Graham School of General Studies

**The Romantic Piano: The Intimate and the Grandiose**

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**Description:** This course examines the world of virtuoso piano music. During the Romantic era, the modern piano as we now know it came into being, and with it came a flurry of exceptionally vivid acoustical experimentation, coupled with the intensely personal expression that defined the Romantic era. We will examine the results, from the heady celebration of individual performing virtuosity to the “new” genres we now take for granted, such as Schumann’s intimate music-as-poetry. A survey of the role of nationalism will cover Chopin’s nocturnes and Polish national dances, the evocative works of Dvorak and Janacek, and the cult of Liszt.

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| **Week** | **Biographical and Historical Themes** | **Featured Works** |
| 1 | Ballade | Chopin’s 4th Ballade  Brahms 4 Ballades Op. 10  Debussy: Ballade  Grieg Ballade Op. 24 |
| 2 | From Classicism to Romanticism | Schubert Impromptus Op. 90  Hummel Sonatas  Weber Sonatas |
| 3 | Robert and Clara Felix and Fanny | Piano music of Rpbert and Clara Schumann  Piano music of Felix Mendelssohn and Fanny Hensel |
| 4 | The Super-Virtuosi | Kalkbrenner, Henselt Concertos  Thalberg and Liszt operatic transcriptions |
| 5 | Years of Pilgrimage | Liszt: Years of pilgrimage |
| 6 | Nocturne | A survey of the evolution of a style: Selections from Faure, Field, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, Bizet |
| 7 | Variations | Brahms, Variations on a theme by Handel; Variations on a theme by Paganini;  Rachmaninov, variations on a theme by Corelli |
| 8 | Lesser-known masterworks of the Russian tradition | Balakirev, Liadov, Tchaikovsky, Rubinstein, Mussorgsky |

**Recommended Materials**

Stewart Gordon, *A History of Keyboard Literature: Music for Piano and its Forerunners*

Joseph Horrowitz ed., *Arrau on Music and Performance*

Erik Frederick Jensen, *Schumann*

Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History*

Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Book with CD)

David Rowland, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*

Jim Samson, *Chopin* (Master Musicians Series)

Harold C. Schonberg, *The Great Pianists: From Mozart to Present*

Jan Swafford, *Johannes Brahms: A Biography*

John C. Tibbets, ed., *Schumann: A Chorus of Voices* (Book with CD)

R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music*

R. Larry Todd, *Nineteenth Century Music*