

LEON FLEISHER

PRESS QUOTES

February 22, 2009, Alice Tully Hall re-opening:

“Leon Fleisher played a rhapsodic and affecting performance of Bach’s Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue. I had never found the hall ideal for piano recitals before. But Mr. Fleisher’s tone, especially in softer passages, had a presence and body that seemed to be evidence of the new acoustical bloom... Was the passage in the fantasy when the piano breaks into an evocation of recitative so penetrating because the sound in the hall was so rich? Or was it the compelling way Mr. Fleisher played it, more like a vocalist than many singers?”

The New York Times

“The rest of the programme was just as impressive: Leon Fleisher dazzled with Bach, ...”

Gramophone

“And when pianist Leon Fleisher offered a personal, poetic take on Bach's "Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue," the piano sang clearly even at the most ruminative dynamics.”

The Star Ledger

“Leon Fleisher performed Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D Minor. His interpretation captured all the colors of the piece and was infused with its spiritual depth. It was also a powerful symbol of rebirth. When the hall opened, 40 years ago, Fleisher had lost the use of his right hand. Only in the last few years has he regained it. His appearance was an inspired idea.”

New York Daily News

November 2008, European tour:

"... a pianist with an individual cast of mind and much to say.... Fleisher's poetic tone — an indefinable gift — never failed him. It was a memorable Wigmore occasion."

The Sunday Times, UK, November 23

“No one was left unmoved as this most profoundly peaceful of lullaby melodies passed imperceptibly from left hand to right... this comes through more powerfully in Brahms's left-hand piano version, whose beauty can be almost painful to behold. Including this staple of his left-handed years in his repertoire, it seemed that nearly four decades without a working right hand may have left Fleisher not less but more of a musician.”

The Guardian, November 23, 2008

"... one hears nuances and profound depths that were not there earlier... I can think of no octogenarian pianist alive today who is consistently as interesting and illuminating as Fleisher. He's arrived there, more than 60 years ago, Schnabel predicted he would. He still plays as wonderfully, perhaps even more wonderfully, as ever."

International Piano, Nov/Dec 2008

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"... a lullaby from eternity....each note simply and sweetly voiced so that each harmonic sidestep was relished all the more."
The Times, November 18

"He captures the fleeting grace of a gesture, but in a way that makes it monumental."
Telegraph, November 17

"The pianist Leon Fleisher is back playing with two hands.... He's returning to our concert halls and his music is soaring.... What I hear in Recklinghausen is almost spiritual ... classical music's great survivor."
The Times, November 14

"Fleisher has a way of fixing the essence of a piece that reminds me of early Renaissance painters like Giotto. He captures the fleeting grace of a gesture, but in a way that makes it monumental."
The Telegraph, UK, November 2008

"Fleisher hasn't lost his touch — no other pianist has that glittering, limpid, instantly identifiable tone and the unfussy yet uncannily illuminating phrasing."
The Boston Phoenix

"In this, Fleisher was his true partner. The pianist - whose struggles with the focal distonia that paralyzed part of his right hand were explored before the concert in the movie documentary "Two Hands" - played the wintry folk theme in the "Emperor" Concerto's first movement as if he were stringing a diamond necklace. Every note was clear and brilliant, and yet, every phrase was seamless."

The Journal News, Lower Hudson

"In the Mozart department, I caught the BSO's Friday and Saturday night programs. A highlight was Leon Fleisher's glowing rendition of the slow movement from the Piano Concerto No. 12, which brimmed with a kind of quiet autumnal wisdom. "

The Boston Globe, August 11, 2008

"Fleisher relished each dissonance, each diminished chord, delaying its resolution in just the right proportion to its context within the larger harmonic plan of the movement. He focused on silences within the musical conversation, gauging them to patient perfection, so that the resumption of sound was not only inevitable, but impeccably timed. In his conducting of Beethoven's more extreme constructions, Fleisher extended the reign of tension and the grip of silence to a proportional degree, rendering their release all the more glorious in its time."
The Republican, April 30, 2007

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“And magic happens (...)When he brings to life three scene-painting preludes by Debussy, with which he began the second half of his program, he opens a door for us into the composer's mind (...) I got the feeling that if Bach had a modern piano, this is how he'd play it.”

The Aspen Times, July 20, 2007

“Fleisher’s supple technique majestically encompasses his command of sonority, colour, line, and a gorgeous singing tone – (...) the combination of sensuous tone, clarity of line, rhythmic life and sheer musicality is heart-warming. (...) Fleisher’s attention to detail, his voicing and accenting of different layers, his innate phrasing and dramatic pacing, the cumulative feeling of inevitability, and above all the indefinable sense of humanity transport you on a very special journey. It’s wonderful to hear this superlative musician once again playing core repertoire, and he’s been given beautifully immediate and atmospheric engineering.”

BBC Music Magazine

“When Leon Fleisher sits at the piano, it's miraculous”.

The Daily Iowan, March 22, 2007

“You could hear as much in Saturday’s authoritative performance. The attention to detail and Fleisher’s steadfast devotion to even the smallest matters of dynamics, phrasing, and tempos were wonders to behold. He simply refused to exaggerate, during a scholarly approach packed with dignity and a keen sense of architecture. He mastered the most delicate of passages with equal authority during the thunderous ones. It was an example of grandeur in Beethoven rare in all its virtues. (...) Both the sustained loveliness of the strings and Fleisher’s ability to make the piano follow suit provoked an awed silence throughout the hall. It was as if the music were saying, “Now, this is important. Pay attention”.”

San Francisco Classical Voice, October 18, 2008

“There are moments in Fleisher's involvement with the sublime slow movement when time seems to stop. Yet his dynamic course through a fascinating disc of Americana — Aaron Copland, Roger Sessions, Ned Rorem and Leon Kirchner — becomes a kaleidoscopic masterpiece.”

TwinCities.com 09/13/2008

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