SCHOOL OF MUSIC
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES

presents a

Junior Recital

featuring

Merris J. McDuffie, piano

with

Aiden Payer, flute

November 15, 2026, 5:00 p.m.
Doudna Fine Arts Center
Recital Hall

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EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

Nocturne No. 21 in C-sharp minor, Op. posth. — Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Merris J. McDuffie, piano

Sonata for Arpeggione in A minor, D. 821. — Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

I. Allegro moderato

Merris J. McDuffie,piano
Aiden Payer, flute

Rondo in C Major, Op. 51 No. 1 — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Merris J. McDuffie, piano

Program Notes

Merris J. McDuffie | Junior Recital

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Nocturne No. 20 in C-sharp minor, Op. posth.

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Frédéric François Chopin was a Polish, Romantic era composer and piano virtuoso. A child prodigy, he grew up in Warsaw where he composed many of his early works. Each of Chopin's compositions incorporate the piano in some way, the majority being piano solos. At the age of 20 he moved to Paris where he earned a living teaching piano lessons, performing and selling his compositions. He earned the admiration of many renowned pianists of his time, such as Franz Liszt and Robert Schumann. Chopin remained in Paris until his death, brought on by tuberculosis, at the age of 39.

Between the years of 1827 and 1846, Frédéric Chopin composed 21 Nocturnes for solo piano, with 18 of them being published during his lifetime. His Nocturne No. 21 in C-Sharp minor was published posthumously in 1875, 26 years after Chopin's death. Frederic composed this particular piece for his sister, Ludwika Chopin, in 1830 with the dedication, "For my sister Ludwika to practice before she takes on my second Concerto." Chopin's alternate titles for the piece, *Reminiscence* or *Reminiscence Nocturne,* highlight the piece's melancholy nature. Nocturne No. 21 was composed after Chopin's arrival in Vienna, shortly before the November Poland uprising, and reflects the composer's feelings of isolation and longing for home.

This particular Nocturne holds some additional historical significance, specifically during the Second World War. In 1939 Władysław Szpilman, a Polish-Jewish pianist, performed the piece on a radio broadcast that was interrupted by the German invasion of Warsaw, Poland. Later, as the war progressed, Szpilman was discovered hiding in abandoned house by German army officer Wilm Hosenfeld. When Szpilman stated that he was a pianist, Hosenfeld asked him to perform something on the house's dilapidated grand piano. Szpilman chose to play Chopin's Nocturne No. 21, whereafter Hosenfeld protected him from Nazi discovery. Furthermore, in the midst of the war, high ranking Nazi officer Amon Goeth brought Jewish pianist Natalia Karp to

the Kraków-Płaszów concentration camp. Karp was then ordered to perform a piece in honor of Goeth's birthday. She chose Chopin's Nocturne No. 20 in C-sharp minor as an outward representation of her feelings at the time. Karp's performance was received so well by Goeth that her spared her life.

I chose to perform this piece as a sort of dedication to my former piano teacher, Victoria Sowders. Mrs. Sowders was a kind, wonderfully uplifting teacher, and I miss her very much. Sadly, she passed away suddenly in July of this year. Her favorite composer was Frédéric Chopin, and she had a particular fondness for his Nocturnes.

Sonata for Arpeggione in A minor, D. 821

I. Allegro moderato

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Austrian composer Franz Peter Schubert was born in Himmelpfortgrund, a suburb of Vienna, in 1797. His compositions span both the late Classical and early Romantic periods, of which he wrote over 1,000. Despite only living to the age of 31, Schubert is regarded as one of the most inventive and productive composers of his time. His works offer a wide variety, including art songs, symphonies, operas, sacred music, piano works, and chamber music. Schubert's compositions took inspiration from the music of Beethoven, Haydyn and Mozart, three of the most well-known composers of the Classical period. He died in the year 1828 after contracting typhoid fever, although some historians believe there may have been additional causes. In the years after his passing Schubert's compositions gained significant traction. His work inspired future artists such as Johannes Brahms, Felix Mendelssohn, and Robert Schumann.

The Sonata for Arpeggione in A minor was composed in 1824 by Franz Schubert. Today, it is the only significant work written for the arpeggione (a sort of bowed guitar), a long-forgotten string instrument. It is comprised of three movements: Allegro moderato, Adagio in E minor, and Allegretto in A Major. Today, the sonata is often performed on the cello or viola, and in this case the flute. The Sonata for Arpeggione is thought to have been commissioned by Schubert's friend, Vincenz Schuster, an arpeggione virtuoso. The arpeggione was invented in

1823, only one year before the composition of this sonata, and was forgotten not long after. It is a six-stringed, guitar-like instrument played by bowing rather than plucking, much like a modern cello. See the image below:



Rondo in C Major, Op. 51 No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Born in Bonn, Ludwig van Beethoven was a German pianist and composer. A staple composer in piano repertoire, Beethoven's music incited the transition from the Classical to Romantic period. He gave rise to many musical innovations of the symphony, sonata and string quartet, and is regarded as one of the greatest composers in history. At the age of 21, Beethoven moved from Bonn to Vienna to study composition with the renowned Joseph Haydn. He continued to develop his reputation as a virtuoso pianist, and his compositions gained recognition from other famed musicians and even royalty. After writing his *Sonata Pathétique* in 1798, Beethoven began experiencing symptoms of hearing loss. In 1827, Ludwig van Beethoven died at the age of 56 after a drawn-out battle with many illnesses. His death is attributed to significant liver damage brought on by his lifestyle and profound hearing loss.

Beethoven's Rondo in C Major was written in 1797, and it is the first in a pair of rondos. Its partner piece is the Rondo in G Major, Op. 51 No. 2. Beethoven's compositions are often divided into three distinct musical periods, the first, middle and late. The Rondo in C Major was composed during the first period, approximately 1782-1802, alongside his other early works. During this time, Beethoven's compositions adhered to classical forms and took much inspiration from Joseph Haydyn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Beethoven's first period pieces often include notable dynamic contrasts and clear harmonies, which can be observed in the Rondo in C Major.