

Dr Leslie Howard

"musicianship that was as breathtaking in its virtuosity as it was revelatory in its grasp of the music"

Classical Source (on Leslie Howard's latest Wigmore Hall recital)

This has been another busy season for pianist Leslie Howard. Tours on five continents throughout 2010-12 have seen him enthralling audiences with his customarily adventurous repertoire.

A citizen both of Britain and Australia, Leslie Howard has accomplished a feat unequalled by any solo artist in recording history - his 99-CD survey for Hyperion of the complete piano music of Franz Liszt, including all 17 works for piano and orchestra. Accomplished within 14 years, it encompasses more than 300 world premières, with many works prepared from Liszt's unpublished manuscripts and works unheard since Liszt's lifetime. This critically acclaimed project merited Leslie Howard's entry in the Guinness Book of World Records, six Grands Prix du Disque, the Medal of St. Stephen, the Pro Cultura Hungarica award and a mounted bronze cast of Liszt's hand presented by the Hungarian President. In 1999 the Queen bestowed on him "Member in the Order of Australia" for his "service to the arts as piano soloist, composer, musicologist and mentor to young musicians". During the Liszt bicentenary year - 2011, Leslie Howard travelled the world with seven different all-Liszt recital programmes, maintaining at the same time a broad repertoire of concertos and chamber-music, and a quantity of solo music by Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Rakhmaninov and Rubinstein.

Leslie Howard has appeared internationally with the world's finest orchestras, including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, English Northern Philharmonia, RTE National Symphony of Dublin, Hanover Band, Utah Symphony, Maryland Symphony, Mexico Philharmonic, Orchestra della Scala, Budapest Philharmonic, Budapest Symphony, and the orchestras of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Queensland and Tasmania in Australia.

His 130-CD discography contains many other important world première recordings, including the four piano sonatas of Anton Rubinstein, the three piano sonatas of

Tchaikovsky and a disc of Scandinavian piano sonatas. In 2011 Leslie Howard released four new CDs: Liszt New Discoveries 3 - a 2-CD set of world première recordings for Hyperion; 25 Etudes in Black and White - his own compositions recorded for ArtCorp; and, most recently, a disc pairing the two Rakhmaninov piano sonatas for Melba Recordings. In addition, he has produced an Urtext edition of the Liszt sonata for Edition Peters and a new reconstruction and orchestration of Paganini's fifth violin concerto for the collected Paganini Edition.

In January 2011, Hyperion Records released a 99 CD boxed set of Leslie Howard's complete Liszt recordings, which has proved an enormous success: 'Almost any way you choose to look at it, this is a staggering achievement.'

Diapason d'Or

www.lesliehowardpianist.com

The Tait Performing Arts Association would like to express its sadness at the passing of friend and supporter **Pip Smibert**.

Pip was a great supporter of young performers and, as a member of the Savage Club, was instrumental in creating the partnership with The Tait. Our deepest sympathy to Pip's family and friends.

The **Tait Performing Arts Association** is a not for profit organization that raises funds to support emerging Australian performing artists wishing to study overseas. It was formed in memory of **Sir Frank Tait** and **Lady Viola Tait**, and his elder brothers, who played such an important part in the establishment of the performing arts in Australia.

The **Tait Performing Arts Association** would like to thank the **Savage Club** and **Leslie Howard** for their support for this evening's fund raising concert.

Tait Performing Arts Association Inc. Chairman Isla Baring OAM

Founding Patrons Dame Joan Sutherland AC OM DBE, John McCallum, Googie Withers AO CBE, AO CBE, Viola, Lady Tait AM

Patrons Richard Bonyngé AC CBE, Barry Humphries AO CBE, Piers Lane AO, Roger Woodward AC CBE

Recipients: Hoang Pham, piano, to study at the Royal College of Music, London; James Roser, baritone, to study in Austria

**SAVE THE DATE Lotte Betts-Dean
with the Mietta Foundation –
Thursday 28 November 7:00 pm Savage
Club 12 Bank Place Melbourne**

TAIT PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION INC.

The Tait Trust in Australia: supporting young Australian
artists in the UK & Europe
www.tait.org.au

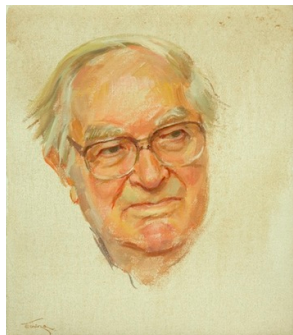
is pleased to present



LESLIE HOWARD

John Amis Award Memorial Concert

Tuesday 15 October 2013
Savage Club Melbourne



In memory of
John Amis
June 17 1922 - August 1 2013

Programme

SCHUBERT *Fantasie in C-dur, D760 'Wanderer' (1822)*

LISZT

Aïda di G. Verdi – Danza sacra e duetto finale, S436 (1879)

Rigoletto de Verdi – Paraphrase de concert, S434 (1859)

RUBINSTEIN *Sonata no. 1 in E minor, opus 12 (1848)*

Franz Peter SCHUBERT

Fantasie in C-dur, D760 'Wanderer' (1822)

Allegro con fuoco ma non troppo – Adagio – Presto – Allegro

Schubert composed three large-scale fantasies that draw each upon one of his songs for thematic unity: the *Trockne Blumen* Fantasie for flute and piano, the Fantasie for violin and piano that is based on *Sei mir gegrüßt* and his great solo piano piece of 1822, the Fantasie in C major, always known by its nickname *Wanderer*, which original song lies behind most of the thematic material. The influence of this single piano piece upon successive composers would be difficult to exaggerate: the new approach to the sonata-form – combining the elements of four movements into a continuous structure, the use of thematic transformation to unite the apparently diverse content, and the use of a key structure that almost always modulates by thirds was to have a profound and universal effect. Liszt (who made a splendid version of the piece for piano and orchestra, as well as a thoughtful edition of the solo version, aimed at rendering its more intractable difficulties manageable) pays practical homage to this outstanding composition in the construction of his symphonies, symphonic poems and piano sonata, which in turn influenced practically every composer in the second half of the 19th century. And Schubert's piano writing, no matter how awkward and inconsiderate,

outdoes even Beethoven in its quasi-orchestral grandeur. Famously, Schubert himself was unable to play the work, declaring that 'the Devil can play it' as he flung the manuscript into the room.

Ferenc LISZT (1811-1886)

Aïda di G. Verdi – Danza sacra e Duetto finale, S436 (1879)

The number of operas which Liszt attended, conducted, supported and transcribed is legion – his only failing in this respect was not to have written a mature opera of his own. His piano pieces based on other composers' operas occupy some 15 hours playing time, and present far and away the most important body of works of this kind in the whole literature, at whose range and scope of invention and reinvention one can only marvel. Liszt cast his net broadly, taking in operatic masterpieces which have endured to the present day in the repertoire, some operas which are granted honourable mentions in despatches, and one or two which have sunk without trace, if not always deservedly so. The multiplicity of Liszt's aims and techniques, and the sheer musical quality of his personal contribution – ranging from thoughtful literal transcription to almost wholly original works based upon external themes – is unparalleled.

Liszt called his *Aïda* piece a transcription, but it is surely a paraphrase, in which the religious themes are somewhat altered to make a more mystical tone-poem, and the duet is separated from the temple chorus at the end – Verdi's simultaneous "split-level" staging effect would be impossible to realise on the piano.

Rigoletto de Verdi – Paraphrase de concert, S434 (1859)

The *Paraphrase de concert* on *Rigoletto* is amongst Liszt's finest operatic inventions. By calling the piece a paraphrase, rather than a fantasy or a transcription, Liszt intended to convey the idea of taking a specific section of the opera, presenting it in highly pianistic terms whilst maintaining the general outlines of the original. This justly famous piece is simply a stunning recreation of the quartet between Rigoletto, Gilda, the Duke and Maddalena in Act IV of Verdi's opera, preceded by the most magical introduction designed to make the home key of the piece arrive as a wholly-unexpected delight.

Anton Grigoryevich RUBINSTEIN (1829-1894)

Sonata no. 1 in E minor, opus 12 (1848)

Allegro appassionato

Andante largamente

Scherzo – Moderato

Finale – Moderato con fuoco

Rubinstein was born in Balta Podalia (Ukraine) on 28th November, 1829 (he died in Peterhof on 20th November, 1894). He was Russian of German extraction and Christian by virtue of his progenitors' forcible conversion from Judaism. This admixture served his critics well, as Rubinstein himself admitted when he wrote in his Autobiography: "For the Russians I am a German, for the Germans a Russian; for the Jews I am a Christian, for the Christians a Jew – in short, a miserable fellow", but it was also the reason for his versatility and solid West-European cultural standards. Anton Rubinstein has suffered the unhappy fate of having his name and fame as composer, pianist and pedagogue perpetuated while pretty well all of his enormous catalogue of compositions had disappeared from the repertoire, always excepting the youthful piano composition: *Melody in F*. But there has been a slow revival as the debt of later composers to Rubinstein has been acknowledged: recordings of the six symphonies, all the concertos (five for piano, one for violin and two for cello), much of the piano music and chamber music, many of the songs, and several times the opera *Demon* are happily available to testify that many a later master benefited from Rubinstein's example.

The first of Rubinstein's four piano sonatas (he also wrote three with violin, two with cello, one with viola, and a one for piano duet) was written c1848, when the composer was only 19, and is of great historical interest for being almost certainly the first Russian sonata of any account. There are plenty of signs of Mendelssohn and of Schubert and Chopin, but also a good bit of youthful fire and the occasional trace of vodka. The coda of the finale is without any precedent in its colossal orchestral sweep of the keyboard, and the whole ethos of the piece immediately accounts for the deep admiration felt for this extraordinary man by both Tchaikovsky and Rakhmaninov, not to mention the surreptitious 'borrowing' of some of his ideas by Brahms (who didn't have a kind word to say about him!).