

Eccentric, turbulent, brilliant

Pianist Pervez Mody presented an inspiring piano recital with works by
Chopin, Liszt, Debussy and Scriabin

By Alexander Florie for NRZ/WRZ

Rheinberg Even the introduction was unusual. There was a sense of eager anticipation amongst the concert audience in the *Stadthalle*; a few minutes later the chairperson of the “Musikalischen Gesellschaft”, Lore Rabe appeared on stage and gestured to the young artist to come out.

Pervez Mody appeared, marched straight towards the piano, bowed and got going. The magic that this pianist from Bombay created after that was incredible.

He began with the Scherzo in B minor by Frederic Chopin in which he unleashed a stirring, fascinating river of sound – a real surge, presented with almost impeccable technique, coupled with immensely tender feeling and melodramatic expression.

He allowed his fingers to fly over the keys, leaning so far back as if he would fall off and from time to time glanced at the audience in an almost provocative casual manner as if to say “Is everyone still there? Do you like it?”

He admitted after the concert “Yes, I get a feel of the mood of the audience.” Like someone who needs the communication with the listeners for his “flow” and the enjoyment of playing. A complete work of art, part personality, part music.

In his rendering of the Berceuse D-flat major he demonstrated that he can hold himself back and strike the introverted, introspective mood. The playing was intimate and as light as a feather as if he was barely touching the keys. The Etude in C major, tumultuous in tempo, surged with passion and musicality. Both of the following works, the Etude in F minor and the Revolutionary Etude in C minor were just as thrilling. With their sad tone and elegant rhythmic verve the two waltzes in G-flat major and E minor provided the proverbial cherry on the cake.

Melancholy and ecstasy

He captured the right mood - poetic with the burning expression of melancholy and ecstasy - in Franz Liszt’s Consolation No. 3 before he stepped up the pace in the rigoletto paraphrase and built up the dancing, dramatic and almost piercing trembling phrases to a breathtaking melodic dance.

It was in keeping with Mody’s eccentricity that he just disappeared from the stage after the last note. The audience did not seem to mind, given what they had just experienced. One of the listeners commented “This took us to the limits of biomechanics!”

During the second half Mody developed a new sound world: In Claude Debussy's "Children's Corner" he conjured up delicate, melancholy sound pictures. In the "Serenade" he demonstrated amazing twists and in "The snow is dancing" we could almost see the snowflakes fall gently over the piano. The "Golliwog's Catwalk" was embellished with a hint of ragtime.

He once again demonstrated his skill in varying the sound in Alexander Scriabin's Sonata Fantasy G-sharp minor – with the complex dramatic Sonata and the sound wave of the "Presto". This was balanced by the Etudes from op. 42 – with tempo and emotional, forward-pressing momentum and the multilayered sophisticated "Vers la flame" which swelled into a complex intoxicated sound.

At the end Mody treated the listeners with musical humour to two of his own versions of Schubert's "Warum" and "Die Forelle" A very special evening with a wonderful artist.

Translation: Shirin Gazder