

Lifestyle

CONCERT REVIEW

Concert review: Pianist fills West Point ballroom with the joy of music

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WEST POINT — Friday evening at the Eisenhower Hall Ballroom, pianist Albert Stanziano gave a recital in which he communicated his joy of music, an enjoyment he obviously experiences in his demanding schedule as a soloist, accompanist and teacher. His playing is alert, varied and spirited with works he knows by heart and has mastered with technical panache and personal warmth. His passion, vitality and pleasure are exemplary and were everywhere evident in the selections he performed.

Mozart's Sonata in A minor is in the traditional form: fast-slow-fast. Lyric trills mark the opening allegro, and an expressive cantabile characterizes the mid-movement andante. The final presto takes off at an accelerando pace, repeating the first theme and closing with a resounding crescendo. Stanziano made the keyboard rock with full harmonics and speedy two-handed scales.

Two Impromptus by Franz Schubert offered a vivid contrast of style and interpretation. No. 3 in G flat major is dark and rich with lower measures and anthemlike aspirations. In another mood, No. 2 in E flat major involves fleeting arpeggios and a tutti close of emphatic staccato chords.

Still another style was heard in Rachmaninoff's Prelude in E flat with its long sweeping lines and romantic melodies.

Heartfelt and haunting, it evoked a sensitivity of emotions that sounded genuinely tender.

Debussy's "Clair de Lune" called up still another vision with its impressionistic echoes of moonlight dancing on lapping waves of pedal point.

Chopin, of course, has his place in any classical recital, and here Stanziano offered two pieces: Fantasie — Impromptu in C sharp minor with its familiar "forever-chasing-rainbows" theme and Waltz in E minor with its upbeat, headlong movement and rubato shifts of rhythm and tone.

The last pieces played were two by Alexander Scriabin: Etude in C sharp minor, a coolly contemplative and quietly legato meditation, and Etude in D sharp major, a forcefully wide-scaled study in full keyboard resonance and power.

The accomplished soloist rewarded a standing ovation from the audience with a lively "Left-handed Tango" by Pense and a melodic "March Slav" by Beethoven.