

Twin concert pianist double the listening pleasure



Photo courtesy of the Cultural Program department

Students and community members joined together to listen to the stylings of John and Richard Contiguglia last week.

Leigh Ann Vanscoy
Features Editor

What would it be like to look, work and play exactly like someone else? For identical twins, Richard and John Contiguglia this is a normal occurrence.

These two men have played classical piano together for over 55 years. The Contiguglia brothers usually play music specifically written for two pianos. However, they often use their four hands on one piano.

The native New York twins have been playing piano since they were five years old. They have performed with many major orchestras throughout the world. Some of these include the Cleveland Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, The National Symphony and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra.

The twins played in Elon's Whitley Auditorium last Thursday. The concert drew not only Elon students, but also many people from the community.

"The audience was enthusiastic," said George Troxler, dean of Cultural and Special Programs. His main objective in bringing the twins to campus was to share their love of music with the Elon community. "We have the opportunity to present world class chamber music for our campus community," Troxler said. "Bringing an appreciation of the arts and making programs of this quality available to the community is part of our mission."

The Contiguglia twins accomplished this mission by playing many inspirational pieces. Their program included Franz Liszt's Symphonic Poem as well as Beethoven's Symphony No. 9.

The brothers are now proprietors of a recording company Gemini Classics. They have modified various popular tunes for duo pianist to perform. Their first releases include "Schubert Piano Duets," "The Final Year," "Live From The Holland Liszt Festival," "Duos of Franz Liszt for One and Two Pianos" and "Gershwin - Grainger."

The brothers graduated in the top one percent of their class at Yale, receiving their B.A. degrees summa cum laude. Two years later, they received their Masters of Music degrees from the Yale Graduate School of Music at the top of their class. The brothers spent four years in London studying with the legendary British pianist Dame Myra Hess.

After the concert, the cultural center held a reception at the Isabella Cannon center for all who attended the performance. Audience members could meet and greet the twins.

Their concert is part of the Adams Foundation Series. "The Adams Foundation of Santa Barbara Cal supports piano recitals throughout the U.S.," Troxler said. "We are fortunate enough to have that support and we choose from a list of pianists who the Adams Foundation has on their list. All have been outstanding."

For more information about cultural events being held on campus, please call or e-mail Dean Troxler in the Center for the Arts.

Contact Leigh Ann Vanscoy at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.

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