

2-5-2012

Richard Becker, piano

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Presents in Concert

Richard Becker, *piano*

Sunday, February 5, 2012

3:00 p.m.

Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music



About the Artist

RICHARD BECKER, coordinator of piano study at the University of Richmond, is a recitalist, composer and chamber musician whose playing has been acclaimed in Europe and America. He has frequently toured the eastern United States, playing recitals on college campuses, performing also at such venues as Virginia Museum, Grand Rapids' St. Cecilia Music Center, New York's Alice Tully Hall, Town Hall, 92nd Street Y, and Carnegie Hall, and Washington D.C.'s Library of Congress, National Gallery of Art and French Embassy. In Paris he has performed at l'École Normale de Musique, Salle Edmund Michelet of the Cité Internationale des Arts and as first prize laureate of the French Piano Institute Marathon Competition at Salle Cortot. His performances and compositions have been broadcast on NPR, Voice of America, WNYC, WETA, WGMS, and WCVE. His performance has been described as "powerful" by the *Washington Post*, "admirable in taste and technique" by the *New York Times*, and "brilliant with seamless passagework and elegant phrasing" by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Becker's repertoire is made up of masterworks of the standard repertory often punctuated by one or two of his own efforts at composition. His playing is grounded in the traditions of Arthur Schnabel, acquired during study with Leonard Shure while at Boston University (M. Mus.). His teaching owes much to the methods of Tobias Matthay gained through his study with Cecile Staub Genhart at the Eastman School of Music (B.Mus. and Performers Certificate). Becker taught piano performance at University of Texas and Boston University prior to joining the faculty at the University of Richmond in 1975. Recordings of his compositions are on CRS, and his piano performances on Albany Records.

Also a poet in recent years, Becker's work has been published in such journals as *America*, *Columbia*, *Visions-International*, *Cold Mountain*, and *Red Wheel Barrow*. His poetic sequence, "Fates," is one of nine chapbooks published in *The Literary Review*.

SPRING 2012 DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC CONCERT SERIES

FREE—No Ticket Required—CAMP CONCERT HALL—*unless otherwise noted**

Monday, Jan. 30—7:30p

LISA TERRY, *viola da gamba*
JOANNE KONG, *harpsichord*

Sunday, Feb. 5—3:00p

RICHARD BECKER, *piano*

Friday, Feb. 10—7:30p

Cannon Memorial Chapel
BECKERATH ORGAN 50TH ANNIVERSARY
Guest Organists

Thursday, March 22—7:30p

Perkinson Recital Hall
LESLIE TUNG, *fortepiano*

Sunday, March 25—3:00p

DUO-PIANO RECITAL
Richard Becker, *piano*
Doris Wylee-Becker, *piano*

Sunday, April 1—all day, across campus

GLOBAL SOUNDS FESTIVAL

Wednesday, April 4—7:30p

UR WIND ENSEMBLE

Friday, April 6—7:30p

UR SCHOLA CANTORUM, UNIVERSITY DANCERS,
AND GUEST INSTRUMENTALISTS

Monday, April 9—7:30p

UR JAZZ ENSEMBLE & JAZZ COMBO

Wednesday, April 11—7:30p

UR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Featuring Tim Munro, *flute*

Monday, April 16—7:30p

UR CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

Program

Richard Becker, *piano*

Sonata in E-flat major, Hob. XVI:20

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Finale: Allegro

Franz Joseph Haydn

(1732-1809)

Ballade No. 2 in F major/A minor, Op. 38

Frédéric Chopin

(1810-1849)

Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20

Intermission

Four Poems of Emily Dickinson for Solo Piano (2011)

Richard Becker

(b. 1943)

I. I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—

II. I would not have paint—a picture—

III. Much Madness in divinest Sense—

IV. Volcanoes be in Sicily

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11

Franz Liszt

(1811-1886)

Mephisto Waltz No. 1



Please silence cell phones, digital watches, and paging devices before the concert.

The texts of Richard Becker's *Four Poems of Emily Dickinson for Solo Piano*

I. 465*

I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—
The stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air—
Between the Heaves of Storm—

The Eyes around—had wrung them dry—
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset—when the King
Be witnessed— in the Room—

I willed my Keepsakes—Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable—and then it was
There interposed a Fly—

With Blue—uncertain stumbling Buzz—
Between the light—and me—
And then the Windows failed—and then
I could not see to see—

II. 505

I would not paint—a picture—
I'd rather be the One
Its bright impossibility
To dwell—delicious—on
And wonder how the fingers feel
Whose rare—celestial—stir—
Evokes a Torment—
Such sumptuous—Despair—

I would not talk, like Cornets—
I'd rather be the One
Raised softly to the Ceilings—
And out, and easy on
Through Villages of Ether—
Myself endued Balloon
By but a lip of Metal—
The pier to my Pontoon—

Nor would I be a Poet—
It's finer—own the Ear—
Enamored—impotent—content—
The License to revere,
A privilege so awful

What would the Dower be,
Had I the Art to stun myself
With Bolts of Melody!

III. 435

Much Madness is divinest Sense—
To a discerning Eye—
Much Sense—the starkest Madness—
'Tis the Majority
In this, as All, prevail—
Assent—and you are sane—
Demur—you're straightway dangerous—
And handled with a Chain—

IV. 1705

Volcanoes be in Sicily
And South America
I judge from my Geography—
Volcanoes nearer here
A Lava step at any time
Am I inclined to climb—
A Crater I may contemplate
Vesuvius at Home.

*Arabic numbers refer to the ordering
in *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Thom-
as H. Johnson (3 vols. Cambridge: the
Belknap Press, Harvard University
Press, 1955).

