

## For All Mankind

by JUDY GELMAN MYERS on Apr 17, 2012 • 3:14 pm

*Pro Musicis shares and evokes*

Sometimes a concert is more than a concert. Celebrating its 46th season, Pro Musicis (“For Musicians”) presented pianists Andrew Staupe and Alexandria Le at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall April 11 for an evening of Mendelssohn, Debussy and Mussorgsky, as well as a trio of world premieres by Karl Blench, Ryan Carter and the (deservedly) much-commissioned Christopher Walczak, whose Dark Blue Etude sang with lucid and unexpected harmonies.

Pro Musicis was founded with a double mission: to not only nurture exceptional young musicians but to share their gifts with those in need of spiritual healing. Pro Musicis artists are selected by competition, adjudicated by piano legend Byron Janis and composer/educator Gunther Schuller. Competition winners are awarded a concert in a famed concert hall in a major city. In return, they commit to at least two public service concerts in venues such as prisons, homes for the aged or shelters for the homeless.

“Sometimes a concert is more than a concert...Staupe in particular communicated a personal voice nevertheless rooted in a profound understanding of the material he played. In addition, his ability to draw tonal color from the piano lent authentic variety to his interpretations...”

“In the process,” read the concert notes, “Pro Musicis artists alter their relationship to their gift; beyond aiming for a successful career, they become committed to a lifetime of sharing music.”

This commitment to sharing was palpable throughout the evening. Staupe in particular communicated a personal voice nevertheless rooted in a profound understanding of the material he played. His broad musical interests—from medieval to chamber to new works—lent depth to his phrasing, while his voicing underscored the emotional structure of the music as a natural expression of its compositional structure. In addition, his ability to draw tonal color from the piano lent authentic variety to his interpretations of composers as different as Scarlatti, Mendelssohn and Debussy.