

## Pianist Martín García García to perform for Tuesday Musical

by Mike Telin



Since winning first prize at the 2021 Cleveland International Piano Competition and 3rd Prize at XVIII International Chopin Piano Competition, as well as the special award for the best concerto performance, Spanish pianist Martín García García's world has — in his words — changed drastically.

On Tuesday, March 7, at 7:30 pm in Akron's E.J. Thomas Hall, Tuesday Musical will welcome García García back to Northeast Ohio. His program includes Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes, Op. 13* and Brahms' *Sonata No. 3 in f*. Tickets are available [online](#).

I caught up with the pianist by phone and began our conversation by asking him why he chose two large works rather than presenting a selection of smaller showpieces?

Martín García García: These are two great abstract works from the past which have not more musical value but more transcendent value.

Almost all the great composers have works like these. They don't take any of the imagination away from their shorter pieces. But composers always put so much effort into the bigger works — the symphonies, sonatas, and operas — and I tend to lean toward these kinds of pieces.

*Mike Telin: Let's start with Schumann's Symphonic Etudes: if someone doesn't know the piece, what would you tell them they should be listening for?*

MGG: First, and most important, is that this piece might be the best symphonic work ever written by Schumann — and I include his symphonies. [laughing] But jokes aside, I do mean works written for the piano. It is an orchestral piece for the piano, the only one where he attempted to get more idiosyncratic sounds from the instrument. And I must say that he was successful.

The second thing is that it's one of the few pieces where he uses a single motive and develops it through the entire work.

*MT: And the Brahms — that is a huge piece.*

MGG: That is the adjective I would use. But it complements the Schumann quite nicely. With this sonata Brahms was also attempting to take a symphonic approach. He was an admirer of Beethoven and the way he would develop a single motive.

Schumann actually helped him finish it by giving Brahms a little bit of inspiration. And when he finished this sonata he said 'that's enough,' and he never wrote a sonata for the piano again.

*MT: I'm going to change topics. How has your life changed since winning the Cleveland Competition and having success at the Chopin?*

MGG: 360 degrees or maybe 180 — which is more drastic? I mean literally everything has changed. For example, if I wasn't in those two events I wouldn't be where I am right now. Everything has changed so dramatically that it's almost impossible to think about.

I've turned into a nomad — sometimes I wake up and I have to remember where I am — that's the most drastic thing. I'm joking of course.

But every time I go onstage I can feel the energy of the audience and become inspired — we all become part of the music. But in any concert it's important to feel the presence of the audience, and it's always enjoyable. And every audience is different, which is quite incredible.

*MT: Is there anything you'd like to say?*

MGG: I'm looking forward to coming back. It's been almost three years since the Cleveland Competition.

*Published on ClevelandClassical.com March 1, 2023.*

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