

Sonata for Piano and Arpeggione in A Minor by Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Allegro Moderato
Adagio
Allegretto

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Franz Schubert has become one of the most beloved composers of the early Romantic era in music, with a prolific output of symphonies, instrumental chamber music, and nearly 600 *Lieder*, or German poetic songs. Yet, his life story is that of the quintessentially Romantic figure of a neglected genius who dies in obscurity. Taken at the young age of 31 by complications from syphilis, Schubert received little adulation as a composer until fellow composer, Robert Schumann discovered his musical scores in 1835 and began to write about and arrange for performances of Schubert's music. A complete edition of his works did not begin to be published until nearly 60 years after his death.

The *Arpeggione Sonata* reveals Schubert as somewhat of an experimentalist in that he was the only composer to have written a work for this rare, now defunct hybrid string instrument. Built in Vienna by Johann Georg Stauffer in the early part of the nineteenth century, the six-string arpeggione was fretted and tuned like a guitar yet held between the knees and bowed like a cello. An amateur Viennese guitarist, Vinzenz Schuster introduced this musical invention to Schubert, who wrote the sonata for the arpeggione with piano accompaniment expressly for Schuster in 1824. However, the piece was never published during Schubert's lifetime, and when it was finally published in 1871, the arpeggione, having failed to catch on with performers or composers, ceased to exist any longer as a musical instrument. Thus, the 1871 edition contained an arrangement for either viola or cello. Tonight's performance has the African wood flute on the arpeggione's original part with the guitar performing the part originally written for the piano.

Program Notes by Kris Palmer, DMA