



Brilliant Expressions

Southeastern Piano Festival Opens June 7

by : Tiffany Brand

Victor Hugo once said, "Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and that which cannot remain silent."

It's a quote that pianist and Southeastern Piano Festival director Marina Lomazov believes best captures what she hopes her students can learn about art and performance at the event. The festival, which takes place at the USC School of Music June 7-13, not only gives aspiring musicians the opportunity to learn from world-renowned musicians, but also offers an amazing selection of concerts open to the public.

The six-year-old festival throws open its doors to the public on Sunday at 6 p.m. with the Piano Fireworks Gala Concert. Lomazov and fellow USC faculty members Charles Fugo and Joseph Rackers will helm the concert with a variety of works. Fugo will begin the concert with a trio of works: Rondo in A Minor by Mozart, Gnomenreigen by Franz Liszt and Barcarolle in F Sharp Major by Frederic Chopin. Rackers continues the performance with Prelude and Fugue IX in E major by Bach, and two etudes each by Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin. Lomazov will cap the concert with modern and contemporary works, William Bolcom's "Serpent's Kiss (Rag Fantasy)" from the Garden of Eden Suite (1969) and Carter Pann's Six Strokes (2000).

"I'm currently playing my some of my favorite composers," Lomazov says. "[The Pann and Bolcom works] come from the great American tradition of ragtime, which influenced wonderful composers like Bolcom and William Albright."



Ran Dank

Monday, June 8, is devoted to viewing the inner workings of the festival with an open session from 2 to 4:30 p.m., at which the general public can see USC faculty members work with student pianists to hone their craft. That evening at 8 p.m., three past winners of the festival's Arthur Fraser International Concerto Competition perform an Alumni Celebration Concert. The performers include Sonya Schumann, a native of Blacksburg, Va., who won the competition in 2004 and now studies with Lomazov at USC; 19-year-old Leo Svirsky, the 2005 winner, who will perform works by Schubert, Liszt and Ligeti; and Olga Krayterman, the 2003 winner and now a master's student at the Eastman School of Music.

Public performances continue on Tuesday at 8 p.m. with guest artist Ran Dank. Dank, winner of the 2008 Hilton Head International Piano Competition, has just been selected as semi-finalist for the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

"[Van Cliburn] ends just as our festival begins, and we may very well be hearing the newest winner of the most prestigious piano competition in the world," Lomazov says.

"One of my goals is for the festival to never to become a predictable or stale event," Lomazov says. "Each year we try to do something unique, something different, something we have not done before."

This year, the festival takes to the road with a series of outreach concerts, the first a performance by festival participants at the South Carolina Episcopal Home at Still Hopes on June 10.

"We're merely giving back to the community which so generously supports the festival," Lomazov says.

Back on campus, guest artist and Van Cliburn silver medalist Yakov Kasman performs at the School of Music as part of the Artist Showcase at 8 p.m. on June 10. Van Cliburn bronze medalist Christopher Taylor will follow Kasman's performance on Thursday, June 11, with a Bach aria and *The People United Will Never Be Defeated* by Frederic Rzewski, a massive work consisting of 36 variations.

All this is part of the run-up to the annual Arthur Fraser International Concerto Competition, at which students compete all day in performances running from 10 a.m. to noon, 2 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. The winner will be announced at 10 p.m. and will perform in 2010 with the South Carolina Philharmonic.

"Our festival participants will play for audiences ranging in ages from 9 to 99 — a great experience for all involved," Lomazov says.

Variety, fun and world-class musicians — all reasons this festival should not be missed.

For a complete schedule of events and ticket prices, visit sepf.music.sc.edu or call (803) 576-5763.

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