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Young Concert Artists, Inc.

GLEB IVANOV, *pianist*

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Gleb Ivanov Playful, Riveting

By Thomas Bohlert

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Gleb Ivanov, a Russian-born pianist, chose a program of mostly serious and passionate music for his appearance in the Rising Stars Piano Recital Series at the Southampton Cultural Center on Saturday, and he delivered a compelling performance.

Mr. Ivanov won first prize in the 2005 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and during the 2005-6 season made his recital debuts at Carnegie's Zankel Hall and the Kennedy Center. He has also been a participant in Pianofest and has performed at Island Concerts on Fishers Island. This past season he made return engagements at the Louvre in Paris and at Princeton University, and he has just completed a master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music.

Gleb Ivanov was greeted by thunderous bravos at Saturday's final concert of the season in the Rising Stars Piano Recital series.

Franz Joseph Haydn's Sonata in C (Hob. 48) is among the composer's later and great piano compositions. It shows great steps forward in his musical language and in what he asks of the instrument. It is a two-movement sonata, beginning not with the usual allegro, but with an Andante con Espressione, and from the beginning Mr. Ivanov gave the movement an authoritative and beautifully sober reading. The melodic runs and ornaments were handled with ease, and a sense of subtle shading was very apparent.

The second movement, a rondo, was exquisitely phrased and shaped, and although it is not as cheery as many rondos, Mr. Ivanov showed a sophisticated playfulness.

Next were two songs (lieder) by Franz Schubert, transcribed for piano by Franz Liszt. They are called transcriptions but are really arrangements, even quasi-orchestrations. These two were originally art songs, and Mr. Ivanov succeeded in making one think that the piano was more of a vocal instrument rather than a percussive one. They served nicely as a soothing respite between the Haydn and the masterwork to come.



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Three of Sergei Prokofiev's piano sonatas are commonly known as the War Sonatas, because they were written around the time of conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union. The Sonata No. 6 in A major (Op. 82), written in 1939, is the first of these and was the main work on the program. It is full of stormy struggle, conflict, poignancy, and stridency, and is as taxing on the performer as can be. Mr. Ivanov handled it with technique to spare and great maturity.

It opens with an insistent, repeated-note figure, and tension between the major and minor. There are moments of a kind of serenity, but more moments of terror, with powerful, smashing chords, heavy use of the sustain pedal, and fortissimos on both ends of the keyboard.

The second movement, Allegretto, is a bit lighter. The following Tempo di Valtzer Lentissimo is a waltz of delicate, longing beauty, with a turbulent middle section.

The closing Vivace has many striking and contrasting themes, running a wide range of emotions. Mr. Ivanov's hands were racing with untiring technique, and, as throughout, one could see the intensity of the passion on his face. The hammering ending brought bravos from the audience, and Mr. Ivanov's expression showed that he was still in the music and had not quite returned to the present moment.

As an encore, he played a Bach prelude as transcribed by Alexander Siloti. It was limpid and calming, bringing the listeners and the performer back to center.

Comments heard from the audience afterward included the words magnificent, enthralling, and riveting.