



'New Tango' best of year's 'Pops'

Jeff Johnson
Post and Courier Reviewer
Sunday, February 22, 2009

Saturday night at the Charleston Music Hall, the Charleston Symphony Orchestra concluded its "Pops" series, featuring Pablo Ziegler, pianist, composer, arranger and premier creator of "Nuevo Tango."

Also featured were Hector Del Curto playing the bandoneon, an accordion-like instrument, capable of poignant solos as well as odd murmuring sounds like a bongo under water, and Claudio Ragazzi, whose expert playing of the jazz guitar seemed commonplace beside his more exotic partners.

Ziegler's "New Tango" format uses the dance form as a capacious receptacle for the spiky rhythms of tin pan alley ("Asfalto" and "Buenos Aires Report"), the improvisational solos that are the heart of contemporary jazz and even the baroque techniques of Bach ("Fugata"). Every number sharing a pulsating beat and spontaneity.

In obvious awe of his talented musical guest, conductor Scott Terrell warmly noted the Charleston Symphony had a wonderful week learning "Nuevo Tango" style from Ziegler. He and the symphony provided a lush musical background for the trio in "Images," "El Empedrado" and "Fuga y Misterio," which also included an exciting solo by the first violin.

In other numbers, the trumpet and flutes had compelling solo moments, and the whole orchestra managed a variety of odd sounds that added novelty.

The SRO audience gave a standing ovation, providing a successful conclusion to the most successful "Pops" concerto of the season, and hopefully leading to a return next year.