

NICHOLAS ROERICH MUSEUM

319 West 107th Street, New York NY 10025-2799 • tel: 212 864 7752 • email: inquiries@roerich.org

Sunday, November 6, 2016

Mark Valenti

pianist

Próle do Bébé (The Baby's Family) (1918)

Porcelain Doll

Wooden Doll

Witch Doll

Paper Doll

Rag Doll

Clown Doll (Polichinelle)

Heitor Villa-Lobos

(1887-1959)

Three Preludes (1730-40)

G major BWV 902

F# minor from Well-tempered Clavier Bk. II

F major from Well-tempered Clavier Bk. II

J. S. Bach

(1685-1750)

Sonata #7 in B flat major, op. 83 (1939-42)

I. Allegro inquieto

II. Andante caloroso

III. Precipitato

Sergei Prokofieff

(1891-1953)

Variations Sérieuses, op. 54 (1841)

Felix Mendelssohn

(1809-1850)

PROGRAM NOTES

Heitor Villa-Lobos wrote two suites with the title *Prôle do Bêbé*. The set presented here is from the first suite which he wrote for his wife. They are full of childlike charm and simplicity and were championed by the pianist Artur Rubinstein.

Serving as preliminary versions of the prelude and fugue in G major of the *Well-tempered Clavier*, Book II, Johann Sebastian Bach originally paired the *Prelude in G major* with a fughetto. He separated the prelude, however, realizing that it was a gem worth standing alone. It is a prelude rich with lyricism and delicate syncopations. All the preludes of the *Well-tempered Clavier*, I feel, can stand alone and hold their own. The *Prelude in F# minor* is an eloquently songful air while the *Prelude in F major* is woven with resplendent choral textures.

Nicknamed one of the 'war sonatas', Sergei Prokofieff's *Sonata #7* is brimming with anxiety, tension and anger. Military march rhythms mechanize most of the first movement *Allegro Inquieto* while the tranquil poignancy of its second theme serves to ease the conflict. *Andante caloroso* (warmly), with its barber-shop-like harmonies contrasting with acerbic dissonances, boasts Prokofieff's balance of simplicity and modernism. Finally, in *Precipitato*, Prokofieff hammers us with toccata touches and an insistent, incessant bass motif culminating with one of the most dynamic spectacles of *moto perpetuo* in the entire repertoire.

During the composition of *Variations Sérieuses* Felix Mendelssohn remarked to a friend, "I've never enjoyed myself so much". Nonetheless, these variations are without a doubt "serious". A theme, full of yearning pathos, and 18 variations, each one a miniature study in virtuoso romantic piano techniques, comprise the set.

-M.V.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Mark Valenti received his Master of Music from Northwestern University, Bachelor of Music from the Philadelphia Musical Academy and has studied with such notable teachers as Benjamin Whitten, Zoltan Kocsis and Mary Sauer. In addition to giving solo recitals in cities throughout the U.S., Mr. Valenti has performed in France, Belgium, Hungary and Luxembourg as well as for former First Lady Barbara Bush in Washington, D.C.

Mark Valenti has performed in recital live on WFMT classical radio. He has also done extensive work in the Jazz field including performances with Gregory Hines, Frank Foster and Al Grey and has appeared on television with Joe Sudler's Swing Machine and singer/actor Christopher Durham.

Formerly Professor of Music at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Xavier University in Chicago and the Loire Valley Music Institute in France, Mr. Valenti currently teaches at his studio in the Lakeview neighborhood of Chicago and is available for lessons for all levels and all styles.



MARK VALENTI 512 W. Addison St. Chicago IL 60613 (773) 983-4780 mark@markvalenti.com

www.markvalenti.com