

ONSTAGE

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS AT PENN STATE

**Keyboard
Conversations®**

with

Jeffrey Siegel

*The Power and Passion
of Beethoven*



CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
AT PENN STATE

presents

**KEYBOARD CONVERSATIONS®
WITH
JEFFREY SIEGEL**

**THE POWER AND PASSION
OF BEETHOVEN**

Tonight's performance of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata is part of Moments of Change, a Penn State Institute for the Arts and Humanities multifaceted and ongoing initiative focused in 2009–2010 on the period 1776–1801. The performance is made possible through a partnership between the Center for the Performing Arts and the Institute for the Arts and Humanities.

*The Steinway piano used this evening is provided courtesy of
Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers and Steinway & Sons of New York City.*

**7:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 23, 2009
Schwab Auditorium**

The concert includes one intermission.

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The 2009–2010 season of the Center for the Performing Arts is supported, in part, by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.



**Institute for the Arts and Humanities
Moments of Change Multidisciplinary Initiative
Dare to Know! The Late Eighteenth Century
(1776–1801)**

**Beethoven's Piano Masterpieces
Steven Herbert Smith, piano**

September 27, November 1, January 24, and March 21
4 p.m. Esber Recital Hall (free admission)

"For Beethoven, the sonata form is not a scheme that can be used in caprice one day and abandoned the next. This form dominates everything he imagines and composes; it is the very mark of his creation and the form of his thought—an inherent form, a natural one."

—Edwin Fischer, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*

Part of a project to perform all of Beethoven's piano works, this *Moments of Change* series of four recitals by Penn State pianist Steven Herbert Smith features the masterpieces written between 1795 and 1802, a time of great musical exploration and experimentation. Works include the famous *Pathétique* (1798) and *Tempest* (1801–1802) sonatas.

**For more information, contact the Institute for the Arts and Humanities at
814-865-0495 or arts-humanities@psu.edu; www.iah.psu.edu.**

PROGRAM

All works by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Für Elise

Variations on *God Save the King*

Sonata quasi una fantasia in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, *Moonlight*

Adagio sostenuto

Allegretto

Presto agitato

[INTERMISSION]

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a, *Les Adieux*

Adagio – Allegro (The Farewell)

Andante espressivo (The Absence)

Vivacissimamente (The Return)

A question-and-answer session follows the concert.

Jeffrey Siegel is a Steinway artist.

BIO | JEFFREY SIEGEL

The distinguished American pianist Jeffrey Siegel has been a soloist with the world's great orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic; London Symphony, Philharmonic, and Philharmonia; Moscow State Symphony; Bayerischer Rundfunk; The Hague Residentie Orkest; Oslo Philharmonic; Stockholm Philharmonic; Orchestra of La Scala; and NHK Symphony of Japan. In the United States, engagements have included the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Siegel has collaborated with many of the pre-eminent conductors of our time—Claudio Abbado, Pierre Boulez, Charles Dutoit, Neeme Järvi, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Leonard Slatkin, Michael Tilson Thomas, and David Zinman, as well as legendary maestros of the past, including Eugene Ormandy, Sir George Solti, William Steinberg, Klaus Tennstedt, and Yevgeny Svetlanov.

In addition to his solo appearances, Siegel presents Keyboard Conversations®, a unique, concert-plus-commentary format in which he speaks to the audience about the music before performing each work. New listeners have greeted these programs with enormous enthusiasm because each presents an informal, accessible, and highly entertaining introduction to the vast repertoire of the piano and to classical music in general. Seasoned music-lovers have been enriched by Siegel's erudition and delighted by his wit. Ongoing series flourish in numerous American cities, among them New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Phoenix, San Francisco, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Dallas, Atlanta, Denver, and Washington, D.C. Some of these venues have been presenting Keyboard Conversations® for more than

twenty-five years—resounding testimony to Siegel's superb artistry, innovative format, and loyal following.

As a conductor, Siegel has appeared with the Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, and Saint Louis symphony orchestras; The Minnesota Orchestra; and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, as well as orchestras in France, Scandinavia, and South America. He is equally at home in the dual role of conductor/pianist, in which he conducts the orchestra from the keyboard. For thirteen years, Siegel served as music director and conductor of the Mainly Mozart Festival in Arizona.

In June 2006, Random House Audio Publishing Group released an audio book series of four CDs of Keyboard Conversations®—*Mozart and Friends*, *The Power and Passion of Beethoven*, *The Romanticism of the Russian Soul*, and *The Romance of the Piano*—all available at www.randomhouse.com/audio, for download at iTunes and Audible, and at booksellers across the country. Twin Cities Public Television, in conjunction with The Schubert Club, recently produced and broadcast two half-hour Keyboard Conversations®—*Mozart and Chopin*—available on DVD exclusively at Siegel's concerts. Siegel's recording of Gershwin's complete works for piano and orchestra with Leonard Slatkin and the Saint Louis Symphony continues to be a best-seller and is available as a VoxBox two-CD set.

Born into a musical family, Siegel studied with Rudolf Ganz in his native Chicago, with the legendary Rosina Lhévinne at The Juilliard School in New York City, and as a Fulbright Scholar with Ilona Kabos in London. Siegel and his wife live in New York City and are the parents of two grown children.

Visit www.keyboardconversations.com for more information about Keyboard Conversations®, including the current season's schedule for this series and others throughout the United States, audio and video highlights, and direct box office links.

Percussionist Evelyn Glennie joins Brazil's Orquestra de São Paulo October 23

By John Mark Rafacz

The Brazilian metropolis São Paulo—one of the largest population centers in the Americas and often likened to New York City—brims with cultural institutions and a diverse gathering of ethnic and racial groups. In the twenty-first century, Orquestra de São Paulo has become one of Brazil's most celebrated classical music ensembles by reflecting the character of its cosmopolitan home.

The orchestra makes its Penn State debut October 23 in an Eisenhower Auditorium concert conducted by American Kazem Abdullah and featuring Scottish percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie.

Abdullah, who conducted Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* in his January 2009 Metropolitan Opera debut, is a rising star in classical music.

"He is a very young conductor . . . Our orchestra is very young, as well," says Marcelo Lopes, the ensemble's executive director. "The average age in the orchestra is about 35, 36 years old, so I think it's going to be a very energetic concert."



Dame Evelyn Glennie

Glennie, the first person to sustain a full-time career as a classical percussion soloist, gives more than 100 performances a year with cream-of-the-crop conductors, orchestras, and artists. She performed at Eisenhower in 1995 with—ironically since São Paulo is Portuguese for Saint Paul—Minnesota's Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

The program includes two works by Brazilian composers—Alberto Nepomuceno's *O Garatuja* and Heitor Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*—plus James MacMillan's *Veni, Veni Emmanuel* and Béla Bartók's *The Miraculous Mandarin: Suite*.

Glennie performs as soloist for the MacMillan concerto, which she first performed in 1992 and later recorded. MacMillan, born in 1959, is considered the preeminent Scottish composer of his generation.

"It's a very special program," says Lopes, speaking by phone from São Paulo. "... We are very excited to have Dame Evelyn Glennie to make this concert with the orchestra."

The orchestra was state-sponsored when it began in 1955 but adopted its own board of directors in 2005. The major music media have praised the São Paulo's efforts in becoming an orchestra of international merit.

"I think we have fourteen to fifteen different nationalities in the orchestra. And those musicians, they came from Eastern countries, they came from Latin American countries, they came from Germany, from Europe in general. And they get along very well here," Lopes says. "... The cultural differences of the schools [and] differences of the backgrounds of the musicians have been a great asset for the development of a new sound, and I think this has made a great difference and has brought to the orchestra this consideration of being a new thing in the international scenery of symphony orchestras."

"The public here is very open to different and new music. We can have in our season lots of contemporary music and commissioned pieces—and classical music in general, as well," Lopes points out. "... We are very far from the centers like New York and Europe, but we are creating, I believe, a new center for the development of classical music in Latin America, and I'm very happy to be part of this process."

Dotty and Paul Rigby sponsor the concert. WPSU-FM is the media sponsor. Foxdale Village, a Quaker-Directed Continuing Care Retirement Community, underwrites classics presentations. Artistic Viewpoints, an informal moderated discussion featuring a visiting artist or local expert, is offered in Eisenhower Auditorium one hour before the performance and is free for ticket holders.

For tickets or information, visit www.cpa.psu.edu or phone 814-863-0255.

John Mark Rafacz is the editorial manager of the Center for the Performing Arts.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Community Advisory Council is dedicated to strengthening the relationship between the Center for the Performing Arts and the community. Council members participate in a range of activities in support of this objective.

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WITH MARCELO LOPES.

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Julian Lage's guitar music melds jazz, blues, classical, and folk

October 13

By John Mark Rafacz

Guitarist, composer, and arranger Julian Lage, who makes his Penn State debut October 13 at Schwab Auditorium, is often described as a former child prodigy. But Lage didn't come out of the womb yearning to play guitar. It was Lage's father—inspired by a 1992 Eric Clapton recording—who piqued the youngster's interest in the stringed instrument.

"I never thought of myself as a prodigy at all," says Lage, speaking by phone from his native Sonoma County north of San Francisco. "The thing is that my father picked up the guitar when I was like 4. ... It was around the time that Eric Clapton's *Unplugged* had come out. I think a lot of people of my father's generation—born in the '50s—were really kind of rejuvenated [by that CD] as far as their interest in acoustic guitar. ... It inspired my dad to get a guitar, which inspired me to get a guitar. I just wanted to do what he did, I guess. He showed me what he would learn at his guitar lessons until I was maybe advanced enough to go learn it myself."

Lage's childhood affinity for the guitar was the subject of the 1996 Oscar-nominated documentary *Jules at Eight*.

The blues bit Lage hard. "Yeah, I was a pretty diehard blues player," he recalls.

"In a lot of ways it's like a stepping stone. It's like, 'You want to play guitar? Oh, well blues is a guitar-friendly kind of music,'" he says. "It just kind of happened, so I sought out classical and jazz as a way to kind of break open some of the theoretical aspects of music that I had wondered about. That was kind of my progression. It goes full circle. I go back to the blues a lot, and [I'm] always in classical mode."

Today, Lage's music resides at the intersection of jazz, blues, classical, and folk. Only in his early 20s, the guitarist has performed with a who's who of musicians, including Béla Fleck, Herbie Hancock, Gary Burton, Christian McBride, and Chris Thile.

Sounding Point, Lage's first album as a leader, was released earlier this year to glowing notices. "Here's a jazz newcomer more interested in elegance than in flash, more interested in instrumental storytelling than in virtuosity," observes a *Washington Post* reviewer. "With a fully-formed voice that transcends yet incorporates his multifaceted stylistic interests, Lage's impressive debut points to a giant in the making," writes a critic for *All About Jazz*.

The CD features Lage in four settings. He performs with his band or selected members of it. He also plays solo guitar; as a duo with his longtime collaborator pianist Taylor Eigsti; and as a trio with mandolinist Thile, best known for his work with Nickel Creek, and banjoist Fleck, who returns to Penn State for a concert on March 3.

The guitarist, who lives in Boston, leads the Julian Lage Group in concert at the Center for the Performing Arts. The band, which formed in early 2008, includes saxophonist Ben Roseth, cellist Aristides Rivas, bassist Jorge Roeder, and percussionist Tupac Mantilla. "I've known most of the guys, more or less, for the last five years," he points out.

"I was looking for a band that had many bands within it," he says, "and allowed the guitar to kind of be a chameleon and float around a little bit—not have to be so defined as the soloist, the melody player, or whatever."

Lage has always had eclectic taste in music. "I listened to a lot of music, and I never was extremely committed to any one style. Even though I went through a strong blues phase, a strong jazz phase, and I'm always immersed in classical ... I always felt like I could jump around quite a bit," he says. "I think I've just been in pursuit of qualities more than a musical style. ... Obviously jazz has this incredible improvisational energy, this kind of communication that's just so amazing when it's happening between great jazz musicians that you see. So that's a quality. And then I said, 'I love that quality, so where else is that?' Well, it's also in classical music in some of these string quartets. Let's say Beethoven string quartets. Even though they're not improvised, they still talk about something similar. Or maybe I like the percussive nature of bluegrass music, you know that kind of perpetual motion feeling. ... So in the pursuit of all these characteristics, I've stumbled into a lot of really cool styles of music."

Coming of age in northern California wine country was—maybe surprisingly to outsiders—fertile ground for music.

"It's a great place to grow up because musically there's a ton of influences over here," he says. "You know, like when I used to play a lot with [mandolin master] David Grisman, that was a perfect example of someone who's very diverse—and lived just down the street—who exposed me to a whole world. You could be with him one day and then with some amazing jazz musicians the next."

Lage, at age 11, made his first recording as a duo with Grisman on "Old Souls," the closing track of the disc *Dawg Duos*.

The music of Bernard Hermann (1911–1975), the film composer who wrote the scores for nine Hitchcock films (including *Psycho*, *Vertigo*, and *North by Northwest*), *Citizen Kane*, *Taxi Driver*, and other movies, has also had a tremendous influence on Lage.

I listened to a lot of music, and I never was extremely committed to any one style. Even though I went through a strong blues phase, a strong jazz phase, and I'm always immersed in classical, I always felt like I could jump around quite a bit. I think I've just been in pursuit of qualities more than a musical style. *Julian Lage*

"Bernard Hermann is a master of Romanticism, and extreme suspense, and what could be thought of as maybe a tragic sound to his harmonies," he says. "And that was so fitting with Hitchcock's very dry, almost deadpan, sense of terror. You know, like the way Hitchcock movies would have these characters who were seemingly so normal and almost boring, like in *Psycho*, but there was something a little bit different about the character. That was Bernard Hermann's job, to exploit that one little quiriness, and he did that through, like I said, this romantic kind of lush orchestral sound. Which is just so cool to me ... to have someone who's devoted their musical career to making music about that thing you can't put your finger on—why someone is a little creepy or why that chord rubs you the wrong way. I think that there's just so much beauty in his writing."

On songs such as "All Purpose Beginning," featured on *Sounding Point*, Lage draws inspiration from Hermann's compositional style.

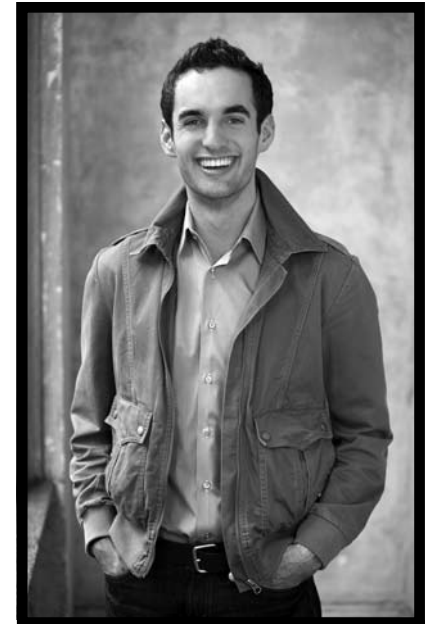
"I still don't think of myself as being really a composer. I've always been a student of it. I probably started that pursuit when I was 6 or 7, right from the beginning, because I just would try to write songs," he remembers. "When I was maybe 12 or 13, I began writing tunes for bands and stuff. And then with *Sounding Point* and my new band, I wrote a lot of music for the band that was kind of in a more folkloric tradition. None of the music on the record was written out. It was all kind of conceptualized, played on the guitar, and then taught to each musician. But yeah, my interest in composition really kind of became more serious when I was maybe 12 or 13—so nine or ten years ago."

Lage tries to share his love of music with students who come to Stanford University to learn about jazz.

"I teach in the summers at the Stanford Jazz Workshop, which is a three-week workshop for both adults and children," he says. "The first two weeks are primarily for students under 18, and the last week is all ages. ... This will be my sixth year. I started when I was 15."

Many of Lage's students are considerably older than he is.

"There's no clear-cut rule about how information is supposed to be passed on. The one thing I know that I can offer, even if it's a student who's a bit older, is a love for the music," he says. "I enjoy it, and I'm energized about it, and I think that's always fun because that might spark someone who played years ago and now they're getting back into it. You're not really teaching what you think you're teaching; it's always something a little more subtle. But yeah, that's a big part of my life."



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WITH JULIAN LAGE.**

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