

## **REVIEW: Young-Ah Tak captures essence of salon performance**

By Richard Storm, Herald-Tribune  
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Young-Ah Tak, in her first recital as an official Steinway Artist, provided ample justification for having received this prestigious designation. The recital room at Pritchard's Pianos and Organs was an appropriate setting for this modern salon concert, even though its intimacy was sometimes tested by the sheer volume of sound created by both the instrument and the performer.

### **Pianist Young-Ah Tak**

In an astutely structured program, we first heard Muzio Clemente's lovely and surprisingly modern Sonata in B-flat Major, Op. 42 No. 2, written in 1788. Young-Ah Tak's crisp technique immediately captured the essence of the 18th-century salon in the attractive setting as listeners sipped wine and smiled.

Judith Zaimont's "Wizards" — a piano suite written in 2003 — is a fine example of today's trend toward a return to recognizable tonality in modern composition and was an apt choice to follow the Clementi, focusing on the dynamic lyricism inherent in fine modern music. It should be noted that Young-Ah Tak will present the New York premiere of this work in her upcoming Carnegie Recital Hall recital.

Very little is more soothing than a Schubert song, especially when heard in the graceful arrangements of them made by Franz Liszt. Sensitive programming was at work here, providing a respite before Tak's presentation of Leon Kirchner's first piano sonata, written in 1948. The late 1940s were a time of ferment and turmoil in the music scene, nowhere more turbulent than in the United States.

This sonata, with its avoidance of a recognizable tonal center and its use of repeated groups of dense and often dissonant clusters, is typical of its time. Occasional passages of melodic consonance were welcome, but it was difficult to determine where the piece was headed. Music of this kind often produces listener fatigue which diminishes its impact, even when played with the impressive skill heard on this occasion.

The architecture of the concert was fully achieved when, after intermission, Tak tackled Franz Schubert's iconic Sonata in C Minor. Typically generous in length, this music is one of the finest examples of the composer's gifts. Dramatic declamation alternates with soaring lyricism, all clearly logical in the development of the sonata. We heard music of the utmost delicacy alternating with massive statements, all of which was compelling, stimulating and touching.

### **CONCERT REVIEW**

Young-Ah Tak, piano. Reviewed Feb. 23 at Steinway Society of Sarasota

