

# Local pianist to play on global stage

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Internationally recognized pianist Flavio Varani's summer concerting schedule keeps growing as the Birmingham resident prepares to tour Latin America, Japan, Germany, Brazil, Venezuela and Ecuador this summer.

What began as a two-week tour of Japan as a soloist with the Vienna Chamber Ensemble will extend through the entire month of June.

Varani looks forward to his plane touching down on Japanese soil. He knows from past experience how exciting it is to visit this Far Eastern culture. Last November he spent three weeks concertizing his way through Tokyo, Toyama and Ishinomaki.

He traveled by bullet train, performing in new concert halls outfitted with the latest technology. In one hall the program called for a more intimate, chamber-like setting. With the touch of a button, the entire seating area moved closer to the stage.

Backstage, adoring fans brought flowers and cake. They wanted to shake his hand and have their photographs taken with him.

"It was a very pleasant experi-

ence. It's not because it's fashionable to like things Oriental. There's something about Japan, it's something about Japanese," the native Brazilian said.

The Japanese immigrated to Sao Paulo before World War I. They brought peaches, Kabuki plays and kimonos. I remember awakening Sunday mornings to their music. Culture is really a learned process. When people react accordingly, it blossoms."

**Early interest**  
Varani's fascination for foreign cultures was instilled early. A child prodigy at age 10, he toured with the Brazilian National Symphony. By 13, he was studying in Paris with the legendary Magda Tagliaferro. While in Europe he performed in Austria, Germany, Italy and Poland. At 18, Varani won first prize in the Chopin International Competition in Malaga, Spain.

At 20, he came to America, completing his studies at The Juilliard School in New York City with Rosina Lwinne, and Manhattan School of Music with Arthur Balsam and Dora Zaslovsky. He has toured extensively throughout Europe as well as South and North America as a soloist. All along the way he steeped

himself in multicultural experiences.

"It's an incredible desire to be part of culture, not for lack of culture but because we learn the little ways, the little traditions of different cultures."

On his return trip to Japan Varani will be packing Gayle's Chocolates among other hometown delights as gifts. Last fall when touring he learned of the generous tradition of gift giving as Japanese endowed him with a porcelain plate, handpainted handkerchief and summer robe.

"Everybody carries shopping bags for gifts," he said, delighted by the tradition.

## World view

Varani isn't alone in his fascination with foreign cultures. It seems people around the world long to savor them as well. One of his most interesting experiences occurred when a piano technician invited Varani home to perform for his sister.

"It was a piece of France, French furniture, paintings, in the heart of Tokyo."

Next to concertizing, in his heart, is teaching. He was deeply touched when one of his former

piano students traveled five hours by car to hear him perform Bach, Chopin and Ravel.

"I consider myself a concert pianist who teaches. The best best thing I can do as a performer is teach. All my tours are with master classes."

In between countries and concerts the multilingual Varani will stop in Germany, where he will serve as artistic director as well as professor at the fourth International Chamber Music Academy taking place this year in Hammelburg. When he returns home in October it will be to his 20-year position as professor of music and artist-in-residence at Oakland University in Rochester.

"As a concert pianist, Flavio is among the best I've ever known. He has musical vision. He knows what he's trying to say. He communicates that to the audience, and he brings that back to the classroom," said Karl Boelter, chairman of the music, theater and dance department.

"Flavio Varani is an asset to the university in general. He spreads the name of Oakland University around the world, furthering the university's image as an arts center."



DIAN BAKER

**World tour:**  
Flavio Varani of Birmingham, professor of music and artist in residence at Oakland University in Rochester, will perform in concerts around the globe this summer.

## Reaction

In concert halls throughout the world, the demonstration of enthusiasm for a performer varies, Varani said.

"We make more noise. The Japanese, you can sense it in their faces. Noise is impolite there. Brazil is very noisy. It's personal. Latin American kids come to the

concert in their jeans."

In a world where CDs bring the concert hall into your living room, music performed live still has the edge, according to Varani.

"There's nothing like live performance, to see human spirit at work. Human communication is still very important."

## Learn how

### to handcolor

The Paint Creek Center for the Arts offers a one-day adult workshop on handcoloring 6:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 10. Learn to handcolor black and white photographs. For more information, call the PCCA at (810) 651-4110.

**Looking For A Great Rate?**

Look no further. At Fleet Mortgage, we provide a wide variety of home financing options, including fixed and adjustable loans, at clearly competitive rates. And our customer service is visibly superior.

If you're looking for a few good rates, focus on Fleet Mortgage Group.

38777 Six Mile Road • Livonia, Michigan 48152  
Suite 305 (313) 462-0404

**Fleet Mortgage Group**  
Nobody Funds More Possibilities

Fleet Mortgage Group operates through two subsidiaries: Fleet Mortgage Corp. and Fleet First Credit Funding. The above APR is not guaranteed. Loan rate based on 10% due 1/10/94 and was effective 5/3/94. The rate and other terms are subject to change without notice.

**ARK**  
GROUP INC.

**FINANCIAL**  
6735 Telegraph • Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301

- Lock & Float Down
- Pre Approvals
- Low Down Payments
- No Income Verification
- Flexible Credit Requirements
- Friendly Personal Service

**646-1000**

**Pine Lake**  
Lake Front Living

• Private Peninsula • Gated Entry • All Sports Lake • Bloomfield Hills Schools

A Ron Mayotte design. 6232 sq. ft., 3 fireplaces, 4 bedrooms, 5 1/2 baths, spa, sauna, den, Florida room, greenhouse, boat dock. Lake views from every room. Easy access to I-76.

If you are looking for casual sophistication in a private, secure, and serene setting, come see this beautiful home.

**FOR APPOINTMENT CALL**  
**RALPH MANUEL 647-7100**

**Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Real Estate But Were Afraid To Ask**

Call For Free, Private Consultation

- Current Market Conditions
- Mortgage Information
- Market Analysis

**689-7300**  
**WEIR, MANUEL, SNYDER & RANKE**

**GIVE BLOOD, PLEASE.**

American Red Cross

**The MICHIGAN GROUP REALTORS®**  
**851-4100**  
7499 MIDDLEBELT RD. WEST BLOOMFIELD

**OUTSTANDING Contemporary home** located in Chubbard Village in WEST BLOOMFIELD. 4 bedrooms, 4 1/2 baths, finished lower level walkout with full kitchen. A REAL VALUE! \$256,000 CH40 (408000)

**A DRAMATIC WEST BLOOMFIELD CONTEMPORARY** 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 2 story. Ceramic floor, hallway & powder room. Oak kitchen with almond counter tops & pickled flooring. Family room with wall to wall fireplace & pickled flooring. 1st quality craftsmanship. \$243,866 TH42 (410234)

**WEST BLOOMFIELD, Beautiful & Spacious built ranch** with nearly 2,700 sq. ft. of living space. Great kitchen for entertaining. Fieldstone fireplace in family room. Many updates including hardwood flooring throughout. Newly landscaped lot on private street. \$118,000 DL42 (412571)

**FARMINGTON HILLS RANCH** With great layout. Huge family room with fireplace. Many updates. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths. Corporate lot. Must see! \$129,000 RE28 (404665)

**IMPRESSIVE Executive's home** in the heart of WEST BLOOMFIELD. Formal dining room, island kitchen, finished lower level basement with walkout. West Bloomfield Schools. Lake privileges & more! \$320,000 FA30 (418775)

**SENSATIONAL 2 story in WEST BLOOMFIELD.** Landscaped naturally & perfectly. Shimmering entry opens to gracious oak living room & dining room. Blackless kitchen. 1st quality craftsmanship. \$225,000 LA21 (418203)

**LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!** 4 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath FARMINGTON HILLS home in the heart of Country Ridge! Only 2 years old! 4 bedrooms, dining & family room plus library. Numerous upgrades. Move in condition. \$259,800 MY30 (422831)

**GREAT TRI-LEVEL in FARMINGTON HILLS** with many newer items. Master suite, freshly painted exterior, central air, fireplace & an outstanding lot! \$118,900 CA37 (421802)

**COLONIAL MANOR LAKEFRONT.** On prestigious Upper Branch Lake in WEST BLOOMFIELD. Includes investment value. Wonderful WEST BLOOMFIELD family home for the sports & entertainment minded. \$299,000 CO47 (414302)

**BLOOMFIELD HILLS SCHOOLS** Gorgeous 2 1/2 bath WEST BLOOMFIELD colonial on cul-de-sac setting. Updated kitchen, finished basement, ceramic tile floor. Large deck overlooks panoramic view & much more! \$217,900 BU33 (423259)

**ONE OF A KIND - SOUTHFIELD** brick ranch designed uniquely with solar windows across the back. 2 full baths, master suite with bath, full finished basement. Wonderful open floor plan. Call for your private showing. \$165,900 CO17 (412164)

**WOODED PRIVACY** Across the border than new 4 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath colonial in WEST BLOOMFIELD. Open spacious floor plan, cathedral ceilings. 2 story foyer, library. Call today! \$174,900 CA15 (422638)

**ONLY THE BEST Materials** were used. Custom WEST BLOOMFIELD contemporary 2 story. Great room & 4 way fireplace in kitchen. Large kitchen with custom cabinets & butler's pantry. 4 bedrooms, master bedroom with custom closet, full bath with view of nature pond! \$248,000 JA40 (405318)

**LOOKING FOR THE BEST? HERE IT IS!** Desirable West Bloomfield Lake Estates colonial in WEST BLOOMFIELD with natural landscaping, 3 story foyer, great room & dining room, full wall brick fireplace, master 20' x 16' deck, circular floor plan & much more! \$188,900 VB40 (420980)

**PERFECT FOR SINGLES OR YOUNG COUPLE.** Great contemporary Lake Estates colonial in WEST BLOOMFIELD with natural landscaping, 3 bedrooms, large family room, FARMINGTON HILLS schools with private yard, deck, air conditioning & full kitchen appliances & more! \$147,900 BU34 (417083)

**ABSOLUTELY GORGEOUS!** 4 bedroom, 2 full plus 3 half bath WEST BLOOMFIELD colonial with 3,400 sq. ft. decorated & updated throughout. Extra large master suite, large kitchen with eating area, formal dining room, practically finished basement, Birmingham Schools. \$234,900 SF19 (422483)