



Vigil and Maltais hold audience in their spell

Friday, September 29, 2017 at 5:32 pm

Beth Speaks For Herself — By Beth Urech

In the corner of a large room with warm red walls stands an impressive grand piano. Large windows overlook the Plaza Park whose multi-colored string of lights adds a festive note.

An ornate candelabra holds three real candles which flicker in anticipation. That is the setting for the Sept. 20 concert at our Plaza Hotel. When you turn your gaze, you'll see men and women seated and quietly speaking.

The overhead lights dim as two handsome men appear in evening dress. Yes, starched white shirts and vests, perky white bowties, patent-leather shoes and tails.

Ronald Maltais moves next to the piano bench. Marcos Vigil stands in its curve. After a few words of introduction, the concert commences.

We are transported to a world of mesmerizing music. We begin with romantic Lieder by Schumann which Vigil sings in German with strong uncompromising control.

We are reluctant to leave Schumann's castle on the Rhine, but Brahms bids us into his dark wood where a young man's beloved insists that unlike "Der Stahl and das Eisen," their love will endure forever.

Maltais performs Brahms's Intermezzo in A major with sensitivity and verve. Later he explains he knows when he first plays a piano if he will be compatible with it. Well, this 1909 Knabe of Baltimore piano discovered by Kevin Zoernig up the road in Chacon sounds like a perfect match! Vigil's final song in the German language declares, "I have thanks."

We also have thanks for the richness of his tenor voice and his interpretation. Bellini love songs include the pretty moon, fervent desire, and intense longing ... Bellissimo!

After a short interval, we are treated to Ralph Vaughan Williams pieces based on Songs of Travel. In a word? Sublime. The finale is Gounod's Romeo & Juliet balcony scene: "Ah! lève-toi, soleil!" Our applause is spontaneous and heart-felt. Then a song in Spanish.

Vigil loves performing in his hometown. As a youngster at Robertson, he wanted to be a drummer in a rock band. Aren't we grateful that he discovered his special gift is his splendid voice?! More applause and then the hauntingly beautifully September Song by Kurt Weill with lyrics by Maxwell Anderson: "The days grow short when you reach September."

Oh, yes, we know.

Thank you, gifted pianist and tenor for your September Songs concert to benefit both the Meadow City Academy of Music & Words and Music Concert Series.

Afterward at the reception, Roy Montibon confides, "If Julie and I were listening to this concert in New York, we would turn to each other and say, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had music like this in Las Vegas?'"

And we do.

Beth Urech is a contributing writer, traveler, and artist of the spoken word, performing both nationally and internationally. She lives in Chicago and Las Vegas, N.M., with her husband, Mark, and dog, Java. Follow Beth at bethurech.wordpress.com. She may be reached by email at beth@bethurech.com.