



## UAPRESENTS STUDENT CRITIC PROGRAM

### **Menahem Pressler and the New York Chamber Soloists with Richard Stoltzman**

Review by Kelly Berger

On November 21, 2010, I had the pleasure of attending an evening filled with the music of Mozart and Brahms, performed by The New York Chamber Soloists Orchestra. Also featured was the extremely talented Menahem Pressler on piano and two-time Grammy winner Richard Stoltzman on clarinet. These two award winning musicians were a delight to hear and brought an extra amount of life and energy to the orchestra.

The program featured two concertos by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The orchestra performed “Concerto No. 17 in G Major” behind Menahem Pressler’s impeccable piano playing. Pressler’s stature may have been small, but his piano playing skills were vast, as he led the orchestra with confidence and ease. Equally impressive was Mozart’s “Concerto in A Major” which was played next. Richard Stoltzman brought life to the stage with his expressive clarinet playing. While the orchestra remained a mostly static backdrop, Stoltzman’s movements and facial expressions stood out. It was interesting to hear two of Mozart’s full works that featured different solo instruments. The pieces were equally impressive and enjoyable.

After a short intermission, Stoltzman and Pressler graced the stage again, but this time they were not accompanied by the orchestra. The two acclaimed musicians proved themselves worthy of their many awards as they played “Sonata No. 1 in F minor for clarinet and piano” by Johannes Brahms. The two played to one another, as if having a conversation between their instruments. The clarinet and piano held their own, but also complimented one another very nicely when they played together. Each movement within the piece had its own “personality”, which Stoltzman and Pressler showed in their body language. At the end of the piece, which ended on the very lively movement entitled, “Vivace”, the men smiled, throwing their hands up into the air as if to say “the end!” Stoltzman and Pressler grabbed hands and bowed together, Stoltzman’s mop of white hair flying wildly back and forth. This exciting ending was met with a standing ovation from many audience members, complete with shouts for an encore, which the men were quick to provide.

The New York Soloists Orchestra, accompanied by Menahem Pressler and Richard Stoltzman gave an engaging and enlightening performance at Centennial Hall. I was privileged to share the evening with such talented and dedicated musicians.