Poetry on the Ivories
A course for OLLI, Spring 2019

Professor: Alexandra Amati, PhD || adamati@usfca.edu
Class meets at the Freight & Salvage on Wednesdays from 10 am to noon

Course description: This class will explore the Romantic phenomenon of the miniature (or "character") piano piece—genres and forms but also social use (in the home and salon), codes, interpretations, and covert political implications. For example, today we listen to a Chopin Ballade and find it powerful and wonderful, but we don't “hear” the nationalistic message that all Polish émigrés in Paris perceived. We'll study music by Chopin, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and others.

Course objectives: to familiarize students with the phenomenon of the Romantic piano character piece, to provide students with the tools and methods to analyze this repertoire, and to explore the music's meta-message as well as social functions.

Course schedule:

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Repertoire</th>
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<tr>
<td>3 April</td>
<td>The repertoire and the genres, definitions and examples. The character pieces: ballata, rhapsody, song without words, barcarolle, prelude, étude, nocturne, impromptus, intermezzo, etc.</td>
<td>Chopin: étude, waltz, Mendelssohn: Lieder ohne Worte, Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody, Brahms: intermezzo</td>
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<td>10 April</td>
<td>Visionary fragments, coming of romanticism, Beethoven, variations.</td>
<td>Beethoven: Für Elisa, excerpts of Diabelli variations</td>
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<td>17 April</td>
<td>Early romanticism, absolute and program music. Songs for the piano (the Lied ohne Worte) and not.</td>
<td>Schubert: “Erkönig”, Impromptus Op. 90 No. 2 and Op. 142 No. 3, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: selections from Lieder ohne Worte</td>
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<td>24 April</td>
<td>The romantic household and the Schumanns, music criticism, the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, Robert’s “piano years,” his sets of character pieces, madness, Clara’s music. The cycle of pieces.</td>
<td>Clara Schumann, Soirées Musicales op. 6 - Robert Schumann, excerpts from Carnaval op. 9, Phantasiestücke op. 12, Kinderszenen op. 15, and Waldszenen op. 82</td>
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### 1 May


### 8 May

| The late romantic generation, the return to some classical models, Johannes Brahms | Brahms: Selections from Klavierstücke, Rhapsodies op. 79, and Intermezzi |

**Readings:**


