



Tomer Gewirtzman, *pianist*

 Oberon's Grove

Young Concert Artists: Tomer Gewirtzman

Philip Gardner | Oberon's Grove | December 13, 2016

Tuesday December 13th, 2016 - Israeli pianist Tomer Gewirtzman was presented by **Young Concert Artists** in recital at Merkin Hall this evening. In a wonderfully varied program of works by Couperin, Liszt, Corigliano, and Schumann, Mr. Gewirtzman conquered the audience with playing that displayed both extraordinary virtuosity and true depth of feeling. We can add Mr. Gewirtzman's name to the long list of **Young Concert Artists'** great discoveries; technically and expressively, he is already an artist of very high quality.

The tall pianist seemed somewhat shy as he walked onstage and seated himself at the Steinway. Once he began to play, a passionate temperament was revealed. His playing was moving and intensely involved, his facial expressions manifesting the emotions of a man for whom music is his urgent calling.

From the stately opening phrases of the Couperin *Passacaglia in B-minor*, Mr. Gewirtzman's playing sustained a church-like mood of reverential silence among his listeners. Veering from the pensive to the grand, Mr. Gewirtzman's playing displayed charm and vitality in perfect measure.

In Franz Liszt's epic *Sonata in B-minor*, Mr. Gewirtzman unleashed the full force of his talent in a performance of spectacular virtuosity and profound emotional resonance. A heartbeat motif - re-visited in the Corigliano *Fantasy* later in the evening - sets up a drama that extends almost to madness. Deep chords herald a outpouring of familiar melody followed by delicate scales. Decorative trills and rippling cascades of notes delighted the ear. Mr. Gewirtzman's playing thoroughly captivated the audience. Photo: Jiyang Chen



Following the interval, Mr. Gewirtzman offered John Corigliano's *Fantasy on an Ostinato*. Composed in 1985, the *Fantasy* draws on a well-known passage from the second movement of Ludwig van Beethoven seventh symphony. Mr. Gewirtzman has a clear affection for this Corigliano piece: music brand new to my experience and doubtless to most of the audience. The emergence of the Beethoven theme, subtly woven in by the pianist, caused a murmur of quiet recognition to pass thru the hall.

The pianist then launched the finale of the evening: Robert Schumann's *Fantasy in C major*. Having already thrilled us with his technical wizardry and ardent commitment, Mr. Gewirtzman used the Schumann as a great canvas to display the full range of his artistry. A wide dynamic range presents itself in the *Fantasy's* opening movement; Mr. Gewirtzman relished the turbulent passage but also made the silences meaningful. Mood swings occur throughout, and the pianist let them have full sway, his playing immersive and vivid.

In the slow final movement, Mr. Gewirtzman's intrinsically poetic nature was given full flourish. The flow of melody arching over depths of romantic longing drew some gorgeously subtle playing from the long-fingered pianist; he brought his triumphant performance to a close with a settling benediction of peace.

Eagerly applauded by the packed house, Mr. Gewirtzman offered a sublime encore: Liszt's setting Schumann's *Widmung* ("Dedication"), played with a sense of spirituality which became quite rhapsodic before its uplifting conclusion. Marvelous!