



honens

BACKGROUND INFORMATION BEGINS ON PAGE 2

For immediate release

**MINSOO SOHN, FIRST LAUREATE OF THE 2006
HONENS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION,
MAKES HIS WEILL RECITAL HALL AT CARNEGIE HALL
DEBUT THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2009, 8 P.M.**

**WORKS BY KIRCHNER, BEETHOVEN, AND LISZT; AND
TRANSCRIPTIONS OF BEETHOVEN, SCHUBERT AND
MOZART**

Minsoo Sohn, the First Laureate of the 2006 Honens International Piano Competition, will make his Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall debut in a solo recital on Thursday, October 8, 2009, 8 p.m.

The recital, presented by the Honens International Piano Competition, will feature Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*, Leon Kirchner's *Interlude II* as well as Liszt's transcriptions of works by Beethoven, Schubert, and Mozart.

In addition to winning the Honens International Piano Competition, Mr. Sohn was a top prizewinner at the Rubinstein, Cleveland, Busoni and Hilton Head International Piano Competitions, and received laureate prizes at Belgium's Queen Elisabeth and Santander's Paloma O'Shea Competitions. He has performed in recital halls, at festivals, and with orchestra across North America and Europe.

The Weill Hall program is highly personal to Mr. Sohn: “From my earliest years at the conservatory, I had a tremendous love for the *Diabelli Variations* without fully understanding the greatness of the composition. I later came to understand this as a triumphant and comprehensive representation of Beethoven’s ingenious writing for piano. This musical journey confronts matters of life and death in a most genuine way, but always with humor and love. In some ways, this music is reflective of my life as well; through its ups and downs, it has endured, restoring the spirit of music within me.”

William Aide, Chairman of the Fifth Honens International Piano Competition, speaks to Mr. Sohn’s artistry: “Minsoo Sohn is an artist of Olympian magnitude. To the *Diabelli* and *Goldberg Variations* he brings a structural clarity and an expansive range of dramatic characterization. His Liszt is unsurpassable in its lyric refinement and sonic splendor, qualities reminiscent of great Lisztians of the past, such as Egon Petri and Grigory Ginzburg.

The complete program is as follows:

Kirchner	Interlude II
Beethoven	33 Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120
<i>Intermission</i>	
Beethoven-Liszt	Adelaïde, S.466
Schubert-Listz	Gretchen am Spinnrade, S. 558 No. 8
Schubert-Liszt	Der Müller und der Bach, S. 565
Mozart-Liszt	Réminiscences de Don Juan, S. 418

Tickets for the October 8 recital are \$18 to \$25, students and seniors \$10 and available online at www.carnegiehall.org, or by telephone at Carnegie Charge: (212) 247-7800, or by visiting the Carnegie Hall Box Office Box Office: 57th Street and Seventh Avenue.

About Minsoo Sohn

The First Laureate of Canada’s Honens International Piano Competition (2006), Sohn’s masterful technique and astonishing artistic expression create performances rich in deep emotion and musical intelligence. His extraordinary interpretation of Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* from the Honens Competition has been broadcast

numerous times on the CBC and across the United States on NPR's *Performance Today*.

Minsoo Sohn was born in Korea and began piano studies at age three. One of his earliest inspirations was Henryk Szeryng's legendary recording of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin. While the violin first captured his attention, he grew to appreciate the piano's many voices and tonal colors. It wasn't until Sohn moved to Boston to study with Russell Sherman and Wha Kyung Byun at the New England Conservatory of Music that he was reassured of his career as a concert artist. "I just wasn't sure I would be a musician," he says. "I had interests in many fields and stopped playing. I even dreamed of being an athlete."

Last season, Sohn performed with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, was part of the Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, and was soloist with the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec. His first CD – a disc of Liszt transcriptions and études – was released last fall.

When not sitting at the piano, Sohn can be found watching his beloved Red Sox.

About the Honens International Piano Competition

Founded in 1992, Honens International Piano Competition is one of the world's great music competitions. It is known for its pursuit of the "complete artist" – not only an accomplished soloist, but a musician whose interpretations reflect a wide cultural context, whose well-balanced programs are designed with knowledge and imagination, and who excels in chamber and ensemble performance. Every three years, 21 pianists between the ages of 20 and 30, from all parts of the globe, compete for more than \$100,000 CAD (approximately \$90,000 USD) in cash prizes, including a comprehensive three-season Artistic and Career Development Program for the laureates, preparing the for the rigors and realities of a professional life in music. This includes arranging performance engagements, production of recordings, residencies at The Banff Centre, promotional and publicity support, professional development opportunities for self-management, and networking opportunities with presenters and artist managers.

Honens searches for musicians whose talent, in the credo of the Competition, "inspires the heart and engages the intellect," whose understanding of his or her art will stem not only from knowledge of a particular composition itself but also from a wide knowledge of related music, of musical literature as a whole, of the other arts, the humanities, and of contemporary culture. Honens is not a series of tests, but rather, a compelling festival of music.

Past Honens Laureates include Maxim Philippov who, in June, 2001, won the Silver Medal at the Van Cliburn Competition; Albert Tiu, who won Juilliard's prestigious William Petschek Award, giving him a debut recital at Alice Tully Hall; Sergei Babayan, appointed Artist-in-Residence at The Cleveland Institute of Music, who founded the Sergei Babayan International Piano Academy in Cleveland and his own chamber music festival in Mexico (Babayan has recorded on the Connoisseur Society,

Propiano and Discover International labels); Krzysztof Jablonski, who has recorded two CDs as part of the Polish National Edition of the complete works of Chopin (he has recorded 14 more CDs in Germany, Japan and Poland); Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, who has recorded several CDs of music by Haydn, Schumann, Ohana, Debussy and Chopin, the complete piano works of Ravel, and the recently critically acclaimed complete piano works of Debussy on the Chandos label (he has been nominated Professor-for-Life at the Detmold Hochschule in Germany); 2003 Laureate Winston Choi, Head of Piano Studies at Chicago's Roosevelt University, whose debut CD of the complete piano works of Elliott Carter received rave reviews, and whose CD of the music of Jacques Lenot was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque de l'Académie Charles Cros; Xiang Zou, 2003 First Laureate, who teaches at the Central Conservatory in Beijing; and Honens 2000 First Laureate, Katherine Chi.

The Competition is named for Esther Honens, born in Pittsburgh and educated in Calgary, who became a successful businesswoman. She married John Hillier, who died in the 1970s, then Harold Honens, with whom she developed real estate holdings in Calgary. In 1991, Esther Honens made a capital gift to establish the international piano competition. She died five days after the first competition in 1992. After five competitions, Honens has distinguished itself as one of the most prominent competitions of its kind, worldwide. Additional information is available on-line at www.honens.com.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION:

For CDs, additional information, interview access, or photographs, please contact:

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