



from
Young Concert Artists, Inc.

BENJAMIN MOSER, *Pianist*



The London Philharmonic, Congress Theatre, Eastbourne

**By David Grundy
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There was a full house at the Congress Theatre in Eastbourne to hear this concert by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. On the rostrum was one of the best and most energetic of today's young conductors, Michael Dworzynski, a Pole, who recently won the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition.

There is no more severe test of nerve and ability for a conductor than to have to steer an orchestra through the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. **With the brilliant Benjamin Moser at the Steinway, this was a high-wire act of breathtaking proportions. A familiar work it may be, but it was here performed with freshness and panache. The pianist's encore, "Dreaming" from Schumann's Scenes of Childhood, held the audience rapt from first to last. Sheer poetry.**

The conductor also directed fine performances of Smetana's Vltava, an epic piece of scene painting of the mighty Vltava river from its trickling source in the mountains to its majestic entry into the city of Prague, and Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. Finely played though this was, I have always found Beethoven's repetition of the same fortissimo chords in this symphony somewhat trying.

This concert, generous in terms of time, with more than two hours of music, concluded with Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker Suite. Hackneyed, you may say. By no means. The LPO gave the music its very best shot, with the various soloists revelling in their opportunities. Sir Thomas Beecham is said to have remarked to an assistant on one occasion, "You young men could learn a lot from Tchaikovsky!" When one hears the deft and innovative scoring in this music, you can see what he meant. The celeste, after all, is used for the first time in the 19th-century orchestra in the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy".

The London Philharmonic Orchestra played The Nutcracker as if it really enjoyed it. Maybe it was a pleasant change from all that Mahler and Shostakovich it has to play nowadays.