

Opus Issue 11

ALL ABOUT THE FESTIVAL THAT WAS

If you missed it: During our 6th International Laureates Festival July 28-August 10, 11 super-talented young artists performed in LA & about in 8 concerts. Festival received extensive coverage in 18 local publications, Beverly Hills Outlook (www.bhoutlook.us with readership of 425,229) followed all events/concerts. here are some excerpts from reviews by DORIAN.

A Masterful Master Class and Some Breathtaking IPALPITI Soloists

I am in total awe of Professor Eduard Schmieder (world-renowned violinist , teacher, conductor) and so it was with eager anticipation that I arrived early for a good seat at his Master Class on August 5. The participating group included Sayako Kusaka, violin [Japan], Evgeny Sakakushev, cello [Bulgaria-Germany] and Edna Yuan-Yuan Chia, piano [USA], who were rehearsing Rachmaninov's Piano Trio in G minor, "Elegiaque," quite elegantly. Then Professor Schmieder arrived and proceeded to turn it from a beautiful rendition into a glorious one-delving into the heart of the sad and passionate expression, creating a transcendent journey into the soul of this neglected Russian composition. Playing with concentrated panache, the young artists listened attentively as Professor Schmieder detailed the nuances of the Russian sound and music, even how to hold the bow and perform so delicately as to evolve into a more powerful delivery from the quivering quietude.... Written as homage in honor of Tchaikovsky's death, it is a complex composition that Professor Schmieder explained, solving the profound mysteries of this work of passion and loss, making the subject of death rendered with drama and pathos.... But we held our collective breaths lest we miss the quiet sweetness of sound. On August 6, we returned to hear a presentation of "Classica Romano" by four new members of Young Artists, all laureates of international competitions: Hungarian violinists Gyula Vadaszi, Gabor Szabo, Janos Bodor, and Peter Stoll, cello/keyboard. In a jaw-dropping recital of sheer virtuosity, these artists played devilishly intricate Paganini pieces as brilliantly as I have ever heard. If the intent was to dazzle, and I believe it was, they accomplished that unquestionably with a wink and a smile. The latter part of the program was entirely devoted to Gypsy Music, a "Czardas Extravaganza!" and indeed it was. The joint was clamorously jumping, stomping and clapping to this amazing foursome. It was a breathtaking blend of individual and group virtuosity

energized by a youthful vibrancy that was totally infectious. These talented music-makers will surely make their indelible mark on the world of music—they are that talented, remarkably so. And Professor Schmieder elevates them even further.

An Ode to Schmieder and the I PALPITI Wunderkinds

The I PALPITI soloists of Young Artists International have honed themselves into an exhilarating polished team under the leadership of the incomparable Professor Eduard Schmieder. No more so evident than at the final two outings of the group: On August 9 at the hidden but oh-so-lovely Heverly Hills Municipal Gallery, an adjunct of Beverly Hills City Hall. In a large, bright, sunshine-and art-filled room with marvelous acoustics, came Sayako Kusaka, violin, and Marianna Racz, flute [Holland] to offer up a Bach Sonate C-dur BWV 1037 from Offertorium. Their tonal resources blended smoothly and expertly with Racz's amazing breath control and Kusaka's silken bow. This was followed by Mozart's Piano Quartet in E flat major with Edna Yuan-Yuan Chia/ piano Sayako Kusaka/ violin, Gabor Szabo/ viola, and Evgeny Sakakushev/ cello....the group presented the purest Mozartean melody ever composed, played with great finesse, and concluding as brightly as it began. Last presented was Richard Strauss' Piano Quartet in C minor. Richard Strauss is quoted as having said, "...I may not be a first-rate composer, but I am a first-class second-rate composer!" This Piano Quartet puts a lie to that self-effacing statement with its demands of supreme musicality and technical prowess....the passionate and elegantly performed work ranks with the finest chamber music of the Romantic era. On August 10 we repaired to the Bing Auditorium at LACMA to hear the musicians' final outing of the season in Southern California, presenting Rachmaninoff's Trio Elegiaque for Piano, Violin and Cello No. 1 in G minor (Kusaka, Sakakushev and Chia)... musicians clearly inwardly participated in the music-making during the long rests to create continuity and seamless give-and-take, a subtle problem these performers solved admirably. They seemed to have such a strong rapport that thoughts and feelings seemed to flow between them in an unbroken current. Then in an earned standing ovation performance of Mozart's Clarinet Quartet in A major (Lucy Chuang/ clarinet, Kusaka/ violin, Racz/ violin, Gabor Szabo/ viola, and Sakakushev/ cello) there was so much energy, the playing so technically impeccable that it was like seeing the music, not just hearing it, their phrasing and style unanimous, elegant and flexible. Their tone, though each player has a different one, was beautiful and expressive. They brought out all of Mozart's mercurial

moods, the light and shadow, repose and passion, joy and sorrow...This was flawless ensemble work, all contributing to the synergy that comes from five instrumentalists playing as one. What a joy! We cannot wait for the return of this exceptional group, although it will be without Marianna Racz who, we understand, has accepted a position with the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam-their gain, or loss. And so many thanks to Professor Schmieder for this living golden achievement!

News from our Artists

After the Festival, violinist Sayako Kusaka went on tour with Tokyo Symphony performing Tchaikovsky concerto & Saint-Saens' Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso-to a great acclaim, of course!

Cellist Timo-Veikko Valve is premiering pieces by Sibelius in his native Finland, recording is to be made by Finnish Radio (YLE), and performing Schostakovich 1st cello concerto with Hyvinkaa Sinfonia. Next summer he is invited to Kuhmo festival in Finland (among 5 biggest festivals in the world)-it is at the same time of our Festival-we will miss him but are very happy for his career. Evgeny Sakakushev took a principal cellist position in Malaga Spain.

As part of our mission to develop & promote careers of young talented musicians, two of our alumni were given an opportunity to work as faculty members in the festival organized by Young Artists International at Moulin d'Ande Centre Artistique & Culturel in Normandy, France. Under the guidance of Professor Schmieder, violinist Vadim Tchijik & pianist Luiza Borac coached 10 international students and performed in recitals. Vadim just accepted a new position in another conservatory in Paris, His new CD on Lirynx (Harmonia Mundi) was named one of the best CD's of the month in French Classica Magazine. His next CD will be released in Japan in January.

Luiza is on the faculty of the very prestigious Hochschule in Hanover. She is playing solo recital in New York Steinway Hall on November 20. Here is her note after festival in France:

Dear Laura,

I've just got home this morning and I would like to tell you firstly how much I enjoyed the festival and the violin course at Moulin d'Ande and to thank you very very much for inviting me to take part in this project.

Dr. Schmieder played a phenomenal concert and coached the young talented students at the most incredible level of artistry. It might sound ungrateful of me towards all the great teachers and artists with whom I've worked with until

now in my humble life, to say that Dr. Schmieder work is on a far more high level but what I can say is that the students might consider themselves lucky indeed to be provided with this sort of guidance in their very early years of life. Personally I enjoyed te atmosphere at Moulin d'Ande very much. The organizing is such that you don't have to worry about going out to look for meals which of course save very important rehearsal time. There is always a nice audience for concerts and being in such beautiful surroundings is really inspiring.

Dear Laura, I consider myself very privileged and honooured to have been part of the Festival project in France and I thank you so much for inviting me. With warmest greetings, Luiza.