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**Thursday, March 11, 2021 • 8:00 PM**

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**JEFFREY BIEGEL, *piano***

**Klassical Klavier Konversations  
Classical Masters of the Piano**

**BY GEORGE, WE GOT A PIANO!**

**G. Gershwin** Rialto Ripples (1916)  
(1898-1937) Lullaby (1919)  
Blue Monday (1922)  
Rhapsody in Blue for solo piano (1924)

**Jeffrey Biegel will respond to comments posted in the chat section following the performance.**

Learn more about Jeffrey Biegel, his career, recordings, performances and more at [jeffreymbiegel.com](http://jeffreymbiegel.com).

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[www.troychromaticconcerts.org](http://www.troychromaticconcerts.org)

All programs, dates and times are subject to change.

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## Jeffrey Biegel

Since 1999, Jeffrey Biegel has commissioned ten composers to bring new music for piano and orchestra to the repertoire. On February 10, 2019, Kenneth Fuchs's "Piano Concerto: 'Spiritualist'" with the London Symphony Orchestra led by JoAnn Falletta garnered a Grammy win in the Best Classical Compendium category, featuring Mr. Biegel as its soloist.

Considered the most prolific artist of his generation, Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA, conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters upon Mr. Biegel, for his achievements in performance, recordings, chamber music, champion of new music, composer, arranger and educator. Among his recent recordings and performances, Mr. Biegel performed the World Premiere of Giovanni Allevi's 'Concerto for Piano and Orchestra' with Orchestra Kentucky and in Milan's Teatro dal Verme, recording with Orchestra Sinfonica Italiana. During 2018, Naxos released Kenneth Fuchs's Grammy-winning recording, "Piano Concerto: Spiritualist" and, he performed the World Premiere of Christopher Theofanidis's "Concerto no. 2 for Piano and Orchestra" with the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra, Stuart Malina conducting. In 2019, Grammy winning composer, Dick Tunney unveils the new "Peanuts Concerto" for piano and orchestra based on music by Vince Guaraldi for its World Premiere with Orchestra Kentucky and Mr. Biegel. Equally championing pop music icons, Mr. Biegel has brought Jimmy Webb's 'Nocturne for Piano and Orchestra' to the public and, PDQ Bach's 'Concerto for Simply Grand Piano and Orchestra' by Peter Schickele with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. The first solo digital recordings on Mr. Biegel's Naturally Sharp label were released and, upcoming plans include world premiere performances of Daniel Perttu's "A Planets Odyssey" Jim Stephenson's first piano concerto, and Farhad Poupel's "Legend of Bijan and Manijeh" for piano, orchestra and chorus. In tribute to the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Mr. Biegel has created a project for vocalist/narrator, piano and small orchestral ensemble. The work will be composed by Pulitzer Prize composer, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, and will feature the respected mezzo-soprano, Denyce Graves. Anticipated first performances will be in 2021. Planning into the 2023-24-25 seasons, Mr. Biegel is currently organizing the "Rhapsody in Red, White & Blue" project, composer already involved to be announced shortly, for a planned 50-state and perhaps global project post-pandemic. This will coincide with centennial celebrations for George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" .

A leading pioneer of concerto projects joining multiple orchestras as a model for commissioning new music in the 21st century, Mr. Biegel created the first largest consortium of orchestras in 1998 for Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's 'Millennium Fantasy' premiered with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 2000, followed in 2002 with Tony Award winning composer Charles Strouse's 'Concerto America' with the Boston Pops, Lowell Liebermann's 'Concerto no. 3, Opus 95', premiered with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (2006), William Bolcom's 'Prometheus' for piano, orchestra and chorus, with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and Pacific Chorale (2010), Richard Danielpour's 'Mirrors' with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra (2010), Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's 'Shadows' (2011) with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, Jake Runestad's 'Dreams of the Fallen' (2013) with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and Symphony Chorus of New Orleans, Lucas Richman's 'Piano Concerto: In Truth' (2013) with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, recorded in 2014 with the Pittsburgh

Symphony Orchestra for the Albany label, and Kenneth Fuchs's "Piano Concerto: 'Spiritualist'" with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra (MA) in 2016. An avid composer, Mr. Biegel's choral music is published by the Hal Leonard Corporation, Carl Fischer, Porfiri & Horvath and The LeDor Group. Leonard Bernstein said of pianist Jeffrey Biegel: "He played fantastic Liszt. He is a splendid musician and a brilliant performer." These comments launched Mr. Biegel's 1986 New York recital debut, as the third recipient of the Juilliard William Petschek Piano Debut Award in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. He studied at The Juilliard School with Adele Marcus, herself a pupil of Josef Lhevinne and Artur Schnabel, and is currently on faculty at the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College, a City University of New York (CUNY).

Jeffrey Biegel



## **GEORGE GERSHWIN**

**born September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, New York**

**died July 11, 1937 in Los Angeles, California**

George Gershwin's first job as a performer was demonstrating sheet music piano works - mostly songs - for the Jerome Remick music publishing house on Tin Pan Alley in New York. Rialto Ripples is his first published instrumental work (1916), his only piano rag, and first commercial success. It has all the hallmarks of Gershwin's piano style merging ragtime with a piano novelty.

Gershwin's early serious music studies led to his studying harmony and counterpoint with Edward Kilenyi, Sr. in New York City. His wonderful Lullaby (1919) was composed as an assignment for his teacher. Originally scored for strings, it has a gentle glow that comes out of the almost hidden inner voices (harmony and counterpoint) running under its infectious themes as a syncopated accompaniment over its three main sections. The final return of the first section is shortened and closes with the return to the harmonics of the introduction.

Blue Monday was the original name of a short, one-act "jazz" opera (later named "135th Street") with a libretto written by Buddy DeSylva (1922). Although not a success at the box office, it represents Gershwin's first attempt at blending classical elements and American popular music in a larger scale form. It's African-American influence as well would come to full fruition years later in his self-styled "folk opera" Porgy and Bess. Blue Monday also contained an aria based on the principal theme of his Lullaby. Gershwin always knew a good tune should never go to waste when he had one.

Rhapsody in Blue, the most popular of Gershwin's concert works, famously combines elements of classical music with jazz-influenced themes in such a degree of originality not achieved before in a concert piece. It was commissioned by bandleader Paul Whiteman for a concert, "An Experiment in Modern Music," held in Aeolian Hall in New York City on February 12, 1924. Gershwin himself was the piano soloist, with the orchestration provided by composer Ferde Grofe. An instant success, the Rhapsody firmly established Gershwin's reputation as a serious composer.

Paul Sulzmann