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MAKSIM SHTRYKOV • Clarinet Reviews/Quotes



“Shelter Island Friends of Music season kicks off with Tanaka and Shtrykov”

John G. Miller | *Shelter Island Reporter* (Shelter Island, NY) | February, 22, 2019

One of the advantages of attending and enjoying musical events over many years is that the listener hears works from an ever-expanding catalogue of composers.

The season’s first Friends of Music concert is a case in point. Are there any readers out there who have heard works by Danzi, Bassi, Rosenblatt or Gretchaninov? No? Well, neither have I.

And yet, together they made for a fascinating afternoon of chamber music specifically scored or arranged for clarinet and piano. The young duo of Maksim Shtrykov, a clarinetist from Belarus, and Misuzu Tanaka, a pianist from London, are yet another example of a new generation of exquisitely talented performers who elevate our understanding of the world’s music.

Two highlights from the program were vivid performances of fantasies based on Verdi’s *Rigoletto* and Bizet’s *Carmen*. While many of the melodies from these well-loved operas were quite familiar, their unusual arrangements provided listeners a fresh and daring re-appraisal.

The young couple (yes, they are a couple, with near-future wedding plans), are each global competition winners and both hold degrees from Juilliard. They enchanted the audience with their technique and style and generated standing ovations from the sold-out crowd. Perhaps the loudest ovation came when it was announced that, just two weeks ago, Maksim Shtrykov became an American citizen. Belarus’s loss. America’s gain.

John G. Miller
Shelter Island Reporter (Shelter Island, NY)

Seamlessness and Contrast at Trinity Church [headline]

Thursday at Trinity Church clarinetist Maksim Shtrykov and pianist Alina Kiryayeva delivered a terrifically enjoyable show of some lesser-known pieces for the two instruments. Shtrykov has a clarity that's viscerally breathtaking. His quicksilver legato made the streams and frequent torrents of notes seem absolutely effortless even though much of the program was considerably demanding. The only giveaway that he was working hard was how he swayed along with the music at the edge of the stage. Kiryayeva, by contrast, didn't hold back. As comfortably fluid as her approach was, it wouldn't be an overstatement to call it an attack, which brought a welcome energy to the bill. Their seamlessness together undoubtedly stems from having worked together since the middle of the previous decade.

Up first was Schumann's Adagio and Allegro for Piano, Op. 70. It worked as an opener, perfectly pleasant and far more challenging for the performers than the listeners. The piece de resistance was Saint-Saens' Sonata in E Flat for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 167, an absolutely delicious four-part suite. It's got Saint-Saens' signature humor, but also his signature plaintiveness, and it was here where Kiryayeva dug in and found the intensity in every unexpected dynamic shift, especially in the second, allegro animato movement while Shtrykov mined the poignancy in the pensive, lento third movement as well as the counterintuitively misty end of the final allegro. They closed with Weber's Grand Duo Concertante, Op. 48 which is sort of the classical equivalent of garage rock: an endless series of call-and-response, you can see the changes and ideas coming a mile away, but playing them is another story! Even in the andante con moto second movement, the cascades come in endless waves and the duo met the challenge head on and walked away victoriously after another seemingly endless series of false endings. These works – and these performers – deserve to be better-known.

Lucid Culture, New York, NY

QUOTES

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"Maksim is an unusually sensitive musician with excellent ensemble skills and a clarinetist who plays with great imagination and attractive stage presence. The recitals he has given have been among the best I have heard recently."

Charles Neidich

International Soloists and Recording Artists

Artist Faculty: The Juilliard School; Manhattan School; Mannes College

"Mr. Maksim Shtrykov is a virtuoso clarinetist who performs with conviction and excellence"

David Dubal

Emmy-Award winning Broadcaster and Classical Music Writer

TESTIMONIALS FROM PRESENTERS

It was a privilege and distinct pleasure to host the Shtrykov-Tanaka Duo for the first concert of our 2018-2019 season. Misuzu's lively and animated piano interpretations were enthralling, carrying the audience on the wave of sound along a breathtaking journey. Maksim brought a compelling richness and beauty of the clarinet's resonant sound to every piece. This uncommon combination of clarinet and piano delighted the audience and was a masterful performance to kick off the season. Bravo!

Karen Haden
President, Ridgecrest Chamber Music Society

"We are pleased to have had the Shtrykov-Tanaka Duo performing on our concert series...Clarinetist Maksim Shtrykov and pianist Misuzu Tanaka, each an accomplished solo musician, achieved a perfect ensemble balance, two instrumental voices engaged in lively conversation, in music by Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms and Carl Maria von Weber...It was a privilege to have them on our series."

Patricia H. Frederick
Manager, Historical Piano Concerts Inc.

"...an outstanding performance. Both Misuzu Tanaka and Maksim Shtrykov fulfilled all of our expectations and left audience eager for more."

Robert M. Nash
Executive Director, The Cultural Center of Cape Cod

"Patrons still speak of your performance that took place two weeks ago. As evidenced by the uncontained applause after each piece, the concert was magnificent. The standing ovation given at the conclusion of the program should serve as a testament to your talent and desire of the community to hear you play again. Your artistry for the piano, Misuzu, and for the clarinet, Maksim, shone through the music and enraptured the patrons."

Salvatore J. Filosa
Adult Program Coordinator, North Shore Public Library (Shoreham, NY)