



OPENING NIGHT - Saturday, September 12, 2009

Dedicated to the memory of Victor Batzel

THE TCHAIKOVSKY GOLD MEDALLIST

Sergey Antonov, cello and Ilya Kazantsev, piano

Programme: SCHUMANN Adagio and Allegro Op. 70, Fantasy Pieces Op. 73, Five Pieces in Folk Style Op 102; RACHMANINOV Sonata in g minor Op 19
Encore: ROSTROPOVICH Humoresque Op 5

Romanticism Lives!

Mesmerizing, soulful tone. Supple and commanding. Such a loving performance of the Rachmaninov. A great opening to the season! **(Muriel Smith)**

What a wonderful start to the season. Yo Yo Ma, watch out. This duo is great and the question and answer period is great. Even though I didn't have any questions, it opens the door and I will participate. **(Larry Fleisher)**

From the first note the rich, velvety sound of the cello caught our attention. There was a wonderful sense of line and shape to the melody. The pianist played with enviable ease, class and grace even in demanding and virtuosic passages. There were moments when I would have liked him to be more prominent. Schumann would have been thrilled with the soaring melodies and tone. The variety in the folk pieces was a total delight. How to describe the Rachmaninov - deep, dark, sultry, passionate, achingly beautiful melodies wreathed in delicate arpeggio. One wanted the last note of that 3rd movement to last forever. One was hardly aware of the gigantic demands made on the artists - the magic and emotion was foremost. Fantastic! **(Virginia Heinrichs)**

Two young men with vigorous passion. What wonderful energy. Beautiful balance between cello and piano. Where else will they be playing/ recording? Can they come back again? **(C. Bhakar)**

Lovely and quite a unique start to the season. Both young Russian talents were exceptional. Also the mix of composers and pieces selected were perfectly suited to an opening concert. **(Maria Mitousis)**



What a soulful cellist. The Schumann was full of warmth and romance. The Rachmaninov was an exciting merger of cello and piano. **(Laura Weir)**
A formidable beginning to what may be your best season yet. These two masterful, intelligent, and truly talented young virtuosi debuting in Winnipeg is simply a coup. Their depth, precision and passion and the delight in which they play captivated a well-seasoned audience. The last movement of Rachmaninov...too beautiful. I cried. Fabulous! **(Susan Weldon)**

Ah Schumann! What a sweet, sonorous, scintillating, sensational cello! And Antonov was a delight! Excellence personified! Superb playing! Welcome to our Russian artists! The *pièce de resistance* was the Rachmaninov. The skill, artistry and dexterity of the performers was extraordinary. Lyrical, emotional, I loved every moment! **(Cynthia Coop)**

What an impact with which to start the season. The wit of the cellist is truly so refreshing. What a great tribute to Victor Batzel! **(Agnes Dyck)**
Spectacular performance from both artists. The selection of music was truly emotionally satisfying and thrilling to listen to. I do hope we shall again have the pleasure of hearing them. **(Evelyn Downey)**
What's to say but - magnificent! Two virtuosi of the finest order. The Rachmaninov was thrilling. Sign them up! **(Don Rodgers)**

It was a thrill to listen to Sergey Antonov. He is a virtuoso of the cello. We were privileged indeed. **(Lou Billinkoff)** Similar sentiments were expressed by: G. C. Pollock, Carol Raizen, Kathryn Sexton, Jenette Goodman, Leonard and Anna Schwartz, Marina Plett-Lyle, Aaron Lussier, Barbara Filuk, and Judith London Bager.

*Thank you all sincerely for your comments.
Ed: Mireille Theriault*

Critic's Prize

Virginia Heinrichs

CD — Kalin Ivanov, cello with Emily White, piano

Winnipeg Free Press - ONLINE EDITION Thursday, September 17, 2009

Russian cellist had Virtuosi audience at first bow stroke

By: Holly Harris

Film buffs will remember a famous line from a few years back: "You had me at 'hello.'" Well, Russian cellist Sergey Antonov quickly asserted his status as a world-class artist from the first stroke of his bow Saturday night, wowing Virtuosi Concert's opening night crowd with sublime artistry and a bundle of charm. holly.harris@shaw.ca

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<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/entertainment/arts/Russian-cellist-had-Virtuosi-audience-at-first-bow-stroke--59648247.html>

