

YAMAHA CONCERTS REVIEW

Hendelman improvises with American Songbook



Photo by JAMES DUFFY

Tamir Hendelman plays jazz music on a Yamaha Grand piano on Oct. 17, 2019 in the Herb & Lani Alpert Recital Hall.

BY JAMES DUFFY

When jazz musician Thelonious Monk sat down at his piano, he did not stay seated. YouTube videos show Monk convulsing to playful beats. The ‘high priest of bebop’ smoked during sets. He stood up to dance while his fellow musician played solos.

Tamir Hendelman played Monk’s songs among other jazz composers on Oct. 17 in the Herb & Lani Alpert Recital Hall at L.A. City College. Hendelman mastered mimicry over 43 years of practice on the keys.

“Life like music, has its own rhythm,” Hendelman said.

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but in improvisational jazz, imitation challenges the listener to as much as it excites.

Hendelman showed devotion to his Jazz predecessors.

Several audience members gasped when he played familiar Monk tunes. But Monk’s piano keys whine on recordings, in a way Hendelman’s Yamaha Grand piano does not.

“It’s really awe-inspiring to see what practice can do, especially, the way he blended in tunes, moving from one to another one,” said Diego Serna, a City College guitar major.

In figure and measure, Hendelman resurrected the bodies of work of Benny Carter and George Gershwin. He improvised his own music with flashes of Johann Sebastian Bach and Claude Debussy throughout.

Hendelman left Israel for America with his mother when he was 12 years old. She was in the audience at his performance. He began learning the organ at 6 years old in Tel Aviv. He said he first wanted to play when he crossed an instrument salesman playing an organ behind a shop window.

“I basically heard the orchestra,” Hendelman said. “I heard strings, and brass and rhythm. That piqued my interest. So, I ran home to my parents and say I want to get one of these.”

He changed instruments because he said he admired the “nuance of tone and texture” of the piano and its historical role in jazz music. He has not stopped playing since.

“There are different seasons, periods where you want to hibernate and compose more,” Hendelman said. “And periods where you want to tour and perform as much as you can. There’s a rhythm to all these things.”

As promised, Hendelman’s performance relaxed the audience, when he did not punctuate his sound with a rapid, foot-tapping clips. His important contribution to American jazz is how he incorporates his classical training.

“With the French impressionist composers they would slip in alterations that came closer to jazz,” Hendelman said. “That piqued my interest.”

Hendelman’s only theatrics are at the piano. His expression comes through the fingertips. By his third piece at the Yamaha, Hendelman elicited pleased grunts from the audience of about 50, many of whom are music students at Los Angeles City College.

Hendelman is polite and intriguing on stage. In between sets, he dutifully explains the improvised composition he performed.

The UCLA professor invited his audience to tell an impromptu story, which he then interpreted at the piano.

“A wizard,” an audience member shouted. “What is he most afraid of?” Hendelman asked.

“Poison,” another audience member replied.

Hendelman turned to his Yamaha and played at a tempo and key to provoke and thrill. One of Monk’s charms was his inimitable sound.

The was the audience was never quite sure he would make it though. The keys rattled, the man shook with dramatic tension. Hendelman’s compositions are serious work from a prepared musician.

While his audience may not see a musician join his troupe from Frenchman Street, as happens to New Orleans jazz groups, Hendelman excites them with skillful use of hands and feet.

New Way to ‘Catch Them All’: Pokemon Raptures Gamers’ Hearts



BY DAMIEN HOSEA

Welcome to the Galor Region, where the countryside is full of life and the cities are contemporary. The plains are vast and the mountains are covered in snow. In the Galor region, Pokémon battles are the main attraction and becoming the next Pokémon League Champion is the main objective.

On November 15, 2019, Japanese game developer Game Freak will release Pokémon Shield and Pokémon Sword for the Nintendo

Switch game console. Pokémon Shield and Sword is the 17th installment in the Pokémon franchise and will introduce the 8th generation of Pokémon.

In the core Pokémon games, players are designated as Pokémon Trainers and have three main objectives: to complete the regional Pokédex; which is an electronic encyclopedia that collects all of the available Pokémon species found in the respective region, to complete the national Pokédex by transferring Pokémon from other Pokémon games, and to train a team of powerful Pokémon to battle other Trainers so they may eventually win the

Pokémon League and become the regional Champion.

In Pokémon Shield and Sword, the idea of becoming a Champion has been enhanced to give Trainers a whole new strategic approach when it comes to Pokémon battles. For example, a new feature called “Dynamax,” will be introduced where Pokémon power up and grow much larger than normal. The Dynamaxed Pokémon’s moves will also change, causing them to be much stronger than intended. This gives the player a whole new way to experience Pokémon battles in the Galor Region.

There are over 800 different species of Pokémon but unlike previous core Pokémon games, not all existing species of Pokémon will be available in Pokémon Shield and Sword. According to Producer Junichi Masuda, “the Switch’s hardware quality made it easier for Pokémon to be unique and expressive, and the designers had to balance importing as many as possible and updating them to these high standards while still keeping development deadlines.”

At the E3 Gaming Conference 2019, Nintendo announced that they will release a cloud-based service for the Nintendo

Switch and mobile devices called, “Pokémon Home”. This service will allow you to transfer Pokémon between all current Pokémon titles including the popular mobile game, Pokémon Go and Pokémon Shield and Sword. According to Masuda, “you’ll be able to trade Pokémon from within Home as long as you have a smartphone with you.”

Pokémon Home is set to be released early 2020 for Android, iOS and the Nintendo Switch game console. Pokémon Shield and Pokémon Sword will release worldwide for the Nintendo Switch game console November 15, 2019