



DANIEL LEBHARDT, pianist



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– THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Lehardt didn't just come to play for his Washington audience. He came to conquer, mustering his formidable technical and interpretative skills to present powerful performances."

**– COMMUNITIES DIGITAL NEWS
(Washington, DC)**

"Lehardt is gifted with a delicate sensibility and perfect dexterity... Ravel's Scarbo was a pianistic explosion in which fragments of melodies shone brightly like dazzling bells." (The Louvre)

– RES MUSICA (England)

Most Promising Pianist Prize, 2016 Sydney International Piano Competition (Australia)

Winner, 2015 Young Classical Artists Trust Auditions (London)

First Prize, 2014 Young Concert Artists International Auditions • First Prize, 2014 YCA European Auditions

The Rhoda Walker Teagle Debut Prize • Paul A. Fish Memorial Prize

The Usedom Music Festival Prize (Germany) • The Paramount Theatre Prize (VT)

The Hayden's Ferry Chamber Music Series Prize (NY) • The Buffalo Chamber Music Society Prize

2015 Patron's Award, Royal Academy of Music (UK) • YCAT 2015 Auditions (London)

First Prize, Russian Music International Piano Competition (CA) • First Prize, Citta di Gorizia International Piano Competition (Italy)

First Prize, Kosice International Piano Competition (Slovakia) • First Prize, Carl Filtsch International Piano Competition (Romania)

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Photo: Kaupo Kikkas



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DANIEL LEBHARDT, piano

Pianist Daniel Lehardt has impressed audiences and critics alike with his thoughtful interpretations and outstanding virtuosity. Mr. Lehardt won First Prize at the 2014 Young Concert Artists Auditions in Paris, and then won YCA's International Auditions in New York, where he was also awarded the Paul A. Fish Memorial Prize and four concert prizes. Among his many other accolades, Mr. Lehardt won First Prizes at the Russian Music International Piano Competition in California, Citta di Gorizia International Piano Competition in Italy, Kosice International Piano Competition in Slovakia, and Carl Filtsch International Piano Competition in Romania. Most recently, he won the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) 2015 Auditions in London and the Most Promising Pianist Prize at the 2016 Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia.

As a result of winning the Royal Academy of Music's prestigious Patron's Award, Mr. Lehardt gave his Wigmore Hall recital debut in 2015, and is scheduled to return there this fall. This season also includes appearances at the Oxford International and Nottingham International Piano Series, his debut with the State Academic Symphony Orchestra at the White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg, and with the CBSO Youth Orchestra. Further afield he undertakes tours of China, Argentina, Columbia and Chile.

Mr. Lehardt has appeared at the BBC Proms in a concert recorded and broadcast by BBC Radio 3, London's Steinway Hall, the Pounds Arts Centre in Wiltshire, the Senate House in London, the Bela Bartok Memorial House and Liszt Museum in Budapest, the Musée du Louvre in Paris, Germany's Usedom Music Festival, and in Hungary, Austria and Japan.

Mr. Lehardt's concerts in the U.S. include recitals in the Young Concert Artists Series at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and in New York at Merkin Concert Hall and the Morgan Library, for Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Embassy Series in Washington, DC and University of Florida Performing Arts, as well as in Canada at the Canadian Opera Company's Piano Virtuoso Series. He has appeared as concerto soloist in the U.S. with the Dearborn Symphony Orchestra and the Auburn Symphony Orchestra.

A native of Hungary, Mr. Lehardt started piano lessons at the age of six, and from the age of nine attended the Special School of the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, studying with István Gulyás and Gyöngyi Keveházi. He attended the Royal Academy of Music in London with Christopher Elton, and the studio of Pascal Nemirovski. He has played in master classes for Alfred Brendel, Leslie Howard, Ferenc Rados and Mikhail Voskresensky.



Daniel Lehardt, *pianist*

The New York Times

Daniel Lehardt Shows Daring Command in a New York Debut

Anthony Tommasini | The New York Times | March 2, 2016

Even before the 23-year-old Hungarian pianist Daniel Lehardt began his New York debut recital on Tuesday night, I was impressed by the adventurous program he had chosen. For this performance at Merkin Concert Hall, Mr. Lehardt, a winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, played an overlooked Beethoven sonata, followed by the premiere of a substantive piece by Tonia Ko, ending with a cornerstone of the repertory (by a fellow Hungarian): Liszt's daunting Sonata in B minor.



*Daniel Lehardt at Merkin Concert Hall.
Credit: Hiroyuki Ito for The New York Times*

It took imagination to open with Beethoven's Sonata No. 16 in G (Op. 31, No. 1). While many of this composer's works are run through with humor, this ebullient sonata can seem almost slapstick. The opening Allegro unfolds in bursts of spiraling runs and scale fragments punctuated by chords that are slightly, and deliberately, out of sync. Taking a daringly fast tempo, Mr. Lehardt dispatched the music with scintillating crispness and conveyed its brash humor. But the breathless energy of his account also teased out the sonata's heedless daring. He revealed the slyness at work in the Adagio, with its almost mock-elegant trills and swirling passagework. The final Rondo was an impish, brilliant delight.

Ms. Ko, a composer in residence with Young Concert Artists, wrote in a program note that her "Games of Belief" was inspired by Schumann's fanciful piano works, especially his "Scenes From Childhood" suite. Her captivating score plays musical games of sound and color, often requiring Mr. Lehardt to strike keys with one hand while, leaning into the piano, moving his other over the strings to create sounds that combined percussive thumps with sighing harmonics. The more traditional elements involved rustling runs, skittish riffs and high tinkling figures that evoked pagoda chimes, all splendidly played.

Liszt's visionary Sonata in B minor is an epic fantasy lasting nearly 30 minutes, shifting from bursts of wildness to passages of profundity. Just playing it commandingly, as Mr. Lehardt did, is difficult enough. He brought narrative sweep and youthful abandon to the piece, along with power, poetry and formidable technique. As an encore, he played Bartok's charming "Evening in Transylvania" from "10 Easy Piano Pieces," the perfect cap to a demanding program.



Daniel Lebhardt, *pianist*



Pianist Daniel Lebhardt: Formidable Liszt at the KenCen

Terry Ponick | Communities Digital News (Washington, DC) | March 2, 2016



YCA's young Hungarian artist makes an impression with towering Beethoven and Liszt sonatas at his debut Kennedy Center Terrace Theater recital. Credit: Matt Dine

The Young Concert Artists (YCA) series of recitals returned to the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater earlier this week, highlighting the considerable artistry of young Hungarian pianist Daniel Lebhardt.

This was the first YCA performance we've had a chance to review in quite some time, and this excellent performance reminded us yet again of what we've told our readers many times – these recitals are still the best musical deal in town, presenting up-and-coming but still relatively unknown young musicians (and a few young composers) to DC and New York audiences. Over the years many of these performers have gone on to become notable classical stars.

As is frequently the case with YCA's young pianists, Lebhardt didn't just come to play for his Washington audience. He came to conquer, mustering his formidable technical and interpretative skills to present powerful performances of two supremely difficult sonatas – Beethoven's Sonata No. 16 in G-major (Op. 31, No. 1) and Liszt's epic Sonata in B-minor (S. 178).

Lebhardt opened his recital with the Beethoven sonata, perhaps not that composer's best known work in that form but one that's quite challenging, offering plenty of opportunities for a pianist to demonstrate his virtuoso technique. That's precisely what Lebhardt did as he launched the sonata's first movement.

Next up on the program was an interesting tidbit – the world premiere performance of YCA young composer Tonia Ko's "Games of Belief," a suite of interrelated piano miniatures composed specifically for Daniel Lebhardt.



Daniel Lehardt, *pianist*



Pianist Daniel Lehardt: Formidable Liszt at the KenCen

Terry Ponick | Communities Digital News (Washington, DC) | March 2, 2016

“Games,” at least for this reviewer, turned out to be something of a mixed bag. It reminded me a great deal of avant-garde American composer John Cage’s (1912-1992) various works for “prepared piano.” Composed in bursts primarily from the late 1930s through the 1950s, Cage’s prepared piano pieces were performed on instruments whose strings and hammers were modified by the insertion of foreign objects such as rubber erasers and tacks, essentially turning the piano into a custom-made percussion instrument that could also play notes.

Quirky, rhythmic and at times otherworldly, recordings of these pieces were quite popular with Boomer era college students, most of whom wouldn’t get near classical music otherwise. Having come from that era myself, listening to “Games of Belief” for the first time felt like jumping in a time machine.

Tonia Ko didn’t require the Terrace Theater piano to be “prepared” for this piece. Nonetheless, by standing up, reaching into the piano, and manipulating and plucking the piano strings in different ways at the beginning of the piece – and a number of times thereafter – the pianist created passages and rhythms that called out to the ghost of John Cage.

As successive developments and variations unfolded, Lehardt seemed to be enjoying himself, as he made the Steinway perform Ko’s compositional magical tricks, including what sounded like riffs on East Asian motifs.

Many in the audience seemed to enjoy the piece, perhaps because for many of them it was a novelty. That said, concerts such as this one are precisely the right venue to try out or introduce new works from young composers, some of which will work, some of which will not.

After a break, Daniel Lehardt returned to present an audacious performance of Franz Liszt’s epic Sonata in B-minor. With its three interwoven movements played without pause, this monster of a sonata is like a WWF Super Slam for solo pianist. Liszt clearly composed it to show off his own astonishing pianistic abilities.

But this sonata is also complex and harmonically daring. Its “played without a pause” structure allows melodies and motifs to weave in and out of each movement in a way that integrates the entire structure. The musical world would have to wait to experience sonata format again until Scriabin exploited it in his increasingly exotic final sonatas.

Lehardt seemed to both grasp and appreciate Liszt’s landmark sonata, not only as a pianist, but also as a fellow countryman of Franz Liszt. Adding nationalistic and ethnic insights to his already fine technique, he launched into this epic work from the very start and made it his own.



Daniel Lebhardt, *pianist*



Pianist Daniel Lebhardt: Formidable Liszt at the KenCen

Terry Ponick | Communities Digital News (Washington, DC) | March 2, 2016

From the sonata's ominously dramatic opening motif – a statement so grim and determined that Hollywood swiped it for any number of 1930s horror films – Liszt's music veers wildly from the demonic, to the hopeful, to the tender and then passionately romantic, to the triumphant and then back again before its embers finally die out. As the journey progresses, we encounter excitement, brilliant passagework, clattering octave sweeps, suddenly halted developments – you name it. The drama never stops.

Lebhardt somehow internalized it all, then reflected it back in an exciting performance that united Lisztean showmanship with 21st century technique. At the same time, he produced a consistently beautiful bel canto tone in Liszt's achingly romantic passages, providing the emotional contrast this sonata needs to lift it into the next realm.

All in all, this performance of the Liszt was an excellent way for Daniel Lebhardt to wrap up his debut recital here in the nation's capital.



Daniel Lehardt, *pianist*



Young Concert Artists: Daniel Lehardt

Philip Gardner | Oberon's Grove | March 1, 2016



Photo: Matt Dine

Young Concert Artists presenting Daniel Lehardt, the 23-year-old Hungarian pianist, in a solo recital at Merkin Hall. Mr. Lehardt, is a prodigious talent and was at his peak in a stunning performance of the Liszt B-minor sonata which concluded the evening.

But first: Beethoven - the Sonata No. 16 in G major, Op. 31, No 1. Mr. Lehardt's performance was dynamic and impetuous, sailing thru the music with only the briefest of pauses between movements. In the opening *Allegro vivace*, flurries of notes displayed the pianist's clarity of technique; the music veers into a minor mode - and even into another key - before ending rather abruptly in G-major. The *Adagio grazioso* is amply laced with trills, sometimes descending into a grumbling lower register. There is a gentle wittiness here and there, as in a dance-like passage. Trills recur against insistently repeated chords. For the concluding *Rondo*, the call for virtuosity extends to the left hand. Things slow down a bit before the coda, and then the music suddenly runs out of itself, ending with a touch of irony. Mr. Lehardt played all of this most persuasively.

Tonia Ko is the current Young Concert Artists' Composer-in Residence. Premiering tonight, her newest work for solo piano, entitled *Games of Belief*, drew inspiration from Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. Mr. Lehardt returned to the stage but instead of sitting down to play, he reached inside the Steinway and began plucking strings.



Daniel Lehardt, *pianist*



Young Concert Artists: Daniel Lehardt

Philip Gardner | Oberon's Grove | March 1, 2016

It became evident that a *prepared piano* effect was being sought; as the work progressed, mystical upper-range rippings alternated with deeper resonances. As prepared notes chimed, the music turned ghostly. Individually struck descending low notes take on a somewhat ominous feel, and the music concludes on a high shimmer. Mr. Lehardt's command of the music, and his skill at manipulating both the keyboard and the strings to achieve the composer's unusual effects, was impressive. Ms. Ko, so young and lovely, took a bow; she could not have asked for a better advocate for her music than Mr. Lehardt.

The sonic panorama that is Franz Liszt's Sonata in B minor drew an authoritative performance from Mr. Lehardt. Crafted in a single movement, this epic work calls for complete command of the keyboard, and for an extraordinary concentration and passion in the playing of it.

For the massive, tumultuous passages that erupt after a quiet start, the pianist summoned a *huge* sound from the Steinway. The music shifts to a quietly rapturous theme, with elegant trills and sweeping cascades of notes, then turns tempestuous again. The melody returns with rising passion, simmers down, and then goes deep and rich: a rhapsodic theme flairs up. An intense quietude ensues before another patch of turbulence; rapture is voiced, and then a marvelous passage of quiet lyricism. The music is honed down to extreme delicacy before going grand yet again, leading to the elongated, *misterioso* conclusion of this astounding sonata.

For his performance - with its alternating currents extraordinary virtuosity, purple passion, and chaste spirituality - the audience expressed their thanks to Mr. Lehardt with an enthusiastic and prolonged ovation. In reciprocal gratitude, he offered a Bartok encore - *Evening in Transylvania* - in which moody nocturnal passages alternated with folkish dances. The audience then called him back twice more.

At the end of the concert, I had the pleasure of meeting YCA violinist Paul Huang and YCA pianist Louis Schwizgebel; their YCA recital at the Morgan Library last season was such a thorough delight. Ironically, I'd been listening to Louis's Prokofiev 1st - my favorite piano concerto - earlier in the day.



Daniel Lehardt, *pianist*

Darlington & Stockton Times

Daniel Lehardt Recital – October 11, 2015

Peter Bevan | Darlington & Stockton Times Review | October 23, 2014

Darlington Piano Society's 20th season got off to a flying start with a stimulating performance by this young Hungarian pianist.

J S Bach's Partita No. 1, BWV825 immediately impressed with fleet finger work in the outer movements, contrasting with the delicacy of the first gentle Menuet, and with the difficulties of the final Gigue clearly posing no problems.

Brahms' Three Intermezzi, Op.117, were played straightforwardly with no unnecessary emphasis, making these soothing and poetic pieces particularly effective.

In a change to the programme, though sorry not to hear Ravel's Jeux d'eau, I think Chopin's Etude in B minor, Op. 25, No. 2 provided a better contrast and a more dramatic way to end the set, especially when played with such a concentrated flourish.

For the second set, in the imperious opening of Beethoven's last Sonata in C minor, Op.111, the piano sounded quite resonant at first, possibly due in part to the refurbished hall which currently has no carpet or curtains. But it was also part of a thoughtful interpretation which included tempos which were subtly varied for greater effect. The second and final movement was also suitably measured, perhaps starting more slowly than usual, allowing the themes to come through more clearly. The gradual climbs and retreats were very effective and the following cascade strong and powerful, leading to a beautiful shimmering effect, magnificently controlled, before the final transcendental calm.

DANIEL LEBHARDT, *piano*

REPERTOIRE WITH ORCHESTRA

BACH	Concerto No. 1 in D minor BWV 1052 Concerto No. 5 in F minor BWV 1056
BEETHOVEN	Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37
BRAHMS	Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 83
HAYDN	Concerto No. 11 in D Major, Hob.XVIII:11
LISZT	Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major, S.124 <i>Totentanz</i>
MOZART	Concerto No. 26 in D major, K. 537 "Coronation"
PROKOFIEV	Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 16
RACHMANINOV	Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp minor, Op. 1 Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18