

THE COMPETITION

By Frederic Grosz



Some weeks ago the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition came to its end. Hundreds of music, especially piano music lovers, had been looking forward to this this event. You can always meet there the same familiar faces, who return faithfully every time and attend the whole competition. I also spent much time in the concert hall of the Tel-Aviv Museum, listening to the recitals.

Sometimes I wonder what is the message of this competition which attracts so many people?

First of all there is the music. The competitors have to perform works from a large repertoire in a variety of styles, from baroque up to contemporary music. Rendering Bach's sobriety and depth, Mozart's genial simplicity, Beethoven's sometimes hidden, at other times eruptive passion and greatness, Schumann's adventurous fantasy, Chopin's poetic elegance, Liszt's grand virtuosity, then the difficult Brahms, the mystic Skryabin, the melancholic Rachmaninov, the impressionists Debussy and Ravel, the unconventional Prokofiev and a series of composers of the 20th century, this demands serious preparation of the competitors. The competitors are young artists who want to succeed in the musical life, bringing with them the rich tradition of their countries and of their school. This amalgam of ambition, enthusiasm, emotion, courage and talent gives the competition a special attraction.

Finally, on the stage, there is a drama going on. Contrary to usual concerts, where masters with years of experience, play works with more or less inspiration, sometime with indifference, here the competitors concentrate their whole intellectual force and talent to do their best. Everybody can see the disappointment on their faces when they fail.

As a listener I am impressed by this youthful atmosphere, which makes me feel younger. Seeing these young people, who reached a high artistic level at a young age, due to their courage, gifts and serious work, who master the magic keyboard, somewhere inside, I feel that I envy them.

A special part of the competition is chamber music, where not only the musical, but also the human qualities of the interpreters are revealed. Making music together, when the melody springs from one to the other, is an art by itself. You

must give your partner the opportunity to express himself, you should not dominate, but listen to your partner and accompany him modestly. Your solo part will come and at that moment you can show the sparkle of your talent.

The final stage is the concert with the orchestra in the Tel Aviv Culture Palace (Charles Bronfman Auditorium). Playing in a big concert hall, owning that magnetic fluid which captivates the public are special gifts of an artist's personality. To be at one with the orchestra and the conductor, these are only some of the qualities of a good soloist.

At the end the jury deliberates. The winners are happy, the public also, but some already think about the next competition which seems so far, three or four years away.

All these are only thoughts, ideas, which cross my mind. The main thing is the love of music.

The love for music is the magic key,
Which enriches your soul, day by day,
And helps you to resist, to face
The hardships of your life's race.

<http://www.arims.org.il/competition2014/?view=featured>