

Some Enchanted Evenings

Jazz diva Diane Schuur and her band put on a great show for a delighted audience at the Whitefish Performing Arts Center in March. The Steinway concert grand sounded beautiful, as usual. It was another successful Singer and Simpson production, sponsored by Don "K" Subaru.

"...a fine way to treat a Steinway." Irving Berlin

Our next music event will be the extraordinary pianist Doug Montgomery with talented vocal guests at WPAC on June 8th. It will be world class entertainment on a world class instrument. Doug last appeared in Flathead Valley in October, 2007.

Doug has performed as a soloist with symphonies and orchestras worldwide as well as premier public, private and corporate engagements for royalty, presidents and noted celebrities. He is a brilliant classical pianist who can transform any musical style to classic status with his arrangements and passionate delivery. Doug Montgomery is often mentioned on the same short list of great pianists such as Peter Nero, Liberace and Roger Williams.

Doug Montgomery attracted national attention as a top prize winner in the prestigious Robert Casadesus Piano Competition in 1977. Initially pursuing a career in classical music, Doug was also working as a male model in Manhattan when he discovered the concept of piano bar. He realized this was something he could do as well or better than anyone else. So Doug expanded his repertoire, and put his training to work learning show tunes, popular music and jazz, giving it all his usual verve and panache. He moved to Santa Fe and created the now famous Vanessie's Piano Bar where he has been performing for almost thirty years while also appearing at private events and concerts. Vanessie of Santa Fe was so successful that a second location opened in Indian Wells, California called Vicky's of Santa Fe where Doug performs February through May.

At Vanessie of Santa Fe one evening John and Miriam remember well, Doug asked the audience to name five tunes, and told them that he would play them all at once. Everyone thought it was a joke, but they called out names of tunes, and Doug chose five. He then proceeded to play the most amazing piece of music they'd ever heard. He played all five songs, as a living collage, as one composition, and the audience was flabbergasted. It was truly magical, and the magic was Doug's brilliance. Miriam and John had never heard anything like it.

Doug's magic covers a variety of styles and genres performing a range of repertoire including Rachmaninoff, Gershwin, Cole Porter, Chopin, John Williams, Bach, Leonard Bernstein, Andrew Lloyd Webber, marvelous movie themes and more.

In the celebrated "Rhapsody in Blue" by George Gershwin, the triumph was for American pianist Doug Montgomery. His natural feeling, idiomatic sound, and fluency in

jazz were purely expressed on an impeccably classical base...A pianist who is brilliant and appealing in many ways. --Il Lavoro, Genoa, Italy

Montgomery's playing possesses a seductive variety of touches and colors. He enraptures us with his interpretations. --Le Soir, Brussels

Doug can make a vocalist sound good too. But it is certainly not magic when the vocalists start out as good as Mike Eldred and Cynthia Dario who will be joining Doug at this concert.

Complementing Doug Montgomery will be Whitefish favorite Mike Eldred. Mike starred on Broadway in *Les Miserables* as Jean Valjean, and appeared in the original cast of the Tony-nominated *The Civil War*. He also performed in the 25th anniversary tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. His role as Tony in the Nashville Symphony's production of *West Side Story* has earned international praise as "arguably the best 'Tony' on record". Last September, he charmed audiences in Whitefish with his John Denver show *Come Love Me Again Remembering John Denver*, raising money for Casa of Flathead Valley in the process. Last December, with his Nashville accompanist Jeff Steinberg, Mike brought us his Christmas show, *Home for the Holidays with Mike Eldred*. *Listening to his soothing tenor embrace one is reminded that talent, personality, training and experience can combine to create a truly unique and amazing sound. --Evans Donnell, ArtNowNashville*

Eldred has won numerous performance awards, including Nashville Scene's Best Musical Theatre Performer. He was nominated as Nashville Music Awards Male Vocalist of the Year. He has shared the stage with Stevie Wonder, Garth Brooks, Amy Grant and Michael Bolton to name a few.

Special guest opera singer Cynthia Dario will enchant us with the beauty and clarity of her voice. Among Ms. Dario's credits are performances with the Mayo Civic Orchestra, Seattle Opera and Emerald City Philharmonic. This is her third appearance in the Flathead Valley. Additional vocals by Miriam Singer. Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 8th.