

Solo pianist Fabian Thibodeaux /Isadar inspires audience

Submitted by

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Church Point native Fabian Isadar Thibodeaux offered a passionate concert at the Grand Opera House on Friday, May 11th. Performing selections from his new CD "Reconstructed," this special concert was filmed and recorded. The CD features new versions of songs recorded on earlier albums.

Contacted by Grammy winner Will Ackerman, the founder of Windham Hill Records was anxious to collaborate with Fabian. The finished product is truly a work of art. Not only will his modern classical sounds fill a room with a sense of comfort and relaxation, but it may also evoke a deep emotional response from the listener. During his performance of the song, "Summer Nights," I

was transported back to my childhood and summer evenings spent on a screened-in back porch with my Dad. For a moment, I could smell his pipe tobacco and see the lightning bugs.

He interspersed his instrumental numbers with chats with the audience. Mr. Ackerman had two songs that he definitely wanted to include on this album; Isadar related an interesting story about

one of them. Ackerman really wanted to include the song "Jealous Heart" saying how much he enjoyed it. Fabian informed him that he had rejected the song when it was submitted to him in 1990. The other song included upon Ackerman's insistence was one of the crowd pleasers, "The Bermuda Triangle."

Among my personal favorites from the concert were the upbeat

"Where the Wild Things Are", "Love Chaconne" with its haunting melody, and "Near the Edge of Light" taken from his debut album.

Living in New York, Fabian was deeply affected by the 2001 disaster of September 11th with the destruction of the twin towers. He was inspired to write a musical memorial; he played a summary from the very moving piece entitled "The Purple Heart."

The enthusiastic crowd demanded an encore, which he happily obliged playing a piece "Blood... Thicker than Water" that will be included on his next album. He is also working on a Christmas album to be released this December.

In talking with Fabian after the performance, he related a very interesting story regarding the grand piano at the Opera House. For his debut album, he had used this piano, which at the time, was at the home of James Fontenot in Abbeville. The piano was later purchased by Frank Hanley, a music professor at USL. Fabian actually studied under Hanley while matriculating at USL. Upon Hanley's death,

his friend Jeff Gueno gained possession of the piano. In turn, it was purchased by the Grand Opera House for half its value while the other half was a donation from Jeff. For this reason, Fabian said he was anxious to perform on the piano again. Besides being impressed by the remarkable sound of this grand piano, he was in awe of the meticulous renovations of the Opera House and its acoustics."

This was the first time that this reviewer had heard Fabian. His is a unique sound that I find very relaxing. As I was discussing the sound with Fabian, I explained my difficulty in trying to describe the genre of this music. He described it as displaying "the technique of classical and the improvisation of jazz, although it isn't either of those." I would have to agree. But beyond trying to put a label on the style for this review, I would simply say, it is music that is soothing, yet passionate.

For those who might be interested in listening to samples or purchasing his music, please visit his website: <http://www.isadar.com>