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♭ 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).
THE SCHERZO IN SELECTED WORKS FOR PIANO
FROM HAYDN TO COPLAND

By

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