

# An evening filled with passion and poetry

On Wednesday May 19, 2004 Colloquium Depot Ltd. and the National Association of Women for the Arts presented pianist **Marlon Daniel** in recital as the recipient of the first Hazel Scott Memorial Prize for Outstanding Musical Achievement.

The concert was held at Terri Cultural Institute for an enthusiastic audience filled with musician and patrons of the arts. Predominantly Russian-trained, Daniel is a graduate of Manhattan School of Music and has studied piano with Arkady Aronov, Alexander Edelmann, and most recently Nicolai Lomov.

Daniel also studied in Santander Spain with Dmitri Baskinov at the Centro de Estudios Musicales Isaac Albéniz and in France with Gaby Casadesu at the famous Fontainebleau Conservatoire

Americaine, whose other alumni include Paul Bowles, Walter Piston, Nathaniel Dett, Aaron Copland and African American pop icon Quincy Jones.

Marlon has performed throughout North America and Europe and in several international music festivals including *Kronos* in the Czech Republic and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival in the United States. The auspicious *tour-de-force* program of works by Chopin, Beethoven, Scarlatti, Ravel and Debussy was filled with passion and pyrotechnics, and showed that the young artist is a big talent to watch.

The evening began with two well-known sonatas by Scarlatti, L. 457 in C Major and L. 118 in F minor. The pianist romantic approach to these works was a welcome reminder that this music has

a significant place in the piano repertoire and that more pianist should use full possibilities of the



Marlon Daniel

"modern" piano in this music.

Concluding the first half of the concert was a sensitive reading of Beethoven's Sonata in A-flat Major Op. 110. The third movement (*Adagio ma non troppo*) was exceptionally touching because of the pianist's beautiful phrased melodies and quiet demeanor.

After intermission Daniel began with the Polonaises Op. 26 by Chopin and his supple technique allowed the music to not only sing but dance as well. The finale and highlight of the program was the two French works, which showed the pianist at the height of his prowess. His performance of Ravel's *Ondine* from *Gaspard de la nuit* and Debussy's *Ce qu'a vu Vent d'Ouest* exhibited such myriad textures, dynamics and colors, simply brought down the house. It was an evening filled with

passion and poetry.

One hopes to hear more of this up and coming young artist in the future. Interestingly enough, according to the biographical information given on him in the program, Marlon Daniel is also a prodigious conductor and will be making an Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center orchestral debut this year conducting *Ensemble du Monde* on October 23, 2004.

A rare talent such as Marlon Daniel comes only once or maybe twice in a generation as with the case with such famous artists as Daniel Barenboim, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Christoph Eschenbach. To have an African American on this illustrious path is outstanding and should be commended. More information on Marlon Daniel and upcoming concerts are posted on his website: [www.marlondaniel.com](http://www.marlondaniel.com).