

MSC OPAS

Dual pianists' performance 'most varied recital' to date

By Staci Finch
Reviewer

Dual piano performers are envied by their peers for their ability to perform together with perfect timing and precision. Two of the finest dual piano performers in the United States showed their prowess in the art of dual piano playing Thursday night in Rudder Theater.

Stephen Nielson and Ovid Young performed for a sparse crowd of about 65 people as part of the OPAS Stark Series. Those who missed the performance missed quite a show. As he came on stage, Ovid Young told the audience the show would be "the most varied recital we've ever performed," and he was right. The program consisted of styles ranging from classical to modern, and showed the versatility of the pianists, as well as kept the audience entertained.

The evening opened with a piece by J.S. Bach, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." The short piece was smooth and perfectly together, and proved to the audience that these two pianists are worthy of their international fame.

This opening was followed by a Johannes Brahms piece "Variations on

a Theme of Hydn, Op. 56b". If the title wasn't familiar to audience members, the melody was, as it appears in some church hymnals as the tune to "We Thy People Praise Thee."

Halfway through the first part of the program, the two pianists jumped ahead a century, as they left the classical period and swung into some songs as American as apple pie. The songs "Dixie," "America the Beautiful," and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," had everyone tapping their feet, and the next medley of "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" (the U.S. Naval Hymn) and "God of Our Fathers" (a national hymn) were familiar as church hymns as well as national anthems.

The first section of the program closed with some familiar tunes by Ernesto Lecuona. The performers brought the famous "Suite Andaluca" alive with their thrilling rendition of "Gitanerias," "Andaluca," and the ever popular "Malaguena," played by most anyone who has played in a concert band or performed solo pieces.

After a short intermission, Nielson and Ovid ushered in the Christmas season a little early with a selection of

traditional carols. One of the best carols was the arrangement of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman." Arranged by a friend of the performers, Judith York, the piece switched into a major key halfway through, providing a refreshing change from the traditional minor key performance.

But the highlight of the evening was in the closing piece. George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" is perhaps the best known of the artist's works, and Nielson and Ovid performed highlights from the piece specifically arranged for dual piano. The pianists' rendition of the piece resounded throughout the theater, and was flawless in timing, emotion and transition.

It is not surprising that the two performers put together such an entertaining evening. They have played together for 17 years, after meeting when they were both on the staff at Olivet Nazarene University near Chicago. Since then, they have performed all over the United States and abroad, as well as including private coaching, teaching and writing in their busy schedule.

Two Democratic judges sue to stop procedures OK'd by Secretary Rains

AUSTIN (AP) — Two Democratic Travis County election judges are accusing Republican Secretary of State Jack Rains of overstepping his power and trying to intimidate minority voters by issuing election orders that represent a "radical departure" from past practices.

Randy Erben, assistant secretary of state, said the charge is "ridiculous." In documents filed Wednesday with the Texas Supreme Court, election judges Walter Timberlake and Jerry Butrey seek to block Rains' office from enforcing certain procedures set out in Oct. 13 memos to county clerks and election administrators.

The two take issue with the memos for permitting pollwatchers to leave polls to make phone calls.

They also are challenging a requirement forcing election officials to contact voter registrars to verify whether a person is registered if the person does not present a voter registration certificate at the polls, and warning that law enforcement officials will be on alert to respond to Election Day problems.

"We contend this is just another last-minute, 11th-hour effort by the secretary of state to enhance powers the law doesn't give him," said Austin lawyer Dave Richards, who is representing the election judges.

Richards said the memos were written in a fashion calculated to either create confusion at the polls or disenfranchise legitimate voters.

He said that they are intended to intimidate Hispanic voters in South Texas.

Erben said former Secretary of State Stephen Oaks ruled in 1978 that pollwatchers could leave the polls to make telephone calls, although it was overruled by another former secretary of state, Myra McDaniel, four years ago.

"We just happened to agree with one Democrat over another," Erben said.

However, he said, the other procedures outlined in the memos are consistent with state election law.

The voter registration certificate issue was addressed, Erben said, after the office received numerous requests from local officials about the issue.

The memo warns that federal, state and local law enforcement officials will be mobilized to respond to possible dis-

ruptions at polling places and to be on alert should ballots have to be impounded, Erben said.

"Any kind of allegation that this is improper is absurd. I don't want to intimidate voters. I want to stop it," he said.

The lawsuit came after the Texas campaign chairman for Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis, Railroad Commissioner John Sharp, contended that Republicans are using tactics in radio commercials to scare Hispanic voters from the polls.

Democrats: Texas GOP trying to scare Hispanics

AUSTIN (AP) — Democratic politicians and campaigners, charging that Republicans are trying to intimidate Hispanic and black voters, Thursday demanded the firing of a state election official.

The Democrats alleged that tactics by Vice President George Bush's campaign and actions by Republican Secretary of State Jack Rains' office were aimed at keeping minorities away from the polls Nov. 8.

"(Gov.) Bill Clements is having his henchmen, who are all supposed to be non-partisan state officials protecting Texans' rights, serve in George Bush's dirty campaign to scare or trick minority workers into not voting," Land Commissioner Garry Mauro, said.

A spokesman for Bush's Texas effort, Mark Sanders, said the campaign favors full voter participation, and he charged that Democrats were the ones who would act improperly on Election Day.

"They (Democrats) think that if they can get within three points (of Bush), they can steal this election," Sanders said.

Mauro, Attorney General Jim Mattox, Democratic Party executive director Ed Martin and Jose Villarreal, Southwest political director for Michael Dukakis' presidential campaign, were among those raising the charges.

They demanded the firing of Assistant Secretary of State Randy Erben, who on Tuesday said Hidalgo County paper ballots were printed improperly to allegedly give voters the impression they could cast separate votes for Bush for president and Sen. Lloyd Bentsen for vice president.

Villarreal said Rains and Erben, instead of protecting the election system in an unbiased way, were "leading a campaign intended to impugn the integrity of Hispanic voters by creating an atmosphere of mistrust and embarrassment with the ultimate aim of suppressing Hispanic voter turnout."

Martin said Erben made public accusations against Hidalgo County Clerk William "Billy" Leo without investigating what Leo has said was only a printing error with the paper ballots.

"These tactics are deplorable and should be denounced by Secretary of State Jack Rains. . . Rains should immediately fire Randy Erben and replace him with someone who will fairly and honestly protect the constitutional right to vote of all Texans," Villarreal said.

Mattox said he didn't believe Rains had the right to order the ballots impounded, and he sharply criticized Erben's news conference on Tuesday.

Correction

In a *Battalion* story about a crime tip reward fund newly established at Texas A&M, it was incorrectly reported that only the University Police Department determines the monetary value of the information given. Actually, the UPD, the Association of Former Students and the Office of Finance and Administration together determine the value of the information. *The Battalion* regrets the error.

Education Board approves plan for minority higher education

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board gave preliminary approval Thursday to a plan for improving minorities' chances at getting a higher education.

The Texas Educational Opportunity Plan for Public Higher Education follows on the heels of a five-year integration program the state began in 1983 under pressure from the federal government. The Coordinating Board has recommended that the Legislature fund programs in the plan costing \$29.5 million over two years.

"I think that we need to continue the commitment and the edge of the state to address what is the most critical question that we face in the history of the state of Texas, and that is the education of our minorities," said Kenneth Ashworth, state higher education commissioner.

"We are not going to be able to diversify our economy unless we bring this growing proportion of our total population into the mainstream, and education is the means to do it," Ashworth said.

Minorities represented about 35 percent of the Texas population in 1980, officials said. By the end of the century, they will make up 40 percent of the entire population and 45 percent of the college population, it said.

Blacks currently make up about 14 percent of the college-age population, the plan said. According to figures presented to the board, blacks made up 7.8 percent of the public four-year college enrollment and 9.5 percent of public community college enrollment in fall 1987.

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