

Piano Guild Notes

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Memories of John Browning: The Lhevinne Legacy Continues. This beautifully crafted DVD chronicles the life of the late concert pianist, John Browning. I met Producer Salome Ramras Arkatov at the MTNA National Convention where she showed her film, “The Legacy of Rosina Lhevinne.” The Lhevinne film shows rare footage of Madame Lhevinne in master classes and live performance. Many of her students are interviewed as the observer becomes aware of the far-reaching influence of this master teacher. In the Browning DVD, Arkatov interviews Browning as the two of them remember their teacher, Madame Lhevinne, outside her small New York apartment. Browning is shown in rare performances of the Rachmaninoff, *Prelude, Op. 32, #5* and the Chopin, *Nocturne, Op. 27 #2*. The close-ups of his hands are like receiving a lesson in technique. Students of Browning are interviewed as they share the insights they received from their lessons on the value of careful study. Conductor Leonard Slatkin recalls his collaboration with Browning in the two recordings of the Barber, *Concerto for Piano*. Everyone who was interviewed commented on his meticulous attention to detail. The most important part of the film for me was Browning’s explanation and demonstration of the technique of the Russian school and of Madame Lhevinne’s technical exercises in particular. This DVD is a must for university professors to show to their piano students to keep this teaching legacy alive.

The DVD of both films is available from Arkatov Productions.

www.arkatovproductions.com.

(Dr. Vicki King, reviewer)