

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE SCHERZO IN SELECTED WORKS FOR PIANO
FROM HAYDN TO COPLAND

Jeong-Yoon Choi, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2005

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This performance project will cover performing issues in terms of technique in the *scherzo*. The Dictionary of Musical Terms defines technique as “the system of creating music, the musical skill to show personality by controlling tones that is not an abstract theory but a practical ability in composition or performance.” My project focuses on techniques in fast tempos, specifically those found in the *scherzo* form and in concertos containing a *scherzo* character.

The term *scherzo* has varied in its meaning and form throughout history. In the Baroque period, a *scherzo* was a work of light vocal or instrumental character. In the

Classical period, *scherzo* still meant light in style, but it also indicated a quick tempo, often in $2/4$ time. The *scherzo* was usually a single movement in a suite or multi-movement work. Like the minuet form, the *scherzo* contained a contrasting trio section.

The *scherzo* was also standard in Romantic and post-Romantic symphonies and related genres. Because of the high degree of subjectivity in Romantic music, genres that stressed emotional content over abstract form developed rapidly. Some composers even wrote one-movement pieces entitled *scherzo*. These pieces became very important because they usually expressed a particular character or mood.

The objective of my dissertation project is to research *scherzo*-like concertos, *scherzo* as single movements in larger forms, and *scherzo* as independent works. My first recital will consist of two concertos with a *scherzo*-like character. These are Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 9 in E^b Major, K. 271* and Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G Major*. I will perform these works in December 2002 with a second piano. In addition, I will perform the Ravel with an orchestra in 2003. My second recital will consist of two parts. The first half presents multi-movement works with *scherzo* movements. The pieces are Haydn's *Piano Sonata No. 3 in F Major, Hob. XVI/9*, Beethoven's *Piano Sonata No. 10 in G Major, Op. 14, No. 2*. The second half presents independent four *scherzi* by Chopin. The final

program will also include multi-movement works containing *scherzo* and independent *scherzo*. These are Prokofiev's *Piano Sonata No. 2 in D minor, Op. 14*, Grieg *Lyric Pieces Op. 54*, Schubert *Zwei Scherzi D. 593* and Copland *Scherzo humoristique; Le Chat et la Souris* (The Cat and the Mouse).

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By

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