

Festival of the Sound 2018 # 16: From Monumental to Mambo

The second afternoon concert was a recital of piano music, involving multiple artists, and was simply titled, *Great Melodies for Piano*. The concert opened with the Bergmann Duo playing Marcel Bergmann's arrangement for 2 pianos of the *andante* movement from Mozart's *Piano Concerto in C Major, K.467*. Yes, that one -- the movement that rocketed to fame after being used as soundtrack in the 1967 Swedish film *Elvira Madigan*. Indeed, the reference is still nearly ubiquitous, and the concerto is often identified in many quarters as the "*Elvira Madigan* Concerto." Bergmann's unusual arrangement broke the solo and orchestral parts into smaller units, and then shared them out between the two pianos. With light touch, selective use of the pedals, and the gentlest of pulsing accompaniments, the Duo spun out a beautiful and evocative performance of this evergreen staple.

Speaking of "staples," Silvie Cheng next played a pair of night pieces which are ingrained in the minds of music lovers everywhere. First she gave a reading of Chopin's *Nocturne in E Flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2* which covered a wider range of tone than some pianists allow themselves in this work, rising to emphatic (but not over-loud) climaxes which seemed both inevitable and justifiable. She then followed with a haunting *Clair de lune* of Debussy, drawing together flowing lines and delicate arpeggios into sheer musical magic. In the process, she made me forget all about the dozens of times I'd heard these pieces played by conservatory students.