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Guest Artist Recital: Vladimir Feltsman, piano

Vladimir Feltsman

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The Rachel S. Thaler Concert Pianist Series

Friday, September 10
8:15 P.M.
Ford Hall
James J. Whalen Center for Music
Ithaca College
Vladimir Feltsman is one of the most imaginative musicians of our time. An artist of immense range and insight, Feltsman was born in Moscow in 1952. At age 11, he debuted with the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. He studied piano with Jacob Flier at the Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatory and conducting at both the Moscow and Leningrad Conservatories. In 1971 he won the Premier Grand Prix at the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud international piano competition in Paris.

Feltsman’s career came to a standstill in 1979. Because of his growing discontent with the Soviet government’s ideology and rigid control of the arts, he applied for an exit visa. He was immediately banned from performing in public. After eight years of artistic exile, the government granted him permission to leave the country. Upon his arrival in the United States in 1987, Feltsman was warmly greeted at the White House, where he performed his first concert in North America. That same year, his debut at Carnegie Hall established him as a major pianist on the American scene.

A regular guest soloist with every leading orchestra in the United States, Feltsman appears in the most prestigious concert series and music festivals all over the world. His repertoire encompasses music from the baroque period to the 20th century. He is especially passionate about the music of Bach: in 1992 he inaugurated a four-season concert cycle of Bach’s compositions, including his major clavier works, at the Tisch Center for the Arts in New York City.

Feltsman’s most recent project, Masterpieces of the Russian Underground, unfolds a panorama of Russian contemporary music that was proscribed by the Soviet Union. This unprecedented survey of piano and chamber music compositions includes the works of 14 artists, ranging from Shostakovich to those composing today. Premiered by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in January 2003, the program was a great success. Feltsman was artistic director of the three-concert cycle and performed in most of the pieces presented during the festival.

Sharing the great tradition of piano playing has become increasingly important to Feltsman, who teaches at both the State University of New York College at New Paltz and the Mannes College of Music in New York City. He is the founder and artistic director of PianoSummer at New Paltz, an international summer institute and festival that attracts gifted students from around the world.

Feltsman’s extensive discography includes six albums of Bach’s clavier works as well as recordings of Beethoven’s last five piano sonatas; solo piano works by Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, Brahms, and Messiaen; and concerti by Bach, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev. Feltsman lives in upstate New York.
Partita no. 1 in B-flat Major, BWV 825 (1726)

Praeludium
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Menuet I
Menuet II
Gigue

Partita no. 2 in C Minor, BWV 826 (1726)

Sinfonia
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Rondeau
Capriccio

INTERMISSION

Pictures at an Exhibition (1874)

Promenade
The Gnome
Promenade
The Old Castle
Promenade
The Tuileries
Bydlo
Promenade
Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks
Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyli
Promenade
The Market at Limoges
Catacombae: Sepulcrum Romanum
Con Mortuis in Lingua Mortua
The Hut on Fowl’s Legs (Baba-Yaga)
The Great Gate of Kiev

MASTER CLASS
10:00 a.m., Saturday, September 11

Hockett Family Recital Hall, Whalen Center for Music

Patrons are requested to silence signal watches, pagers, and cell phones.
The use of camera and recording equipment is prohibited by law.

Vladimir Feltsman appears by arrangement with Arts Management Group, Inc. His recordings are available on the Sony Classical, Music Masters, Melodiya, and Urtext labels.
The Rachel S. Thaler Concert Pianist Series
was established at Ithaca College in 1991 in honor of Rachel Thaler.

A native Ithacan and talented pianist, Rachel Thaler attended the Ithaca public schools and graduated from Ithaca High School. She was awarded a scholarship to attend the Ithaca Conservatory of Music, but her father’s unexpected death shortly before classes began required her to change her plan and step in to manage the family’s furniture business instead.

Although she was never able to formally pursue her studies at the conservatory, Mrs. Thaler saw to it that her two sons and six grandchildren all had the opportunity to play musical instruments. Her love of music remained strong, as did her attachment to Ithaca College. Both she and her husband, Louis K. Thaler, were devoted supporters of the Friends of Ithaca College and members of the Tower Club for many years.

In addition to her musical skill, Rachel Thaler was a talented artist. She worked with needle painting, an ancient Chinese technique that uses pieces of colored thread rather than paint to create the image. Her work has been exhibited at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and in Rochester and Syracuse, and her technique has been featured in a video produced by the New York State Council on the Arts. Mrs. Thaler died a few weeks ago, on August 18, 2004, at the age of 97.

In endowing the concert series in 1991, Manley H. Thaler said, “My mother has always had an affinity for music. We wanted to do something in her honor during her lifetime. Because of her interest in Ithaca College and its outstanding music program, it was clear that the endowment fund should be created here.”

The legacy of the Thalers’ love of music lives on today through the Rachel S. Thaler Concert Pianist Series and the Louis K. Thaler Concert Violinist Series, which was established in 2002. The Thaler/Howell Foundation, through the efforts of Manley H. Thaler, endowed both series to recognize and honor Rachel and Louis Thaler and to ensure that outstanding pianists and violinists would always perform for the Ithaca College community and the residents of the surrounding area.