



School of Music
University of Missouri

2025-2026 Series | Faculty Recital

Peter Miyamoto, piano

October 11, 2025 • 7:30PM

Whitmore Recital Hall

Program

Sonata quasi una fantasia in C-sharp Minor, Ludwig van Beethoven
Op. 27, No. 2 "Moonlight" (1770-1827)

Adagio sostenuto

Allegretto

Presto agitato

Estampes Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

I. Pagodes (Pagodas)

II. La soirée dans Grenade (Evening in Granada)

III. Jardins sous la pluie (Gardens in the Rain)

Intermission

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23 Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Allegro ma non troppo e molto maestoso – Allegro con spirito

Andantino – Prestissimo

Allegro con fuoco

Jinhong Yoo, orchestral reduction

Program Notes

Beethoven Sonata quasi una fantasia in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 “Moonlight” (1801)

Hoping to study with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven traveled to Vienna in 1787, but returned to his hometown of Bonn, Germany upon learning of his mother's severe illness and eventual death. By the time Beethoven returned to Vienna in 1792, Mozart had died, resulting in Beethoven studying with Franz Joseph Haydn. Beethoven's early piano sonatas exhibit a composer modeling his works on the examples of these two great predecessors. In 1801, Beethoven began experimenting with the traditional expectations of the quintessential Classical form of the sonata, boldly altering the form through unorthodox ordering of movements, employing exotic keys, and introducing quasi-programmatic elements.

The sonata on tonight's program, one of the two sonatas Beethoven published as a *Sonata quasi una fantasia* (sonata in the manner of a fantasy) Op. 27, is extremely unusual in that it opens not with a sonata-allegro form fast movement, but with a slow adagio. Indubitably, the work earned the nickname “Moonlight” Sonata because of this famous opening movement. It is important to note that this moniker was not given by Beethoven but by Ludwig Rellstab (1799-1860), the critic and poet who commented that the sonata conjured for him “a vision of a boat on Lake Lucerne by moonlight” five years after Beethoven's death. All three movements of the sonata are in C-sharp or D-flat tonality. The second movement is a bright menuet and trio in the enharmonically spelled key of D-flat Major. The final movement is a tumultuous, sonata-form presto in c-sharp minor tonality, bringing the work to an epic close.

Debussy Estampes (1903)

The three pieces that comprise Claude Debussy's *Estampes* (“prints” or “engravings”) take the listener on a trip around the world. In the opening piece, “Pagodes” (pagodas being the tiered towers in the far East often used as religious temples), Debussy's use of the pentatonic scale, gong-like effects, and layering of patterns to evoke exotic Asia, and the gamelan orchestras Debussy encountered in Paris at the 1889 Exposition Universelle. In “La Soirée la Grenade” (An Evening in Granada), the habanera rhythm and use of Lydian mode create a rich, languidly sensuous soundscape of Spain. With the set's final piece, “Jardins sous la pluie” (Gardens in the Rain), Debussy returns home to France. The toccata like textures evoke the falling rain. Debussy quotes two French children's songs, “Nous n'irons plus aux bois” (We'll not return in to the woods), and “Dodo, l'enfant do” (Sleep, child, sleep) before this model of Impressionist composition ends with a brilliant flourish.

Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23 (1874-75)

Like Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat Minor, Op. 23 is one of the world's best-known compositions. It had a difficult conception, with Tchaikovsky writing in 1874, "I am completely bogged down in the composition of the piano concerto, it's coming along, but very poorly." On Christmas Eve 1874 the concerto was completed and Tchaikovsky, looking for a champion for the work, performed it for Nikolai Rubinstein, the great pianist and director of the Moscow Conservatory. Tchaikovsky later recounted that Rubinstein called the concerto "worthless, absolutely unplayable...with only one or two pages worth anything," and had said he would only play the work if it were completely revised. Hurt by his friend's reaction, Tchaikovsky vowed not to change a note, and changed his dedication from Rubinstein to the pianist Hans von Bülow, who premiered the work on October 13, 1875 in Boston (almost 150 years to the day of tonight's performance) to great acclaim.

The concerto unusually opens with an introduction in the "wrong" key of D-flat Major. Its majestic opening theme does not return again in the movement. The first movement is monumental, lasting over twenty minutes and featuring numerous cadenza passages. The first theme is based on a Ukrainian folksong that Tchaikovsky reportedly heard sung by a blind singer. The second movement opens with a simple, lullaby-like theme, and features a contrasting prestissimo, fast-waltz middle section. The last movement rondo opens with a fiery theme based on another Ukrainian folksong and is contrasted by a soaring, lyrical second theme. A blistering coda brings this famous work to a virtuosic close.

Notes by Dr. Peter Miyamoto

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Biography

Pianist **Peter Miyamoto** enjoys a brilliant international career, performing in recital and as soloist in Canada, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Switzerland, China, and Japan, and in major US cities such as Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. In 1990, Miyamoto was named the first Gilmore Young Artist. He won numerous other competitions, including the American Pianist Association National Fellowship Competition, the D'Angelo Competition, the San Francisco Symphony Competition and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Competition, and was a top-prize winner in the National Chopin Piano Competition.

Peter Miyamoto holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music, Yale University School of Music, Michigan State University, and the Royal Academy of Music in London. His teachers included Maria Curcio-Diamand, Leon Fleisher, Claude Frank, Peter Frankl, Marek Jablonski, Aube Tzerko, and Ralph Votapek, as well as Szymon Goldberg and Felix Galimir for chamber music. He has appeared as soloist with numerous orchestras, working with such conductors as Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, David Lockington, Raymond Harvey, Lawrence Leighton-Smith, William Henry Curry, Kyle Pickett and Kirk Trevor. A dedicated chamber musician, he has collaborated with such musician as Charles Castleman, Victor Danchenko, Joel Krosnick, Lara St. John, Anthony McGill, Amit Peled, David Shifrin, Allan Vogel, singer Lucy Shelton, and members of the Juilliard, Borromeo and Pacific String Quartets. He is the Executive Director of the Plowman Chamber Music Competition.

Middlebush Chair of Piano at the University of Missouri, where he was also named 2021 Professor of the Year, Peter Miyamoto formerly taught at Michigan State University, and the California Institute of the Arts. He has presented lectures and master classes through the Irving S. Gilmore Keyboard Festival and the Amadeus Piano Festival, at numerous music institutions including the Colburn School, Interlochen Academy of the Arts, Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Michigan among many others, as well as internationally in Canada, China, Greece, Japan and Serbia. From 2003-2015 he served as head of the piano faculty at the New York Summer Music Festival and has served on the piano faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music's Young Artist Summer Program and the Curtis Mentor Network Program in Philadelphia.

Miyamoto's six solo CDs, available on the Blue-Griffin label, have received excellent reviews in periodicals such as *Gramophone*, *International Record Review*, *Fanfare*, and

American Record Guide and were recognized by the American Prize. He has also recorded a CD with violinist Julie Rosenfeld of world-premieres of six works for violin and piano on the Albany label, produced by GRAMMY Award winner Judith Sherman.