

# Pianist Flavio Varani changing his style

By Avigdor Zaromp  
special writer

The first Julius Chajes Series concert featured pianist Flavio Varani. This series, at the DeRoy Auditorium of the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield, is dedicated to

the memory of Julius Chajes, pianist, teacher and composer.

Varani was born in Brazil and studied in France under some distinguished teachers, including Magda Tagliaferro. He is artist-in-residence at Oakland University. In addition to

his performances abroad, he is a frequent artist in local chamber events. Having heard many of his performances over the years, I noticed a significant shift in his approach. His intense emotional involvement with the music, which manifested itself through excessive pounding and raw

force in the earlier stages, now tends to be redirected into more subtle channels.

In the opening Schumann work, "Forest Scenes," some of the former passion was still apparent. This, combined with some nervousness,

resulted in passages that alternated between excessively bold and over-hesitant. A better equilibrium was reached in the final scenes.

In Ravel's "Ondine," from "Gaspard de la Nuit," he appeared more at ease even though there were still some occasional rough edges. The pieces by Chajes, Valse Sentimentale and an Israeli Dance, seemed to have a calming effect that lasted into the second portion of the program.

The Valse, an early work, is very Chopinesque and suggests little of Chajes's later, mature style. The Israeli Dance, combines traditional Israeli harmonies and motifs with more formal and sophisticated musical forms. As with many of Chajes'

works, this music appeals to most listeners without being overly simplistic.

In the second portion, Varani presented works with substantial technical demands, two Etudes Tableaux by Rachmaninoff and two works by Granados. The Rachmaninoff études, Nos. 8 and 9 from Op. 39, may be of greater interest to those with more musical training.

The pieces by Granados, on the other hand, reveal a rare world of richness and ingenuity by this prominent but seldom performed Spanish composer. Here, Varani seemed to be at his best. This event left the audience with a sense of well being, an inevitable result of a program well done.

## Museum's Rivera Court reopens

The Rivera Court of the Detroit Institute of Arts recently opened after three months on intensive renovation. The 37 panels of the "Detroit Industry" frescoes, which the renowned Mexican muralist, Diego Rivera, did in 1933, were cleaned last fall. Lucienne Bloch and Stephen Dinstroff, who assisted Rivera on the original project, spent six weeks removing dirt and grime with the help of two apprentices.

A second phase of improvement involved adding new skylight glass, multi-purpose lighting, new flooring and the cleaning of all travertine surfaces and trellises.

The existing skylight structure was reinforced with white aluminum mullions, then filled with ultraviolet-shielding double pane glass. It possesses a light transmittance factor of approximately 50 percent. The glass and new climate control (heating, ventilating and air conditioning system) will eliminate extreme temperature fluctuations.

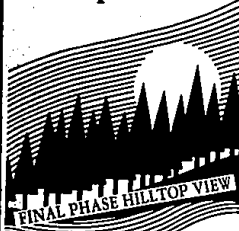
The fountain-pool, installed for the 1950s, has been removed and the area floored with pale Missouri Carthage marble and Pewabic tiles. A compass rose medallion, inspired by the directional motif that Rivera painted on the west wall, is in the

center of the rectangular floor. Circular tile inserts at the east and west ends of the floor were commissioned this year from Pewabic Pottery. The volcano motif on them represent the element of fire and complement the floor tiles in the adjacent Great Hall. Fiberglass floor planters faced with travertine replace the plate glass barriers which formerly pro-

TECTED the lowest register of the frescoes.

The Rivera Court is open during regular museum hours, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday, 5200 Woodward, Detroit.

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