

Liszt and the mortality enmeshed in his music

By MARK S. PORTER
of *The Montclair Times*

In his mid-teens, in the 1820s, Franz Liszt was hailed as one of the preeminent pianists in Europe. In the mid-19th century, Liszt created the "tone poem," an innovative musical structure that proved unpopular with many of his audiences. By the 1870s, and before he died in 1886, Liszt had become disenchanted by the lack of popular acceptance of his later musical compositions.

About 120 years after his death, many Liszt fans now cherish his later works.

According to the American Liszt Society, it will present its annual New Jersey concert next Thursday, May 10, in the Cali School of Music at Montclair State University.

Artis Wodehouse will perform the concert of several Liszt compositions on piano and harmonium.

"I'm trying to show some aspects of the late Liszt," Wodehouse told *The Times*. "There's something about the music that's almost painful. He's dealing with his own mortality."

"He's following his solitary pathways into the future."

Wodehouse, the music director of the Unitarian Church of Montclair, will be accompanied by the church choir on Liszt's "Via Crucis."

"I found this group to be pretty amazing in their commitment to projects," she said of the Unitarian Church of Montclair Choir. "We in the choir are relishing

Artis Wodehouse in concert

Artis Wodehouse will perform compositions of Franz Liszt on Thursday, May 10, in the Recital Hall of the Cali School of Music in Montclair State University.

The show begins at 8 p.m. and will feature the Unitarian Church of Montclair Choir.

Admission is free.

our experience," said Julian Caplan, a longtime bass in the choir. "She brings out the best in us because she sets such a high standard."

Wodehouse is an acclaimed pianist known for her jazz deliveries. Citing her performances of Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington and George Gershwin compositions, Caplan enthusiastically pronounced: "She did jazz and it was magnificent."

She will perform some Liszt compositions on a harmonium, which is a keyboard instrument similar to a pipe organ in producing sounds by pushing air over vibrating brass reeds.

The MSU concert was postponed from March due to repairs being made to her Trayer harmonium, which suffered cracks when exposed to cold, dry air this past winter.

"We've repaired all these cracks," Wodehouse said. "It's been brought back."



Photo courtesy of Artis Wodehouse

ARTIS WODEHOUSE will be performing on harmonium and piano in a concert next Thursday, May 10, in the Cali School of Music at Montclair State University.