

From: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>

To: "Charlie Albright ([REDACTED])" <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Updates from Charlie

Date: Sat, 16 Dec 2017 00:38:18 +0000

i will be back in mid jan hope to see you then

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 7:33 PM, Charlie Albright <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Mr Epstein,

Hope you're doing wonderfully! I've been busy performing and traveling, and of course learning new pieces for upcoming concerts...whew!

Some new news has developed that is quite exciting. As you know, improvisation is something that really sets me apart as a pianist. I can improvise entire new pieces on the spot, and often do at my concerts...sometimes performing good chunks or entire concerts as an improvisation based on audience notes and whatnot...it really helps to set me apart as a musician, because while almost anyone from Juilliard can play almost any concerto, nobody else can do what I can when it comes to improv. :) (Here's a link of a whole sonata I made up a couple months ago at a concert: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zu_-1YAheiQ)

Well, my manager of the past few years is a bit old-fashioned (I think he's about to retire soon), and has never been one that likes "rocking the boat." I really want to continue pushing ahead with this unique aspect of what I do, but he's not so enthusiastic, despite audiences going crazy and reviews raving about it (I'll put some quotes below from recent improv reviews).

Anyway, we amicably agreed that our visions for the future were different, as I want to pursue differentiating myself through things like improvisation (maybe it's the business-minded side of me?) and he'd prefer me to just give normal, old-fashioned concerts playing things that anyone can play, which I often feel don't really connect with 'real' people as well...and which prevents me from doing my unique abilities in concerts as much. So, we decided to finish the year and a half of scheduled concerts together and part ways.

This is scary, but I think it's what really needed to happen. I know that what I can do is unique and different... and I am not a 'typical classical pianist.' You know I love playing a Liberace Christmas Medley and Great Balls of Fire just as much as the Tchaikovsky Concerto. :)

I'm talking to singer Andrea Bocelli's management in London on Monday, and am reaching out to one fellow at CAMI Music who manages Lang Lang, as they seem to have a better perspective on branding and company partnerships than my old manager does. If a good match doesn't work out, I'm also looking into young college graduates in music business/management who are eager to think outside of the box to potentially work with (my old manager took 20% of all earnings). It's scary but very exciting!

If you know anyone in the entertainment (non-traditional-classical) music industry that might be a good contact, please let me know, Mr. Epstein! :) I'll keep you posted with all the new developments!

Thank you so much for all of your kindness and continuing support...it is because of people like you that I am able to really share my unique music with the world. :) Happy Holidays to you and hope to see you very soon! Here's that Liberace Christmas medley for you, too! (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAD3hTGlp-w>)

Your Friend,
Charlie Albright

Here are some reviews regarding improvisations I've done:

The Washington Post declared that "Albright is among the most gifted musicians of his generation." It continued that "An impressive range of differently colored sounds at the keyboard was matched by overwhelming virtuosity" and that Albright "leapt the most outrageous technical hurdles... with a sense of dangerous self-abandon that was thrilling to hear. At the same time, musical shape was never sacrificed to showmanship."^[9] With regards to Albright's 2015 tour with [Keith Lockhart](#) and the [BBC Concert Orchestra](#), they wrote that Albright "made quite an impression. He is full of ideas...and has a dazzling natural keyboard affinity. He does not have an overpowering sonority (fingers more velvet than steel) but a lot of nuance."^[56] After an April 24, 2015 concert, the DC Metro Theater Arts wrote that "Albright was brought back to perform an encore: the audience picked four musical notes and he improvised a piece using those four notes as a base. To hear the initial sequence of four notes and then what an elaborate, beautiful piece Albright turned those simple notes into was thrilling. To listen to his own improvisation, and the emotion he poured into this simple piece...really showed his skill and passion for the piano and for music."^[57]

The New York Times praised Albright's "Jaw-dropping technique" and described his playing as "virtuosity with a distinctive musicality throughout"^[7]

The Philadelphia Inquirer published that "'Such a display still has novelty, though Albright didn't need it, so distinctive were his improvisational ideas and overall presence. Though the demure lyricism of "Für Elise" is something one associates with music boxes, Albright took off from it in what turned into a tour of 19th-century pianism. As clever as he sounds, Albright, in fact, gave the improvisation something I rarely witness in such settings: a highly personal emotional depth, as if he was expressing his inner self rather than simply exercising his powers of invention. This concert brought the art of classical-music improvisation to a new level. Of course, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 was bound to show a more filtered version of Albright — it's a tightly written concerto — though his personality was evident in his way of shaping a phrase with a kind of extravagance that had showmanship but never felt cheap. With a fresh, clean, crystalline sound, he played with a kind of ease and smoothness that refuses to airbrush the music, but animates it from within. You simply hear more Beethoven than usual and with a kind of rhythmic momentum that makes you listen more closely, no matter how familiar the music has become. And yes, he improvised the first-movement cadenza as Beethoven himself might have."^[58]

The *Boston Musical Intelligencer* wrote that if Albright "is not indisputably first among equals, he seems to me unsurpassed, anyway, and on the top tier. I will be surprised to hear another performance at this level very soon. It was gripping, frankly, both spellbinding and spellbound, quite unlike most such solo recitals I've heard over the decades."^[33] On a separate occasion, they wrote that "Albright has the requisite chops of a competition winner, but the beauty, sensitivity, and taste of a mature artist. is Schubert was ravishing, imaginative, poetic—full of poignancy and lyricism. It would seem Albright is a born Schubert player, whose taste is simply impeccable. His interpretation sounded spontaneous, but this was also heartfelt, mature playing. Everything had been thought out by a mind brimming with musical intelligence." In response to his improvised encore, they wrote that "Albright is a master of improvisation."^[34]

The *New York Concert Review* wrote that "Albright is a pianist whose name music-lovers will be hearing more and more. Winner of a slew of awards, most prominently a 2014 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Mr. Albright is now in the company of musicians who have become household names...Ursula Oppens, Richard Stoltzman, Joshua Bell, Hillary Hahn, Yuja Wang, and many others who have made their marks. Mr. Albright will undoubtedly lend his own additional distinction to this already illustrious group. This concert, an evening not to be forgotten. He displayed a joy in his playing that was utterly infectious. Beethoven, for one, felt new, because as casual as Mr. Albright was in his stage style and commentary, he was equally intense in his high-powered performances. The finale...took on a fire of the master's Op. 57 or 111. It was brilliant, precise, and powerful. In fact, throughout the entire evening, he displayed a joy in playing that was utterly infectious. He disarms jaded concertgoers with an openness and humility that for some reason we are not prepared to expect. Albright brings a vibrant spirit and limitless range for performances. He possesses a kind of intellect that doesn't stop growing and will no doubt continue to surprise as his career progresses. The Etude No. 11 ("Winter Wind"), was, as they say, "as good as it gets" — and so was No. 12 ("The Ocean"). The improvisation was...spectacular, and the spontaneity, even with stylistic similarity to Chopin

and Rachmaninoff, kept one on the edge of one's seat. The improvisation alone was worth the trip. Bravo – and encore!" [8]

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