

JOSE RAMON MENDEZ

Jose Ramon Mendez, assistant professor of piano at Penn State is described as “an artist with a polished sound and tremendous constructive power” and hailed by the Hoja del Lunes de Madrid, as “the Spanish pianist of his generation,” Jose Ramon Mendez is one of the most exciting Spanish pianists on the concert scene today.

Mendez received his first music instruction from his father, and by the age of seven was already performing on Spanish television and radio stations. He first gained international recognition when he performed Liszt’s first piano concerto under the direction of Sergiu Commissiona at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Since then, he has concertized extensively in his native Spain, the United States, Italy, England, Portugal, Holland, and Japan to great acclaim. With his poetic performance expression, intellect, and masterful technique, he has been praised by critics and celebrated by audiences around the world.

At the age of 18, Mendez’s success brought him to the United States, where he began his studies with Solomon Mikowsky at the Manhattan School of Music. He also completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree there under the tutelage of legendary pianist Byron Janis, a pupil of Vladimir Horowitz and Miyoko Lotto. While a student, he won top prizes in the Pilar Bayona International Piano Competition, the Hilton Head Island International Piano Competition, the Frederick Chopin Competition in New York, and the Hermanos Guerrero International Piano Competition, among others.

Mendez has been a guest performer at many music festivals, including the Caramoor Festival, the Barge Music Series, the Festival Internacional de Piano de las Islas Canarias, and the Santander International Music Festival, to name a few. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with such distinguished artists as Karl Leister, Itzhak Perlman, Michael Tree, and Pinchas Zukerman.

He previously held faculty positions at the University of Texas at Austin and at New York University's Steinhardt School. During the summers, Mendez serves as executive director of the Stony Brook International Piano Festival and is also co-director of the Gijon International Piano Festival in Gijon, Spain.

PROGRAM

PRELUDE and FUGUE in A Minor, BWV543 J.S.BACH
Arr. FRANZ LISZT

SIX PRELUDES SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
PRELUDE in F-sharp Minor, Op.23, No.1
PRELUDE in D Major, Op.23, No.4
PRELUDE in E-flat Major, Op.23, No.6
PRELUDE in C Minor, Op.23, No.7
PRELUDE in B Minor, Op.32, No.10
PRELUDE in G-sharp Minor, Op.32, No.12

INTERMISSION

SONATA No.3, in F Minor, Op.5 JOHANNES BRAHMS
Allegro maestoso
Andante. Andante espressivo-Andante molto
Scherzo. Allegro energico avec trio
Intermezzo (Rückblick). Andante molto
Finale. Allegro moderato ma rubato