BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BETH ALLEN
and
APRIL STEAD
duo piano
in a
SENIOR RECITAL

Andantino varié, Op. 84 No. 1 .................................. Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Petite Suite ................................................... Claude Debussy
I. En bateau .................................................. (1862-1918)
II. Cortège ......................................................
III. Menuet .....................................................
IV. Ballet ........................................................

... Intermission ...

Billy the Kid ................................................... Aaron Copland
(excerpts from the Ballet) .................................... (1900-1990)
I. The Open Prairie
II. In a Frontier Town
   a) Cowboys with Lassos
   b) Mexican Dance and Finale
III. Billy and his Sweetheart
IV. Celebration After Billy's Capture
V. Billy's Demise
VI. The Open Prairie Again

The following is a quotation from an article by Aaron Copland, "Notes on a Cowboy Ballet."

"The action begins and closes on the open prairie. The central portion of the ballet concerns itself with significant moments in the life of Billy the Kid. The first scene is a street in a frontier town. Familiar figures amble by. Cowboys saunter into town, some on horseback, others with their lassos. Some Mexican women do a Jarabe which is interrupted by a fight between two drunks. Attracted by the gathering crowd, Billy is seen for the first time as a boy of twelve with his mother. The brawl turns ugly, guns are drawn, and in some unaccountable way, Billy’s mother is killed. Without an instant’s hesitation, in cold fury, Billy draws a knife from a cowhand’s sheath and stabs his mother’s slayers. His short but famous career had begun. In swift succession we see episodes in Billy's later life. At night, under the stars, in a quiet card game with his outlaw friends. Hunted by a posse led by his former friend Pat Garrett. Billy is pursued. A running gun battle ensues. Billy is captured. A drunken celebration takes place. Billy in
prison is, of course, followed by one of Billy's legendary escapes. Tired and worn in the desert, Billy rests with his girl (Pas de deux). Starting from a deep sleep, he senses movement in the shadows. The posse has finally caught up with him. It is the end."

Fantasy Suite No. 1, Op. 5 .......................... Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

III. Tears

Tears, human tears, that pour forth beyond telling
   Early and late, in the dark, out of sight,
While the world goes on its way all unwittingly,
   Numberless, stintless, you fall unremittingly,
Pouring like rain, the long rain that is welling
   Endlessly, late in the autumn at night.
   ...Tyutchev

IV. Russian Easter

Across the earth a mighty peal is sweeping
   Till all the booming air rocks like a sea,
As silver thunders carol forth the tidings,
   Exulting in that holy victory....
   ...Khomyakov.

Beth Allen and April Stead are students of Robert Palmer.

This recital is dedicated to Robert Palmer, who, through his talents as a musician and teacher, has broadened our love for and understanding of music. We would like to thank him for the constant encouragement he has given us, as well as for the friendship we have developed with him over the last four years.

PRUIS HALL
Saturday, November 23, 1991
5:30 p.m.

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Andantino varié, Op. 84 No. 1

Franz Schubert

Andantino varié is a set of variations for one piano, four hands written by Schubert late in his life in 1826. Schubert wrote three sets of variations during the years of 1824 - 1826, all of which are characterized by their maturity, and reflect that Schubert had, in fact, become a master of the variation form. These variations include: the Andantino varié being performed, the Andante poco moto from the Sonata in A minor, Op. 43 for piano solo, and the Variations on an original theme in A flat, Op. 35 for piano duet. Schubert also wrote a number of piano duets during these years, but the Andantino varié is considered to be the best of them. The theme is a very simple melody in abb form, each section being eight bars long:

Variations I and II are both somewhat gigue-like, and have a great deal of melodic freedom while maintaining the harmonic structure of the theme. Variation III contains a canon between the treble and tenor (between the players' right hands). And finally, Variation IV, marked 'un poco più lento,' is the apex of the work, and is a very delicate melodic flowering and ornamentation of the theme. This variation is the longest of the four, and tapers into the close of the work, which is a repeat of the opening bars of the theme, marked 'pianissimo.'

Petite Suite

Claude Debussy

Debussy's Petite Suite was written in 1889 during a period in which the composer published several small pieces for the piano. For the most part, these early piano pieces are very atypical of Debussy's later, more significant, impressionistic works. They are, in essence, light-hearted pastiches that Debussy composed with little artistic conflict. The Petite Suite is one of the most well-known of these compositions, its popularity largely resulting from the fact that Henri Busser (a French composer and organist) created an arrangement of it for small orchestra in 1907. This is perhaps its most well-known format, but it is
MUSIC FOR PIANO DUET AND PIANO DUO

An Honors Recital (HONRS 499)

by

Susan E. Allen

Thesis Advisor
Dr. Robert Palmer

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

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Abstract of Project

The following program notes were written to enhance the audience's understanding of the senior duo piano recital performed on November 23, 1991 by Susan (Beth) Allen and April Stead. The recital itself explores some of the repertoire written for both piano duet (one piano, four hands), and piano duo (two pianos, four hands), and consists of works by Schubert, Debussy, Copland, and Rachmaninoff. The program notes provide a general explanation of the style in which each piece was written, the period of the composer's life in which each was written, as well as other information that may make the pieces performed more meaningful to the audience.
found in a number of other arrangements: the duo piano version being performed, an arrangement for piano solo, an arrangement for piano duet, and a second version for small orchestra written in 1909. Even though the Petite Suite is one of Debussy's earlier compositions, it does contain stylistic characteristics that Debussy was to develop in his later, more abstract works. This is apparent in the passage from the first movement, 'En Bateau,' which is based on the whole-tone scale that Debussy used quite frequently in his later compositions:

In the whole-tone scale, the octave is divided into six equal whole steps making the scale symmetrical in structure, and tonally ambiguous. Although this scale was used by other composers as well, it is particularly associated with Debussy's name and with the abstract ambiguity of his later impressionistic works. The final movements of the Petite Suite, 'Cortège,' 'Minuet,' and 'Ballet,' are graceful and tonal epitomies of Debussy's early style.

Billy the Kid

Aaron Copland

Aaron Copland wrote his ballet Billy the Kid in 1938; during this same year he arranged the duo piano suite of excerpts from the ballet consisting of about two thirds of the original score. This ballet was written during a period in which Copland began to rely heavily on American folk music as sources for his works, and his style became characterized by its simplicity. Furthermore, the works of this period are very functional in nature; they were written not necessarily as art for art's sake, but instead for some social or educational purpose. Such music is known generally as 'Gebrauchmusik' meaning 'music for use,' and it is often intended to appeal to a wider audience than is art music. When Copland began his use of folk material, drawn from various areas of America, most composers generally regarded folksongs as outmoded material for musical compositions. Nonetheless, it was soon recognized that Copland, in essence, established a true serious American folk style for general use by all American composers, as well as to create (through his four ballets) a definitive American dance repertory.
The folk sources used by Copland in Billy the Kid are very apparent:

'The Open Prairie' consists of a theme harmonized in open fifths which depicts the openness and expansiveness of the vast prairie.

'In a Frontier Town' presents the folk tune 'Great Grandad' as its opening theme, followed by excerpts from the tune 'The Old Chisholm Trail,' and 'Git Along Little Dogies.' Finally a Mexican theme is introduced out of which an elaboration of 'Good-bye Old Paint' appears. In this elaboration, Copland uses the piano very percussively in an ominous crescendo that depicts the gun battle.

'Billy and His Sweetheart' is an eloquent, serene setting of 'Oh Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie (The Dying Cowboy).'

'Celebration After Billy's Capture' depicts garish dance-hall saloon tunes, and humorously imitates the sound of an out-of-tune player piano.

Descending chordal patterns are used to reflect 'Billy's Demise' which then leads to an idealized version of the opening theme in 'The Open Prairie Again,' heard fortissimo this time.

Fantasy Suite No. 1, Op. 5

Sergei Rachmaninoff

The Fantasy Suite Op. 5 was composed in 1893 when Rachmaninoff was only twenty years old, and was dedicated to Peter Tchaikovsky who was the most influential composer of Rachmaninoff's formative years. The work, which consists of four musical images set to poetic texts, is Rachmaninoff's first attempt at programme music in which the music is written to illustrate the literary ideas presented in the accompanying poetry of each movement. Only the last two movements are being performed, 'Tears,' and 'Russian Easter.' 'Tears,' based on the poem by the Russian poet Fedor Tyoutchev, consists almost entirely of pianistic decorations around the following four-note motif (derived from the notes of the bells at St. Sophia's Cathedral in Novgorod) which Rachmaninoff associated with sadness:

The last movement, 'Russian Easter,' based on the Russian poet Khomiakov's poem is a rousing piece resembling the fanatical peal of Orthodox church bells on Easter Sunday. The movement, in essence, is a successful attempt to recreate, with the tones of the piano, the complex rhythmic intricacies produced in the art of the Russian Orthodox bell ringers.