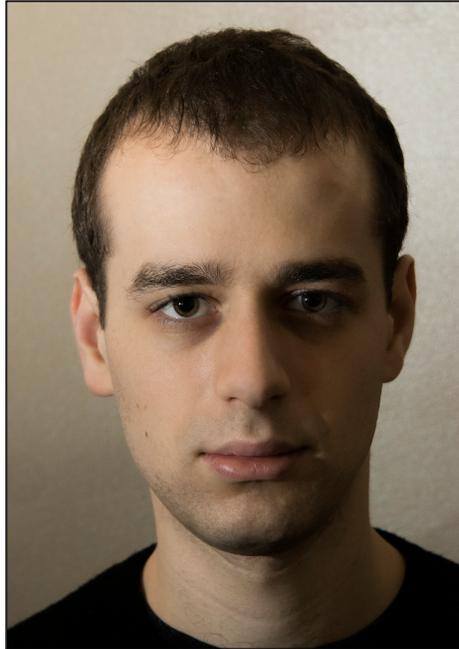


## **An Experience of Midsummer Revelry and Reverie**

Margaret Bergmann-Ness

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*Pianist Ari Livne*

On June 14, 2014, a collegial group of music lovers who share an interest in psychoanalysis were treated to a performance by the gifted pianist Ari Livne. The event was a fundraiser for the tenth International Evolving British Object Relations Conference, organized by the Northwestern Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, which will take place this October in Seattle, Washington. We gathered to listen to music chosen with the theme of reverie in mind, in consonance with the EBOR conference theme of psychoanalytic reverie.

Ari Livne, a graduate of Juilliard School of Music, played an unusual selection of piano works. He had chosen them attending to the concept of reverie as an element in composition and in performance. His extremely thoughtful explanations were enlightening and created a useful frame for listening. He spoke of the eras in which these pieces were conceived, and the importance of reverie in opening new landscapes for composition.

We enjoyed the following pieces:

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) – Fantasie in G minor/B major Op. 77

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) – Sonata No. 5 Op. 53

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) – Sonata No. 47 in B minor Hob.XVI:32

Franz Liszt (1811-1886) – Rhapsodie Espagnole  
York Bowen (1884-1961) – Toccata Op. 155

Each piece was performed with precision and sensitivity. At times I found myself engrossed in the pure auditory experience of Livne's performance. In other moments I was transfixed by the visual experience of trying to track the dance of his flying fingers on the keyboard. The combination of his introductions and the pauses for discussion after each piece freed us all to listen to our own reverential responses and associations as well as to the music.

At one point in listening to the rarely performed Beethoven Fantasie, I found myself remembering an egg that I had accidentally broken and made a mess with earlier in the day. I then heard the composition as Beethoven cracking open musical egg after egg, freely and fearlessly stirring up and playing with his different conceptions.

In listening to the Scriabin, the experience of the effort of staying with the unfamiliar was aroused. Our group discussion linked the musician's experience of trusting the composer and becoming familiar with his goal to the analytic experience of patient and analyst learning each other's modes of expression. We also shared thoughts on the pain of meeting something unfamiliar and the fear of potential failures in connecting.

I left the evening holding a deeper sense of possibilities in myself for listening, to both music and to psychoanalytic process. Many thanks to Ari Livne, Drs. Eli Livne and Esther Karson for hosting, the EBOR 2014 Organizing Committee, Gracious Gourmet Catering, and the audience who all contributed to this Midsummer Revelry.

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