

Program #1

Chopin – Military Polonaise (6:00)

Alice Ping Yee Ho - The Weeping Woman (2020) (14:00)

Nicky Sohn - When the bullets lay still (2024) (6:00)

Liszt - Funérailles S.173 (11:00)

INTERMISSION

Sam Wu - In:Ruins (2024) (8:00)

Prokofiev - Piano Sonata No. 8 in B \flat major, Op. 84 (29:00)

This recital is dedicated to the theme of war, and how the recent Ukraine-Russia and Israel-Hamas Wars have affected us as people and musicians.

The program opens with Chopin's Military Polonaise, a piece played on the Polish radio in hopes to unite the country during World War II. Canadian composer Alice Ping Yee Ho wrote The Weeping Woman as her response to the Ukraine-Russia war, influenced by Picasso's painting of the same name, which depicted the bombings in the Spanish Civil War. This program features two rising composers, Nicky Sohn and Sam Wu, who were commissioned for my Doctoral project to respond to the two ongoing wars and reflect how music written today is influenced by significant world events. Liszt's Funérailles is a funeral march based on the Hungarian Revolution of 1849, lamenting the lives that were lost. It coincides with the news of Chopin's death, and Liszt pays tribute by referring to his A-flat Polonaise in the middle section. The program concludes with one of Prokofiev's War sonatas, the powerful sonata No.8 in B-flat major. Despite its dark and broody character, this sonata serves as a metaphor for his country's past history, the hopelessness of the early war years, and finally, victory.

Program #2

Chopin - Étude Op. 10, No. 12 in C minor "Revolutionary" (3:00)

Karim Al-Zand - Sounds of War (2024) (8:00)

Julián Fueyo - Surrender (2024) (8:00)

Prokofiev - Piano Sonata No.7 in B-flat Major, Op.83 (18:00)

INTERMISSION

Liszt - Piano Sonata in B minor, S.178 (30:00)

This program begins with Chopin's "Revolutionary" Étude, composed in September 1831 when news of the crushing of the Polish uprising and the capture of Warsaw by the Russian army began to spread. Sounds of War is a new 2024 commission from Canadian composer Karim Al-Zand, reacting to another war breaking out (Israel-Hamas) while the Ukraine-Russia conflict continues. Julián Fueyo is another composer who was commissioned for my Doctoral project to respond to the two ongoing wars and reflect how music written today is influenced by significant world events. Plunging into chaos and uncertainty, Prokofiev's sonata No.7 is another powerful work from his three War sonatas, diving into the anxiously threatening atmosphere of a world that has lost its balance. The program concludes with Liszt's monumental Sonata in B minor. Displaying the divine and the diabolical, this sonata portrays the struggle of man between God and the devil, just like how our morals are being challenged during these times of violence.