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JOEL HASTINGS

PIANIST

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JOEL HASTINGS

Joel was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, and has dedicated himself to a career in music since beginning piano at the age of 15. While pursuing an undergraduate degree in organ at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, he also improved his skills at the piano, which then became his major instrument in graduate school. Mr. Hastings distinguished himself at the University by winning three consecutive concert competitions, which resulted in solo performances with the University Symphony Orchestra. Other achievements include first prize in the International Bach Competition at the Kennedy Center, and grants from the Canadian Council for the Performing Arts.

In May of 1997, Mr. Hastings was one of thirty-five pianists selected to participate in the Tenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas. According to the press, Mr. Hastings was audience favorite and his performance met with great acclaim.

Mr. Hastings has studied with following acclaimed teachers:

Dickran Atamian
Sergei Babayan
Nina Lelchuk
David Palmer

RECENT EVENTS

1998:

Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Phoenix, Arizona

1997:

Forth Worth Opera House, Forth Worth, Texas (Oct. 11)
Memorial Hall, Racine, Wisconsin
Concerto Performance with the Racine Symphony Orchestra - Gershwin
Rhapsody
U.S. Department of State, Dean Acheson Auditorium, Washington D.C.
Jewish Community Center Washington D.C.
University of Akron, Akron, Ohio
Madonna University, Livonia, Michigan
Christ Church Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe, Michigan
Chamber performance with members of the Detroit Symphony

1996:

Kerrytown Concert House, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Solo Performance
Kulas Hall, Cleveland Institute of Music.
Sergei Babayan International Piano Academy, Cleveland, Ohio

REVIEWS

Star-Telegram, Sunday, May 25, 1997
A hypnotic passion - by Wayne Lee Gay

What he played: Hastings threw two curves -a Saint-Saens transcription of J.S. Bach and Canadian composer Carl Vine's Sonata of 1990- then added some showy Mendelssohn and Liszt to create the day's most ear-catching repertoire list.

High notes: Mendelssohn's Variations Serieuses aren't played as often as they should be, probably because so few pianist can find the right tempos to make the piece move forward with the hypnotic drive that Hastings invested in last night. Vine's Sonata provided a perfect excursion into modernism in an otherwise all-romantic program, as well as another display of Hastings apparently bottomless reserve of pianistic energy. Liszt's Totentanz, a fantasy on the traditional Dies Irae chant, is as wild and untamed as the Mendelssohn Variations are structured and rational, but Hastings was equally successful in this madcap catalog of virtuoso technical devices.

Low notes: We'll admit that Saint-Saens's transcription of the Overture to J.S. Bach's Cantata No.29 is fussy, but it's a tremendous curtain-raiser.

To sum up: It's hard to tell whether the audience or Hastings had more fun with this program.

The Dallas Morning News, Sunday, May 25, 1997
by John Ardoin (music critic of The Dallas Morning News)

... He (Joel Hastings) gave a dazzling, sweeping performance of Liszt's Totentanz and a vivid, alive one of Mendelssohn's Serious Variations. But his most amazing of all was his performance of a new Sonata by Australia's Carl Vine, a piece of superhuman difficulty that is an impressive addition to the repertory and which Mr. Hastings tossed out with supreme confidence and glittering wizardry.

Star-Telegram, Sunday, May 25, 1997

Hastings lays waste

Bowing low over the keyboard, Joel Hastings pulled the audience out of the seats with a blistering performance of Liszt's Totentanz ("Death Dance"). "That last one, you need a fire extinguisher on the keyboard," said Jing Ling Tam, associate conductor for the Fort Worth Opera. Before that, the 27-year-old Canadian pianist connected with a piece few in the audience had heard: Carl Vine's Sonata of 1990. "The Vine selection was very exciting," said Helen Polczer, a fellow Canadian. "Normally with a modern work you have to get to know it before you enjoy it, but he gripped you from the first note to the last. He's an original." Hastings' self-appraisal: "What the heck, I'm pleased," he said with a modest shrug.

Star-Telegram, Friday, May 30, 1997

First Person - by Tara Dooley

... What if Liszt's Totentanz ("Death Dance") never again grips me the way it did when Joel Hastings performed it?

Newsweek, June 9, 1997 Music

You're Dammed If You Do...

At the Gong Show of classical music, nobody really wins -by Yahlin Chang

... After Canadian Joel Hastings pulled his audience to their feet with a wild performance of Liszt's Totentanz, a local radio host shoved a mike at him and asked, "Joel, would you say that was a slam-dunk?"

HASTINGS' CONCERTO REPERTOIRE

Bach	Concerto No. 1 in D minor
Beethoven	Concerto No. 1 in C major Concerto No. 3 in C minor
Brahms	Concerto No. 1 in D minor Concerto No. 2 in B-flat major
Chopin	Concerto No. 1 in E major Concerto No. 2 in F minor
Franck	Symphonic Variations
Gershwin	Rhapsody in Blue
Grieg	Concerto
Liszt	Totentanz Concerto No. 1 in E-flat major Concerto No. 2 in A major
Mendelssohn	Concerto No. 1 in G minor Concerto No. 2 in D minor
Mozart	Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major Concerto No. 12 in A major Concerto No. 14 in E-flat major Concerto No. 19 in F major Concerto No. 20 in D minor Concerto No. 23 in A major
Prokofiev	Concerto No. 3 in C major
Rachmaninoff	Concerto No. 2 in C minor Concerto No. 3 in D minor
Ravel	Concerto for the Left Hand
Saint-Saens	Concerto No. 2 in G minor
Schumann	Concerto in A minor
Tchaikovsky	Concerto No. 1 in B-flat major