

Piano Duo 'Remarkable'

by Richard Westerdale

A part of a critic's job is interpreting the audience's reaction to a performance and then observing how this reaction relates to his own. This kind of analysis is very difficult for the David Montgomery--Nathan Schwarz duo-piano recital which took place in the South Lounge on March 31. The amiable audience which filled the Forum's South Lounge obviously came to be pleased, expected to be pleased, and certainly left very pleased. Such outright enthusiasm for any performance as was exhibited last Friday night is liable to influence the opinion of any critic.

The first piece labeled "Contrapunctus XVII from the The Art of Fugue by J. S. Bach is actually the same as Contrapunctus XVI but with a fourth completely obligato part added to make the piece playable on two instruments. The fugue is in two sections the second of which is a mirror image of the first. After an initial bad start and verbal encouragement from Miss deLecluse, the piece was well played in an acceptable pianistic style. Entrances of the subject were made dynamically conspicuous and transition passages played softer. Though very popular for piano-duo concerts, the piece tends to suffer outside of the environment of its companion contrapuncti.

The second piece, *En Blanc et Noir*, by Claude Debussy, is a two-piano sonata written toward the end of his career. The first two movements may be considered to contain Debussy's impressions of the First World War. The third movement, a scherzo, is typical of the virtuosic pieces often found at the end of Debussy's three-movement collections.

The playing of Messrs. Schwarz and Montgomery indicated the same sensitivity required for a piece which would be considered relevant to our own time. Working against the handicap of two pianos out of tune with each other, Messrs. Schwarz's and Montgomery's execution of the

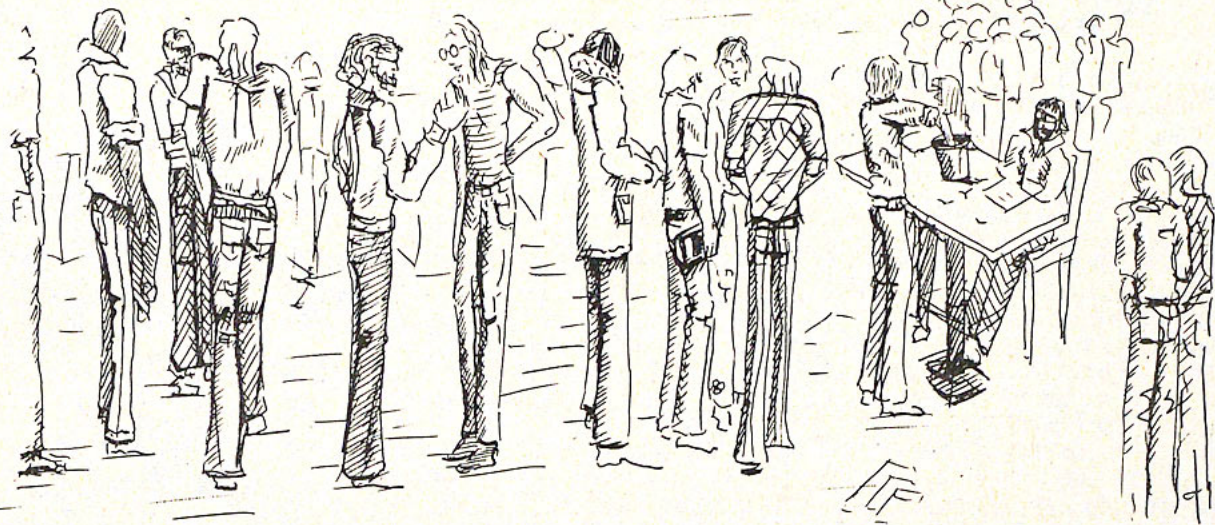
Debussy demonstrated a better blend and, hence, more of a feeling that just one person was playing. Owing to the short length of time the duo has been playing together, such niceties as precision in exposed passages were not always present.

The L. M. Gottschalk transcription of Gioacchino Rossini's *William Tell Overture* for one piano and four hands was probably considered by many to be the high point of the program. It certainly elicited the greatest amount of audience response since, throughout most of the piece, the playing was accompanied by snickers from the audience now and then crescendoing to a guffaw.

The playing itself would certainly have seemed very acceptable even at the time the piece was written. Difficulties present in the more virtuosic passages were of a mere technical nature. Successful as the performance was, the section of the piece containing the "storm" would have sounded much better on a piano with proportionately longer strings. Mr. Montgomery's playing in the upper register during this section tended to sound tinny through no fault of his own.

From the point of view of a concert whose main objective was to thrill, anything following a piano transcription of the *William Tell Overture* would have seemed anticlimactic. Strangely enough the Sonata by Franz Schubert contained some of the duo's most beautiful playing. Among the relatively large selection of literature by Schubert for one piano and four hands, the Sonata, opus 140, nicknamed "Grand Duo", stands out as one the more well known.

For the most part, the playing of Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Schwarz was quite remarkable with regard to both the short amount of time they have practiced together and the technical and musical difficulty of the pieces chosen. The audience's approval itself ought to serve as an impetus for future performances employing the same piano-duo team.



Room Draw

Students drew numbers last night to determine the priority for room selection next year. (Art by Miriam Burstein)

Recent Plays 'Entertaining'

by Sylvia Wallace

Two contrasting outlooks on man's earthly predicament were exemplified this past weekend in the presentation of two plays, *The Secret of Heaven* by Par Lagerkvist and *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* by Moliere, by the Grinnell College Theatre.

The first view, as depicted in Lagerkvist's play taking place in a Lilliputian replica of the world, is that there are no healthy people (physically or mentally) left in the world. Therefore no-one can help the other. Selfishness and vanity are prevailing qualities of the deformed entities found in this play.

The one exception is the youthful and earnest main character who, very realistically portrayed, is defeated by the antagonistic, non-communicative environment upon which he encroaches.

This particular environment was expertly depicted with the simplicity of set found in the Theatre of the Absurd. The stage was almost barren except for strange caricatures, twin screens, and a cross in the background. Pictures exemplifying the mood of the moment were flashed upon the screens at intervals, and a stroboscopic light was used to emphasize moments of turbulence and confusion. The scenery on the whole projected a feeling of isolation appropriate for the mood of the play.

The pace changes at the beginning of the second play -- becoming brighter, gayer. Again this coincides with the author's view of life and the games people play. *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* pokes fun at the avaricious nature of humans. The tone is light and comical and so are the characters.

The costumes were much more elaborate in this play than in the previous ones in keeping with the Medieval French setting of the play. The piano accompaniment by Greg Gaines also added to the clarity of the mood changes within the play. I might add that Michael Grant's comic performance in the role of Sganarelle, the lascivious doctor, was one of the most outstanding of the evening.

Congratulations are due to director Bruce Halverson and to his assistant William Vanderpool. The set design was adequate and in keeping with the moods of the plays. Prof. James E. Reeder III deserves the credit for supervising set design and Michael Grant designed the lighting. The behind-the-scenes staff as well as the cast did a fine job and the presentation was very entertaining.



To the Editors:

If you think you are running a newspaper, I would like to suggest that you are dead wrong, for the damaging lies you print eliminate any consideration of your publication as an arm of the responsible news media.

I refer to the picture of myself which was, last issue, printed over the name of one "Ben Z. Dreen" without my permission. This slander and libel is vicious, maliciously intended, and personally embarrassing to myself. Until this preposterous lie is corrected (in another of the S&B's never-ending series of "retraction" articles) I will consider your paper a scandal sheet, run by your demented minds only for the purpose of providing an interesting lining for local garbage bins.

The tradition of S&B smut lives on. I would sue your rag for all it is worth, if I did not fear incurring a debt.

Don F. Dagenais

Editors note to dagenais letter
Our apologies to Mr. Dreen. -- The Editors.

To the Editors:

In response to the gay letters to the S&B, we contacted Mr. Haas for more information about a possible meeting of Grinnell gay people. Within the week, there will be a meeting of gay men and a meeting of gay women. Anyone at all interested in attending these meetings should immediately see Mr. Haas, who will refer you to the women and men associated with their respective meetings. We confided our thoughts to Mr. Haas because we know that, as chaplain, he is open-minded and has a genuine concern for the student body. All information

Dagenais Decries Slander (sic); Homosexuals To Meet Here; Lesbians Are Here Too; Appeals For Student Activism

and identities will be kept strictly confidential.

Names Withheld By Request

To the Editors:

Here is one more letter from a gay Grinnellian.

This one's from a proud and happy lesbian--one who has discovered a wealth of strength in accepting herself on her own terms.

I'd like to say more about that, but I don't know quite how to go about it. That's because I don't know enough about that segment of my audience which would be most affected by it--other gay women at Grinnell--to really relate to them in a letter of this sort.

I hope that this most unfortunate situation will change. I'm sure I'm not the only person who would benefit from such a change.

One thing I could say is that maybe in some ways the outlook of gay women is peculiar to their nature as gay women, as distinct from gay men.

(Perhaps I should have started out by confirming that we do in fact exist. A couple of the letters submitted earlier to the editor more-or-less subtly made the assumption that "homosexual" implies "male".)

One more thing--if anyone wants to add their views to what has so far been said about homosexuals at Grinnell, and wants to do it in the form of an unsigned letter, they should present it to Mr. Haas, and he will then vouch for it to the S&B. Otherwise, this newspaper is not likely to print it without a signature.

Name withheld by request

To the Editors:

E.P.C. re-organization, academic reform, etc., is just a bunch of quackery. It's just like "reactionary pig" and "male chauvinist", just so

much rhetoric. Those of us who are really concerned about all of these issues must find new ways to communicate our viewpoint and then move beyond theory and find new ways to mold the social reality around us. If you are serious about student power don't wait for someone else to do something. Take advantage of the power we have now.

In your classes try to destroy the maggot-ridden ideas of student inferiority, criticize the professor (constructively), and don't sneer at students who challenge the professor (within reasonable limits). Take active part in your departmental meetings. Talk to your advisor and friends about the best ways we can aid each other in our common struggle of gaining education. The faculty is here to help us, don't let them forget that we can help them too.

Let's work our way into the structure and, while continuing to push for more women and black faculty, intensify the pressure for more black, lower class, and rural students. This latter way is the only way we can change the sterile, apathetic, and snobbish atmosphere of this campus.

The E.P.C. proposal our task force has drawn up aims at the following points: the Dept. EPC will be a faculty student committee with equal numbers from each group with power over the departments contract recommendation, staff assignments, curriculum, structure of the major. The Dept. EPC will have the right to receive a full explanation of Exec. council actions on personnel. Some form of representation for non-majors. The institution of the right to recall student EPC representatives. We are working with Anne Walters in this area and would appreciate any help and new ideas.

Bob Ramer

Mark Parshall

Screen Gems

Fairy Tale From Underworld

by Robert Simmons

The film scene is pretty slow this weekend. Alice in Wonderland is only a fair movie, but it has some priceless character bits that are extremely entertaining. The Russian film by Pudovkin is predictably a bit heavy although critically and historically very important.

A collection of "award winning" shorts is scheduled for the Film Odyssey program tonight. Finally, the Strand has a film called "Man and the Wilderness" which is Richard Harris versus everything, part 2. Being mauled by a bear, buried alive, and facing John Huston are the toppers to being hung from the ceiling by his pectorals.

With the Academy Awards in the air the next topic for discussion is the return of Hollywood to Hollywood or Marlon Branco versus everything, part 467. I am speaking about *The Godfather*, the movie that has everything. See a faded former-great make his long-awaited comeback. See a fun-loving, God-fearing bunch of happy-go-lucky gangsters shoot their way to fame and fortune. See the movie that all America has been waiting for. In one of the industry's cleverest and longest publicity campaigns the Paramount Pictures Corporation, Inc. has kindled more public interest in a film than anything since their last hit, *Love Story*. They hope that enough people will wait in line to pay to see this movie to put it on the all-time top grossing list.

Most people get their money's worth. Whispers of "He's the one that's supposed to be Frank Sinatra" are mixed with the laughs, applause, and tears at the appropriate shooting or strangling. In the realm of entertainment it is quite successful. *The Godfather* is one of the most "theatrical" movies to be released in quite a time. Every moment is calculated not for its importance to character or plot, but for its effect on the viewer. This kind of shallowness in a film usually spells artistic failure, even though the expected reaction may be achieved in the mass audience e.g. *Love Story* and *The Summer of '42*. For a combination of reasons, however, *The Godfather* is a critical success as well.

It may just be that overstatement and theatricality are the perfect touches for the nether-world of organized crime where corpses are "just business". The muted pastel tones and expensive period recreations give the distance necessary for the audience to identify with the characters. It would be much harder to sympathize with the death of a real gangster whose crime was affecting one's own life. The fairy tale treatment, as calculated an effort as anything a big studio ever made makes these criminals seem to be a family with a duty and a business not too different from any other, and therefore one to be watched with empathy and enjoyment.