

## MUSIC

# Pianist will key on rich Latin American classics

BY RON EMERY

Special to the Times Union

ALBANY — Pianist, composer, entrepreneur, music professor and chairman-designee of the Music Department of the University at Albany, Max Lifchitz has been presenting an ongoing series of concerts exploring the rich heritage of Latin American classical music.

Since coming to the university in 1986, Lifchitz has given a series of both solo piano concerts and performances with various soloists and ensembles like his crackerjack North South Consonance.

For a free recital at 8 p.m. Wednesday at the University at Albany's Performing Arts Center, Lifchitz brings along Isabel Aretz, composer and ethnomusicologist from Venezuela. In a pre-concert lecture at 7:15 p.m., Aretz will speak about Latin American aboriginal themes in her music. In the concert Lifchitz will perform "Man to the Cosmos (for piano and tape)," composed by Aretz in 1992 in memory of her composer-musicologist husband, Luis Felipe de Ramon, who died last year.

"Isabel is a leading authority on South American folk music. Her work throughout the Latin world is as important as the work of Bartok and Kodaly on Hungarian folk music in the early part of this century.

### PIANIST MAX LIFCHITZ.

Concert of Latin American music. University at Albany Recital Hall in Performing Arts Center. 8 p.m. Wednesday. Pre-concert talk by Venezuelan composer and ethnomusicologist Isabel Aretz at 7:15 p.m. Free. 442-3995.

Her music is intensely personal and often includes products of her research. She has created a contemporary synthesis of folk elements and

avant-garde European and North American music," said Lifchitz.

Born in Buenos Aires on April 13, 1913, Aretz studied orchestration under Heitor Villa-Lobos in Brazil. She is a multi-prize winner, including a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1966-67 and the Polifonia Prize of Buenos Aires in 1952. She has collected over 2,000 folk songs from all over South America.

Aretz has composed dozens of works for combinations of instruments. The International Encyclopedia of Women Composers lists five major compositions for orchestra, a dozen piano works, five ballet scores, numerous songs and some electronic music. She has also written widely for scholarly folkloric publications.

"She is coming to the university specially," said Lifchitz.

As usual, Lifchitz has planned his recital to include



ISABEL ARETZ

not only music by Aretz — "Vidalai y Danza" from 1940 and Three Afro-American Preludes from 1955 in addition to "Man to the Cosmos" — but by other significant Latin composers as well. Lifchitz decries a program with music by a single composer as too narrow in scope.

Lifchitz will perform three pieces by Ricardo Castro, "the most famous Mexican composer, who reminds you a little of Chopin or Liszt."

Also on the program is music by Villa-Lobos, Louis Moreau Gottschalk and Mexican composer Marta Garcia Renart.

"Most of this music is unknown to even the most sophisticated concertgoer in the United States. It is important for our students to hear this music and to recognize the amazing contribution to scholarship made by this extraordinary woman," said Lifchitz.