

## **Paul Barnes, pianist**

### **Liszt and the Cross: Music As Sacrament in the B Minor Sonata**

Sonata in B Minor (1853)

Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

#### **Paul Barnes, pianist**

Praised by the New York Times for his “Lisztian thunder and deft fluidity,” and the San Francisco Chronicle as “ferociously virtuosic,” pianist Paul Barnes has electrified audiences with his intensely expressive playing and cutting-edge programming. He has been featured four times on APM’s *Performance Today* and on the cover of *Clavier Magazine*. His recent performance at Lincoln Center was featured in the *New Yorker Magazine*. He has performed in England, China, Korea, Austria, Russia, Greece, Serbia, Hungary and in all major cities throughout the US.

Deeply inspired by the aesthetic challenge of minimalism, Barnes commissioned and gave the world premier performance of Philip Glass’s *Piano Concerto No. 2 (After Lewis and Clark)*. The Omaha World Herald praised Barnes playing for his “driving intensity and exhilaration.” Nebraska Educational Telecommunications’ production “The Lewis and Clark Concerto,” a documentary/performance of the concerto featuring Barnes, won an Emmy for Best Performance Production. At a performance of the concerto in Boston, the Boston Globe praised Barnes for his “strong and sympathetic performance.” Additional performances included collaborations with conductor Marin Alsop at the prestigious Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music and also the Northwest Chamber Orchestra where the Seattle Times called Barnes’ performance “an impressive feat.” The world-premier recording with the NWCO was released by Orange Mountain Music. Gramophone Magazine remarked that this recording is “certainly one of the most enjoyable recent releases of Glass’s music...Paul Barnes is a shining soloist.”

Orange Mountain Music also released Barnes’ recording of his transcriptions from the operas of Philip Glass, including both the *Trilogy Sonata* and the *Orphée Suite for Piano*. Gramophone Magazine observed that “Barnes offers a surprisingly expressive reading... Atmosphere and rhythmic vitality are important, and these qualities Barnes has in abundance.” The American Record Guide’s Rob Haskins said “Barnes is an expressive pianist with a lovely tone and a flair for the dramatic.” New York critic Joseph Dalton described Barnes’ playing of the Glass transcriptions as “atmospheric and elegant,” while San Francisco critic Michael McDonagh hailed Barnes’ performance as “remarkably effective, highly expressive.” The *Trilogy Sonata* and the *Orphée Suite for Piano* are published by Chester Music of London and are available at [musicroom.com](http://musicroom.com).

Barnes also serves as head chanter at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Lincoln where his fascination with Byzantine chant led to a commissioned piano concerto “Ancient Keys” written by Victoria Bond based on a Greek chant. The world-premier recording of this concerto as well as Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* was released on Albany Records.

With performances throughout Europe, the Near East, the Far East, and the U.S., Barnes' unique lecture/recitals have received international acclaim. *Liszt and the Cross: Music as Sacrament in the B Minor Sonata* explores the fascinating relationship between music, theology, and the Orthodox icon. Barnes' live recording of this lecture recital was recently released on the Liszt Digital label. Paul Schoemaker of the British Society Newsletter reviewed the recording and wrote that Barnes was "a fine pianist and gives us a performance of resounding conviction." Janice Weber of Clavier Magazine wrote "It is a majestic, reverential performance that elevates listeners to the sacred experience Barnes so eloquently describes in the lecture."

Recently elected to the national board of the *American Liszt Society*, Barnes hosted the 2010 ALS festival at UNL celebrating the bicentennial of the births of Chopin and Schumann from April 8-10, 2010.

Barnes is Hixson-Lied Professor of Piano at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Music. He teaches during the summer at the *Vienna International Piano Academy* and also coaches the students of Menahem Pressler, Barnes' own teacher, at Indiana University where Barnes received his doctorate in Piano Performance. In great demand as a pedagogue and clinician, Barnes has served as convention artist at several state MTNA conventions and was recently named "Teacher of the Year" by the Nebraska Music Teachers Association. Barnes performed and taught in China and at Seoul National University during a recent sabbatical leave.

Recent performances include the world-premier of Ivan Moody's piano quintet "Nocturne of Light" with the Chiara Quartet at *Symphony Space* in April of 2010. During the Liszt bicentennial year in 2011 Barnes will be performing *Liszt and the Cross* throughout the US and Europe. Barnes will also give the world-premier performance of the winning piano work of the ALS Bicentennial Composition Competition in February 2011 at the ALS Bicentennial Festival at the University of Georgia. His eleventh CD *The American Virtuoso* featuring the music of Philip Glass, Samuel Barber, and Joan Tower was released on Orange Mountain Music to much critical acclaim. The American Record Guide wrote, "Another fine release from the amazing pianist Paul Barnes...with a pianist like this, new American music is in good hands." Barnes' recordings are available on iTunes, YouTube, and at Amazon. Visit [www.PaulBarnes.net](http://www.PaulBarnes.net) for more information.