tchaikovsky moved from St. Petersburg to Moscow to take a position teaching music theory at the newly opened Moscow Conservatory. Over the next 10 years, his earliest symphonies and operas,

the First Piano Concerto, the three string quartets, and many smaller works built a wide reputation. He was an industrious worker. Four first performances have been documented within a two-week period in March 1870 and three premieres in as many weeks in November 1875, both periods being typical of the pace at which Tchaikovsky worked. Tchaikovsky's need to make a living also drew him to music criticism for the newspaper *Russkie Vedomosti* and to accepting smaller commissions, including a substantial quantity of occasional music, much of which is lost. In January 1875 he began a monthly assignment to provide a piano piece appropriate to the month in which it was to appear in a St. Petersburg musical-theatrical periodical called *Nuvelist*. The resulting twelve short piano pieces went through several editions after their initial publication and were to become the composer's best-known piano music. Tchaikovsky's approach to the project seems to have been somewhat casual, with magazine editor Nikolai Bernard selecting both subtitle and appropriate accompanying verse by a Russian poet. *January*, for example, is subtitled *By the Fireside*, and the accompanying excerpt from Pushkin reads: “A little corner of peaceful bliss, the night dressed in twilight; the little fire is dying in the fireplace, and the candle has burned out.”

Vremena goda, Bernard's title for Tchaikovsky's collection, translates as “The Seasons,” though “The Months” might make for a better fit. The pieces are in simple ternary form, carefully crafted, often with surprisingly challenging technical demands, given their intention as music for the home. The music is often inspired. The wistful middle section of *January*, for example, appears to lead directly to Tatiana's Letter Scene from the opera *Yevgény Onégin*. *February* portrays an exuberant carnival scene while the *Lark's Song* in *March* is more restrained and delicately drawn. The waltz-like *April Snowdrop* has a winning innocence and grace—not surprising since Tchaikovsky had just completed *Swan Lake*, the first of his three great ballets. *May* captures the beauty as well as the exuberance

of a *White Night* at the time of the midnight sun. *June* is one of the more popular pieces from the collection. Its title, *Barcarolle*, comes from the rocking motion of its middle section. *July* portrays the repetitive actions of the *Reaper's Song* while the *August Harvest* is a showpiece requiring nimble fingerwork. Its scherzo-like agility and the hunting calls of *September* are both reminiscent of genres favored by Mendelssohn in his *Songs without Words*. *October* mines a characteristic vein of melancholy in a duet between the hands. “I continue to bake musical pancakes; today, a 10th has been tossed,” he joked to a friend. Rachmaninoff made the glittering sleigh bells of *November* (*Troika*) one of his favorite recital encores. Finally, for the Christmas night ball described in a verse by Vasily Zhukovsky, Tchaikovsky provides the gentlest of waltzes.

**FRYDERYK CHOPIN (1810–1849)
FOUR SCHERZI (1831–1843)**

Chopin was exploring new territory when he wrote single virtuoso scherzo movements outside the context of the symphony and the piano sonata. Without the framework of contrasting sonata movements, he made a point of providing contrast within the scherzo itself. The principle behind the four scherzi is that of alternating dramatic and lyrical ideas. A lively outer section often encompasses a more lyrical middle episode, though the shape of each scherzo does vary. The heroic opening chords of the First Scherzo (1831–1832) and the subsequent dynamic, scampering passagework seem to throw a challenge to his Parisian piano rivals. The turbulence of the work is relieved by a contrasting central episode, where the young Chopin recalls his homeland in a melody from a Christmas folk song, *Lulajże Jezuniu* (*Sleep, Little Jesus*). In the opening outburst of the B-flat Minor Scherzo (1837), a question-and-answer-like statement is followed by a vivid, plunging melody. Dramatic contrast is present from the outset and continues for all three sections of a work that Robert Schumann referred to as “Byronic.” A triumphant coda culminates

in the key of D-flat major rather than in the home key of B-flat minor, bringing to an end one of Chopin's most popular works. The Third Scherzo (1839) is the shortest of the set. Its opens with several bars of indeterminate tonality and unexpected rhythm, with all 12 tones of the chromatic scale and four beats to the bar, rather than the customary three. The excitement then promised by the resolute, plunging octaves is amply realized in the stormy, virtuoso coda. The middle section is a haunting, somewhat mystical chorale, punctuated by cascades of shimmering notes. It is an extraordinarily bold and beautiful effect. The Fourth Scherzo (1842–1843) is at once the longest and most refined of the four, playful and witty at times, pensive at others, a masterpiece of subtle writing for the piano.
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LANG LANG

If one word applies to Lang Lang, to the musician, to the man, to his worldview, to those who come into contact with him, it is “inspiration.” It resounds like a musical motif through his life and career. He inspires millions with his open-hearted, emotive playing, whether it be in intimate recitals or on the grandest of stages—such as the 2014 World Cup concert in Rio, with Plácido Domingo, to celebrate the final game; the

56th Grammy Awards, where he performed with Metallica; the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, where more than four billion people around the world saw his performance; the Last Night of the Proms at London's Royal Albert Hall; or the Liszt 200th birthday concert with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Charles Dutoit, which was broadcast live in more than 300 movie theaters around the United States and 200 cinemas across Europe (the first classical music cinemacast to be headlined by a solo artist). He forms enduring musical partnerships with the world's greatest artists, from conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Gustavo Dudamel, and Sir Simon Rattle to artists from outside classical music—among them dubstep dancer Marquese “Nonstop” Scott, king of the crooners Julio Iglesias, and jazz titan Herbie Hancock. He even builds relationships with corporations who will help him get classical music to ever more people. Thanks to his Sony ambassadorship, for instance, he brought Prokofiev's Seventh Piano Sonata to the soundtrack of the hugely popular computer game *Gran Turismo 5* and *6*! And he builds cultural bridges between the East and West, frequently introducing Chinese music to western audiences and vice versa.

Yet Lang Lang never forgets what first inspired and continues to inspire him: great artists, above all, the great composers—Liszt, Chopin, and the others—whose music he now delights in bringing to others. Even that famous old Tom and Jerry cartoon “The Cat Concerto,” which introduced him as a child to the music of Liszt—and that childlike excitement at the discovery of music—now stays with him and propels him in what he calls “his second career,” bringing music into the lives of children around the world, both through his work for the United Nations and through his own Lang Lang International Music Foundation. As he inspires, he is inspired. As he is inspired, he inspires others. It is this quality, perhaps, that led the *New Yorker* to call him “the world's ambassador of the keyboard.”

It takes a special kind of dedication to come from a small Chinese town, Shenyang, to travel to the big city as a small child, and to win the attention of the country's finest music professors. And then to leave behind your home country altogether to join the world-famous Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia in the United States. Lang Lang achieved all of this early on: he started playing piano at age three, won the Shenyang Competition and gave his first public recital by the time he was five, entered Beijing's Central Music Conservatory at age nine, and won First Prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians and played the complete Chopin études at the Beijing Concert Hall at 13. He left for America, Curtis, and the great piano teacher Gary Graffman, and when his moment came, he was ready. That moment happened when, at age 17, he was called upon to make a dramatic last-minute substitution for the famous André Watts to perform in the “Gala of the Century,” playing a Tchaikovsky concerto with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It made him what journalists like to call an “overnight star,” and the world's finest concert halls quickly beckoned.

Today, his resume reads like a bestseller (indeed, his biography, *Journey of a Thousand Miles*, has been published by Random House in 11 languages and was released to critical acclaim—and as part of his commitment to the education of children, he released a version specifically for younger readers, entitled *Playing with Flying Keys*). He has been heralded as the “hottest artist on the classical music planet” by the *New York Times*, has played sold-out concerts in every major city in the world, and is the first Chinese pianist to be engaged by the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the New York Philharmonic orchestras.

Time magazine recently included Lang Lang in the “Time 100,” its annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world, as a symbol of the youth of China and its future. Lang Lang is the cultural ambassador of the



cities of Shenzhen and Shenyang. In July 2012 he relayed the Olympic torch in London just before the opening of the XXX Olympiad.

And if the Chinese passion for piano isn't solely due to him, he has played no small part as a role model in encouraging more than 40 million Chinese children to learn to play the instrument—a phenomenon described by *The Today Show* as “the Lang Lang effect.” Steinway Pianos, for the first time in its 150-year history, named a piano model after a single artist when it introduced the “Lang Lang Piano” to China. That piano, specially designed for early music education, is now on its fifth iteration.

The child Lang Lang was and who, perhaps, is always with him would surely have approved of the way he gives back to children around the world. His volunteer activities include mentoring young talented pianists, convening 100 piano students at a time

in concert, performing for sick children in hospitals, delivering classical music recitals in underserved and remote communities, and donating his musical talents to raise awareness of other charitable causes. These charitable efforts have led to the launch of the Lang Lang International Music Foundation, with its goals of cultivating tomorrow's top pianists, championing music education at the forefront of technology, and building a young audience through live music experiences. *The Financial Times* described Lang Lang as “evangelical in his efforts to spread the popularity of classical music.” And in May 2009, Lang Lang and three chosen young scholars from the foundation—between six and ten years old—performed together on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in “Oprah's Search for the World's Smartest and Most Talented Kids.”

In 2011, Lang Lang Music World was launched, a multifunction arts complex located in Shenzhen and Chongqing, China,

where children can study piano, participate in master classes and competitions, attend concerts, and purchase educational products. Lang Lang himself continues to give master classes regularly throughout the world at the invitation of the most prestigious music institutions, including the Curtis Institute of Music, the Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, and the Hannover Conservatory, as well as all the top conservatories in China, where he holds honorary professorships. Elite universities such as Oxford, Harvard, and Columbia have invited him to give talks.

Lang Lang enjoys reaching audiences of all sizes and few come bigger than that of the YouTube Symphony Orchestra, of which Lang Lang was the first official Ambassador—a role, created by YouTube and Google, that combined two of his great loves, music and outreach through technology. More traditionally, tens of thousands of people have enjoyed Lang Lang's performances

“The hottest artist on the classical music planet may well be the Chinese pianist Lang Lang.” —*New York Times*

in open-air concerts in parks and venues around the globe, including Central Park in New York City, the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, Theaterplatz in Dresden, and Derby Park in Hamburg. Lang Lang participated in the opening concert at Munich’s Olympic Stadium with Mariss Jansons, marking the commencement of the World Cup Games in 2006. In celebratory concerts for the closing of the 2008 Euro Cup finals, Lang Lang played with the Vienna Philharmonic under the baton of Zubin Mehta in front of Schönbrunn Palace. And he marked the New Year’s Eve gala opening of the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing with another great conductor, Seiji Ozawa.

In December 2007, Lang Lang was a guest soloist at the Nobel Prize Concert in Stockholm, an event attended by Nobel laureates and members of the royal family. He performed as a soloist in Oslo for the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony and in a concert for President Barack Obama.

Lang Lang has made numerous TV appearances, including *The Today Show*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *Good Morning America*, CBS’s *The Early Show*, *60 Minutes*, *Wetten, dass...?*, and *El Número Uno*, among many others. He has been featured on every major TV network and in news and lifestyle magazines worldwide, including such diverse publications as the *New Yorker*, *Esquire*, *Vogue*, the *Times*, the *Financial Times*, *GQ*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Die Welt*, *Reader’s Digest*, and *People*.

In addition to President Obama, Lang Lang has performed for numerous international dignitaries, including former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan,

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, William J. Clinton, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, former President Hu Jin-Tao of China, President Horst Köhler of Germany, H. R. H. Prince Charles, former French President Nicolas Sarkozy, French President François Hollande, Dutch Queen Beatrix and His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, and Polish President Lech Kaczynski. Among many landmark events, he was honored to perform recently for President Barack Obama and former President Hu Jin-Tao at a White House State Dinner, as well as at the Diamond Jubilee celebratory concert for Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

Wherever he can, Lang Lang tries to give back. In 2013, he was designated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as a Messenger of Peace focusing on global education. He has worked to raise funds and awareness for earthquake relief in China and Haiti. These efforts included auctioning the red Steinway piano he played during his 2008 New York Central Park concert, donating the net proceeds to the American Red Cross China Earthquake Fund, and organizing a benefit concert at Carnegie Hall, donating the net proceeds to UNICEF’s Earthquake Relief Fund in Haiti. He also currently serves on the Weill Music Institute Advisory Committee as part of Carnegie Hall’s educational program and is the youngest member of Carnegie Hall’s Artistic Advisory Board.

Honors include being named one of the 250 Young Global Leaders picked by the World Economic Forum and receiving the 2010 Crystal Award in Davos. In May 2011, Lang Lang received an Honorary Doctorate of Music from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at the Royal College of Music, and he received his second Honorary Doctorate in Musical Arts at Manhattan School of Music in May 2012. In December 2011, he was honored with the highest prize awarded by the Ministry of Culture of the People’s Republic of China. More recently, he has

received the highest German civilian honor, the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, in recognition of his distinguished service to music, and in January 2013, he was presented with the Medal of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture.

He is one of the world’s most prolific and highest-profile recording artists. The featured soloist on the Golden Globe-winning score for the film *The Painted Veil*, composed by Alexandre Desplat, he can also be heard on the soundtracks of *The Banquet*, composed by Tan Dun, and *My Week with Marilyn*. All of his albums have made the top classical charts as well as many pop charts around the globe. His album of Beethoven’s First and Fourth Piano Concerti with L’Orchestre de Paris and Maestro Christoph Eschenbach debuted at number one on *Billboard’s* Classical Chart. Lang Lang also appeared on *Billboard’s* New Artist Chart in the highest-ever position for a classical artist. In 2007, he was nominated for a Grammy Award, becoming the first Chinese artist to be nominated for Best Instrumental Soloist. He has recently recorded the movie soundtrack for the Japanese blockbuster film *Nodame Cantabile*, Chopin’s 24 Études for Project Chopin (the largest project in honor of Chopin’s bicentenary), *La nuit de mai* with Plácido Domingo, and, of course, that opening sequence for *Gran Turismo*, the most successful video game to date.

In February 2010, Lang Lang joined Sony Music Entertainment as an exclusive recording artist; his first album with Sony featured a live recording of his 2010 recital at Vienna’s legendary Musikverein (including a segment filmed in 3D). His next CD, *Liszt, My Piano Hero*, and DVD, *Liszt, Now!*, celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of the great composer, while 2012 saw the release of *The Chopin Album*. His latest released album is a recording with Nikolaus Harnoncourt and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra of all the masterpieces of Mozart.

For more information, visit www.langlang.com/ www.langlangfoundation.org ❄️