Pianist delivers subtle stylings

Jalbert to perform at MOM

BY DAVID GORDON DUKE

David Pay's Music on Main is one of the newest music series to find a constituency in the ever-diversifying local performance scene. This evening pianist David Jalbert shows why listeners are increasingly finding Main Street's Heritage Hall a nexus point for exciting performances of unconventional repertoire.

Music on Main counts as a classical series, but its approach to programming stretches outside of the occasionally staid comfort zone that often seems to be the Vancouver norm. MOM's focus is frequently on younger performers, and repertoire choices can be decidedly edgy.

Jalbert fits the bill perfectly. He's one of this country's up-and-coming pianistic talents with an impressive string of awards and honours already to his name. Many piano fanciers will know his subtle and sophisticated recording of the complete Faure Nocturnes released a few seasons ago. This evening's MOM program shows another side of his musical personality.

In a postscript to last season's Shostakovich year, Jalbert is including six selections from his new CD of the Shostakovich's 24 *Preludes and Fugues*. Written for (and once the near-exclusive property of) Russian pianist Tatiana Nikolayeva, the *Preludes and Fugues* were anything but a hit when premiered in the early '50s. Soviet-era tastemakers found them formalistic and far too Western in outlook; Western critics thought them reactionary examples of outdated neoclassicism. Half a century later, the pieces are at last receiving the attention they deserve.

In a sort of epilogue to this month's RzewskiFest at UBC, Jalbert will also be playing two of Frederic Rzewski's *North American Ballades*. If you are still unfamiliar with Rzewski's work, pieces titled *Down by the Riverside* and *Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues* may sound a bit like exercises in nostalgic musical Americana. Be warned: both pack a considerable punch.

Jalbert's recital begins at 8 but, in keeping with MOM's highly civilized approach to concert presentation, the bar opens at 7 p.m. and stays open after the concert, encouraging mingling and discussion.

Special to the Sun

Canadian pianist David Jalbert, who will perform a recital at Music on Main tonight, released a recording of the complete Faure Nocturnes a few seasons ago.

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