

Russian pianist comes to A&M

By Jennifer Gressett

THE BATTALION

The discovery of the 1989 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition will be the spotlight of tonight's performance in Rudder Theatre.

University Chamber Concerts presents Russian pianist Alexander Shtarkman, a performer who has captured audiences in his tours throughout the former Soviet Union, Europe and the United States.

Shtarkman's performance, which is funded by the Texas Commission on the Arts and the Bryan-College Station Music Teachers Association, will include works by Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky.

Martin Bernheimer, of the Los Angeles Times, said Shtarkman, 27, "plays the piano with all the strength, flash and eagerness that his age would suggest. He also plays with the sensitivity and mellow refinement one associates with certain grand old men of the



SHTARKMAN

keyboard."

Born in Moscow, Shtarkman is the son of Naum Shtarkman, who placed third in the 1958 Tchaikovsky International Competition, the year Van Cliburn

took first prize.

After his debut at age 11, Shtarkman seemed to continue along a path that might make his father proud. He attended the Moscow College of Music, and in 1985, he won first prize at the national competition in Riga.

He later placed sixth at the 1988 International Competition of Crown Princess Sonja in Oslo, Norway, and in 1991 Shtarkman once again took first prize in the Taipei International Piano Competition.

When he finally reached the Van Cliburn competition, where he was the major prizewinner, he was only 22 years old.

"Applause seems to embarrass him," Bernheimer said. "He looks frail, almost giving the impression of a wimp. Then he plays! It was scary. It was wonderful!"

Shtarkman's performance will begin at 8 p.m. in Rudder Theatre. Tickets at the MSC Box Office are \$8 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens. For more information, call 845-1234.

International

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Droleskey enjoys watching all the different cultures and people come together to discover things about each other that surprise them.

It's just as exciting for international students to learn about each other's cultures, Droleskey said, as it is for them to explain their culture to United States citizens.

"A lot of students group the international students together as though they're all one group," she said, "and they aren't. They are tremendously diverse groups of people."

Droleskey said she considers International Week to be like a "service event" because international students get a chance to explain their culture to other students.

International students began preparing for International Week last fall. They returned from Christmas break with costumes and artifacts. Money raised throughout the year, combined with ticket sales from the talent show and international buffet, fund International Week each year.

The International Student Association is the umbrella organization for 55 international student clubs. Proceeds from items sold at the booths will benefit UNICEF. Although ISA defrays some of International Week's costs to the individual groups, students also dip into their own pockets. Droleskey said ISA members consider International Week to be a valid way to spend their money.

Texas A&M International Statistics

There are 2,567 international students enrolled in the spring semester. The following are the top seven countries outside of the U.S. represented at A&M.

1) India	432
2) China	316
3) Korea	266
4) Taiwan	206
5) Mexico	124
6) Indonesia	114
7) Japan	100

International Weekend's culmination, Friday evening's Talent Show and Fashion Parade, will feature two hours of music, dances and skits from over 15 different countries.

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