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[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winner pianist's Luis Fernando Perez Herrero (Spain) interpretation of Liszt]

## **IBLA Foundation**

### **1991 - 2001**

#### *Eleven years of activities*

The 2001 IBLA Awards at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall will celebrate the memory of Lucia Evangelista, beloved wife of Jerome Hines, who was in her own right a great and noted soprano in the international community of operatic music.

IBLA Awards have been officially commended by New York City Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, New York State Governor George E. Pataki, United States Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato, Empire State Development Chairman Charles Gargano and IBLA winners have received critical acclaim by such writers as Pulitzer Prize winning music critic Martin Bernheimer on MSNBC Living's Young Artists Series.

Each summer hundreds of pianists, singers, composers and instrumentalists representing Italy, France, Germany, England, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, Albania, Czech-Republic, Belarus, Estonia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbajdjan, Republic of Georgia, Uzbekistan, Siberia, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Ghana, South Africa, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Perù, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Canada, Alaska and the United States come to the IBLA Grand Prize International Music Competitions which take place in Ragusa-Ibla, Sicily with hopes of being selected for the IBLA International Roster. While in Sicily, through the cooperation of the Mayors of Chiaramonte, Comiso, Ispica, Pozzallo, Santa Croce Camerina and Vittoria, outstanding musicians are given the opportunity to perform in open air concerts for the citizens of each of these communities.

In the words of journalist, music critic and IBLA jury member Gordon Sparber, "... the sunbaked island of Sicily, the largest and historically richest in the Mediterranean, is the scene of the IBLA Grand Prize, a music competition held in a hall buried among the clusters of 17th - 18th - century stone buildings that crowd the little threads of streets. The rocky town ... lies just a few miles from where the Ionian and Mediterranean meet at Sicily's southernmost tip. Hearing piano-playing in this kind of setting is amazing. It is, I imagine, like opening an ornate and ancient casket only to find it is stocked with glittering gems."

The IBLA International Jury is the largest and most diverse among international competitions and is comprised of representatives from the most important music institutions worldwide such as:

Marcello Abbado, former Director of the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milano, Howard Aibel, Piano Faculty at the University of Northern Iowa, Licia Albanese, Chairperson of the Albanese - Puccini Foundation in New York, Sarah Arneson, Voice Faculty at Boston University, Hasmig Baghdjian, Piano Faculty at the Higher National Conservatory in Beirut, Sherman Banks, Commissioner of the Sister Cities program in Little Rock, David Bender, Voice Faculty at New York University, Angela Boone, IBLA International Advisor, Victor Bunin, Piano Faculty from the Damascus Conservatory, Renè Clemènt, Director of the Music Conservatory of Lyon, Joseph Conlin, Impresario from New York City, Agata DeMartino, President Amici della Musica of Ragusa, Kyoko Edo, President of the Edo Foundation in Tokyo, Victoria Fisher, piano faculty at Elon College, Gloria Gari, IBLA International Adviser, Vakhtang Jordania, Conductor of Russian Federal Orchestra, St. Petersburg Festival Orchestra and the Kharkov Philharmonic Orchestra, Carla Giudici, former Piano Faculty at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome, Margaret Hanegraaf, Voice Faculty, Cedar Arts Center in Corning NY, Frank Heneghan, former Director of the DTI Music College in Dublin, Jeffrey James, Project Director of Angelok Classics Records and President of Jeffrey James Arts Consultant / 4tay Records, George Kern, Piano Faculty at the Salzburg Academy of Music, Fernando Laires, Piano Faculty at the Eastman School of Music and President/Founder of the American Liszt Society, Eric Larsen, Piano Faculty at the North Carolina School of the Arts, Vladimir Leyetchkiss, Piano Faculty at DePaul University in Chicago, Sheila McKenna, Director of the Preparatory Department at the College Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Barbara Meister, IBLA International Advisor, Victoria Mushkatkol, Piano Faculty at the Juilliard School, Ksenia Nosikova, Piano Faculty at the University of Iowa, Sheryl Overholt, Voice Faculty at Purchase College-Conservatory State University of NY, Gunther Reinhold, Piano Faculty at the Staatlichen Hochschule fur Musik in Karlsruhe, Baroness Tietta Savarese Cafici, Artistic Director of the Lyceum Concert Series in Catania, Bela Siki, Piano Faculty at the University of Washington, Irina Skvortsova, International Cultural Exchange Foundation in Russia, Gordon Sparber, journalist and music critic, Peggy Spence, Piano Faculty at the University of Central Oklahoma, Jan Pokorny Steele, Piano Faculty at the University of Central Oklahoma and Founder/President of Chopin Society of Mid-America, Ruth Thomas, Trustee of the Menuhin Foundation in Bermudas, Ireneus Zuk, Piano Faculty / Director of the School of Music at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada, Luba Zuk, Piano Faculty at McGill University in Montreal.

Since the first edition of the IBLA Grand Prize on the occasion of the Cristopher Colombus Festival 1492-1992 celebrating the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, the IBLA Foundation has been dedicated to discovering new talent from around the world. Winners are assisted in establishing concert careers by facilitating their access to performance venues and professional contacts.

Throughout the years the IBLA Grand Prize winners have received the opportunity to be presented in such prestigious venues as Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, Tchaikovsky Bolshoi Hall in Moscow, Carnegie Recital Hall and to perform for the President of Italy, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro at the Great Hall of the

University of Rome, for world-renowned Metropolitan Opera sopranos Licia Albanese and Anna Moffo at Steinway Hall and at the United Nations' Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium. With the support of Baroness Mariuccia Zerilli-Marimò, IBLA Winners have also performed at New York University's Casa Italiana Zerilli Marimò for Metropolitan Opera soprano and Lucine Amara, for pianists Jerome Lowenthal of the Juilliard School, Ursula Oppens from Northwestern University and for Mario Delliponti of the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milano. With the support of the Honorable Senator Yvette Swan, Minister of Cultural Affairs, IBLA winners have been presented in Bermuda on the occasion of the Life Time Achievement Awards. IBLA Winners have also been presented in performance/seminar at McGill University in Montreal and at the Queen's University in Kingston, Canada as well as at the Juilliard School, the University of Washington in Seattle, the North Carolina School of the Arts and the University of Arkansas. In cooperation with the YAMAHA Corporation of America, IBLA Foundation offers a Master Class Series which enables winners to refine their performances through the experience of such masters as Fernando Laires and Nelita True of the Eastman School of Music and Jerome Lowenthal of the Juilliard School.

The IBLA Foundation with the cooperation of the Office of the Mayor, the Sister Cities Commission, Chamber of Commerce and the Public Library System of Little Rock, Arkansas, offers an annual tour of public concerts and community outreach programs which allows IBLA Winners to perform for and interact with hundreds of local students and families by sharing their professional experience and artistic talents.

Through the support of the late pianist Angel Chen, Executive Director of Angelok Records, the IBLA Jordania Award has offered annually a Moscow debut and CD recording at the Tchaikovsky Bolshoi Hall with the Russian Federal Orchestra conducted by Maestro Vaktang Jordania.

Academic scholarships have been offered to IBLA Winners by the North Carolina School of the Arts, the University of Iowa, the University of Northern Iowa, Elon College in North Carolina, the University of SouthWestern Louisiana, the DIT Music College in Dublin and the Scicli International Music Academy in Sicily.

With the support of Chancellor Alexander Ewing from the North Carolina School of the Arts, the IBLA Foundation has also presented modern dance performances in Italy as well as in the USA through the Human Dance Company and the works of choreographer Michael Yasenak.

"Complex movements of human bodies symbolized the ambiguities of spiritual experience ... flesh and spirit carried on an especially intense conversation ... compelling ... their mystical fervor was combined with rational confusion .... mystery and ecstasy ... attested to Mr. Yasenak's powers of choreographic invention"

[Jack Anderson writing for the New York Times about the IBLA presentation of Human Dance Company in New York City]

IBLA winners have received worldwide critical acclaim with praises such as:

"Two brilliant young Israeli pianists ... combined their copious talents ... one of the most thrilling and exciting versions of Ravel's *La Valse*... it has been my pleasure to

encounter ... the players have the discipline, abandon and technical control to approximate the essential orchestral colors, making us believe that we were hearing the genuine original. For once we were presented with a macabre social commentary - something of a precursor to Picasso's Guernica."

[Harris Goldsmith writing about IBLA Winners duo pianists Gil Garburg and Sivan Silver from Israel]

"...an outstanding performance that perfectly balanced the lyrical and dynamic resources of the piano with the stylistic constraints proper to Bach's idiom ... had a lyrical, almost narrated quality, and a crystal clear fugue in which no contrapuntal detail was lost ... great subtlety of phrasing and sensitivity to detail ... concentration and control were remarkable ... a profound and almost self-effacing interpreter whose mature subtlety and controlled pianism add a welcome dimension to Bach interpretation...."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winner pianist Svetlana Gorokhovich from Russia]

"...her performance conveyed an unusual freshness... as a whole, pushes contemporary music beyond the confines of a restricted genre. Moreover, in her performance, she resists all temptations for unnecessary showmanship or false pretense. That made the performance especially refreshing.

[Yuji Numata writing about IBLA Winner pianist Chie Sato Roden from Japan]

"There was a great complexity between the pianists in their close interaction in the four-hand texture; their clear sense of the formal articulations of the piece, and the clearly defined contrasts of the dissonant percussive opening, the tensely quiet middle, and the return, after an impressive crescendo, of the opening material, made for an excellent and well-rounded performance...."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winners duo pianists Eleni Iroidou and Ave Nahkur from Greece and Estonia]

"....delivered a dramatic performance of "Condotta ell'era in ceppi", the gypsy Azucena's horrific account in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, ... a sensuous, rich, and powerful voice, and she performed this difficult and demanding aria, with its many changes of tone and style of narration, with gravity and great dramatic presence...."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winner mezzo-soprano Satik Mkrtumyan from Armenia]

"....performed the glissandi, grace-notes, and difficult ascending scales and arpeggios of the coloratura passages with elegance and style....."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winner soprano Yana Besyadinskaya from Russia]

"... the spectacular kaleidoscopic layering of rhythms, textures and Spanish colors come out in sharp relief ... finely nuanced rubato ... was carried out seamlessly, with accumulation of momentum ... a spectacular ending...."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winners duo pianists Martina Walbeck and Burkhard Kerkeling from Germany]

" ... this performance brought out the spectacular, darkly coloristic worlds of Scarbò with its deep rumblings, brilliant glissandi and diffused percussive effects."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Scholarship Winner pianist Tamara Sanikidze from the Republic of Georgia]

"... an energetic and exuberant performance ... He fully exploited the random-seeming juxtaposition of the contrasting sections ... a splendid eccentricity ... was unstoppable ... charmed with the exuberance and wit of his performance."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winner pianist Luis Fernando Perez Herrero from Spain]

"... remarkably talented. They know and respect each other's strengths and weaknesses ... There is nothing that would suggest studies in progress or interpretations not yet fully realized. They play eloquently and elegantly."

[Pulitzer Prize-winning music critic, Martin Bernheimer writing for MSNBC about duo pianists Jerry Wong from the United States and Stephanie Shih-yu Cheng from Taiwan]

"... a magisterial two-piano performance ... of Ravel's *La Valse*. Their interpretation captured the three phases of illumination ... to perfection ... The perfect symbiosis and polish ... their elegant rubatos, and strength of their interpretive imagination ... made of this performance a memorable and sumptuous affair."

[Maryam Moshaver writing about IBLA Winners duo pianists Jerry Wong and Stephanie Shih-yu Cheng from USA and Taiwan.]

We hope that all of our efforts will ensure a future of fine music for everyone. Contributions to these events will provide lasting satisfaction to anyone who wants to guarantee that future. Most IBLA related events are open to the public and free of charge. It is the generosity of individuals, corporations and other music lovers that makes the difference. Your financial support is crucial to IBLA Foundation's ability to help nurture the careers of young artists. On behalf of the board, staff and dedicated volunteers of the IBLA Foundation, we wish to thank you for your continued support. Special thanks to our Chairperson Lady Dewi Sukarno whose generosity and commitment has made these wonderful events possible.

Always grateful,

Dr. Salvatore Moltisanti  
President  
IBLA Foundation

