

Romeo and Juliet, Eggenberger Allee 90

The Song of Songs may already exist in the Bible, but in terms of its poetry, William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* comes close to it. Arsonore dedicated an evening at Eggenberg Palace to the great lovers.



The Georgian pianist Irma Gigani



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William Shakespeare's play made *Romeo and Juliet* the most celebrated pair of lovers in the world. Even Austropop has embraced the tragic couple, with Carl Peyer's sentimental hit "Romeo und Julia." This time, however, they were not to be found at "Bahnhofstroß'n 104," but were at home at Eggenberger Allee 90. The Planetary Hall of Eggenberg Palace became the setting for the finest poetry. Markus Meyer recited, exceptionally well, magnificent sonnets by the Swan of Avon as well as excerpts from the tragedy about the two young people from Verona.

Classical music, too, is full of Romeos and Juliets. Franz Liszt's *Träumerei*, based on a theme from Gounod's opera, provided an apt introduction to the rest of the evening, which was shaped by the Georgian pianist Irma Gigani with two substantial works. She performed the highly virtuosic piano arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture* with enormous command, stamina and brilliance.

Music by Sergei Prokofiev, written in a completely different manner, was even more successful. He distilled ten pieces for piano from his ballet *Romeo and Juliet*: harmonically advanced music full of surprises, from which Gigani removed the sense of something awkward and forbidding. So eloquent, so fluid and coherent, so supple yet without any musical sweetener — this sometimes angular music rarely sounds like this. The fact that Gigani will soon release an album featuring Prokofiev's sonatas sounds highly promising.

To the audience's sustained applause, there was also Rilke's *Liebes-Lied*, once again beautifully performed by Meyer.

Translation from German text