

# The Washington Post

**Music review: Beatrice Rana's immaculate performance at Wolf Trap**



**Ellen Appel-Mike Moreland/The Cliburn - Cliburn Silver Medalist Beatrice Rana**

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Victory at music competitions often goes to the performer who makes the fewest mistakes. Italian pianist Beatrice Rana, who won the Silver Medal at this year's Van Cliburn Competition, gave an immaculate performance at her local debut Friday night in the Barns at Wolf Trap. There was almost nothing to criticize, but only occasionally did an interpretation compel attention.

Rana used her refined technique to tame the venue's Yamaha piano, coaxing from it sounds of remarkable delicacy and finesse, especially in detailed inner voicings. Her performances of the two sets of variations by Schumann she played here, recorded at the Cliburn, are being released this month by Harmonia Mundi. In her live rendition of the "Abegg Variations" (Op. 1), the slow variations were even more distracted and moony, the rubato almost excessively free, and the fast ones just as polished and intricate. Her interpretation of the "Symphonic Etudes" (Op. 13),

however, did not convince, as it was a little too controlled and cautious. She certainly mastered the work's technical challenges, but that is not enough.

Rana played one of Prokofiev's concertos at the Cliburn Competition, and she gave his sixth piano sonata, a piece that is new to her repertory, plenty of sharp-fingered intensity, especially in a pristine performance of the blistering fourth movement. Rana's poise and intelligence came through, though, just as they did in the question-and-answer session that followed the recital, in which she spoke of her obsessive love of reading, especially the fiction of Haruki Murakami. It seems clear that as she matures — Rana is only 20 years old — she will become an artist one will want to keep an ear on.

*Downey is a freelance writer.*