

# Pianist Gives Gem Of Recital

By LARRY BARRETT  
Special to The Star

Alexander Farkas, piano. At the Phillips Collection. Program: Sonata in A, Op. 13, No. 6; Haydn; Sonata (1926); Bartok; Kinderscenen, Op. 15; Schumann; Hungarian Rhapsody No. XI, List.

It is tiresome to write — as it is doubtless tiresome to read — about this plethora of excellent, young pianists that is upon us. But one can hardly help remarking on their presence and then worrying about their prospects.

Where, in this country that squanders its natural resources, are we to place these remarkable human resources? Most of them — like the sub-

ject of this review — keep busy by teaching and, thereby, multiplying the number of competent players. If the process continues, by 1976 — the Bicentennial Year — we'll be up to here in good pianists.

Alexander Farkas, who teaches at the Yale School of Music, is just such a one. He gave a gem of a recital Sunday at the Phillips Collection — carefully thought out, delightfully programmed and craftily played. He should be touring the country, showing to other audiences his concern for the meaning of the music and how tenderness in the treatment of a keyboard can elicit joyful responses. But so should the many others; Farkas, here, is their symbol.

He played a clear, easy-sounding, almost childlike early Haydn sonata to set up our ears for the Bartok sonata to follow. I heard little of the folk music of Hungary that is sup-

posed to inhabit most of Bartok's music. Rather, it smacked of the let's-see-what-we-can-get-away-with modernity of the time (1926); but, here and there, one heard a bit of Debussy.

His big piece was the Schumann Kinderscenen (Scenes of Childhood), Op. 15. The pleasure which one anticipates in the music was served with the greatest delicacy. Mr. Farkas, having that capacity for divorcing himself from earthly matters, spoke only to Schumann. He gave us the 13 episodes as one whole — carefully bridging between — so that the Traumerei we were expecting came as a sweet surprise and, miracle of miracles, the next-to-last episode (Child falling asleep) actually elicited a soft yawn from a soft little girl. Then, the poet spake; and a more moving performance of the work I have not heard in years.

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