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**Postlude**

# Pianist Demus Plays To a Packed House'

By Paul Hume

Jeorg Demus playing Schubert and Schumann was the program last night at the Phillips Gallery and the word was enough to fill every seat and the adjacent stairs.

The young Viennese pianist has an obvious affinity for the music he chose. He began with the Opus 90 Impromptus of



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Schubert and after intermission played three of the Opus 90 Moments Musicaux. It was especially in the latter group that he did some of his most alluring playing, with subtleties of phrasing and the kind of assured control that these tricky pieces demand. When he came to the lyrical A Flat Moment, he turned on the pure gold that makes Schubert the glory of romantic Vienna.

The Impromptus were completely in the vein of the composer, with the storms that always threaten when Schubert moves in C Minor. The long ripples that flow through the E Flat Impromptu were clear and even, but not always entirely present. For fleeting moments we thought Demus might be more interested in the grand outline of the work than in the detail that fills it.

This thought returned to us in the long pages of the Davidsbueandler Taenze. This is Schumann week in Washington, with Richter's Novellettes, Ryce's Carnaval, Demus's Davidsbueandler and Fantasia and the Fantasia

again next Sunday. Of them all, the David dances are the longest seeming, no matter with what absorption we always listen as they begin. Schumann just did not have as much to say as he said.

Demus, however, played them with great love, which is the first requisite. He also gave them the swift change of pace, the understanding sympathy and much of the brilliance they require. Yet there were moments when suddenly the technique would run into a strange roughness and then, as suddenly, smooth out again, as if the passage had not quite been mastered, but might be even in performance.

The Fantasia closed the evening, and closed it with a glowing, noble reading of the coda that is its crown. Through all of its length, which never seems too long, the music sang, where singing is in order, which is to say, the outer sections. Demus pays great attention to the sudden ritards and returns to tempo that Schumann scatters from measure to measure. And with this he has a fine sense of the place for rubato.

Yet there were times when, in the midst of a well begun rubato, a change of pace would be made within too short a space, giving an uneven motion where a smooth alteration was in order.

The great march in the middle, the part Schumann considered calling the "Victory Arch," is always a problem, unless you are Richter or Rachmaninoff. It was a problem last night, but valiantly met.