

Georgian Music Review

Return of Duo Turgeon - Pianists Anne Louise-Turgeon and Edward Turgeon - Sunday
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Duo Turgeon – “Rhapsodies and Variations”

submitted by Julia Jacklein

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Piano duo Anne Louise-Turgeon and Edward Turgeon – “Duo Turgeon” – were welcomed back to Barrie this past Sunday with great enthusiasm. In a musically and technically demanding program of works for two pianos and for one piano four hands, they started the new year of the concert season with great aplomb. The overarching theme of the program was music from or inspired by Eastern Europe, especially music derived from folk melodies, with a brief foray into the world of Ravel with his *Rhapsodie Espanole*. This composition was first on the program, and its evocation of Spanish rhythms and timbres was characteristic of the composer’s style. By turns elusive, colourful and hypnotic, this music, and the performers’ masterful rendition of it, was wonderfully compelling.

Next was Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a theme by Paganini, Opus 43*, in an arrangement for two pianos by the composer himself. The Turgeons demonstrated their technical prowess through this long and complicated composition which includes a musical Introduction, a Theme, and 24 Variations. Their wonderful sense of togetherness, and their musicality and complete pleasure in the music, made listening a delightful experience.

After intermission, the performers returned with another set of variations on the same theme by Paganini, this time by Polish composer Witold Lutoslawski, which, as Edward Turgeon told the audience, was saved from the imminent destruction of the Polish Radio building during the bombardment of Warsaw during WWII. This music gave a refreshing 20th century twist to Paganini’s theme.

There followed Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances, Opus 46*, with their characteristic folk rhythms and Dvořák's penchant for juxtaposition of tonalities, both of which came through with especial clarity on the Shigeru Kawai piano.

Last of all the audience was treated to a fantasy on Porgy and Bess, showcasing a medley of themes from this famous Gershwin Opera.

When the last note sounded the audience was on its feet, and the Turgeons were brought back for a lovely encore – a piano arrangement of Saint-Saëns' *The Swan* – ending the concert on a quietly reflective note.