

Pianist grows in technical, interpretive skills

By Avigdor Zarembo
special writer

Leszek Bartkiewicz is gaining recognition as one of the best pianists in our area. Having immigrated from Poland a few years ago, his stature here has been on the rise with some successful appearances abroad.

His most recent performance which took place at the Clarkson United Methodist Church, was a fund-raiser for the Bryan Michael Weightman Hope for the Future Fund. Bryan is a two-year-old who has leukemia and needs a bone-marrow transplant.

On several previous occasions Bartkiewicz presented programs with emphasis on Chopin's music. This time, he demonstrated his skill with a wider repertoire, more reflective of the scope of his talent. The program consisted of works by Bach, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Gershwin.

THE STYLISTIC versatility of Bartkiewicz is impressive indeed. Noteworthy is his approach to Bach, as manifested in this performance of his keyboard Partita in A Minor. In spite of a lapse in the first movement, the clarity with which he

outlined the refined architecture of this baroque master was of the kind that few can match. The sonorous melodies of Schubert's A Major Sonata filled the air with their rich harmonies. While the performance was at times too detached and the left hand occasionally under-emphasized, singing expressiveness was the rule.

Chopin's "Rondeau a la Mazurka" had more life and momentum in it than I have heard on previous occasions with Bartkiewicz. He was also very adept at the heavy technical material in the second portion. Following Liszt's sel-

dom-heard Valse Impromptu, the Transcendental Etude in F Minor was one of the most technically demanding works. This, together with Rachmaninoff's arrangements of Kreisler's Liebesleid and Liebesfreud, provided the ultimate in impressive technical demonstration. With few exceptions, there was a high degree of tone coloration as well.

AMONG CLASSICAL composers, Gershwin is regarded as a lightweight and the appeal of his music is mostly in its entertainment value. But when listening to Bartkiewicz play the Rhapsody in Blue, a new

concept emerges. If this performance sounded more studied and intellectual than what is commonly associated with Gershwin's style, it was certainly an asset, in my opinion. Following the warm applause, he played three Gershwin preludes as an encore.

As Leszek Bartkiewicz is well aware, establishing a performing career is among the most difficult challenges, frequently depending on

factors beyond one's control. Persistent efforts, however, are bearing fruits with more engagements and recognition. In view of this trend will continue. We also hope that the struggle of Bryan Michael Weightman and his family, the recipients of these proceedings, will have an uplifting ending. Hopefully, what is humanly possible will prove to be sufficient.

Add easy-to-grow garlic to garden

We are now beyond our initial planting cycle and hopefully ready to listen to some new ideas. Many of our good cooks use garlic upon occasion. If you want to try a new idea in your garden, secure a garlic bulb. Separate the cloves, which is easy to do, as each clove is encased in its own skin.

Plant the garlic cloves about two inches deep in rich soil in an upright position, water thoroughly and cover lightly with grass clippings. Garlic is known to discourage insects around tomato plants. Wouldn't it be fun to experiment with this idea of companion planting?

You may wish to try growing a pot of garlic on your windowsill as an additive to your cooking. Use a three-inch flower pot for this project and plant three unpeeled large cloves upright with the root part on the bottom in one inch of soil and then fill the pot, covering the cloves completely.

BE SURE to water after planting and place the pot in a location where it will receive 14 hours of light each day. A tiny green shoot will begin to appear in about 7-10 days. The shoots are tall enough to cut and eat when they are about three inches high.

If you are bothered by ants, try rubbing garlic on the floor over their passageway. Some local gardeners grow cabbage. Here is a trick for a double

crop. When you cut the head of cabbage, leave enough of the large outer leaves and central core to permit continued growth. Then water, fertilize and mulch it as needed, as if it were a new plant and it will surprise you with its will to live.

The new little cabbage heads will mature in late fall. Just in time for soups on chilly days. The cores are pale green, leafy and tender, not light like the primary head, but still good for slaws and cooking.

THE OUTER leaves are the dark green denoting good nutrition. They're best either in stir-fries or soups. Even if the initial cabbage head is damaged, you may harvest another crop if you do it carefully in this manner. Remember, don't disturb the root of the plant. The small (second crop) heads will develop in a cluster and there may be three to six heads per plant.

An herb you will enjoy is lovage, which smells and tastes like celery. It is a good substitute for celery and is easy to grow. Lovage is a perennial and can grow to be five feet tall. It likes a sunny spot but also does well in semi-shade.

You don't have to use as much lovage in your foods because the flavor is very pungent. What a treat to use this herb from your garden to enhance a soup for a soup and salad supper on a busy day. Dried lovage seeds may be used much like celery seeds in rolls, breads, cookies and

down to earth
Alice Burlingame
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