



Robert Silverman: Concert Reviews

Radiance to every piece... Silverman made an extraordinary impression... He created an idyll of exquisite sound and exact, unforced feeling. That was the feat of a mature artist, and something of a revelation. –Financial Times, London

A player of formidable strength and mastery. His tonal resources and free-wheeling romanticism are wonderfully rich and full... a powerful orator of the keyboard. –Music and Musicians, London

Pianism on a grand scale... great force and impressive control. A pianist of importance and high-minded purpose. –New York Times

Robert Silverman's recital last night at Alice Tully Hall was one of the most remarkable piano events of the whole season. –New York Post

Robert Silverman held his audience spellbound at the 92nd Street Y with his interpretive skills. –Canadian Press, New York

Silverman effortlessly poured out sparkling fountains of arpeggios that cascaded up and down the keyboard; huge chords exploded with breathtaking precision; never was there any hesitation, timidity or second thoughts. If you weren't involved in the music at the beginning, it slammed into you, almost as far out as the parking lot... relentless exhilaration... the experience was electrifying. –St. Louis Post-Dispatch

One could only marvel at a performance of such thorough conviction. Surely he is one of the country's finest pianists. –Toronto Star

As soon as he ascended the stage of Kiev's Philharmonia, an atmosphere of genuinely great art set in the hall. Robert Silverman, the Canadian pianist, won the hearts of Kiev's exacting audience. –News from Ukraine, Kiev

Silverman is a pianist's pianist, unquestionably in the league of today's superstars. –Post Intelligencer, Seattle

The audience discovered the presence of pianistic genius. No other word serves to describe Silverman's vision, the power of his technique [and his] Horowitz-like sonority. –Seattle Times

Robert Silverman reaffirmed his place in the front rank of Canadian pianists with a masterly recital at [McGill University's] Pollack Hall. The recital was recorded by the CBC, and the broadcast should not be missed by anyone with more than a casual interest in the piano repertoire. –Montreal Gazette

For this reviewer, Silverman left no doubt; he is one of the finest pianists I have ever heard, live or on recordings. Always utterly committed to his vision, he has a big, warm sound, a technique equal to all difficulties, and an exemplary sense of tonal refinement. Even more compelling, however, is his extraordinary musical concentration and sense of interpretation. –Calgary Herald

Robert Silverman is a master. Everything which he plays appears to be completely natural in the context of the performance. It is as though the composer speaks directly through the performer. –South China Morning Post, Hong Kong

It's a shame Glenn Gould cast such a long shadow over our neighbour to the north. It has obscured at least a generation of Canadian pianists we would have been happy to know. Robert Silverman is one of them... He's a thinker. We saw - in the preparatory gestures of his hands, the closed-eyed meditative moments between solo passages - the seriousness of purpose in every phrase he played... Silverman dug in especially deep in lyric passages, drawing out every drop of pathos but in a way that never seemed forced or sentimental. That handsome touch would be even better applied to a Beethoven piano concerto or, better still, a solo recital with generous portions of Beethoven. Someone invite him back. –Charlotte Observer, North Carolina

Robert Silverman: Beethoven Concert Reviews

When any pianist can do as much with [Beethoven's Sonata Op. 110] as did Silverman, he need do nothing else. This is a man who can play a page full of notes and make everything sound. It had a rare sense of rightness that both explored its philosophical implications and made the music sing through a wonderful sense of phrase. One of the most remarkable piano events of the entire season. –New York Post

A deeper intensity than one is accustomed to hearing ... Beethoven playing of a high order. The [Op. 31/2] first movement's phantom arpeggios and desolate recitatives erupted in ferocity and the finale's obsessive perpetual motion was powerfully rendered. The slow movement [of the *Hammerklavier Sonata*] was the high point of the evening. In response to Beethoven's call for grand expression, Silverman managed to invest its expanse with an unusual operatic urgency. A recollection of Dylan Thomas's raging against the dying of the light, it was wonderfully moving. –The Globe and Mail, Toronto

Most rewarding of all was the *Hammerklavier*, Beethoven's biggest and thorniest piano sonata, and always a monumental challenge to interpretation (as well as to technique). This sonata is a huge journey, sometimes unhurried and sometimes violently agitated. In Silverman's hands, the journey had a clear and inexorable direction, building adroitly to climaxes and developing the phrases with a telling clarity. This sonata can be thrilling, especially in the bravura flourishes, which Silverman executed as a formidable wall of sound (in the second and fourth movements). The real thrills, however, came in the lengthy third movement, which sounded almost Chopinesque in parts, and which moved Saturday from moments of a velvety softness that was almost palpable to abruptly defused violence, with a drama that never flagged. You don't hear playing of this caliber often.

Then, Silverman launched into a performance of the *Appassionata*. It was a revelation. This was the kind of playing that sweeps you along, from the quietly menacing opening to tender phrasing and explosive cataclysms of sound. Silverman cuts no corners, takes no shortcuts; takes no prisoners; he doesn't smear up the performance with pedal or shove one note into another in sloppy arpeggios. The final movement was hair-raising: rigorous, explosive, but played so evenly that you could hear every note. –Seattle Times

In matters of ultimate concern, his playing is on the deepest of levels. –Washington Post

Though his opening concert Thursday night had the requisite feats of prodigious memory, unfaltering fingers and stamina to spare, it was Silverman's ability to illuminate Beethoven's vast array of emotional states and guide them from within which won the day. One never sensed effect as an end, but rather as an instinctive regard for what was already there and how to make it live. In a major and magnificent way, Silverman's clarity of thought had us looking past the messenger. In every phrase, one viewed the interpreter through the music rather than the music through the interpreter. –Free Press, Winnipeg