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MUSIC REVIEW ILLYA FILSHTINSKIY

Pianist has innate feel for interpretation

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FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Illya Filshinskiy isn't afraid of drama.

The 20-year-old pianist from Westerville proved that, and more, yesterday at the Columbus Museum of Art. Filshinskiy performed works of Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Frederic Chopin and Alexander Scriabin as part of Women in Music — Columbus' Cantilena concert series.

Although he does not yet have the flawless coordination and execution of a seasoned professional, Filshinskiy (now a student at Juilliard) demonstrates an impressive command of technique and an even more impressive command of interpretation.

He is willing to hold out a moment, to suspend listeners in time almost to the point of uneasiness, in order to make a musical point. He is also willing to overwhelm a small space with sound, and to suddenly switch gears for a delicate, melodic passage.

The first piece yesterday, Schubert's Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960 is a challenging work. Its tortured undercurrents and wild turns of mood put emotional demands, as well as technical demands, on the performer.

Filshinskiy handled the piece adeptly, portraying joy, frustration, agitation, nostalgia and melancholy in musical moments that shifted and blended in the same way that one's own thoughts can.

After an intermission, Filshtinskiy performed Schumann's *Fantasie* in C Major. It's a piece that owes much of its style to the influence of Ludwig von Beethoven. However, even in the most derivative passages, Filshtinskiy retained Schumann's rapturous style and elegant phrasing. He also switched easily between the composer's charming melodies and huge sonorities.

Unfortunately, the museum's piano was beginning to fall out of tune and added unwelcome dissonance to many fine moments of the piece.

In the final piece, Chopin's *Ballade No. 2* in F major, Op. 38, Filshtinskiy demonstrated his training as a flutist through graceful, distinctive phrasing. These quiet moments were welcome (albeit momentary) contrasts to the bombast of Schumann's passion and Chopin's own punctuations of swirling, fiery masses of sound.

For an encore, Filshtinskiy performed Scriabin's *Vers la flamme* ("Toward the flame"). In Filshtinskiy's hands, Scriabin's disturbed chromatic lines opened into an outpouring of Nietzschean joy and fiery confusion. This tormented depiction of the end of the world was a fitting end to a program filled with drama.

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