

Daesik Cha Gives Astounding Performance

July 18, 2019

Enfield Shaker Museum, Mary Keane Chapel

Enfield Shaker Museum was blessed with the performance of Dr. Cha on Sunday, which opened our 2019 – 2020 concert series. The program that evening consisted of four pieces from varying styles. This fantastic piano recital included sounds ranging from Viennese Classicism to high Romanticism and from the intimate salon to the grand concert hall.

The first piece, Beethoven’s Piano Sonata Op. 10 No 3, served as a powerful opening of his varying and dynamic performance. His balanced yet boldly passionate interpretation of the sonata, in fact, vividly captured the very spirit of Beethoven of his early years –a young iconoclastic composer who aspired to visions beyond the confines of Viennese Classicism.

On the other hand, he poetically articulated Chopin’s Ballade No. 1 with gentle, sweet tones without drudging sentimentalism. The subdued lyricism he showed in the cantilenas was effectively contrasted with the furious drama he created with his virtuosic piano technique in the sweeping passages. His rendition of the dramatic conclusion, marked *Presto con fuoco*, was, in fact, an explosive firestorm.

With Schumann’s *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, Dr. Cha transported us into another musical world. From the eight-piece collection, he picked the three most intimate pieces which reflect the inner struggle and yearning of Schumann. Dr. Cha’s short lecture on the biographical circumstances of these compositions facilitated our understanding of these unfamiliar pieces. In his interpretation, both hands blended their tones with a combination of both homophonic and polyphonic textures. Each voice was a complement to each other and took part in a conversation which revealed the composer’s inmost feelings and thoughts.

After a brief intermission, Dr. Cha introduced a challenging piano work by Franz Liszt, “Mephisto Waltz” No. 1 as the finale of the recital. This beautiful epic piece of piano music was composed during the peak of Romanticism. Liszt was well known to be a virtuoso pianist and composer. This piece is regarded as the epitome of Liszt’s pianism which demands both a transcendental technique and a commanding musical charisma. And Dr. Cha’s performance of this piece sufficiently met both demands, riveting and stunning our ears. He made the seductive daemonic beauty of the work truly alive, to which our audience responded with fervent applause and a standing ovation.

Dr. Cha won the hearts of our listeners. They were able to recreate through his performance the pieces constructed in each composers' mind. Each piece was played elaborately and beautifully. I believe that anyone listening who had never shown any interest in instrumental music would most likely change their minds after Sunday's evening. He gave a very impressive performance. The most moving and captivation feature of his performance was his in-depth interpretations of the contrasting works eloquently presented through his erudition, artistry, and technique. Each piece flowed and moved every listener in the recital hall. The entire concert was very compelling and enjoyable. I am sure that every person who attended that recital will be looking forward to Dr. Cha's next performance as I do.