

UK PIANIST PAUL LEWIS SCALES BEETHOVEN MOUNTAIN PEAK

British pianist Paul Lewis scaled the peak of Beethoven's mountainous Diabelli Variations in his UKARIA concert.



Stephen Whittington, *The Advertiser*
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Beethoven could make a mountain out of a molehill.

The molehill in question is an inane waltz tune by Diabelli. The mountain: 33 variations on that maddening tune by Beethoven, known as the *Diabelli Variations*.

On this occasion the fearless mountaineer who scaled this lofty peak of the piano repertoire was British pianist Paul Lewis.

It was an extraordinary and mesmerising performance by a master of the instrument.

The intricacy and complexity of the music is matched by the volatility of wild mood swings, from deep seriousness to high-spirited outbursts and gruff humour.

Lewis gave us all of this and more, and in the most modest and unassuming manner.

No grandiose gestures or head-flinging, just a few foot stomps for emphasis. Magnificent.

Before his heroic conquest of the Beethoven, Lewis played one of Haydn's darker sonatas, in E minor. Lewis has the measure of the Bosendorfer piano at UKARIA and used its tonal characteristics to craft a performance of utmost clarity.

Then came three intermezzi by Brahms, sombre and tender, bathed in the fading light of evening. Lewis coaxed sounds of exquisite, dark beauty from the piano in these gems.

Paul Lewis, piano

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