

Pop: Feyer at Waldorf

After 13 years at the Carlyle Hotel, and 12 years at the Stanhope Hotel, George Feyer, the pianist and entertainer, has moved into the Waldorf-Astoria, where he is appearing Tuesdays through Saturdays in a small, secluded, elegant but casual room aptly called the Hideaway.

Mr. Feyer is known primarily as a pianist, largely because the records he has been making for more than 25 years have concentrated on his piano performances of European pop songs and American show tunes. But in the Hideaway, he takes on a different dimension. Here he becomes an entertainer, a description that covers his piano playing as well as his singing, talking and, most importantly, his orchestration of the room.

He literally plays his audience, which invariably includes longtime fans, fitting a remark to a table on the left, acknowledgement of a request from a far corner into his performance, drawing his listeners in with an anecdote, a recollection or an Ogden Nash poem and creating an ambience that is informal but delicately controlled.

There is a touch of Victor Borge in Mr. Feyer's way of tying together classical and pop music. He sings pop lyrics to classical tunes, setting the words of "Just One of Those Things" to the melody of "Un Bel Di" or bending Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to "By the Time I Get to Phoenix." On the piano, he may play "a swingy version" of the Quartet from "Rigoletto," which comes out rippling the light, syncopated tickle of Gershwin jazz.

He sings in French and attractively accented English — Mr. Feyer was born in Hungary — talking his lines with sensitive rhythmic shading on "My Funny Valentine," lifting to a gently gruff melodic projection that gives an interesting twist to the normally soaring "Maria" from "West Side Story." And although Mr. Feyer protests that he is really no singer, his low-keyed approach to "Send in the Clowns," a song that eludes most self-proclaimed singers, is exquisitely sensitive to the mood and meaning of the song.

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