



Henry Wong Doe, Pianist

Henry Wong Doe - Biography

“Pianism in a whole different league, namely: art”. These words from Tel Aviv’s Ha’aretz illustrate Henry Wong Doe’s sincerity and passion for music. Since winning “Audience Favorite” prizes at both the Arthur Rubinstein and Busoni International Piano Competitions, Henry continues to engage audiences with thoughtful programming and insightful performances.

Henry Wong Doe has performed in Carnegie Hall, New York, Heinz Hall, Pittsburgh, Esplanade-Theatres on the Bay Singapore, St.Martin-in-the-Fields, London, U.K., the Sydney Opera House in Australia and Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv, Israel. He has been a featured artist at the Busoni International Piano Festival in Bolzano, Italy, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Series in Chicago, USA and the Brussels Piano Festival in Belgium.

Henry has performed with noted orchestras such as the Pittsburgh Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Australian Chamber, and Israel Philharmonic, and collaborated with conductors Christopher Hogwood, Mendi Rodan, Fabio Mechetti and Edvard Tschivzel. Appearances on television and radio include BBC Radio 3 (UK), ABC Classics FM and Channel 9 (Australia), Concert FM and TVNZ (New Zealand), WNYC Radio (New York), WFMT Radio (Chicago), WQED Radio (Pittsburgh), RTBF and Canal La Deux (Belgium), and Kolhamusica (The Musical Voice) Israel.

A native of New Zealand, Henry Wong Doe has performed with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Auckland Chamber Orchestra and Christchurch Symphony Orchestras. Working with acclaimed conductors such as as Fabio Mechetti, Michael Christie, Piero Bellugi and Tobias Ringborg, he has performed concerti by Prokofieff, Mozart, Grieg, Stravinsky, Hindemith and Beethoven, and Rachmaninoff. In the United States, Henry was invited to perform Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

An avid performer of contemporary music, Henry's debut performance at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 2008 featured solo and interactive works for piano and computer-controlled piano. An equally passionate supporter of new music from New Zealand, both his 2008 and 2012 recitals at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall featured solo and chamber works by composer Gareth Farr.

Henry Wong Doe has released seven recordings on the Trust, Rattle, Klavier and HR Recordings labels. Four of the seven albums feature new or recently composed New Zealand music. His albums have been featured on New Zealand’s Concert FM radio programme, WNYC Radio New York and received critical acclaim in The New Zealand Herald, New Zealand Listener and Classics Today magazine (USA). Henry's chamber recordings include an album for Klavier Records (K11193) of woodwind chamber music with the Ksytson Chamber Winds, and two albums (E161HR, E162HR) for HR Recordings of rediscovered works for cello and piano with Michael Kevin Jones, cello.

Most recently, Henry was awarded a Creative NZ (Arts Council of New Zealand) Arts Grant for his commissioning and recording project, *Perspectives*. This project features six new works for piano by New Zealand composers, with the goal to illustrate each composer's perspective of the last few years. This project will be recorded and released on Rattle Records in November 2023.

Born in Auckland, New Zealand, Henry Wong Doe received his early training from Susan Smith-Gaddis, followed by Bryan Sayer at the University of Auckland. In the United States, he received a Masters degree from Indiana University Bloomington, studying with Evelyne Brancart and Leonard Hokanson, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School, studying with Joseph Kalichstein. His doctoral dissertation “Musician or Machine: The Player piano and composers of the Twentieth Century” examined the influence of the player piano on the works of Stravinsky, Hindemith, Nancarrow and Ligeti. A passionate educator as well as performer, Henry Wong Doe serves on the music faculty as Professor of Piano and Keyboard Area Chair at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. When away from the piano he enjoys snow skiing, jogging and playing tennis.

Ringborg's love for music shows

Could there be a more deliciously tempting overture than Samuel Barber's *School for Scandal*, the American's effervescent orchestral debut at the age of 21?

Tobias Ringborg certainly made it so with Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and the tingle of expectation running through a packed Auckland Town Hall augurs well for the Swedish maestro when he conducts NZ Opera's *La Boheme* next month.

After Barber's teasing flurries and darting wit, Rachmaninov's popular Second Piano Concerto dealt out more primal emotions, Russian style.

Soloist Henry Wong Doe took on its many challenges with ease, unruffled by

Classical review

What: Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra – Rachmaninov Piano Concerto 2

Where: Auckland Town Hall

Reviewed by: William Dart

glittering passagework and bringing just the right heft to forests of chords.

There was admirable restraint in the *Adagio sostenuto*, making us forget its melody's later pop notoriety while reminding us that it is still one of music's most beautiful nocturnes this side of Chopin.

Doe's encore was the perfect sorbet after a solid

main course: a cool, chiselled take on Eve Castro-Robinson's *White Interior*.

If Ringborg drew some impressive sounds from his orchestra for Rachmaninov, nothing was held back for Erich Korngold's sumptuous 1952 symphony.

Inevitably, with the APO horns in fine fettle, there were moments that might have accompanied film-star Errol Flynn in his swashbuckling heyday, along with bewitching evocations of very Teutonic fairylands.

Ringborg obviously loves this music and it showed, conveying the gladiatorial tussle of its scherzo as well as the elemental power of a slow movement that tributes the late Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The New Zealand Herald

August 13, 2018

William Dart

"Soloist Henry Wong Doe took on its many challenges with ease, unruffled by glittering passagework...There was admirable restraint in the *Adagio Sostenuto*..."

Two resounding recordings from Rattle - classics and a feisty newcomer

(Excerpt)

Henry Wong Doe premiered de Castro Robinson's work, along with the Mussorgsky, at a "Music on Madison Series" concert in New York on March 5th 2017, and a month later repeated the combination for the New Zealand premiere in Auckland at the School of Music Theatre. His experience of playing this music "live" would have almost certainly informed the sharpness of his characterisations of the individual pieces, and their almost theatrical contrasts. For the most part, everything lives and breathes, especially the de Castro Robinson pieces, which, of course, carry no interpretative "baggage" for listeners, unlike in the Mussorgsky work, which has become a staple of the virtuoso pianist repertoire.

The pianist relishes the contrasts afforded by the cycle, such as between the charm of the Tuileries scene with the children, and the momentarily lumbering and crunching "Bydlo" which immediately follows. He also characterises the interactive subjects beautifully – the accents of the gossiping women in "The Market-Place at Limoges" tumble over one another frenetically, while the piteous cries of the poor Jew in "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle" are sternly rebuffed by his well-heeled, uncaring contemporary.

I liked Wong Doe's sense of spaciousness in many places, such as in the spectral "Catacombs", and in the following "Con Mortuis in lingua mortua" (the composer's schoolboy Latin still manages to convey a sense of the transcendence he wanted) – the first, imposing part delineating darkness and deathly finality, while the second part creating a communion of spirits between the composer and his dead artist friend – Wong Doe's playing throughout the latter properly evoked breathless beauty and an almost Lisztian transcendence generated by the right hand's figurations.)

Following Mussorgsky's classic depiction of diverse works of art in music with another such creation might seem to many a foolhardy venture, one destined to be overshadowed. However, after listening to Wong Doe's playing of Auckland composer Eve de Castro Robinson's 2016 work, *A Zigzagged Gaze*, I'm bound to say that, between them, composer and pianist have brought into being something that can, I think, stand upright, both on its own terms and in such company. I listened without a break to all ten pieces first time up, and, like Mussorgsky at Viktor Hartmann's exhibition, found myself in a tantalising network of connection and diversity between objects and sounds all wanting to tell their stories.

As I live with this music I'm sure I'll develop each of the composer's explorations within my own capabilities, and still be surprised where and how far some of them take me. On first hearing I'm struck by the range of responses, and mightily diverted by the whimsy of some of the visual/musical combinations – the "gargantuan millefiori paperweight" response to artist Rohan Wealleans' "Tingler" in sound, for example. I'm entertained by the persistent refrains of Philip Trusttum's "The Troubadour", the vital drollery of Miranda Parkes' "Trick-or-Treater" and the rousing strains of Jacqueline Fahey's "The Passion Flower". But in other moods I'll relish the gentle whimsicalities inspired by Josephine Cachemaille's "Diviner and Minder" with its delight in human reaction to small, inert things, and the warm/cool beauties of Jim Speers' "White Interior", a study of simply being.

Most haunting for me, on first acquaintance, however, are "Return", with Vincent Ward's psychic interior depiction beautifully reflected in de Castro Robinson's deep resonances and cosmos-like spaces between light and darkness, and the concluding tranquilities of the initially riotous and unequivocal rendering of Judy Miller's "Big Pink Shimmering One", where the composer allows the listener at the end space alone with oneself to ponder imponderables, the moment almost Rimbaud-like in its powerful "Après le déluge, c'est moi!" realisation.

Henry Wong Doe's playing is, here, beyond reproach to my ears – it all seems to me a captivating fusion of reactivity and execution, the whole beautifully realised by producer Kenneth Young and the Rattle engineers. I can't recommend the disc more highly on the score of Eve de Castro-Robinson's work alone, though Wong Doe's performance of the Mussorgsky is an enticing bonus.

Full review: <http://middle-c.org/2018/02/two-resounding-recordings-from-rattle-classics-and-a-feisty-newcomer/>
(sample screenshot overleaf)

Middle C
February 23, 2018
Peter Mechen

"Henry Wong Doe's playing is, here, beyond reproach to my ears - it all seems to me a captivating fusion of reactivity and execution..."



Two resounding recordings from Rattle – classics and a feisty newcomer

By **Peter Mechen**, 23/02/2018

DAVID FARQUHAR – RING ROUND THE MOON

Sonatina – piano (1960) / Three Pieces – violin and piano (1967)

Black, White and Coloured – solo piano (selections – 1999/2002)

Swan Songs for voice and guitar (1983)

Dance Suite from “Ring Round the Moon” (1957 arr. 2002)

Jian Liu (piano) / Martin Riseley (violin)

Jenny Wollerman (soprano) / Jane Curry (guitar)

Rattle RAT-D062 2015

PICTURES

MODEST MUSSORGSKY – Pictures at an Exhibition

EVE De CASTRO ROBINSON – A Zigzagged Gaze

Henry Wong Doe (piano)

Rattle RAT-D072 2017

How best does one describe a “classic” in art, and specifically in music?

10 classical CDs of the year

Our classical music reviewer **William Dart** selects his top 10 recordings of the past 12 months



1 Wagner, Siegfried (Naxos)
The third instalment of the Naxos Ring Cycle once again brings Bayreuth's legendary opera house spectacularly into your lounge. The bonus this time around, alongside the assured baton of Jaap van Zweden at the helm of his Hong Kong Philharmonic, is New Zealand's celebrated heidentenor, Simon O'Neill, in prime form singing the title role.

2 Veni Domine (Deutsche Grammophon)
The Sistine Chapel Choir, under Massimo Palombella, celebrates Christmas with a Renaissance serenity, recorded under Michelangelo's lofty visions of Heaven. The usually flamboyant mezzo Cecilia Bartoli joins in for just one offering, a 13th century piece of

Gothic chill-out, inevitably imbued with a warm Italianate glow.

3 Trio Da Kall & Kronos Quartet, Ladilikan (World Circuit)
The world's most adventurous string quartet blends strings with the intoxicating rhythms and song of Mali's Trio Da Kall. This hip adventure in crossover already has its first single up on YouTube. It's music for the hips, heart and soul with Hawa Kasse Mady Diabate's magisterial vocals and the hypnotic jive of fiddles and African xylophone.

4 Jade String Quartet, ParLOUR Games (Rattle, through Ode Records)
Meanwhile, in Auckland, the Jade String Quartet has helped a Kiwi quartet tradition thrive

with regular commissions and performances. ParLOUR Games presents eight composers, ranging from the avant-garde texture play of a Karlo Margetic miniature to a buoyant and full-scale score by John Elmsly.

5 Henry Wong Doe, Pictures (Rattle, through Ode Records)
The drawcard for many here will be the young New Zealand pianist's energetic account of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, considerably more relaxed and finessed than it was in his April concert. But the ultimate triumph is local, with composer Eve de Castro-Robinson's A Zigzagged Gaze offering witty and ingenious responses to 10 New Zealand visual artists.

6 Requiem for the Fallen (Atofi, through Ode Records)
This centenary tribute to the heroes of the Great War is powerfully laid out in words and music by Vincent O'Sullivan and Ross Harris. It's a moving piece of choral theatre, gloriously rendered by Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir, the New Zealand String Quartet and the shivery taonga puoro of Horomona Horo.

7 Bach Trios (Nonesuch)
Yo-Yo Ma, Edgar Meyer and Chris Thile bring their cello, bass and mandolin combo to the cool counterpoint of the great Bach. Not surprisingly, there are nods to both jazz and bluegrass, but the trio's crisscrossing tune trails do ample justice to the German

composer's cool, linear beauties.

8 Bach, Goldberg Variations (Deutsche Grammophon)
Mahan Esfahani's brilliant take on Bach's mammoth set of variations carried off some big prizes in 2016 but we waited until this year for a local release, occasioned by the harpsichordist's appearance with Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. This 70-minute masterpiece may have been written as a cure for insomnia but there's no nodding off with Esfahani's meld of exquisite musicianship and playful chutzpah.

9 Shostakovich, Violin Concertos (BIS, through Ode Records)
Dmitri Shostakovich poured so

many aspects of his life into his two decades apart for his friend David Oistrakh. While Oistrakh's original recordings remain benchmarks, Frank Peter Zimmermann, with different Strad for each concerto, reconciles the wild, the edgy and the poignant.

10 Bela Bartok, Complete String Quartets (Harmonia Mundi, through Ode Records)
This vigorous new recording of Bartok's six string quartets is the perfect reminder that the Heath Quartet is visiting us next June. If Mahler felt that his symphonies laid out a whole world, then so do these works and the English musicians catch this in all its tragedy, witfulness and humour.

The New Zealand Herald
December 18, 2017
William Dart

"The drawcard for many here will be the young New Zealand pianist's energetic account of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition...But the ultimate triumph is local, with composer Eve de Castro-Robinson's A Zigzagged Gaze..."

Intimate venue adds punch to tasty works

Auckland Chamber Orchestra, under the admirable Peter Scholes, set off tonight with a welcome taste of the local.

Leonie Holmes' *Aquae Sulis* weaves expansive atmospheres, inspired by mythological mysteries and a resonating landscape.

Smaller forces might not replicate the lushness of the work's New Zealand Symphony Orchestra recording, but an intimate venue brought new focus. Muscular textures had thrust and immediacy; elsewhere there was chamber music clarity and memorable solos from Luca Manghi and Greg McGarity.

Preludes and Fugue by Lutoslawski offered an equally appreciated sampling of the 1970s avant-garde, too little heard.

A circle of 17 string players tore open a Pandora's Box of startling sonorities. Occasionally solo lines were cruelly exposed, but, en masse, the musicians caught its unswerving momentum, through to the slippery slopes of a glissando-laden Fugue.

Pianist Henry Wong Doe

Concert review

● **What:** Auckland Chamber Orchestra

● **Where:** Raye Freedman Arts Centre

● **When:** Sunday

● **Reviewer:** William Dart



Henry Wong Doe

has played brilliant Stravinsky and Hindemith with the ACO; tonight he transferred

the same verve and vigour to Mozart's D minor Concerto.

Scholes and his orchestra shared the drama of its first movement, with beautifully turned woodwind playing and, while Wong Doe understood the swoon of Mozartian sighs, he clearly relished unleashing his full fury on two eccentric and wild Beethoven cadenzas.

His encore, an incandescent movement from Messiaen's *Vingt Regards* was a timely reminder of the mighty Messiaen feast that the NZSO brings us this Saturday.

The New Zealand Herald
July 5, 2016
William Dart

"...while Wong Doe understood the swoon of Mozartian sighs, he clearly relished unleashing his full fury on two eccentric and wild Beethoven cadenzas."

Piano notes that sound like tinkling bells

REVIEW / CONCERT

HENRY WONG DOE/piano recital
Esplanade Recital Studio/Tuesday

Chang Tou Liang

There are many fine pianists giving concerts who are not household names just because they are not named Lang Lang, New Zealander Henry Wong Doe, Juilliard graduate

and prize-winner in the Arthur Rubinstein, Busoni and Sydney International Piano Competitions, is among them. His debut recital in Singapore, which was not widely publicised, should have garnered a bigger audience.

He has an iron-clad technique that easily surmounted the most technically daunting pieces and is capable of bringing out myriad shades of the piano.

Beginning with Beethoven's brief

Sonata In F Major (Op. 54) in two movements, he highlighted its stark contrasts with much purpose and care. The genteel minuet-like opening was upstaged by a procession of marching octaves. And a breathless perpetual motion blazed the way of its second movement without missing a step.

As if to change tact, his breezy account of Liszt's long-breathed Ricordanza (the ninth of 12 Transcendental Etudes) sounded almost improvised, its lyricism and singing tone enveloping the hall with a warm glow.

This was the perfect salve for the coruscating energy of Argentine Alberto Ginastera's First Sonata,

three of its four movements being fast and brilliant expositions.

Raw power and pummelling brute force were delivered in spades in its opening movement, while the Presto Misterioso second movement ghosted like a chilly winter wind. There was a concession for quietude in the nocturnal slow movement before the finale Bartokian violence, which brought out spontaneous applause.

Further indelible impressions were made in the second half with Eve de Castro-Robinson's This Liquid Drift Of Light from Landscape Preludes, an anthology of short pieces inspired by New Zea-

land geography. Impressionistic in character, its indolent portrayal of languid lapping waters resonated in the high registers of the piano like gently tinkling bells.

More bells came to the fore with Mussorgsky's Pictures At An Exhibition. From its imposing opening Promenade, Wong's reading stood out as a brisk and no-nonsense one. One wished he could have taken more time to smell the roses, as The Old Castle sounded unsentimental, while the playful Tulleries was tarred with the same brush as the lumbering ox-cart Bydlo, which served as an early climax of sorts.

The Ballet Of Unhatched Chicks wanted for lightness, but Golden-

berg & Schmuyle (Two Polish Jews) was suitably brutal in its characterisation.

When it came to fast and furious, Baba Yaga's Hut swooped down menacingly but at that high speed, some wrong notes were inevitable. However, all came to a heady end with the grand strides of The Great Gate Of Kiev, with its deafening tintinnabulation of pealing carillons.

Wong's sole encore was a balm for the ears, Gareth Farr's The Horizon From Owhiro Bay (from Landscape Preludes) with its wind-swept climes bathed in pentatonic and gamelan-like tones. It made for a colourful conclusion to a flavoursome evening of piano music.

The Singapore Straits Times
August 6, 2015
Chang Tou Liang

"He has an iron-clad technique that easily surmounted the most technically demanding pieces and is capable of bringing out myriad shades of the piano."



Marc Castelain with **Henry WongDoe**

October 10 at 2:24pm ·

Ne ratez pas le récital que donnera Henry Wong Doe ce mardi à 20 h. dans la salle gothique de l' Hôtel de Ville de Bruxelles.

Vous connaissez beaucoup de pianistes néo-zélandais ? Henry est un professeur renommé aussi de l' Indiana University . Vous connaissez beaucoup de pianistes qui cumulent ces deux distinctions.

Henry vient de donner trois récitals à Prétoria et il vient de jouer le programme qu'il donne à Bruxelles à Singapour.

C'est un honneur rare que de recevoir Henry à Bruxelles. Et à titre personnel, j'ajouterais que c'est un homme charmant.

Nous aurons une première audition en Belgique d'une oeuvre d'un compositeur néo-zélandais, Gareth Farr.

Mardi soir, à l' Hôtel de Ville : il faut y être.

[See Translation](#)



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Marc Castelain (via Facebook)
Artistic Director, Brussels
Piano Festival
October 10, 2015
(translation overleaf)

"It is a rare honor for us to host Henry in Brussels. [His recital is] on Tuesday night at the Hotel d'Ville: we need to be there."

Don't miss the recital that Henry Wong Doe will give this Tuesday at 8:00pm in the Gothic Hall of the Hotel de Ville in Brussels.

Do you know a lot of pianists from New Zealand? Henry is also a renowned professor at Indiana University. You know a lot of pianists who combine these two distinctions. Henry just gave three recitals in Pretoria and he will play the same program in Brussels that he did in Singapore. It is a rare honor for us to host Henry in Brussels. And on a personal note, I would add that he is a wonderful man. We look forward to the first hearing of a work by a New Zealand composer: Gareth Farr. Tuesday night at the City Hall: we need to be there.

Marc Castelain,
Artistic Director
Brussels Piano Festival
October 10, 2015 via Facebook

ACO's corker performance

Musical director Peter Scholes brought two modern pieces and a rare piano concerto, given energy by Henry Wong Doe (inset).

Main picture / Claire Scholes



Bold contrasts make for an electric concert

In the wake of three memorable Town Hall orchestral concerts featuring repertoire no more recent than 1940, Auckland Chamber Orchestra's Sunday programme reassured us that today's composers are alive, well and writing for classical big bands.

ACO's music director Peter Scholes had not only searched out Anna Clyne's 2009 *Within Her Arms* and Unsuk Chin's 2013 *Graffiti*, but placed them on either side of Hindemith's rarely heard *Kammermusik No 2*.

This 1924 Piano Concerto was set off like a firecracker by the flamboyantly capable Henry Wong Doe, leading the hip players around him on a frisky game of musical tag.

While energies never let up on the musicians' part, Hindemith's harmonically spicy bonhomie did lose some of its fizz by the finale. However, we had been amply rewarded by a bittersweet slow movement, not to mention a devilishly witty scherzo that might have given Poulenc and his Parisian bon vivants cause for envy. After a prodigiously

Music review

What: Auckland Chamber Orchestra
Where: Raye Freedman Arts Centre
When: Sunday
Reviewer: William Dart

taxing 20 minutes, Wong Doe enchanted us with a delicately spun rendition of Eve de Castro-Robinson's *this liquid drift of light*.

The evening had opened with *Within Her Arms*, a lament for strings every bit as poignant as the celebrated Barber *Adagio*.

The noted conductor Riccardo Muti has praised Clyne for reaching across all barriers and borders and the ACO players, led by Dimitri Atanassov, communicated well her singularly fragile world.

Fleeting tinges of tentativeness seemed only to add to the sense of vulnerability that this score evokes.

Finally, there was the thrill of the new with Unsuk Chin's *Graffiti*, premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic less than two years ago. This major-league Korean composer is virtually unknown here and it was cheering to see this New Zealand premiere receiving a thumbs-up on her publisher's website.

Chin's response to the phenomenon of street art prompts a glorious outpouring of colour, with bold contrasts of the fierce and furtive in its opening movement.

A massive wall of percussion, visually dominating the stage, underlined the work's often unpredictable flurries and gestures, immensely enjoyed by musicians and audience at this corker concert.

The New Zealand Herald
June 23, 2015
William Dart

"This 1924 Piano Concerto was set off like a firecracker by the flamboyantly capable Henry Wong Doe...[he also] enchanted us with a delicately spun rendition of Eve de Castro-Robinson's *this liquid drift of light*."

CLASSICAL

Fine things

Strong offerings from New Zealand and beyond.

by IAN DANDO



PRINCE IGOR, Soloists, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Chorus and Ballet (Deutsche Grammophon, two DVDs). Even Rimsky-Korsakov's and Glazunov's hurried patch-up job did little

to improve the mess Borodin left this work in on his death in 1887. Now Metropolitan Opera Orchestra producer Dmitri Tcherniakov and conductor Gianandrea Noseda launch their new edition here.

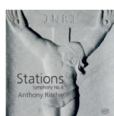
Psychology of war dominates blood-and-guts reality. We think more deeply about its futility, especially if you're on the losing side like Igor. The barbaric war cries of Polovtsian Dances now have Igor (bass Ildar Abdrazakov) fantasising over erotic pleasures in a field of red poppies as an alternative to pro patria fighting.

Traditional dynamic action towards denouement is replaced by large static blocks that maintain their separateness. Some sprawl, such as the finale and the drunken meleé. Although that prevents it equalling its two peers – Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* – this substantial makeover lifts *Prince Igor* from its past exorcism to a



Prince Igor: a modern makeover.

strong mainstream bequest for today's opera houses.



ANTHONY RITCHIE: STATIONS SYMPHONY NO 4, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra/Tom Woods (Atoll/Ode). Ritchie's work draws a parallel

between Christchurch's earthquake-related sufferings and those of Christ, his messianic feelings made more intense by the reality of the city's wrecked Anglican cathedral and the Catholic Basilica given his involvement with them as a chorister and composer.

Of the 14 sections in this one-movement, non-stop structure, nine are sung by the powerful soprano Jenny Wollerman. The other five are purely orchestral. Two have quotations: from a Palestrina *Crucifixus* and Bach's *St John Passion*. The

cross-referencing of *Crucifixus* across to the finale builds up intense dissonance to end the strongest CD from a New Zealand composer to come my way this year.



LANDSCAPE PRELUDES, Henry Wong Doe (Rattle). This is one of the finest Kiwi composition compilations I've heard. Standouts include

the meditative chordal ballade style of Gillian Whitehead's *Arapatiki*; the lively toccata of Lyell Cresswell's *Chiaroscuro*; Jack Body's understated drollery in *The Street Where I Live* for piano and narrator; and the two-part counterpoint of line and chords in the pointillism of *Machine Noises* with its neatly acronymic ending, by Michael Norris, my favourite younger writer. There's not one dud among Doe's imaginatively interpreted lot. ■

The New Zealand Listener
December 4, 2014
Ian Dando

"This is one of the finest Kiwi composition compilations I've heard...there's not one dud among [Wong Doe's] imaginatively interpreted lot."

A 21st-Century New Zealand Piano Landscape

Artistic Quality: 9/10

Sound Quality: 9/10

Landscape Preludes consists of 12 piano pieces composed between 2003 and 2007 by 12 different composers from New Zealand. They were commissioned by the New Zealand-based pianist Stephen De Pledge, who also gave their premieres. Their first CD recording, however, features another pianist, Henry Wong Doe, a New Zealand native based in the United States. While the works draw inspiration from different aspects of New Zealand's varied and colorful landscape, you don't have to know that to approach the music on its own terms—with perhaps one exception: Jack Body's *The Street Where I Live*, which superimposes a steadily intoned spoken text on top of the piano writing. To be honest, the "speaking pianist" genre works best when the vocal and instrumental components interact and give each other space; here, however, the unvarying consistency of the spoken part becomes predictable and fatiguing. But the selections are appreciably varied, well crafted for piano, and offer much of interest.

Gillian Whitehead's *Arapatiki* weaves together Messiaen-like dissonance and bare-bones triadic harmony, while Ross Harris' sparser *Piano Prelude* mainly occupies the keyboard's higher register. Protracted, spacious writing is interspersed with brilliant virtuosic flourishes in Lyle Cresswell's *Chiaroscuro*. On one level Gareth Farr's *A Horizon from Owhiro Bay* is a rambling tribute to Debussy's *Pagodes*, yet some listeners will warm to its accessible language and communicative immediacy. Dylan Lardelli claims *Reign* to be inspired by Bach's polyphony, but you wouldn't know that from its lively yet austere and not particularly charming idiom.

The delicate sound world of Eve De Castro-Robinson's *This Liquid Drift of Light* unfolds with shapely deliberation, leading to a climax so carefully orchestrated that it sounds louder and texturally fuller than it is. While I appreciate the narrative energy of Samuel Holloway's *Terrain vague*, I'm less enamored of its seemingly static use of clusters. At first John Psathas' *Sleeper* struck me as a kinder, gentler, and far shorter rewrite of John Adams' *Phrygian Gates*, yet its repeated phrases and harmonic trajectory are anything but formulaic.

After Michael Norris' lean and percussive *Machine Noises* comes Jenny McLeod's *Tone Clock Piece XVIII—Landscape Prelude*, whose lyrical, introspective episodes hold more appeal than its rather arid climaxes. Victoria Kelly's *Goodnight Kiwi* brings the collection to a close. It's a lovely, lyrical piece featuring floating paragraphs built from widely spaced intervals, soft cloud-like chords, lulling repeated phrases supported by changing harmonies, and attention-getting moments of silence.

In his booklet notes, Doe mentions that he learned the pieces quickly, and without referring to De Pledge's recordings (available on YouTube). He certainly seems to have mastered the notes and assimilated the music to the highest standards. No doubt that other composers are lined up at Doe's door.

Web address: <http://www.classicstoday.com/review/21st-century-new-zealand-piano-landscape/>

(sample screenshot overleaf)

ClassicsToday (New York)

Jed Distler

October 19, 2014

"[Wong Doe] certainly seems to have mastered the notes and assimilated the music to the highest standards."

To Our Readers

Coming soon in Insider: Lots of Boxes, including Martinon, Decca's Mono Years, Mercury Living Presence III, Lorin Maazel (again), Zubin Mehta, Charles Groves, and, well, just tons more cool stuff, all with sound samples.

You are here: [Home](#) » [Solo Instrumental](#) » A 21st-Century New Zealand Piano Landscape

A 21st-Century New Zealand Piano Landscape

Review by: Jed Distler



Artistic Quality: 9
Sound Quality: 9

Landscape Preludes consists of 12 piano pieces composed between 2003 and 2007 by 12 different composers from New Zealand. They were commissioned by the New Zealand-based pianist Stephen De Pledge, who also gave their premieres. Their first CD recording, however, features another pianist, Henry Wong Doe, a New Zealand native based in the United States. While the works draw inspiration from different aspects of New Zealand's varied and colorful landscape, you don't have to know that to approach the music on its own terms—with perhaps one exception: Jack Body's *The Street Where I Live*, which superimposes a steadily intoned spoken text on top of the piano writing. To be honest, the "speaking pianist" genre works best when the vocal and instrumental components interact and give each other space; here, however, the unvarying consistency of the spoken part becomes predictable and fatiguing. But the selections are appreciably varied, well crafted for piano, and offer much of interest.

Gillian Whitehead's *Arapatiki* weaves together Messiaen-like dissonance and bare-bones triadic harmony, while Ross Harris' sparser *Piano Prelude* mainly occupies the keyboard's higher register. Protracted, spacious writing is interspersed with brilliant virtuosic flourishes in Lyle Cresswell's *Chiaroscuro*. On one level Gareth Farr's *A Horizon from Owhiro Bay* is a rambling tribute to Debussy's *Pagodas*, yet some listeners will warm to its accessible language and communicative immediacy. Dylan Lardelli claims *Reign* to be inspired by Bach's polyphony, but you wouldn't know that from its lively yet austere and not particularly charming idiom.

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Henry Wong Doe - Landscape Preludes

A collaboration between Rattle Records, Victoria University Press and the Wallace Arts Trust this collection of Landscape Preludes features the exquisite playing of Henry Wong Doe as he glides and surges through work by a dozen of New Zealand's best contemporary composers. Hear him alternate between strident and playful, dancing across the lines of Jenny McLeod's Tone Clock XVIII, Victoria Kelly's Goodnight Kiwi is gorgeous – pulling at heartstrings, issuing notes of nostalgia but elsewhere Henry Wong Doe finds humour as cat and mouse-like he jousts in the lovely little spaces around Jack Body's voice as he recites a tale of buying a house and making a home on The Street Where I Live.

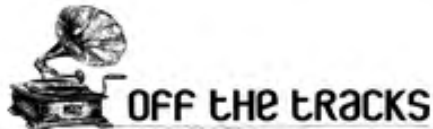
That idea of humour – a sound of humour – continues over Sleeper by John Psathas. It seems Psathas is on a roll currently, his commissioned pieces, soundtrack work and short compositions such as this all seeking to find and define new space, never repeating himself, always bringing in something new and fresh. Wong Doe's cascades across the keys help to tell a beautiful and surprising story here.

There are pieces by Dame Gillian Whitehead (the opening Arapatiki – with its nocturnal stirrings) Ross Harris, Samuel Holloway and Gareth Farr. And Wong Doe is so respectful in his playing, bringing out the sound of each composer, their voice entwined in his playing. It's a masterclass of playing styles, the equivalent of learning a new language to determine each piece and it therefore works as both a sampler to showcase Wong Doe's skills and a fine cross-section of composing styles and standout pieces from some of New Zealand's best-known contemporary composers; a must-have then for both fair-weather types and the anoraks.

Web address: <http://www.offthetracks.co.nz/henry-wong-doe-landscape-preludes/>
(sample screenshot overleaf)

Off the Tracks (Wellington)
September 22, 2014
Simon Sweetman

"...features the exquisite playing of Henry Wong Doe as he glides and surges through works by a dozen of New Zealand's best contemporary composers."



[Blog](#) [The Vinyl Countdown](#) [Back Catalogue](#) [About](#)

September 22, 2014 by [Simon Sweetman](#)

Henry Wong Doe: Landscape Preludes



Henry Wong Doe

Landscape Preludes

Rattle

A collaboration between Rattle Records, Victoria University Press and the Wallace Arts Trust **this collection of Landscape Preludes** features the exquisite playing of Henry Wong Doe as he glides and surges through work by a dozen of New Zealand's best contemporary composers. Hear him alternate between strident and playful, dancing across the lines of Jenny McLeod's *Tone Clock XVIII*, Victoria Kelly's *Goodnight Kiwi* is gorgeous – pulling at heartstrings, issuing notes of nostalgia but elsewhere Henry Wong Doe finds humour as cat and mouse-like he jousts in the lovely little spaces around Jack Body's voice as he recites a tale of buying a house and making a home on *The Street Where I Live*.



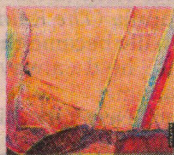
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Classic CD



William Dart
Review

★★★★★
Henry Wong Doe

Landscape Preludes
(Rattle)

Verdict: A fascinating range of New Zealand landscapes magnificently caught, in a recording that no Kiwi CD player should be without.

It has been a long wait, but an amply rewarded one, for Henry Wong Doe's *Landscape Preludes*. This set of 12 New Zealand piano pieces has grown and triumphed on the concert stage in the decade since Stephen De Pledge made his first commissions. Now, thanks to Rattle Records, with simpatiao producer Kenneth Young and studio wizard Steve Garden, this iconic collection is available on CD, played by Wong Doe.

Wong Doe is a pianist who tempers flamboyance with poetry; in Gillian Whitehead's *Arapatiki*, flames flicker among mellow, mysterious surroundings.

When a virtuoso is called for, Wong Doe is your man.

Lyell Cresswell's *Chiaroscuro* streaks in brilliantly hued fury while the heavy industrial density that opens Michael Norris' *Machine Noise* sparks and fires.

Heard in its entirety,
one can pick up
special relationships
between tracks.

Dylan Lardelli's music can be testing but Wong Doe ensures we sense a Bachian tangle under the meteorological malevolence of *Reign*.

Similarly, the pianist carefully streams and shapes the cycles of spilling out and retraction in Samuel Holloway's volatile *Terrain Vague*.

Heard in its entirety, one can pick up special relationships between tracks.

The slow-burn impressionism of Gareth Farr's *A Horizon from Owhiro Bay* finds echoes in the glistening sound web of Eve de Castro-Robinson's *This Liquid Drift of Light*.

Wong Doe catches the brooding soliloquy of Ross Harris' *Landscape with too few lovers* and enjoys bringing out those "deep earth gongs" that tremble under the surface of Jenny McLeod's *Tone Clock XVIII*.

There is mischievous humour in *Sleeper* by the high-profile John Psathas, which plays on three possible definitions of its title. In Jack Body's *The Street Where I Live*, Wong Doe's piano flirts and skirts around the composer's own voice, whimsically extolling the joys of his Wellington home.

After a captivating 50 minutes of infinitely varied and fascinating "landscapes", Victoria Kelly's *Goodnight Kiwi* is the perfect conclusion.

One of the first of the set to be written, this piece deals out a nostalgia of both time and place, designed to touch the Kiwi heart in all of us.

If you buy just one classical CD this year, make it *Landscape Preludes*.

The New Zealand Herald
July 26, 2014
William Dart

"A fascinating range of New Zealand landscapes magnificently caught...If you buy just one classical CD this year, make it *Landscape Preludes*."

Auckland Chamber Orchestra shine in Stravinsky and Dean

The day before Stravinsky's 131st birthday, the Auckland Chamber Orchestra and conductor Peter Scholes presented a programme built around the Russian composer's *Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments* and featuring works by Lyell Cresswell, George Antheil and Brett Dean. Lyell Cresswell is a New Zealand composer currently living in Scotland. His 2004 piece *Con Fuoco* is a riotously animated work for small ensemble which the programme suggests is influenced by scenes of fire from the Maori *Legend of Maui* and Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*. Cresswell's modernism isn't terribly challenging; in fact, in a way his soundworld is not too radically different from the following Antheil piece. They share a whirling, almost dizzying rhythmic vitality, though the Cresswell isn't quite so intricately orchestrated; you are likely to hear (for example) the wind acting in consort with one another.

Even so, it would be difficult to perceive that the 70 years lay between the compositions of the two works. Antheil's quarter-hour *Concerto* (1932), scored for wind alone, is stylistically very much indebted to Stravinsky's neo-classical music. This was a real whirlwind of a piece, absolutely bristling with musical ideas which tumble out and recurred with a frequency that was rather disorienting. Despite a basic fast-slow-fast structure, tempi were also often in flux, constantly changing. Not a great masterwork perhaps (certainly not as fun as his *Ballet mécanique*, but it mostly held one's interest for its duration. Both here and in the Cresswell, the orchestra relished the opportunities given to them, in performances of great vigour and precision.

Acclaimed Australian composer Brett Dean's *Recollections* concluded the first half. Six short movements dedicated to exploring memory immediately placed us in a very different soundworld from the rest of the concert. If one could easily perceive the Stravinskian influences on both Cresswell and Antheil, one would be hard pressed to do so here. From the haunting opening clarinet motif, Dean's grasp of timbre was evident. The pianist was called to pluck the piano strings and tap them with mallets, and the movement "Relic" brought an archaic sound to the proceedings with its use of tuned gongs. Most eerily, the final movement, "Locket", has the piano playing a Clara Schumann piano piece while the other instruments pitch-bend mistily in microtones around it. The sound textures created by Dean were ravishing throughout - his is clearly a major talent in the modern classical music world and here's hoping the Auckland Chamber Orchestra offer future performances of his work performed as adroitly as here.

The rather shorter second half was set to consist only of Stravinsky's neo-classical masterpiece *Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments*. However there was a surprise addition to the programme of young New Zealand composer Alex Taylor's *Loose Knots* for solo bassoon. This short work makes the most of the bassoon's potential as a solo instrument and featured intriguing forays into the worlds of multiphonics and microtonality. It was performed most convincingly by orchestra principal Ben Hoadley. Taylor looks to be a composer of some promise and this piece should be a good addition to the repertoire of solo bassoonists.

Stravinsky's *Concerto* (1923-24) was written for the composer himself to play and he kept the exclusive performance rights for a period of several years. Strangely enough (considering this should be the best-known piece on the programme), at first the ensemble here was less tight and less confident than in the first half. The brass sounded a bit ragged in the wonderful funereal opening; however, they soon recovered and their usual accuracy and precision was back in full force as they swung into the first movement's boisterous conclusion. Scholes gave the piece an ideal swagger in the concluding march.

A lack of confidence was certainly no problem for the soloist, New Zealand-born Henry Wong Doe. He approached the work with great clarity of touch, though could have perhaps done with a little more gradation of dynamics, his performance most came to the life in the barnstorming moments. The technical demands of the piece held no horrors for Wong Doe - the performance was remarkable for its accuracy of rhythmic attack. Despite the occasional Lang Lang-like stage gesturing, he and Scholes refused to sentimentalise the slow movement; the result was a stronger awareness of the work's Baroque influences. Throughout, pianist and conductor joined forces to create a distinctive feeling of dialogue between piano and orchestra. It was no surprise to read that Wong Doe's doctoral dissertation was on the influence of the player piano on Stravinsky and other 20th-century composers - there was a certain mechanical

(continued)

"The technical demands of the piece held no horrors for Wong Doe - the performance was remarkable..."

precision about it all. If the end result was sometimes a little clinically perfect, far better this than any kind of distorting romanticism. Furthermore, any suspicions of over-clinical characteristics of Wong Doe's playing were dispelled by his encore, Gareth Farr's *The Horizon from Owhiro Bay*, an impressionistic miniature played with extreme sensitivity and lightness of touch. This was a lovely concert putting Stravinsky in perspective in the context of the 20th century with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra on top form.

Web address: <http://bachtrack.com/review-auckland-chamber-orchestra-scholes-wong-doe-stravinsky>

Bachtrack online (Auckland)
 June 18, 2013
 Simon Holden

The screenshot shows the Bachtrack website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with categories: WHAT'S ON, REVIEWS, CONCERTS, OPERA, DANCE, FESTIVALS, and ARTICLES. A 'NEWSLETTER SIGNUP' button is also visible. The main article title is 'Auckland Chamber Orchestra shine in Stravinsky and Dean', with a star rating of 4.5 and a date of 18 June 2013 by Simon Holden. The article text describes a concert by Peter Scholes featuring works by Lyell Cresswell, George Antheil, and Brett Dean. A 'PROGRAMME' section lists: Antheil, Concerto for Chamber Orchestra; Dean, Recollections; Cresswell, Con Fuoco; Taylor, Loose Knots; and Stravinsky, Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments. The 'PERFORMERS' section lists the Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Peter Scholes (Conductor), and Henry Wong Doe (Piano). On the right, there is a 'WHAT'S ON? FIND CONCERTS NOW' calendar for May 2015, with a red highlight on the 31st for an evening performance. On the left, there are promotional banners for 'to hear the world's greatest music', 'Festival Pianistica di Primavera', and '5th Festival Opera'. A photo of Henry Wong Doe is shown at the bottom left of the article.



Henry Wong Doe
 compositions of the two works. Antheil's quarter-hour Concerto (1932), scored for wind alone, is stylistically very much

Even so, it would be difficult to perceive that the 70 years lay between the

RECORDING REVIEW

Five in the Sun

Keystone Chamber Players

(Stephanie Caulder, oboe; Jason Worzbyt, bassoon; Henry Wong Doe, piano;

Therese Wacker, flute)

Klavier Music Productions, K 11193; 2013

This disc contains performances of the following works:

André Previn - *Trio*

George Rochberg - *Duo*

Clark McAlister - *Aubade*

Nancy Galbraith - *Incantation and Allegro*

Peter Hope - *Four Sketches*

On this new disc by the Keystone Chamber Players (all faculty members at Indiana University of Pennsylvania), the listener is treated to one modern standard and four much lesser-known works.

While it may be hard to believe, André Previn's *Trio* has been around for almost twenty years now. It has been recorded numerous times and is heard regularly on recitals worldwide - for good reason. It is music that is challenging yet accessible, emotional yet well constructed. And most importantly, it gives each of the three instruments plenty opportunity to shine. Of special note in the first movement is bassoonist Jason Worzbyt's extended solo midway through. In the slow second movement, Pianist Henry Wong Doe perfectly conveys a feeling of twilight mystery. And, while the ensemble's opening of the last movement is a bit reserved, both Worzbyt and oboist Stephanie Caulder have some very fine lyrical moments a few minutes in.

As noted in Matthew Baumer's very well-written liner notes, the Rochberg *Duo* is not from the composer's post-1964 return to tonal leanings but rather hails from his student days at the Curtis Institute - *before* all the serialism happened. Worzbyt and Caulder do us the honor by providing an admirable premiere recording of this ten-minute four-movement work.

Making a great duo, Caulder's tone and interpretation is wonderfully cheeky in the bright spots while Worzbyt's beautifully unflappable sound is expressive and rich in the more somber moments. This is a very fine work that will hopefully be taken up by other interested players.

Third on the disc, Clark McAlister's *Aubade* is a sunny affair. Well-crafted and pleasing, the music pulses along quite well, though at nine minutes in length it is perhaps a touch too long to go without a pause or significant change in style. The performance is strong but it does seem that the flute's pitch center lies a bit below the other two winds.

Doe's playing is the highlight of Nancy Galbraith's *Incantation and Allegro*. In each of his solo turns, he creates beautifully transparent lines that never fail to express the evocative nature of the music. Equally able in a supporting role, Doe accompanies the oboe and bassoon magnificently as they together wind their way through this pretty yet slightly repetitive work.

Peter Hope's *Four Sketches* is an unexpected little gem. While it is still on the lighter side - similar in that way to the McAlister and the Galbraith - it has the benefit of being broken into smaller bits and thereby is not as wearing on the ears. Caulder's opening oboe solo in the "Prelude" is spot on with a distant mistiness that many an oboist would envy. The "Scherzo" features a slightly twitchy melody that easily holds the attention and may induce opera). Worzbyt's high range playing is especially notable in these five minutes that seek to rival Poulenc's famous middle movement. The concluding "Dance" is a perfect end to the work and to the disc - lighthearted yet engaging and very well done. A fine and excellently recorded album (bravo, Klavier): buy it for the Hope and Rochberg and give all the others a spin, too.

The Double Reed
Vol. 36 No. 2 (2013)
Ryan D. Romine

"In each of his solo turns, he creates beautifully transparent lines that never fail to express the evocative nature of the music."

CLASSICAL CDs

The composer we love

Pianist Michael Endres handles George Gershwin with carefree spontaneity.



by IAN DANDO

GEORGE GERSHWIN: *SONGBOOK and RHAPSODY IN BLUE*, Michael Endres (OEHMS/Ode). Endres tours us through 18 perennial Gershwin piano melodies, including *I Got Rhythm* and *The Man I Love*. Next, he displays immense bravura in Gershwin's solo piano version of his *Rhapsody in Blue*, then titillates us down the home straight with the lively syncopations in 14 piano preludes and miniatures, some as short as 22 seconds. It's these 32 littlelies,



rarely heard, that are the fresh air. All are played with carefree spontaneity. To captivate all, from low to highbrow, is unique to Gershwin. Grab it.

GARETH FARR: HORIZONS, Henry Wong Doe (piano), Jisoo Ok (cello), Jesse Schiffman (flute) (Trust). These 17 tracks of mostly piano solo works show how resourcefully Farr employs Asia-Pacific influences when he chooses to. In *Sepuluh Jari*, his use of Indian and Balinese scale systems adds exotic richness to its harmonic resource, with the four-note Balinese scale used both chordally and melodically. Farr's pianistic writing offers Doe's virtuosity a fully enriched bravura ideal. The Balinese flavour extends right down to *The Horizon from Owhiro Bay*, where cello and piano do much active role swapping. Aside from the unusual chord progressions in *Claudia's Victory*, the other four of the *Love Songs* sound passé. Prickly pointillism and dissonant closing harmonies inject



energetic modernism into *Ramayana*. Charley Davenport's meaty notes and Trust's colourful picture layouts enrich this recommended CD.

ANTHONY RITCHIE: CONCERTINA (Good Company/Trust). This CD is a compilation of 1997-2010 collaborations between Ritchie and choreographer/film-maker Daniel Belton and Good Company Arts (see feature, page 42). The modern vitality of Belton's choreography can be viewed on the company website, www.goodcompanyarts.com. There is a style bump between the six thoughtfully expansive piano pieces comprising the 27 minutes of *Line Dances* (2010) and the more carefree lightness of the earlier sets. The seven brief dances comprising *Shoal Dance* (1998) have sprightly tracks nine, 10 and 13. *The Leaf* set of four (1998) for piano contain a droll Satie pastiche and a lively naive art one (track 15).



The seven tracks in *Concertina* (1999) for violin, concertina and piano are at their wittiest in 21, 23 and 24. All up, a pleasantly undemanding listen.

BEETHOVEN FOR ALL, Daniel Barenboim (Decca 2CD). Nothing wrong with Barenboim's stunning conducting and playing. The problem is Decca's condescending spoon-feeding of single movements, when Beethoven conceived his large works as entities. We get bits from symphonies 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9, portions



of all five piano concertos and chunks from name sonatas – *Moonlight*, *Appassionata* and *Pathétique*. Turn in your grave, Ludwig. ■

New Zealand Listener
September 22, 2012
Ian Dando

"Farr's pianistic writing offers Doe's virtuosity a fully enriched bravura ideal."



Indonesian Inspiration



Sep 10, 2012

From

This New Sounds brings music by Canadian composer Vivian Fung inspired Indonesian gamelan, along with other works by westerners that look to that archipelago's music. Fung, on her record, "Dreamscapes," draws on the fast interlocking rhythms of Balinese gamelan and to a degree - John Cage's prepared piano- to create an eerie soundworld on "Glimpses."

Also, there's piano music by New Zealand composer Gareth Farr, which reflects Farr's interest in gamelan music. One of the works, "Tentang Cara Gamelan" imagines a dinner conversation between Debussy and the composer/ethnomusicologist Colin McPhee, discussing the role of gamelan in each of their musical styles. Over the course of the piece, this imaginary talk devolves due to the professional jealousy which consumes both composers, and finally escalates into a hail of insults. Plus, music from American composer Lou Harrison, and some of his work for the combination of western instruments with Javanese-style gamelan. And more.

PROGRAM # 3376, Indonesian Inspiration (First aired on 9/10/2012)

ARTIST(S)	RECORDING	CUT(S)	SOURCE
Kristin Lee, Hanick, Metropolis Ensemble, Cyr	FUNG, Vivian: Piano Concerto, "Dreamscapes" / Violin Concerto / Glimpses (Kristin Lee, Hanick, Metropolis Ensemble, Cyr)	Vivian Fung: Glimpses: I. Kotekan [3:24]	Naxos 8.573009 www.naxos.com <http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.573009> Or download from Emusic.com <http://www.emusic.com/>
Robert Macht	Suite for Javanese Gamelan & Synthesizer	String of Pearls [4:37]	Dorian 80161 www.sonoluminus.com <http://www.sonoluminus.com/>
Henry Wong Doe, piano	Gareth Farr: Horizon	Gareth Farr: Tentang Chara Gamelan [5:15]	Trust Records MMT2070 www.trustcds.com <http://www.trustcds.com/php/artist.php?ID=389> Or download from Emusic.com <http://www.emusic.com/>

WNYC Radio New York
New Sounds Program
First aired: September 10, 2012
Host: John Schaefer

The New Zealand Herald

Horizon and Rozmowa Dialogue

2:11 PM Saturday Aug 11, 2012



Horizon by Gareth Farr

Gareth Farr: Horizon (Trust Records)

Adrianna Lis: Rozmowa/Dialogue (Atoll, both through Ode Records)

Verdict: Enterprising local chamber music releases do not always achieve a consistency of content and performance.

Gareth Farr is 44 and securely mid-career, but his flamboyant past is spectacularly revisited when Henry Wong Doe launches his CD of Farr's piano music with the daredevil defiance of *Sepuluh Jari*.

Wong Doe, now based in New York, delivers a powerhouse toccata and sustains the dazzle through to the final *Ramayana*, an early work that blends Beethoven and Indonesian gamelan with disarming nonchalance.

Farr's fixation with fast (and frequently fortissimo) can irritate, but his *Shadow of the Hawk* for cello and piano is a heart-in-the-mouth thrill, evoking the edgy relationship between bird and landscape. Here, alas, cellist Jisoo Ok lacks the flair and fire of James Tennant on the original 1997 recording.

The two movements of *Nga Whetu e Whitu* enlist American flautist Jesse Schiffman, who fails to delve beyond the surface prettiness, with none of the charisma that we might have expected from New Zealander Bridget Douglas who commissioned the work.

And, while every composer is allowed his or her days off, five short *Love Songs* are like fleshed-out Richard Claydeman, woefully lightweight here.

Adrianna Lis' *Rozmowa/Dialogue* is a novel recital, placing New Zealand composers against those of her native Poland, with the indefatigable Sarah Watkins on piano.

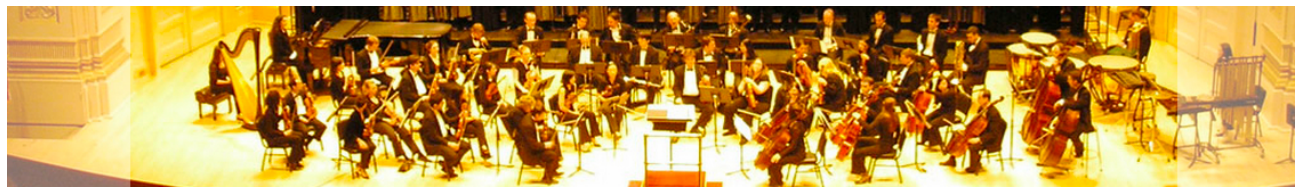
Most of the Polish offerings are pleasant but slightly retro, especially a 2001 Sonata by Lukasz Wos. However, Roxanna Panufnik's unaccompanied *The Conversation of Prayer* showcases Lis' buoyant lines in unexplained reverberance. Michal Rosiak's *The Melbourne Cup* is a perky 1'45"; Lis' piccolo chirping cheekily over Vadim Simongauz's snare drum.

A Gao Ping Sonatina is easy on the ear but conservative for this Christchurch composer; four pieces from Jack Body's *Rainforest* are pattering, playful delights, while Anthony Ritchie takes devious twists and turns with a Chopin Mazurka.

Michael Williams' *When We Fell* catches Polish sorrows and suffering during World War II. A backing track mixes chimes, distressed bar-room piano, heartbeats, military drums and hints of tango. Lis, as well as contributing flute, recites a Polish text, sobs, and completes the emotionally involving narrative with the words of Nietzsche.

New Zealand Herald
August 11, 2012
William Dart

"Wong Doe launches his CD of Farr's piano music with the daredevil defiance of *Sepuluh Jari*."



Henry Wong Doe, Pianist in Review

Henry Wong Doe, piano
Weill Recital at Carnegie Hall
March 26, 2012



Henry Wong Doe. Photo credit: Tom Stoelker

Henry Wong Doe, pianist, entitled his March 26th Weill Hall Recital "A Picture of New Zealand" and dedicated the first half of his program to the music of his countryman Gareth Farr, and the second half to his performance of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition".

Farr, born in 1968, as the program notes stated, is "recognized as one of New Zealand's leading composers." He studied composition and percussion performance at the University of Auckland and at Victoria University, Wellington. He moved to the United States to pursue studies at the Eastman School of Music with Samuel Adler and Christopher Rouse. A recipient of many commissions and performances, Farr's music is particularly influenced by his extensive study of percussion—both Western and Non-Western. Rhythmic elements of his can be linked to the exciting rhythms of Barotongan log drum ensembles, Balinese gamelan and other percussion music of the Pacific Rim. In 2006, Gareth Farr was made an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to music and entertainment, and most recently in 2010, he was the recipient of the prestigious New Zealand Arts Laureate Award.

The evening began with two of Farr's works for solo piano: 1) "Tentang Cara Gamelan", dating from 1994, when Farr was still a student at Eastman. The piece is redolent of both Farr's early interest in Gamelan music, as well as his fascination with French Impressionism such as Debussy, et al. In an early note, Farr cites an imaginary dinner conversation between Debussy and the composer/ethnomusicologist Colin McPhee. While they initially discuss the role of Gamelan in each of their musical styles, professional jealousy disintegrates the conversation into a barrage of tongue-in-cheek insults. Henry Wong Doe's lively performance, and especially the way he realized the music's peppery virtuosity via his gestural way of playing the piano (which I found engaging visually) were beneficial to both protagonists. 2) "The Horizon from Owhiro Bay", a short work commissioned by the James Wallace Trust for pianist Stephen Depledge as part of his program of Landscape Preludes by New Zealand composers, together with eleven other short works. Depledge gave the premiere in February 2008 in New Zealand, and Mr. Wong Doe gave the piece its North American premiere in his debut recital at Weill Recital Hall. Gareth Farr vividly conjures the Prelude's descriptive aspects (Moody green depth; Inky blue sky; Endless unbroken horizon; Fishing Boats sitting on the horizon all lit up; occasional gusts of wind; wild eddies on the surface of the water; the odd rogue wave (hurling itself onto the rocks and up into the air in a spectacular explosion of sea spray, et al). It is a fine mood piece and I am looking forward to hearing Henry Wong Doe's forthcoming recording of Farr's Piano Music (Horizon MMT 2070).

The two piano solos were followed by a pair of chamber music compositions, one for flute and piano: "Nga Whetue e Whitu" ("The Seven Stars"), commissioned for Bridget Douglas (principal flautist in the New Zealand Symphony) and his regular pianist, Rachel Thomson. Alternating Messiaen-like harmonies with Farr's moto perpetuo energy and sharp, articulated notes, he propels the music at a feverish pace. Both of its two movements are united by Farr's expansion of long lyrical passages and unique amalgamation of rhythm and sonority. It was expertly played, with a cool "white" tone by Jesse Schiffman, flautist, and Henry Wong Doe.

But it was "The Shadow of the Hawk", a 1997 work, originally commissioned by cellist James Tennant and pianist Katherine Auston that made the strongest impression on this listener. Farr writes about this composition: "The shadow of the hawk rises and falls as the landscape gently undulates beneath it. One moment it is indistinct and unfocused, the next it snaps into clear definition as the ground rises. A rocky outcrop thrusts up towards the sky." Farr's use of the cello confounds the usual conventionality—the unique combination of cello pizzicato and piano bass notes in the opening gives the work an almost 'jazzy' groove." How fascinating to hear the usually expansively melodic cello used as a percussion instrument. This was a brilliant performance by Mr. Wong Doe and Jisoo Ok, a Korean-born former pupil of Bonnie Hampton and Fred Sherry (Bachelor's and Master's at Juilliard).

Mr. Wong Doe's version of Mussorgsky's "Pictures", though a shade raw and unpolished, had great vitality and engaging thrust and characterization. He was at his best in some of the more aggressive Promenades (e.g. the opening one, and the final one just before Limoges), Gnomus, Baba Yaga, which had the appropriate sinister ferocity, and The Old Castle, which came forth with a long, flowing line (this vignette, believe it or not, has moments that are surprisingly Schubertian!). Other scenes had their drawbacks: Bidlo, for all its appropriate weight and ponderousness, sounded unrelievedly stolid and brutal. Tuilleries and The Unhatched Chicks lacked delicacy, humor and playful animation. The portrait of Samuel Goldenberg was suitably pompous, though his counterpart Schmuyle was stiff and unmemorable (but credit Mr. Wong Doe for superbly closing that piece with a correct C, D flat, B flat, B flat!). Best of all was the wonderfully inclusive, bustling Limoges Market Place. Alas, the Great Gate of Kiev, which ought to have been the suite's proper capstone, was more than a bit anticlimactic and sectionalized. (The dangerous first note, coming right after the ferocious lead-in can be brilliantly effective at times but can dangerously fall flat as a pancake—as it did on this particular occasion). But enough faultfinding: Henry Wong Doe's guided tour (he opted for Mussorgsky's original unbowdlerized text), though not in the Richter class, was an extremely worthy effort.

I am most grateful to the pianist for lavishing his attention on the music of Gareth Farr. Incidentally, another of Farr's pieces, entitled "Love Song" was played as an encore after the "Pictures". (It sounded much more popsy and Flower Child-like, and not at all like the other Farr pieces on the concert's first half).

-Harris Goldsmith for New York Concert review; New York, NY

"This was a brilliant performance...with great vitality, thrust and characterization"

Review: Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra at Aotea Centre

5:00AM Monday Aug 25, 2008

By [William Dart](#)

Lilburn's Festival Overture may have seemed geographically astray in a programme titled Northern Lights, but it certainly whipped up expectations for the final of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's Vero Aotea concerts.

Hints of Sibelius's rugged stride here and there were just the fuel for conductor Marko Letonja and orchestra to give us their crackling best.

Henry Wong Doe had returned from New York for the Grieg Piano Concerto, a warhorse that, ironically, is not so often released from stable onto concert stage.

The pianist is an inveterate showman, flamboyant of gesture, given to casting eyes heavenwards in moments of ecstasy.

Apart from some passing smudges in the first movement and a few tangles in the third, the concerto came off well. Wong Doe balanced volatility and lyricism, with the orchestra beside him all the way, especially in the sumptuous Adagio.

Another virtuoso turn had actor Paolo Rotondo narrating and playing a host of Ibsen's characters in Grieg's Peer Gynt.

There were the expected orchestral favourites, from a Morning of the utmost clarity to a Mountain King's lair that had you hoping the Aotea was earthquake-proof. The musicians clearly enjoyed the exotic Arabian Dance, which took the place of Anitra's customary waltz.

For 53 minutes, we were as youngsters at the foot of a master storyteller. The rascal Peer was all cheeky Cockney, his mother Ase a crone who had slipped out of Monty Python and the Mountain King, a wily fellow of indeterminate nationality and dark, twisted philosophies.

A lot of it was, frankly, fun but the death of Ase was poignantly handled, Rotondo's Peer sobbing against the APO strings at their most eloquent.

Emma Roxburgh delivered Solveig's two songs, including the final lullaby, with an unforced grace and naturalness, although, when her contribution is 35 minutes into the presentation, one wonders why she had to sit on stage, oratorio-style, for the duration.

The tale concluded bluntly (on stage, Solveig's Lullaby rounds things off) but Letonja came up with the Intermezzo from Sibelius's Karelia – an encore with aforethought, linking back to the Lilburn that had opened the evening.

New Zealand Herald
August 25, 2008
William Dart

"Wong Doe balanced volatility and lyricism, with the orchestra beside him all the way..."

Pianist Henry Wong Doe made an unforgettable impression Friday, July 11 at Whyte Hall's Brandon Fradd Theatre in the Fire Island Pines.

Mr. Fradd himself introduced the evening, promising this as the first in a series of classical concerts to be presented by the Fire Island Pines Arts Project. From the size of the nearly sold out house, clearly there's a claim for this. And what a way to begin!

A New Zealand native, Mr. Wong Doe has garnered top prizes in several international piano competitions, including two "Audience Favorite" awards; easy to understand considering his captivating stage presence with which he makes the music look so difficult while sounding so effortless.

The evening opened with Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 "Appassionata", written while the composer was coming to grips with his complete deafness, reflecting the emotional turmoil he felt during the time. Mr. Wong Doe displayed the score's passion and energy, particularly in the third movement's appropriately chosen tempo culminating in the exhilarating *piu allegro* at the end.

More musical frustration followed; the sweepingly romantic but sorrowful tone of Frederic Chopin's Barcarolle in F-sharp, Op. 60 was created as his health was fatally deteriorating from tuberculosis and his relationship with George Sand, one of the most successful novelists of her day, was beginning to crumble. Characterized by a rhythm reminiscent of a Venetian gondolier's stroke, it rocked to a *molto rubato* current.

Next came a complete change of mood with From *Grandes Etudes de Paganini*, S. 141, No. 3 in g-sharp minor, "La Campanella". Franz Liszt borrowed the theme from the final movement of a violin concerto which evoked the tinkling of little bells, thus the title. Featured in the 1996 film *Shine*, this etude originally became famous for the inventiveness with which it plays the delightful folk theme amidst a continuous ringing of high notes.

Following intermission, the concert hall was "transformed" into an art gallery. While suffering from delirium tremens due to his alcoholism, Modest Mussorgsky composed his famous suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874) in commemoration of his artist friend Viktor Hartmann, who was only 39 when he suffered an aneurysm and died. This was Mr. Wong Doe's best performance of the evening, bringing both contemplation and humor to this difficult score. The vivid changes of color fit into an astutely organized concept of the work as a whole, emerging as a deeply satisfying panorama of contrasting aural experiences.

For an encore, the audience was treated to Chopin's "Raindrop" Prelude No. 15 in D-flat major, Op. 28.

Henry Wong Doe's performances have taken him around the world from Lincoln Center to the Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv, Israel. His prize winning performances at the 2000 Sydney International Piano Competition were recorded and released on the Australian ABC Classics label. And his upcoming performances include a Carnegie Weill Recital Hall debut in November, and Grieg's Piano Concerto with New Zealand's Auckland Philharmonia. So if you missed his extraordinary performance this summer on this island, catch him when he's playing two bigger ones this fall...

Fire Island Sun, New York
Isaac Steven Vaughan
July 17, 2008

"...a deeply satisfying panorama of contrasting aural experiences."

Mozart needs better housekeeping

THE Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's *Splendour of Mozart* season set off modestly, with a programme very much based around its string section.

The D major Divertimento K 136 is one of Mozart's sunniest works, with the tang of youth in every phrase. It's no accident that, back in the '90s, both its fast movements featured in a CD titled *Mozart for your Morning Workout*.

Alas, on Thursday, the opening *Allegro* sounded more warm up than workout.

Scales which should be euphonious ripples were ragged in intonation; Italian conductor Piero Bellugi delivered an energetic beat, but the music had neither the subtlety of line or the wit and exuberance one had been expecting.

If the Divertimento was the work of a 16-year-old, then Mozart's *Jeunehomme* concerto marked his coming of age, being written a

REVIEW

■ **What:** Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra
■ **Where:** Auckland Town Hall
■ **Reviewer:** William Dart

month after his 21st birthday.

Despite a few blurred moments, pianist Henry Wong Doe played with aplomb and character. Perhaps he could have invested the melodic outpourings of the *Andantino* with a little more affection, but it was good to hear the dance character of the Finale's Menuetto interlude being firmly preserved.

After interval, Luciani's *Le Tombeau Perdu* proved to be a vibrant tribute to Mozart, a shortish piece that seemed more Wagnerian or Straussian than anything to do with the 18th-century composer.

It certainly brought out a

welcome sense of fervour in both conductor and players.

Mozart's 29th Symphony is one of his zestiest scores but, on this occasion, too much of it came across as simply drab.

Every movement was scarred. The opening *Allegro* was burdened with a plodding second subject while the *Andante* simply needed more buoyant phrasing.

A sprightly Minuet was wrapped around a lugubrious Trio and the Finale seemed content to work its way through to its final cadence, which was terminally smudged by one of too many horn mishaps of the evening.

I was reminded of the words of the harpsichordist Wanda Landowska who, speaking of the difficulties that Mozart's music poses, warned how the least speck of dust spoils it.

One trusts that some musical housekeeping is being investigated before the APO returns on Friday with more Mozart.

New Zealand Herald
November 20, 2006
William Dart

"...Henry Wong Doe played with aplomb and character."



מהמרפקים מטה והרחק מהלב

מאת נעם בן זאב

אוליבייה מסיאן ולסונטה של מוצרט, הציגה ליגה אחרת, ושמה: אמנות. אישיות חיונית, מסירות למוסיקה והצדקת הווירטואוזיות בהבעה ולא בקריקט לשמו, הם שצריכים להעלות אותו לגמר. בתחרויות מוסיקה עלול ללכת לאיבוד כל מה שאמן מתחנך עליו – השאיפה לביטוי עצמי, להתברר נגות באמת, לחיפוש אחר המגע ברגש והכמיהה למקורי ולאיש דרך האמנות. חוץ מוונג'דו, מה אמרו הרסיטלים על מבצעייהם לאורך הערבי? לא כלום. לא רסיטלים היו אלה אלא אוסף יצירות, חבילה עוברת שנודרת עם המבצע עים מתחרות לתחרות. ודווקא יצירת החובה הישראלית, "פנטזיה" של יוסף ברדנשי ווילי, ייצגה איוו התרסה כנגד המודל הזה. היותה שופעת ניגודים בסגנון ומצב רוח, ובעיקר לא מוכרת למתחרים, הוציאה מהם ביטוי אותנטי. אם מותר לחלום, אפשר לדמיין איך תחרות רובינשטיין – שטופחת לעצמה על השכם בהומנט יצירה ישראלית כל פעם – היתה יכולה באמת להפיץ את המוסיקה הישראלית בעולם ולהעשיר את הרפרטואר המנוגן. די לשלוח למתחרים את האנתולוגיה ההיסטורית הישראלית החשובה לפסנתר, "פסנתרין", שיצאה לא מכבר, להגדיל את הפרס על נגינת יצירה ישראלית ל-25 אלף דולר, ולחייב את כולם לנגן את אחת היצירות מתוכה בשלב הראשון. אז היא כבר לא היתה מהווה עונש למתחרים ולקהל, וגורמת להפנינג מוסיקלי אמיתי. כאמור – מותר לחלום.

קרן אור אחת פוגגה את הקרן ברמות ג'י'ן שן הסינית, בנגינה נהדרת, חכמה, לסונטה של שומאן. ובסוף הרסיטל שלה, בחר צפה מקסימה, עיבוד לוואלס של יוהן שטראוס – קטע הרוח אמיתי, כאילו כבר זכתה בפרס הגדול. ועוד קרן אור ודחה עם הישראלי ינון ברנתן, ובחירתו היוצאת דופן בסונטה של שוברט: כמעט היצירה היחידה בכל המרתון הזה שביטאה הלך רוח אנושי עמוק. איפה שוב רט ואיפה שאר המלחינים שבחרו רוב המתחרים האחרים, שנצמדו ליצירות שכל הווייתן היא מהמרפקים מטה – הרחק מהלב. וקרן אור אחרונה – לא: שמש ממש – דחה בסוף, עם הנרי וונג'דו, ברסיטל שהיה אמור להיגמר לקראת חצות. נגינתו לפרק מ"20 מבטים על ישו התינוק" של

בעוד הערפל הצלילי הסמיך הולך ומתעבה באודיטוריום המבוי, הירודתי בשופטים, המברר דיים מזוקה, עטופים בשרעפיהם, משרבטים מדי פעם הערה סורית; והטינה הגוברת בי עליהם, על שהעלו את שתי המתחרות הראשונות בערב – צ'ו פונג ואנג ושרה לאבו – הומתקה קצת, בגלל השמחה לאירם. העליתם? או עכשיו תשבו ותסבלו כאן, כמו כולם. מה שאולי נשמע טוב בשלב א' התגלה כבוועה בשלב השני של הרסיטלים. ובנגינת המתחרות כמעט הולחמו היצירות לכרי ישות אמורפית אחת: עוד ליסט, ועוד פרוקופייב, ועוד שופן, ועוד היידן שנשמע כפולטיק בוהק ולא כדברי האמיתי.

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
April 5, 2005
Noam Ben Ze'ev
(translation overleaf)

"His performance...presented pianism in a whole different league, namely: art."

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
Noam Ben Ze'ev

April 5, 2005

“...one final ray of light or, better put – the sun itself! – shone at last, with Henry Wong Doe, in a recital supposed to end around midnight. His performance of a movement from Olivier Messiaen’s “Vingt Regards sur l’Enfant Jesus” and of a Mozart Sonata presented pianism in a whole different league, namely: art. Lovely personality, devotion to music, and virtuosity in the service of expression, as opposed to circus acrobatics, should all guarantee his success in the competition...”

אחד בתחרות רובינשטיין

אורה בינור



הפתעה בת 18 ושמה יאול אאום סון

הוא כליכך אותנטי ורגיש. הבטהובן שלו היה מפעים, והסונטה של דוטייה שפ" עיה רימיון וצבעים. אני אוהבת את שפת הגוף שלו, כי זו הבעה אישית ויש בזה מין נאיביות מרתקת ויופי של מוזיקה.

דניאל סאיאמוב הרוסי "הרביץ" הופעה, משהו במראה שמאוכר (במעורפל) את פוגורליץ, אבל הבטהובן שלו לא בשל ובפרוקופייב לא הי ניצוץ ולא עוצי מה פנימית.

עידו בר שי הוא שופניסט מלידה, נולד עם מזודקות בבטן, רומנטיקן אמיתי אך גם מיוסר קמעה, מהורהר ומנגן כאילו בבועה שלו. אמי נקזימה מארצות הברית ניגנה קורקטי וזה משעמם, והאחרון יאנג ווק יו הקוריאני צבר המון נקודות בזכות כיצועו ל"פנטסיה" המטריפה באקוויטיקה שלה, של ברדנשווילי. היצירה המופלאה הזו משרדרגת אפילו פסנתרנים פחת מלהיבים. איזה יופי.

עולה לה לבמה נערה קוריאנית צנומה ועדינה, כמעט שכרירית, ופוצחת בני גינת סונטה של בטהובן שכאילו יצאה הרגע ממכש הרפוס, וכאילו בטהובן מתכוונן בה ומהנהן בראשו בחיך מטופק. נגינה בשלה, רצינית, בלי שום אפק טים, מבנה שקוף ומסוגנן, ותנועה זורמת בין האינטימי לסימפוני. ואז זורמים להם, מבין אצבעותיה הגמישות להפליא מיליוני פנינים של האטוירים של שור פן. סון לא "ממציאה" את שופן מחדש. היא פשוט מנגנת כל אטויר עם האופי שלו, והיא קולוריסטית ואין לה שום מגבלות טכניות. כמו התולה עם 11 אצבי עות. איזה פסנתרנות ואיזה מוזיקליות טבעית. זכרו את סון הייטב.

היה גם מפגש מחודש ומרתק עם ירדינו האהור הנרי וונג רו (השתתף בתחרות הקודמת) בן ה-28 מנירזילנד. וונג רו הוא תופעה ייחודית, הוא אמיתי עד לכרי ריגוש, הוא אמן בנשמתו, הוא אוהב מאד מאד את הנגינה ואת המוזיקה, הוא יוצר את היצירה תוך כדי נגינה, כאילו מפסל ודוקדק אותה וזה לא הצגה.

Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv
March 31, 2005
Ora Binur
(translation overleaf)

"He is movingly honest, he is an artist at his soul, he loves playing and music very much, he created the piece anew while playing, as if sculpting and dancing it, and this is not merely for show."

Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv
Ora Binur

March 31, 2005

“...And there was a new and fascinating encounter with our beloved friend Henry Wong Doe (who also took part in the previous competition), a 28 year-old pianist from New Zealand. Wong Doe is a special phenomenon. He is movingly honest, he is an artist at his soul, he loves playing and music very much, he created the piece anew while playing, as if sculpting and dancing it, and this is not merely for show. Rather, his playing is so authentic and sensitive. His Beethoven was overwhelming, and the Dutilleux Sonata was overflowing with colors and imagination. I love his body language, as it is a personal expression that has a kind of captivating naivety to this great music....”



תצלום: מוטי קמחי

חמוש בסונטה של בטהובן, הניו־זילנדי הנרי וונג דו שוב מאיים על הבכורה

לאחר שנשמעו מחצית המתחרים, ניתן למנות אולי ארבעה אמנים שמפליאים לעשות. התחרות מסתמנת כתחרות של נשים

מאת ג'י חטרון

הפסנתרן הניו-זילנדי, הנרי וונג דו, חמוש בסוף סוף מספר 22 אופוס 54 של בטהובן, מאיים שוב על הבכורה. גם לתחרות הקודמת בתל אביב, ב-2001, בא וונג דו עם הסונטה הזאת, או, כן 24, ניגן אותה בשלב השני הפעם בודי לפתוח בה. נגינתו היתה מהוקצעת, ממושבת, מעניינת. הצליל שלו מלוטש. הסונטות של בטהובן הן כתבי־קודש של אמנות הפסנתר, ולכן, לעובדה שוונג דו הוא המתודה הראשון שמגיש סוג זה של בטהובן כהלכונה, יש משקל רב. מה קורה בתחרות בכלל? אני מנחש שאפילו השר פטים המנוסים, המכירים את מקצת המתחרים שבאו לתל אביב מתחרויות אודות בעולם, עדיין לא יכיר לים לענות על השאלה הזו. לכאורה, מדגם של מחצית המתחרים (18 מתוך 36 כבר הופיעו) הוא יותר ממספיק כדי לאמוד את טיב ה"בציר" הפעם, אבל מדובר בקבוצה שאין לה תכונות מאפיינות משות-

פות: השוני בין המתחרים גדול, ייתכנו עדיין הפתיחות, בהמשך השלב הראשון והתמונה הכללית עשויה להתהפך. לאחר הסתייגות זו, הנה מבט שטחי על התמונה הכללית: ראשית, לפי שעה לא נמנו בתחרות יותר משלושה, אולי ארבעה אמנים שמפליאים לעשות. שנית, בינתיים זו תחרות של נשים: ארבע או חמש מתחרות מתוך שמונה עשו רושם טוב, ובהן הסינית ג'י צ'ן, שעדיין צועדת, לטעמי, בראש. רק שלרשה או ארבעה גברים, מתוך העשרה ששמענו, ראויים להיחשב מצטיינים יחסית. גם מספר הנפילות לכדי ביצוע משעמם ושטחי גבוה יותר בקרב הגברים. הנה סיכום של ביצועי המתחרים אתמול: ערו בר-שי (ישראל) הפגין את הצליל הדרך שלו, ששירת אותו היטב בפרק הראשון של סונטה מאת היידן, אבל הדרך דר לכמעט סכריניות בפרק האטי שלה. בהמשך, בקרץ יצירות שופן, הדושם שעשה היה טוב בודרה; דניל סאיימוב מרסיה דפק את בטהובן ואת פרוקופייב; יאן אאום סון מקוריאה גרמה הנאה גם בבטהובן (אף

הפסנתרן הניו-זילנדי הנרי וונג דו. ייתכן שהוא יצחק גם בסיום

שהגשתה רכה מדי) וגם באחרים מהאטיריים של שופן שהשמיעה, לא בכולם: אמי נאקאג'ימה, מארה'ל, ניגן זה שופן (סונטה מס' 3 בס' מינור) בינוני; יונג ווק יו, מקוריאה, ביצע את אותה סונטה של שופן (יכולתי להאזין רק לחלק ממנה, בניגיתו) ברמת פסטורנות גבוהה בודרה, וסיפק עושר ניואנסים רב לאין שיעור. ווק יו מסקרן, משקיע הרבה מחשבה, לרבות ביצירת החובה של יוסף ברדנשווילי, שוכחה אצלו להמון תשומת לב ועיצוב, אבל גם כך אורכה של יצירה זו, לטעמי, עולה במידה ניכרת על מה שמתחייב מערכה.

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
March 31, 2005
Hagay Chitron
(translation overleaf)

"Beethoven's Sonatas are the Holy-scriptures of piano artistry, and therefore, the fact that Henry Wong Doe was the first candidate to convincingly present a Beethoven Sonata is of great importance."

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
Hagay Chitron

March 31, 2005

Armed with a Beethoven Sonata, New Zealander Henry Wong Doe is once again a candidate for the Gold

“...New Zealander pianist Henry Wong Doe, armed with Beethoven’s Sonata no.22 Op.54, is once again a candidate for the Gold. Already in the last competition, in 2001, at age 24, he played this Sonata at the second round. This time he chose to open his program with it. His playing was refined, well thought-through, interesting. His sound is polished. Beethoven’s Sonatas are the Holy-scriptures of piano artistry, and therefore, the fact that Henry Wong Doe was the first candidate to convincingly present a Beethoven Sonata is of great importance”...

Local premiere opens concert in fitting style

CLASSICAL: Piha is the subject of a new work

The Auckland Philharmonia launched Thursday's concert in the best possible way with the premiere of a New Zealand work.

Matthew Crawford's *A Place to Lose and Find Yourself*, a 10-minute evocation of a wind-tossed Piha in minimalist style, was the winner of the orchestra's Kiwi Snapshot competition.

There is an individual voice here. The rhythmic patternings may echo those of Philip Glass, but well-tuned ears will appreciate the subtle harnessing of the score into the safe haven of 4/4.

Crawford has a feeling for colour and there are too many deft effects to list, from glissando string harmonics to the eventual whirr of wind machine, although an over-persistent tongue-drum was an irritation at one point.

Auckland pianist Henry Wong Doe has done well on the international competition circuit and was making his debut with the AP in Prokofiev's Third Concerto.

With a winning platform manner alternating between the insouciant and languid, Wong Doe proved that all that glitters can indeed be gold. Playing Prokofiev's more jagged textures as if the keys were white-hot, he also took time out to luxuriate in the Nocturne-like outpourings of the second movement.

In the opening *Allegro* his glissandi had to be seen to be believed. In the Finale his chordal playing was a cause for marvel.

The orchestral musicians were able partners

» Review

■ What: Auckland Philharmonia
■ Where: Aotea Centre
■ Reviewer: William Dart

under conductor Fabio Mechetti, who held the demanding score together, especially in the lurching third variation of the second movement.

After a number of curtain calls, Wong Doe responded with a rather scuffed account of Chopin's E flat major Etude. It was a shame, when something simpler would have afforded more satisfying refreshment.

After interval, the conductor, also making his first appearance with the orchestra, didn't convey the primal power of Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*.

There was a deadly cosiness and predictability in the first movement, played without a repeated Exposition. What should have been earth-moving *sforzandi* were polite inflections.

The *Adagio* bloomed only occasionally and, after a lumbering Scherzo in which one felt the weight of every beat in the bar, the Finale made some recompense before Mechetti got into the same canter that had so hindered the opening *Allegro*.

New Zealand Herald,
July 28, 2003
William Dart

“...Wong Doe proved that all that glitters can indeed be gold.”

Dazzling theatre of the unexpected

CLASSICAL MUSIC: Pianist Henry Wong Doe ranges from luminescent Busoni to an electrifying account of Beethoven's great A major Sonata

Young Henry Wong Doe is a pianist with attitude. Watching him play on Sunday night, with arms, face and whole body catching the intensity of every nuance, was as much a theatrical experience as a purely musical one.

He does not give his audiences the expected. Last year's recital was built around a Dutilleul Sonata; this time the concert opened with Busoni's *Sonatina Secunda* and included works by Soren Nils Eichberg that were almost hot off the press.

The Busoni was perhaps the finest single offering: a lovely, luminescent work, shedding its own light on the dark soundworlds that Liszt had unearthed late in his career. Wong Doe illuminated it all, caressing melodies out of the fragile blur.

His account of Beethoven's great A major Sonata of Opus 101 may have shocked some. There were lapses and occasionally fury pushed

» Review

■ What: Henry Wong Doe
■ Where: University Music Theatre
■ Reviewer: William Dart

logic aside. Even in the gentler passages, there was a tendency to mannerism, as Wong Doe stressed Beethoven's direction to be played with innermost feeling.

But, in the flesh, no doubt about it, this was an electrifying event. No museum attempt at revivification this; the music lived, breathed and more than once even seemed to pant.

There were living composers in the second half, from Ligeti's great *Devil's Staircase Etude*, transformed into frenetic boogie woogie, and eight of Eichberg's *Scherben*, a collection of 19

Etudes and Postludes written for the Busoni International Piano Competition. Wong Doe caught every shift of mood and there were many, plucking out the ringing sonorities of the eighth and offering a dazzling workout in the mirrored counterpoints of the 13th.

Schumann, as we know, was a man of many personalities and, in Wong Doe's account of the *Fantasiestücke* Op 12, these clashed more than was good for the music. At times *Des Abends* seemed to suspend itself in mid-air; *Aufschwung* was too terrifying in its intensity, the Rossini scamper in *Fabel* perhaps too manic.

There were revelations — the askew folk dance of *Grillen* was one — but liabilities, too, like subjecting *Warum* to death by rubato.

Schumann's question is, I suspect, a simpler and deeper one than Wong Doe makes it out to be.

New Zealand Herald,
August 12, 2003
William Dart

“No museum attempt at revivification this; the music lived, breathed, and more than once even seemed to pant.”

Concours Reine Elisabeth - DIMANCHE

Vent de liberté

► Séance marquée par le Néo-zélandais, Henry Wong Dœ, très investi dans son art.

L'après-midi de dimanche s'ouvre sur la prestation du candidat belge **Dagmar Hofman**, (26 ans), avec un Bach conduit sur le mode méditatif, avec raffinement et un rien de préciosité; le jeu est clair et intelligent, mais manque de souffle et surtout de liberté, réserve très perceptible dans le fantasque *Campeador* de Léon Jongen. Avec **Henry Wong Dœ** (néo-zélandais, 25 ans), c'est un monde qui bascule: Bach, enfin placé au point de rencontre idéal entre la danse et la rhétorique, est étourdissant de vie et d'esprit, l'op. 10/11 de Chopin céleste, avec ses arpèges déployés en altitude, la 13^e étude de Ligeti diabolique (forcément), la sonate de Dutilleux, d'une dynamique quasi infinie, c'est un moment hors du temps (mais justement dans le nôtre), marqué par une personnalité forte, originale et libre. Avec **Gleb Ivanov** (russe, 20 ans) stature de géant et courbes de l'enfance, Bach est poliment expédié avant de

passer aux choses sérieuses, Rachmaninov et Liszt, livrés avec panache mais sans franchir les conventions de la virtuosité, faute d'intériorité, de respiration, de silence. **Jun Ju** (chinoise, 26 ans) ouvre avec de charmantes variations de Mozart, enchaîne avec un Bach mezzoforte perlé, sans relief ni articulations, ne réserve pas meilleur sort à Chopin, ni à Debussy, et termine avec un op. 39/9 de Rachmaninov, tout de fougue et de puissance, allez comprendre.

Plus cohérent, **Kazumasa Matsumoto** (japonais, 23 ans) encadre sa prestation par deux "préludes et fugues", l'un de Bach, à la limite de l'évanescence, l'autre de Chostakovitch, tout aussi mélancolique mais demandant sur la fin une énergie qui s'offre sans compter; entre les deux, Debussy brillant et coloré, Chopin itou, avec en plus, une constance rythmique exceptionnelle.

Xiao Han Wang (chinois, 22 ans) soufflera le chaud et le froid, avec un Bach pris à contresens, une brillante étude Scriabine et, dans les autres pièces, des effets appuyés et une tendance à la précipitation.

Martine Dumont-Mergeay

La Libre Belgique, Brussels
May 12th, 2003
Martine Dumont-Mergeay
(translation overleaf)

“...it is a moment from another time (but precisely in ours), marked by a strong personality, original and free.”

La Libre Belgique, Brussels
May 12th, 2003

Martine Dumont-Mergeay

Breath of freedom

Session marked by the New Zealander, Henry Wong Doe, very invested in his art.

With Henry Wong Doe (New Zealander, 25) it is a world turned upside down: Bach, placed finally at the ideal point between dance and rhetoric, is dizzying with life and spirit, the Op. 10/11 of Chopin celestial, with arpeggios deployed in altitude, the 13th etude of Ligeti diabolical (naturally), and the Sonate by Dutilleux, with infinite dynamics, is like a moment from another time (but precisely in ours), marked by a strong personality, original and free.

אתמול

קונצרט

חתירה ליופי ומיפלט

הקאמרטה הישראלית ירושלים מנצח: שמחה חלד סולן: הנרי וונג דו, פסנתר מיצירות פליקס מנדלסון מחיאון תל אביב

משהו לא עבר אתמול בסאונד של תזמורת הקאמרטה מירד שלים. אולי התוספת של שלושים אחוז בנגנים, מהם רבים בכלי נשיפה – כולל חצוצרות וטובה – גרמה לעיבוי הצליל מעבר לקומפקטיות הרגילה שלו. אולי הסיגנון המוסיקלי הדומנטי קלאסי של מנדלסון, סיגנון שמבקש מין מתיקת מאופקת, או לחילופין השתחררות לירית מכבלי צורה נוקשים, הקשה על התזמורת וסיבך אותה או אולי הניצוח החופשי של שמחה חלד, ששפע טבעיות מובנת מאליה, ולא נלהם על כל צליל. בכל מקרה, קסם הפיות של "חלום ליל קיץ" לא פעל שם, וגם לא המסתורין המכושף במערת פינגאל בפתוחה "ההברידים". אין זה אומר שמהו נפגם באופן מהותי בקונצרט הזה, שהיה מהנה לכל אורכו, ואיך אפשר אחרת בתוכנית שכולה מנדלסון? כל היצירות שנבחרו לערב ביטאו את הצד המעודן של המלחין הזה, את החתירה שלו ליופי, את התום הייחודי לו ואת חוסר הדאגה והשאננות הטבעות בו.

מי שמחפש מיפלט במוסיקה, בקשה לגיטימית במציאות מייאשת, לא יכול היה לבחור קונצרט מוצלח יותר: ויעיד על כך האולם המלא מפה לפה בפנים מחייכות וכפת ידיים מוטחות זו אל זו בקצב. כוכב הערב היה הנרי וונג דו, בדופעת בכורה מקצר עית ראשונה בישראל. הפסנתרן הצעיר הזה הראה כאן שוב למה נבחר כחניב הקהל בתחרות רובינשטיין האחרונה. בקלילות בה ריחף על הסולמות העולים ויורדים בקונצ'רטו הראשון, הנאיב, לפסנתר, או בפייטפוט הארכני לאורך ה"קפריצ'ו בריאנט", טייל וונג דו בתן המיוחד לו, חוכה לליווי נאמן משמחה חלד והאנסמבל. כל הקאמרטה הוכיחה כאן שגם ביום לא מבריק היא יכולה לספק לקהלה את האסקיפיום לשעה, המצופה ממנה.

נעם בן זאב

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
November 4, 2001
Noam Ben Ze'ev
(translation overleaf)

“...this young pianist showed once more why he had been chosen as ‘the audience favorite’....”

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
November 4, 2001

Noam Ben Ze'ev

...The star of the evening was Henry Wong Doe, in his debut professional performance in Israel. This young pianist showed once more why he had been chosen as "The audience favorite" in the last Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition. With the lightness in which he hovered above the ascending and descending scales in the first, naive Concerto [Mendelssohn Concerto No. 1], or in the lengthy chattering throughout the Capriccio Brillant, Wong Doe traveled in his special grace. He had faithful support from the Camerata Orchestra, which proved that they can play well and give its audience an hour of escapism.

א ת מ ו ל

תחרות רובינשטיין

נמצא המועמד

תחרות הפסנתר על שם רובינשטיין - שלב א'; היום החמישי;
מוזיאון תל אביב

קומתה השחוחה של תחרות רובינשטיין, שסבלה גם אתמול מבינוניות כללית, הודקפה לשעה עם פסנתרן שהזכיר לבאים לשם מה קיימים אירועים כאלה. הנרי וונג-דו בא כל הדרך מניו-זילנד כדי לעודד את החרדים מהיעוד דמות פסנתרנית כריזמתית שתטען לכתר הפרס הראשון. הוא היה בדיוק כזה: ניהן באישיות בימתית קודנת, וירטואוזיות טבעית והרבה חוכמה; ואלה הביאו לו, אחרי אינספור רסיטלים בהם הפגין הקהל אדישות מאוכזבת, תשואות קצביות שקראו לו שוב ושוב לבי-מה.

רק אמנים מעטים, והנרי וונג-דו הוא כנראה ביניהם, מעזים - או מסוגלים - לראות רסיטל כראי של האישיות האמנותית שלהם. "זה אני" - כך הכריז הפסנתרן הצעיר (24) מכל פראז'ה בתוכניתו: אלה ההומור והקלילות שלי (סונטה של היידן), זו המורכבות האינטלקטואלית שלי ("5 מבטים על ישו התינוק" מאת מסיאן), אני יכול להיות רגשני ומופנם (אינטרמזי של ברהמס), או להטותן פראי שעושה מה שבא לו (סונטה של חיני סטרה). ואת כל אלה הוא ניגן בלא עכבות רגשיות או טכניות, בגילוי לב שלם - ובכישרון מפחיד ממש. כך כבש וונג-דו את לב הקהל והעמיד עצמו, אם מותר להמר, כמועמד ודאי לשלב הגמר - זאת בתנאי שיצליח להפגין, בסונטה של בטהובן שמחד כה לו בשלב הבא, עומק רגשי שלא בא לידי ביטוי בתוכניתו אתמול.

עד וונג-דו צריך היה לעבור דרך משמימה במקצת עם פסנתרנים מטיוואן, יפאן ושוודיה, ואחריו עם כאלה מרומניה ואמריקה. נשאר עוד יום אחד כדי למצוא כמה מועמדים מסקרנים נוספים.

נעם בן זאב

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv
March 26, 2001
Noam Ben-Ze'ev
(translation overleaf)

"....Very few artists, and Henry Wong Doe would seem to be one of them, would dare to see, or are capable of seeing, the recital as a mirror of their artistic personality."

Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv,
March 26, 2001

Noam Ben-Ze'ev

The Candidate has been found

The unremarkable level of the Rubinstein competition, that suffered also yesterday from general mediocrity shot up for an hour with a pianist who reminded the attendees the reason for events such as these. Henry Wong Doe came all the way from New Zealand to encourage those who were concerned of the lack of charismatic pianists in this competition that would claim the crown of the First Prize. He was exactly like that. Gifted, with a stage personality that shines, natural virtuosity, and a lot of wisdom; and these brought him, after numerous recitals in which the audience showed disappointed indifference, rhythmic applause, calling him back to the stage again and again.

Only few artists, and Henry Wong Doe would seem to be one of them - would dare to see, or are capable of seeing, the recital as a mirror of their artistic personality. "This is me!" so announced the young pianist (24) from every phrase of his program: this is my light humour (Sonata by Haydn): this is my intellectual make-up (Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus* No.15). "I can be emotional and introverted (Brahms' *Intermezzi*), or a wild clown who does as he feels" (Ginastera *Sonata* No.1). All these he played without emotional or technical barriers, but wholeheartedly and with an almost alarming talent.

So did Wong Doe conquer the audience's heart, and put himself, if I may gamble, as an almost sure candidate for the final stage.

מעריב

אמש במוסיקה
אורה בינור

ללכת שבי אחריו

תחרות רובינשטיין, שלב הגמר
איש עוד לא פיענח את צפונות הקסם. גם לא ניתן ליצור מרשם מדעי לסודות המיתוס הרגשי. אבל כשזה קורה – מספיקה פעימת לב אחת, ואנחנו שטים על גל אחר. והקסם – פנים רבות לו.

כשמסימיליאנו פראטי האיטלקי החל לנגן את בטהובן הרביעי, הוא היה מתוח מעט, והפשייר. פראטי בפרק האיטי היה משורר, שסיפר אגדה בצלילים. ושמעתם באיזה קרשנדרו אמנותי ואנושי הוא סיים את הפרק הראשון? הוא מרבר ושר בצלילים, כמו מיכאלנג'לו האגדי.

■ קסם, חולמונות ותמימות

רוך ועוצמה יוצרים דיאלוג. הוא פסנתרן מרגש, אישי מאוד, ויש גם קסם. חולמונות ותמימות. כזה הוא הנרי וונג'דו, אהוב על הקהל. בטהובן הרביעי שלו היה כמו פסטורליה, והוא עצמו מנגן בתמימות יפה, כילד המביט בפליאה על נפלאות הטבע והעולם. עדיין אין רוע, אין קשיות. בטהובן שלו היה מסע לארץ החלומות, ולכן בפרק האיטי – נוצר חשמל מהפנט באולם.

הצליל שלו לעולם מעודן, כמו בושם צרפתי. וונג'דו מחזיר אותנו לעידן התמימות: הוא אמן הצליל והחלום. השאלה אם בחויה הלוקלית הזו יש מילים, הטבעת הותם עמוק, או שכמו בושם קליל – זה מתאדה ונעלם. אבל הלכנו שבי אחריו.

■ אצילות ברבורית

ולבסוף עלתה יומה אוסאקי, שנראתה כמו ברבור ורוד וניגנה באצילות ברבורית את מוצרט מס. 27. מההתחלה ועד הסוף זה היה "בוויבון" מתקתק, יפה כמו השמלה, ובעצם קצת בנאלי ושטוח.

הסבוב הבא הוא ברומנטיקה: צ'ייקובסקי, בראהמס ופרוקופייב. כל אדם והשבי שלו, כי המוסיקה היא ראי של החיים.

Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv
April 2nd, 2001
Ora Binur
(translation overleaf)

“...he is an artist of sound and dream.”

Ma'ariv, Tel Aviv

April 2nd, 2001

Ora Binur

Magic, dreams, and innocence:

Softness and power create dialogue. He is an exciting pianist, very personal, and with a sense of magic, dreaminess and innocence. This is Henry Wong Doe, the audiences' favourite. His Beethoven 4th Piano Concerto was like a Pastorale, and he himself plays with beautiful innocence, as a boy looking in wonder at the wonders of nature and the world. Still, he conveys no evil or harshness. His Beethoven was a trip to 'wonderland' - in the slow movement, a hypnotic electricity was created in the hall.

His sound is always refined, like a French perfume. Wong Doe brings us back to the age of innocence; he is an artist of sound and dream. The question is, whether this experience he creates leaves a solid mark or whether it evaporates like a light perfume in the air. But we were transfixed with him.

מוזיקה



דני ולן. וירטואוז עם נשמה

במקום הראשון: המקום השישי

הזוכה האמיתי בתחרות הפסנתר על שם רובינשטיין היה הנרי וונג דו. וירטואוז עם נשמה, משום מה, החליטו אחרת

של סאונד מהפנט. וכאלה היו כמעט כל המתחרים. בחירת השופטים הייתה תמונה בעיני רוב הקהל. ביום שלישי, בקונצרט האחרון של התחרות, עמדו השופטים, ובראשם האיש שייסד את התחרות, יעקב ביטנרטיץ, והודיעו על הזוכים. כאשר התבשר כי במקום השישי דורג הנרי וונג דו מניו זילנד, התקשה הקהל להסתיר את תדהמתו והגיב מיד בשירת בודה. וונג דו ניגן באותו ערב את הקונצ'רטו מספר 3 של פרוקופייב בטכניקה מדהימה והדהים את הקהל, שני עמד על רגליו בסוף הביצוע. וונג דו הוא שילוב של נגן עם נשמה ווירטואוזיות, ששולט בפסנתר ויודע לתת לכל יצירה צבע שלא נשמע כמוהו לפני כן. במקום החמישי ובתה יומה אוסאקי מימן, ברביעי אר גולבק פלכאנוב מארובקיסטאן, בשלישי מסימיליאנו פראטי מאיטליה. במקום השני זכה פרנק רוי מרומניה ובמקום הראשון – קיריל גרשניין מרוסיה. את תרומת הקהל שיככה מעט החרדה כי הפרס אהוב הקהל (לפי הצבעה) זכה וונג דו.

כשנשאל וונג דו, דקות לפני הכרזת הזוכים, מה יעדיף – להגיע למקום הראשון או להיות אהוב הקהל? – ענה המתמודד שאהוב הקהל הוא תואר שיהיה לו הרבה יותר חשוב. באף תחרות בעולם ובאף תחרות רובינשטיין קודמת לא קרה דבר כזה. אהוב הקהל הוא תמיד אחד הזוכים בשלושת המקומות הראשיים. גם התואר הזה, שניתן הפעם לזוכה במקום השישי, מוכיח את הבעייתיות בשיקולי השופטים, וכל מי שהיה באולם הדיגש בכך, שוב התברר כי טעמם של שופטים בתחרות כמו זו הוא סובייקטיבי, ומכאן מוטריע עצם קיום התחרות הוא דבר לא מוטרי, שפר גע באמנות, ביצירתיות ובאינדיבידואליות.

בכל מקרה, במבחן המציאות, אהוב הקהל הוא גם המנצח בתחרות. לכן אפשר להכריז על וונג דו כמנצח האמיתי של התחרות. לאורך כל התחרות חזרו אחריו מפקים והגיעו לידיו הזמנות רבות להופעות. המקרה שלו מרגיע עד כמה טובים כל מי שחושבים שתחרות כזו אינה רק בידור ושעשועים. אבל נגינה בפסנתר אינה מירוצן סוסים. לא חשוב בה מי מגיע ראשון, אלא הדרך האחרת, השונה. כמו שפיקאטו, ידירו הטוב של רובינשטיין, היה שונה מראלי.

תחרות ואמנות. שני מושגים כל כך מנוגדים. על פי מה מודדים אתטיקה, טעם, פרשנות, נסיבות? הגיוני למדוד מי קפץ הכי רחוק או מי שחה הכי מרד. כשמדובר בנגינה בפסנתר, מה אהוב מודדים בעצמם מי מנגן הכי מרדף והשובה למי אכפת. החוק החשוב ביותר בתחרות הקונצטים אמר שהכל שבו אהוב בר חנים או מודדים רבו מה שמפיע בעצמו על התוצאה. הכלי במקרה הזה היה השופטים והקהל. וכמוכן, שופטים אחרים היו עשויים לבחור נגן אחר שיקבל את הפרס הראשון. ובכל זאת מתקיימת בפעם העשירי רית תחרות לפסנתר לנגנים עד גיל 32, מאות נגנים מ-52 מדינות מרחבי העולם מנסים להתקבל לתחרות ומכונים לעמוד בפני 14 שופטים וקהל של אנשי שים המכירים את היצירות בעל פה. כששואלים אותם למה הם עושים את זה הם עונים: אתגר, כסף, שישקים לממן כמה שנים של אימונים, ובעיקר – אם נזכה במקום הראשון צפויות לנו הזמנות להופעות ואולי אפילו התחלה של קריירה מופלאה.

שני השלבים הראשונים בתחרות התקיימו במר יואן תל אביב, במרתונים מעייפים של שמונה שעות ביום. השופטים היו צריכים לשמוע בכל יום שעות של נגינה ולהישאר ברעה צלולה. חוויה דומה לאכילה במסעדה צרפתית שמונה פעמים ביום: אם בפעם הראשונה גנחתם מותאנה, בפעם השנייה כבר הארוז עלול להביא אתכם לידו בחילה. המתחרים עולים למנה לנגן את הרסיטל, רובם מתחזים ורועים, כך שאין כמעט סיכוי לשמוע את הנגינה הטבעית שלהם. מכך אפשר לחשוב שאולי התכונה החשובה ביותר של אלה שהגיעו לשלב הגמר היא היכולת לשלוט ברגי שות ובלחץ הקיצוני.

על המתח של הנבחנים נוסף הרעש העולה מהקהל. אולי די להשתעל על המסורת הפולנית אמרת: השתעל היום כי עוד מעט כבר לא תוכל. אבל אנשים משתעלים במלוא הגרון לא רק בין הפרקים, אלא גם בזמן הנגינה. גם השופטים משיכים לצפצף מדי שעה עגולה, ואי תם הטלפונים הסלולריים, שמתעקשים לצלצל בריע ברביעים המרגשים ביצירה. הקהל צריך להבין שיש לו תפקיד חשוב, במיוחד בתחרות. רע לב הוא הקהל שיצא בהמוניו באמצע רסיטל גורלי של מתחרה.

רבים מהמתחרים בחרו וירטואוזי שמאפיין את אר תור רובינשטיין ואת מורשתו, אבל נראה שרק מעטים מהם באמת מכירים את ההקלטות של המאסטר. לפחות אפשר להתנחם בכך שאלה שעלו לשלב הסופי הפגינו פרשנות אישית מקורית ונגינה ייחודית. את היצירות בחרו המתחרים בזמן הרשמה לתחרות, וכך קרה שבשלבים הסופיים נאלצנו לשמוע אתן יצירות בנגינת מתחרים שונים. בערב האחרון, לדרג מה, ניגנו שניים מהמתמודדים אותה יצירה מופלאה הקונצ'רטו מספר 1 של צ'ייקובסקי. למרות החזרה מרתקת של שמונת את הבולרי האסאנו בין הפסנתרנים. אפשר לאמרו את גודלתו של נגן על פי אקורד אחר

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“...He is a rare combination of virtuosity and soul.”

ועי הרצל

Ha'eer, Tel Aviv,
April 5th, 2001

Roy Herzlich

The first prize goes to: the sixth place.

The real winner of the recent Rubinstein competition was Henry Wong Doe, the audience favorite. The jury somehow, thought differently.

Art and competition; two phenomenon that stand poles apart. How can one measure aesthetics, taste and interpretation? Measuring who jumped the farthest or who swam the fastest would make sense. But who played the fastest? The answer: who cares?

The most important rule in the theory of quantum mechanics illustrates that the instrument one uses to observe or measure something, in the end affects the result itself. The instrument in the case of the Rubinstein competition were the jury and the audience. Of course, a different jury might have chosen another contestant to receive the first prize.

Despite these factors, the Tenth Arthur Rubinstein competition took place, hundreds of pianists from all over the world applied, and finally the 36 who were chosen for the first stage, gave the jury and an audience who knew their music by heart the right to judge them. If you ask the contestants why? They'll tell you: challenge, money, and if you win, you might get invitations for concerts and the chance to begin a career.

The first two stages of the competition were held at the Tel Aviv Museum. The jury had to listen to 8 hours of playing every day. It's almost like eating 8 times in a French restaurant in the same day. If the first meal is paradise, by the last one it is disgusting. The candidates are so stressed, one can't imagine how it is possible to hear their natural playing and ability. Perhaps the most important quality of those who reached the final stage, was the ability to relax and control their nerves under this extreme pressure.

Besides the psychological pressure, the audience don't give them an easy time either. "Would you stop coughing?" A Polish saying goes: "cough now because later you won't be able to". And yet the audience still coughs as loud as they can during a performance. The watches beep every round hour, the cell phones ring exactly at the most moving part of the work. The audience must understand how important his role is in a performance. In one case a very rude audience member left the hall in the middle of a performance.

The audience surely didn't agree with the jury's decision on Tuesday night, April 3rd, 2001. When Mr. Bistritsky, the founder of the competition, announced that Henry Wong Doe would receive the Sixth prize, a loud boo could be heard from many audience members. Henry Wong Doe played that same evening the Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto with virtuosity and spirit. Wong Doe gave every piece of music a new color and spirit which hadn't been heard before. He is a rare combination of virtuosity and soul. The audience were all up on their feet applauding him following his final performances. Yuma Osaki from Japan was awarded Fifth prize and Ulugbek Palvanov from Uzbekistan the Fourth prize. The Third prize went to the Italian Massimiliano Ferrati, Ferenc Vizi from Romania the Second, and the First prize went to Kiril Gerstein of Russia.

The special "Audience Favorite" prize was given to Wong Doe. When he was asked a moment before the prizes were announced which he would prefer, the First prize or the Audience prize, he told interviewers that the audience prize is much more genuine and important for him.

In the history of the Rubinstein competition it has never happened before that the audience prize has been given to the Sixth prize winner. In previous competitions the audience favorite has always been one of the top three prizes. This therefore emphasizes the problematic aspect of the jury's decision; that their taste is subjective. In some way having a competition like this is immoral; it insults art, creativity and individuality. In a real life setting the love of the audience is the genuine success of the artist.

For this reason one can say that Henry Wong Doe is the real winner. During all stages of the competition and before the results were announced he received invitations for performing engagements at other venues. His case is a great example that shows that this sort of contest is no more than entertainment. Playing the piano is not like a horse race. We couldn't care less about who came first. It's the way one plays that matters. The same that Picasso, Rubinstein's friend, wasn't like Dali. Not better, just different.

Yediot Acharonot, Tel Aviv

April 1st, 2001

Hanoch Ron

Marvellous madness

Seated on the stage is bundle of amazing emotions called Henry Wong Doe, of New Zealand. He takes us with marvellous musical madness on a fascinating adventure into Beethoven (Concerto No.4). This comes from his guts. Welcome to wild imagination. Farewell to feelings. And he does not keep accounts with anyone. Neither from the aspect of style, nor in the direction of tradition. His playing touches raw nerves. The main thing is that he knows to arouse feelings. He presents Beethoven up to date. Different. Compelling. Wong Doe is not a good boy; he is quite simply an original artist. And this is what I look for in a competition.

“He takes us with marvellous musical madness on a fascinating adventure...”



**WAYNE
LEE GAY**

■
Star-Telegram
Classical Music
Critic Wayne Lee
Gay is traveling
the globe with a
jury charged with
auditioning 137
pianists for the
11th Van Cliburn
International
Piano Competition,
to be held
May 25-June 10 in
Fort Worth. Only
30 will make the
final cut for the
prestigious com-
petition for profes-
sionals. This is the
last of six field
reports from the
auditions, which
conclude today
through Saturday
in Fort Worth.

► Contestant
profiles,
Page 5F

Diary: HOT PLAY FROM A COLD CLIME

Friday, Feb. 16: Having listened to ambitious young pianists in halls on the edge of the Alps and just a few feet away from the Kremlin, the five-member Cliburn competition international screening jury now settles into the heart of middle America in Evanston, Ill.. While portraits and busts of Bartok, Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Phil Glass greeted them in Europe, here, photos of championship Northwestern University athletic teams stare down from the walls of the hotel restaurant where they dine.

Boxy, 1930s quasi-Gothic Lutkin Hall is a five-minute walk from the hotel through dry, bitterly cold air. A late winter wind blows in from Lake Michigan, a few blocks to the east. Inside, a pipe organ dominates the stage; the acoustics are odd but serviceable, sensitive to the piano at softer levels but harsh and clangy at any volume above forte.

Still, two of the first evening's performers make a strong impression — and a good case for advancement to the main competition in Fort Worth in May — in front of an audience of about 100 students and connoisseurs. Both play, among other things, Debussy's *L'isle Joyeuse*, a piece defined for

many of us in Van Cliburn's renditions; and they play the piece in entirely different ways.

American Robert Thies (below), 27, dressed like an MBA, is all logic in both his Debussy and in Prokofiev's Piano Sonata No. 6. New Zealander Henry Wong Doe is all passion and ecstasy, not only in the Debussy but in Liszt and Messiaen — and even, within the bounds of style, in a Haydn sonata. Yet both Thies and

(More on CLIBURN on Page 2F)



Special to the Star-Telegram/STEPHEN J. CARRERA

CLIBURN

From Page 1F

Wong Doe are equally convincing to this listener.

Saturday, Feb. 17: The one full day of auditions in Chicago features seven pianists — including, by coincidence, two named Kim and one named Kimm.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram,
February 21, 2001
Wayne Lee Gay

“...all passion and ecstasy...even, within the bounds of style...”

■ Performance

Henry Wong Doe

School of Music

Review: Heath Lees

We are lucky to be able to hear talented young New Zealand pianists when they come back to Auckland from time to time.

The present "Purely Piano" series will showcase Chenyin Li and Stephen De Pledge later this year, and last night Henry Wong Doe took time off between United States graduations and world piano competition entries to play to an appreciative audience back home.

As ever, Wong Doe's strength is in the flamboyant, theatrical pieces, which he plays with intensity and drive, yet — a sign of continuing maturity — there is enormous control and care underpinning even the most colourful effects.

This was most evident in Albeniz' *Malaga* from the suite *Iberia*, and in the brilliant Sonata opus 22 by the Argentinian composer Ginastera; a work with rumba-like rhythms and pungent folk-melodies — Stravinsky meeting Bartok on a joyous, South American holiday.

Earlier, the opening items had their crisp, almost brusque moments. Opting for a more "authentic"

fortepiano-like approach for his opening Haydn sonata, Wong Doe gave us rippling runs and a pleasing clarity of line.

But there were some terse, seemingly hurried moments, and the Brahms Intermezzi that followed were sonorous but not broadly reflective.

In the second half there was a musical, low-profile evocation of Debussy's *Bruyeres*. Clearly, Wong Doe was letting us sample many aspects of his pianism within a reasonably economical programme.

But it was the final piece, the little-played and prodigiously difficult *Fantasia in C* by Schumann that made the most lasting impression.

Opening up as though he were freeing a wild horse from captivity, Wong Doe let the music have all its bold rushes and erratic freedom, yet still gave full rein to the difficult cross-rhythms, subtle inner voices and occasionally solemn processional moments that make Schumann's volatile, kaleidoscopic textures into a marvellous tapestry of sound.

A fine recital this, displaying an increasingly skilful and mature pianist who combines inner sensitivity with a broad, colourful sweep that will make for many stirring performances to come.

New Zealand Herald

June 14th, 2000

Heath Lees

“...an increasingly skilful and mature pianist who combines inner sensitivity with a broad, colourful sweep...”

Ritchie and students share spotlight in Sunday violin concert

By Peter Jacobi
H-T Reviewer

What continually amazes one who frequents the haunts of music hereabouts is the depth of talent that reveals itself.

So it was on Sunday as ensembles representing two traditions of performance offered campus concerts. In late afternoon, several violinists showed their gifts to highlight the work of the Indiana University Baroque Orchestra, so steeped in the early music tradition. Then it was a pianist appearing with the IU Symphony, exemplar of the modern orchestra, who scored mightily during an evening program.

Ritchie and company

Baroque Orchestra leader and teacher Stanley Ritchie shared the solo spotlight with three student

members in an ebullient reading of Vivaldi's Concerto in F Major for Four Violins, Opus 3, No. 7.

Violinists Fumi Okuda, Marty Davids, and — in particular — Antonin Stahly fiddled away gloriously, rousing cheers from a good-sized audience in Recital Hall.

And soon thereafter, another violinist, Tai Murray, displayed her fiery technique in the G Major Concerto by Johann David Heinichen, an early 18th century composer who worked long in Dresden as Kapellmeister and left a long list of pieces that combined German, Italian and French styles.

All the violinists involved played not only with skill but artfully and heartfully, more than dutifully partnered by their colleagues from the Baroque Orchestra.

Ritchie, as one has come to expect, had carefully thought out and rehearsed the concert's bill of fare,

including also two collections of items from opera: a Suite from *Alcina* by Handel, with all its welcoming music, and a collection from Purcell's *Diida and Aeneas*, generous in repeating the lovelies of that great work.

It was interesting to hear, in addition, an early Haydn symphony, the D Minor No. 26 also labeled *Lamentatione*. How different it sounds on period instruments. It gains an informality and an earthiness, strengths upon which Ritchie built, adding in the final Menuet some rhythmic surprises and charmingly overstressed stops.

A Pianist in Beethoven

Delicious chestnuts formed the IU Symphony's Sunday night concert in the Musical Arts Center, one led with his usual level of exuberance and authority by David Efron.

There was Beethoven to start matters off, the Concerto No. 4 in G Major

for Piano and Orchestra, with Henry Wong Doe at the Steinway. There was Respighi's *Fountains of Rome* at midpoint. And to conclude the affair, Efron programmed Richard Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*.

Satisfying fun for a listener (and there were plenty of them on hand) when the musicians at work are as good as these were on Sunday.

Henry Wong Doe proved a highly gifted young pianist. He strode to the stage, a compact, determined fellow, businesslike until the music started, at which point he turned mellow and dreamy and, most importantly, a master of the keyboard, one immersed in the world of Beethoven, one capable of both attacking and coaxing. He accomplished some delicious finger work.

The performance as a whole stood out for its flow of energy. Moments of ferocity contrasted with

those of melting sweetness, but nothing seemed forced. The interpretation emerged as fully natural. And what an intriguing cadenza the pianist added in the opening *Allegro moderato*. Was it his own or someone else's? It had a 20th century personality, and it was stunning. Efron and the orchestra gave the soloist a compassionate foundation to work with and from.

Cheers resulted in abundance. But they were evident also after the reading of Respighi's orchestral love poem to Rome and its fountains, all nipples and sunshine and city life and the glow of evening. As Efron and the orchestra caused it to unfold, one was led to wish for an immediate departure, a heading toward Rome. Efron made his players, strap, crackle, pop and sparkle, too.

As for that luscious Strauss tone poem about the prankster Till Eulenspiegel, it's accepted as one of the most adventurous scores in the orchestral litera-

ture, exuding mischief and gamesmanship. Efron's way with it was no-holds-barred. The orchestra was in superb form and had been urged to be unrestrained while, of course, also being kept in tow. Efron was in command and having a good time and causing the players to enjoy themselves. The mood was catching.

Never mind that as the story has it, Till Eulenspiegel ends with the hero, or antihero, being caught and strung up to pay his societal debts. "Up the ladder with him! Till's mortal self is finished," we are being told. But the music, though touched in those final moments by menace, continues along its brazen way as if Till were smiling and somehow practicing a final joke.

I smiled. I'd heard a delightful concert and been reminded how well all these students play: the pianist Henry Wong Doe and the 90 or so members of the IU Symphony. Talent en masse,

Bloomington Herald-Times

February 7th, 2000

Peter Jacobi

“...a master of the keyboard, one immersed in the world of Beethoven, one capable of both attacking and coaxing.”

CONCOURS Les épreuves éliminatoires du Remand à l'étoffe d'un premier lauréat et un

Un Néo-zélandais miraculeux



Augurant une soirée de mardi promise, **Ragna SCHIRMER** (Allemagne, 27 ans) offre un prélude BWV 874 panaché, complété par une

fugue raide mais débordante de passion. Plus onirique que théâtral, son Erbkönig de Schubert-Liszt accuse en revanche quelque fatigue tout comme ses Chopin et Liszt, rapidement dépassés par la technique mais toujours nourris d'une émotion sincère et spontanée.

Plus introverti, **Naoya SEINO** (Japon, 31 ans) offre un prélude en ut dièse mineur d'une uniformité monochrome, complété par une fugue à la traîne, lourde de signification, qui ne décolle décidément pas. L'autisme est au programme dans les Feux follets lisztien, plutôt des feux de pailles, heureusement compensés par un Islamey de Balakirev où les effets dramatiques fusent dans tous les sens.

Révélation de la soirée, le pianiste néo-zélandais **Henry WONG DOE**, maîtrise du haut de ses 22 ans l'architecture d'un Bach comme s'il en était l'instigateur, cela avec une musicalité débordante. Plus encore, il campe une Ricordanza de Liszt tout en finesse, remplie d'énergie et d'engagement virtuose, exceptionnellement lyrique et vibrante, sans

une once de rhétorique. Un jeu incisif et pénétrant qui atteint des sommets dans une Isle Joyeuse aux coloris inédits, abyme de jouissance et d'ivresse.

Plus terre à terre, **Miho TOKAJI** (Japon, 26 ans) se complait dans un prélude et fugue en la mineur robuste et expressif dont on appréciera surtout la souplesse cristalline du phrasé. Tant son Etude de Chopin, dansante, que ses Albeniz et Rachmaninov, fougueux et dynamiques, laissent entrevoir un rapport privilégié avec le rythme plus qu'avec la couleur, même si la maîtrise du clavier, martelé jusqu'à la violence, est évidente.

Plus nuancé, le tempérament musical du Canadien **Daniel MORAN** (28 ans) opte pour un travail soigné, dominé par le souci de la couleur et l'élégance formelle, malgré un Bach qui se relâche en fin de parcours. La délicatesse fluide de sa Barcarolle et de son étude de Chopin démontrent des ressources expressives infinies, nonobstant un jeu mou, impression culminant dans l'Etude de Debussy.

Quant à **Esther BUDIARDJO** (Indonésie, 26 ans), elle offre une interprétation correcte de Bach, une lecture agréable mais sans plus de l'Arpeggio de Liszt, préférant réserver ses artifices pour l'Etude de Stravinsky et pour un Balakirev fougueux dont on cherchera en vain les qualités expressives. (ST. D.)

La Libre Belgique, Brussels
May 6th, 1999
Martine Dumont-Mergeay
(translation overleaf)

“Revelation of the evening, the New Zealand pianist Henry Wong Doe [played] with energy and virtual engagement, exceptionally lyrical and vibrant...a world of drunken joy.”

La Libre Belgique, Brussels
May 6th, 1999

Reviewer unknown

A miraculous New Zealander

Revelation of the evening, the 22 year old New Zealand pianist Henry Wong Doe conquers the architecture of Bach with great musicality, as if he was the instigator of it. Furthermore, he played Ricordanza by Liszt with energy and virtual engagement, exceptionally lyrical and vibrant, without one ounce of rhetoric. Altogether an incisive and penetrating performance, that reached its summit in the L'isle Joyeuse which had an infinite spectrum of colours, creating a world of drunken joy.

Selected concerto repertoire

Bartok	Piano Concerto No. 3
Beethoven	Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat, Op. 19 Piano Concerto No. 3 in c minor, Op. 37 Piano Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58 Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat, Op. 73 "Emperor"
Brahms	Piano Concerto No. 1 in d minor, Op. 15
Franck	Symphonic Variations
Grieg	Piano Concerto in a minor
Hindemith	Kammermusik II Op. 36 No. 1
Mendelssohn	Piano Concerto No. 1 in g minor, Op. 25 Capriccio Brilliant, Op. 22
Mozart	Piano Concerto No. 9 in E flat, K. 271 Piano Concerto No. 14 in A, K. 414 Piano Concerto No. 17 in D, K. 451 Piano Concerto No. 18 in G, K. 453 Piano Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467 Piano Concerto No. 24 in c minor, K. 491 Piano Concerto No. 25 in C, K. 503
Prokofiev	Piano Concerto No. 1 in D flat, op. 10 Piano Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26
Rachmaninov	Piano Concerto No. 2 in c minor, Op. 18 Piano Concerto No. 3 in d minor, Op. 30 Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43
Ravel	Piano Concerto in G
Saint-Saens	Piano Concerto No. 2 in g minor, Op. 22
Stravinsky	Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments
Shostakovich	Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 35
Schumann	Piano Concerto in a minor, Op. 54
Tchaikovsky	Piano Concerto No. 1 in b flat minor, Op. 23

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