



Andrew Tyson, *pianist*

The New York Times

Peter Serkin and Andrew Tyson Juxtaposing Old and New

Anthony Tommasini | *The New York Times* | December 16, 2016



Andrew Tyson at Weill Recital Hall.
Hiroyuki Ito for the New York Times

It's unlikely that the outstanding young pianist Andrew Tyson had the veteran Peter Serkin specifically in mind when he planned the program of mostly 20th-century pieces he played so excitingly at Weill Recital Hall on Tuesday. Still, some decades ago, among the many adventurous aspects of his artistry, Mr. Serkin, now 69, was a pioneer of unconventional programming that juxtaposed old and new works. He took some heat at the time for his experiments. But he certainly shook up protocols, helping to embolden artists of later generations like Mr. Tyson, who turns 30 on Monday.

Mr. Serkin was at it again, and at his best, in a recital last Saturday at the 92nd Street Y. His program offered several Renaissance keyboard works written well before the invention of the piano and some scores by 20th-century giants, including Wolpe, Takemitsu and Schoenberg. Given the novelty of the program, you might have expected him to speak to the audience about it. That has never been his way. Mr. Serkin prefers to let music speak for itself.

He began with Josquin's "Ave Christie," a four-voice motet, as reset for piano in 1988 by the composer Charles Wuorinen. Unfolding in steady, ruminative contrapuntal lines, this modal music practically invited the audience to settle in and listen. Various Renaissance pieces by Sweelinck, John Bull, and William Byrd were

juxtaposed with Takemitsu's crystalline "for away" (1973), Oliver Knussen's rhapsodic, modernist Variations (Op. 24, 1989), and Wolpe's "Form IV," aptly subtitled "Broken Sequences." The final work, Schoenberg's landmark Suite, Op. 25, came across in this exhilarating performance like an ingenious, 12-tone homage to Bach.

Mr. Tyson, presenting the Juilliard School's Leo B. Ruiz Memorial Recital, opened with Henri Dutilleux's Three Preludes for Piano, music of plush colorings and pointillist outbursts. The composer Michel Petrossian, a friend of Mr. Tyson's, came from Paris for this performance of his fantastical "The Raging Battle of Green and Gold." Like the Dutilleux, this piece had such improvisatory and skittish qualities that Scriabin's wild-eyed Piano Sonata No. 3 sounded almost coherent in comparison.

Playing six Gershwin selections was another great idea. The arrangements of these songs, with their jazzy harmonies and splashy riffs, set the mood perfectly for Ravel's "Miroirs," a French Impressionist masterpiece given a scintillating yet sensitive performance here. Mr. Tyson is a poetic virtuoso.