

Bennington College proudly presents

Dr. John Pickett, professor of piano

Central Washington University

in recital

May 14th, 2009 at 6:30pm

at Jennings Hall

Program

The Little Shepherd

Claude Debussy (1862-1917)

This is a witty piece in a pastorate style with very colorful harmonies from his suite *Children's Corner* (1908)

Reflets dans l'eau

from *Images* (book I)

Sonata in E major op. 109

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

I. Vivace ma non troppo – Adagio Espressivo – Tempo I

II. Prestissimo

III. Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung

("Andante, molto cantabile ed espressivo")

Intermission

Variations on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24

J. Brahms (1833-1897)

is a work for solo piano written by Johannes Brahms in 1861: twenty-five variations and a concluding fugue based on a theme from Handel's Harpsichord Suite No. 1 in B-flat Major, HWV 434.

Dr. John Pickett

Piano

John Pickett has received critical acclaim for his performances in the U.S., Europe and Asia. His performances in Krakow and Katowice, Poland earned him praise from The Gazeta Wyborcza for his "perfect sound balance, great intuition and sensibility," and The Trybuna Slaska for his "ravishing" Rhapsody In Blue of George Gershwin. In June of 2006 he performed the Rhapsody at Carnegie Hall with orchestra to more than 2,000 people.

In October of 2004 John Pickett performed recitals and masterclasses throughout Estonia. The Narvaleht noted that "this musician has a special relationship with the piano" and that "he showed special affinity for the understanding and performance of Rachmaninoff." In 1994 John Pickett was a finalist in The First International Competition of 20th Century Piano Music held in Orleans, France, and was invited back to France the following year to perform solo recitals in Paris and Orleans. Le Loiret wrote that Samuel Barber's Sonata "is a work that fits him like a glove: rhythmic energy, melodic inventiveness and a fugue as part of fireworks finale." John Pickett also performed a solo recital at the Conservatoire de Paris as part of an American music festival which featured the 1994 and 1996 laureates of this competition. He also premiered his own piano work at this event entitled, Paris Poem 1997. Following his Carnegie Recital Hall debut The New York Times praised his "impeccable" pianism. His performance of Rachmaninoff's 3rd Concerto with The Charlotte Symphony won him "a spontaneous standing ovation." The Charlotte Observer added, "Rachmaninoff is a master melody maker and so is Pickett."

A dedicated teacher, John Pickett's students have been past winners of the Washington State Music Teachers State Solo and the WMEA Competitions, regularly serve as graduate teaching assistants, participate in study abroad programs and go on to do graduate work at internationally recognized music institutions. He has given masterclasses at The Ecole Normale, The Krakow Conservatory, The Chautauqua Summer Institute and Conservatorio de la Rosas, in Morelia, Mexico. John Pickett serves as the director of The CWU Sonatina Festival which annually brings more than 400 pianists from around the state to campus.

John Pickett has won awards for both his popular and art songs. He was a finalist in the 2004 National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) art song competition for his setting of the Wallace Stevens poem, Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird. His sacred songs have been performed throughout the Northwest. John Pickett has also received awards from the Billboard and Downbeat songwriting competitions and has been published by the Hal Leonard Company. John Pickett is Professor of Music at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, John Pickett is a graduate of both The Juilliard School and Indiana University. He received Central Washington University's Distinguished Professor Award in 2005.