

Ladies and gentlemen: a wonder

By David Gordon Duke



Vancouver audiences are well aware of the bumper crop of young pianists wowing the world with their prowess and proficiency. **Lise de la Salle, first heard here two years ago, manages to be an exception, even among such exceptional performers, a still impossibly young (21) performer of intellect, character and passion.**

Her Vancouver Recital Society program Sunday evening was comprised of two Beethoven sonatas and the extended version—the director's cut, if you will—of

Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes*. It was a heavier and perhaps less charming proposition than her début recital; but **as a demonstration of her continuing growth and her seemingly limitless potential, it was a striking glimpse of an astonishing talent.**

De la Salle's Beethoven was mercurial: the familiar works ("Les Adieux" and the "Moonlight" *Sonata Quasi una fantasia*) were presented with such individuality that the epithet improvisatory doesn't begin to describe her approach. **Her Schumann was distilled and intense**, by no means as suave or sophisticated as some recent Schumann performances (Radu Lupu comes to mind) but layered with contradictions, complexities and some almost shocking revelations that held her audience enthralled. **She is an interpreter of insight and originality: a wonder.**