

**Memorial Methodist Church Presents:  
Don Shabkie, Piano Solo  
Saturday February 25, 2017 7:30 PM**

**I**

**Sonata in C Op. 53 (Waldstein)**.....Ludwig van Beethoven

Allegro con brio

Adagio molto

Rondo, Allegretto moderato

**II**

**Jazz interpretations of:**

**Take 5**.....Dave Brubeck

**Skating Song**.....Vince Guaraldi

**Prelude No. 2** Andante con moto

**Prelude No. 1** Allegro ben ritmato.....George Gershwin

**Intermission**

**III**

**Improvisation on Celtic Dances:**

Morrison's Jig

The Butterfly (slip jig)

Road to Lisdoonvarna/Drowsy Maggie

**IV**

**Arabesque**

**Heather's Jig**

**Quantum Jig**.....Don Shabkie

## Thoughts About Beethoven's Waldstein Sonata

Beethoven's Sonata in C, Op. 53, known best by its nickname, "Waldstein", is a titanic piano work, full of just about everything. The familiar electric opening of the first movement creates an excitement that never dissipates. However, it is in the last movement, the Rondo, that Beethoven fulfills some of his most unique creative drive. I'll be playing this sonata in my February concert, and I'm enjoying the fact that I've never heard a recording of this Rondo movement—thus learning it has been a journey of one fascinating discovery after another.

For non-musicians, rondo form simply means that you begin with a theme, then move to alternate themes, though always coming back to the first theme, as though it were a refrain. It's often expressed as ABACA, etc. Sometimes Beethoven kept rondo form simple, as in the case of the famous Fur Elise. However, both Mozart and Beethoven both loved to rewrite the rules of rondo form (not that there were really any rules to start with), and in the case of the Waldstein, something truly transcendent happens.

Without form, any work of art becomes a jumbled mess, so a great composer always has a blueprint. However in the Rondo of the Waldstein Rondo, we find a struggle between Beethoven's adherence to form, and his erratic personality, and this struggle creates something truly divine. A similar thing happens in the last movement of his Ninth Symphony—and we know how that turned out. The Rondo's A theme is beautiful and serene, and after that, we go on many adventures. There are parts of this movement, with its inherent struggle, that are so exciting that the listener almost has to stand up in a moment of sheer excitement. After all, the Rondo's struggles could be a metaphor for the struggles of human life. We must adhere to rules and ethics, always striving to do the right thing, but we must never be content to allow any civilizing rules to contain our spirit. Instead, in the struggle between ethics and self-realization we truly find something very remarkable, dynamic, and unconstrained.

