

Young virtuoso to fill Kenan with piano music this weekend

by NATASHA MALINSKY

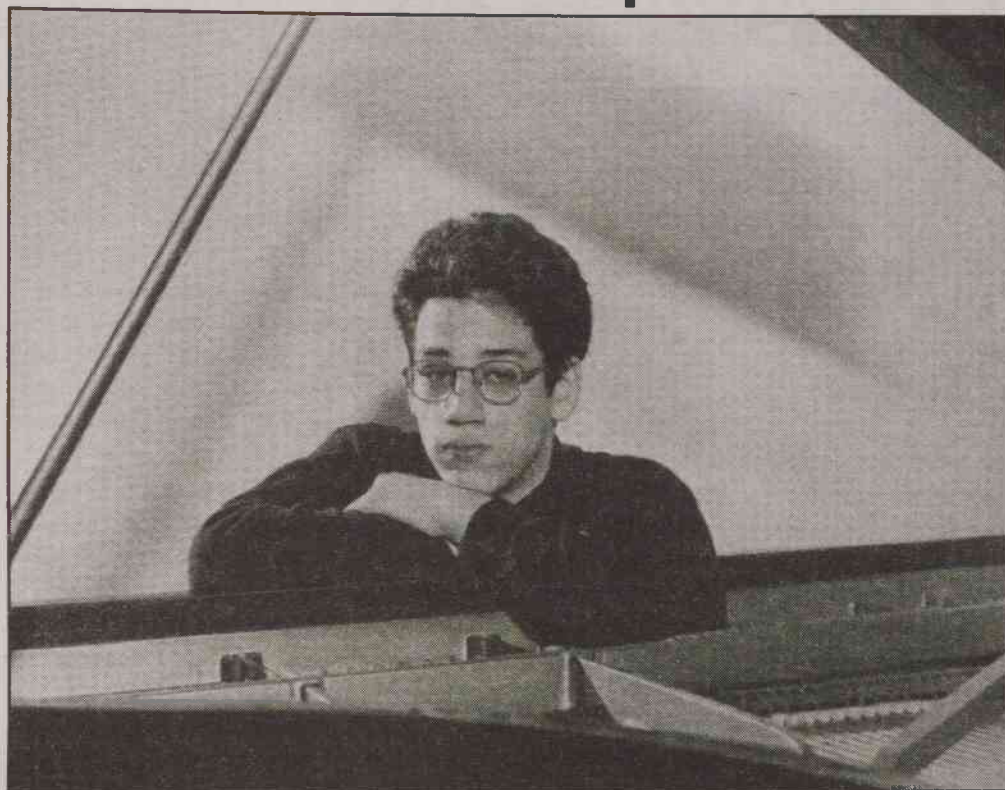
Staff Writer

Nineteen-year-old piano virtuoso Jonathan Biss will perform at 8:00 p.m. in Kenan Auditorium on Saturday, January 22. "I've never heard Jonathan play, but his reviews are excellent and I think it's wonderful that the community has the opportunity to see someone like him perform," said Doris Levy, publicity chair for Wilmington Concert Association.

The *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun* and *The New York Times* recognized Biss's astounding ability. *The New York Times* commended his technical mastery of the modern repertoire by saying that he "negotiated technical thickets with energy and clarity."

Biss established himself as an international artist with performances in the United States as well as in Canada, Finland, Germany, Israel and Italy. In 1999 he was recognized with an Avery Fisher Career Grant, a \$10,000 award given to exceptionally promising young American musicians. Other notable performances last season took place at the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont, and the Spoleto Music Festival in Italy.

Biss was also part of a program featuring the works of operatic composer



File Photo: The Seahawk

Internationally recognized piano virtuoso Johnathan Biss will play at Kenan Hall this Saturday evening. The 19-year-old musician is quickly becoming one of the better-known piano players in the United States and Europe.

John Corigliano last season. Biss made his National Symphony Orchestra debut with conductor Leonard Slatkin in September 1999.

In past seasons, Biss has performed

with the Memphis and Knoxville Symphony Orchestras and the Ra'anana Symphonette in Israel. Also, he has performed at Lincoln Center's "Mostly Mozart" Festival, the Festival of the

Sound in Ontario and the Kuhmo Festival in Finland. Biss has played with violinist Isaac Stern, the St. Lawrence Quartet, Canada's premiere string quartet, and his parents Miriam Fried and Paul Biss. His recitals with his mother have taken him to Sienna, Italy and Jerusalem.

Biss began his piano studies at age six with Dr. Karen Taylor. "My parents never pushed me into doing performances, and I'm grateful for that," Biss said in an article from the April 25, 1999 issue of *Democrat and Chronicle*. "It was truly my decision to learn piano because I loved doing it."

From 1991-1997, he studied at Indiana University with Professor Evelyne Brancart, where he performed in a piano trio. The ensemble was invited by Isaac Stern to participate in the 1996 Jerusalem Music Encounters. Another notable performance was with Jacques Zoon at Indiana University for the American premiere of the "Concerto Doppio" by Erwin Schulhoff.

Biss will return to the Tisch Center for the Arts for his New York debut in April. His other recitals for this season will take him to Boston, Cincinnati, San Diego and Vancouver. He will also appear at Carnegie Hall.

COMEDY, from page 17:

Story," had Sparks asking the audience for titles for a story. Someone came up with "Captain Crunch and the 3 Kangaroos," and when Sparks pointed to a cast member, he had to start the story from where the last storyteller left off. Anyone who couldn't stop or start quickly enough lost. When the contest had narrowed to White and Sterling Martin, Martin pulled out a long, rambling and quickly spoken monologue about cannonballs made of crunchberries. When Sparks pointed to White, he forfeited the game, literally bowing before Martin's story telling skills.

Each show also features a musical guest, usually a local solo musician. Last week featured Brent Stimmel, a singer and guitarist. In the past, Dave Boyles from Jester's Court has performed with them as well. Ed Wagonseller, UNCW professor in the art and theater department, opened the Christmas show with a comic musical performance.

The Other Side started in June, when Jerry Reinney, co-owner of Bull McCabe's, approached several university theater students to do a dinner theater or comedy show. The five original members, seniors Sparks and White, sophomores Talley and Kristin Gedney and UNCW graduate Sterling Martin started doing shows every other week.

In the coming year, Sparks wants to add more performances. "My goal is to have a show every week, starting in March," she said.

The cast has 16 active members, all of whom are UNCW theater majors, with the exception of UNCW graduate Sterling Martin. They come up with ideas for skits and games during whole cast brainstorming sessions. They get a lot of ideas for improv games from books, games, classes and the TV show "Whose Line is it Anyway?" Martin writes most of the dialogue. "I enjoy creating characters and their relationships," Martin said.

The group is currently looking for more writers. The criteria include a sense of humor along the lines of "Monty Python's Flying Circus" and "The Kids on the Hall" and no obscene or scatological humor. Submissions can be placed in the S.T.A.G.E box in the Student Government Association (SGA) office. They are also soliciting people with an interest in shooting video segments, short skit ideas and stand-up comedy acts.

The Other Side provides the audience with a funny show and students with a venue for their unique sense of humor. "The main thing we're about is giving musicians, actors and writers a chance to share their talents," Martin said.

So you wanna do something different??

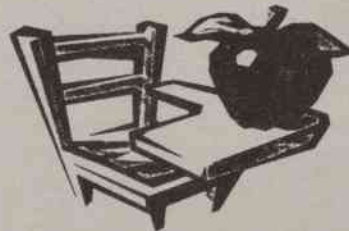
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