

Amersham Concert Club's 55th Season

Brilliance and Delicacy from Pianist Viv McLean

A substantial audience braved a wet and windy night for Amersham Concert Club's first live concert since February 2020. They were well rewarded by a dazzling performance by pianist Viv McLean, a favourite with regular attenders of the Club's concerts.

His varied programme opened with a lovely performance of Beethoven's Sonata in C minor "Pathétique". Powerful and strong where it needed to be, at other times his touch was so delicate and precise you could feel the audience holding its breath. On either side of the interval we heard a selection of Chopin pieces, two quiet Nocturnes, two Ballades, a less frequently played but beautiful Prelude and a lively Polonaise. Sadly, no-one took up his invitation to dance in the aisle, but there were plenty of tapping feet.

Then, a complete change of mood, with two short Gershwin pieces, Walking the Dog and a transcription of The Man I Love. The evening ended with a breath-taking performance of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. A member of the audience commented that she had loved the work since she heard it as a teenager and had never heard a better performance. Those of us in a position to watch his hands were mesmerised by his dexterity. All in all, a wonderful evening and a great reminder of the power of live performance to move an audience in a way that the best streamed performances never can.