

Classical Sonoma

Reporting on classical music across the North Bay

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CONSTANT BEAUTY AT MARIN SYMPHONY

by Donna Kline

Sunday, March 01, 2009



A stormy night did not seem to deter an enthusiastic Marin County audience March 1 from attending the fourth concert of the Marin Symphony 2008-2009 season. Marin's Civic Auditorium was nearly filled to capacity to hear the Orchestra's own

concertmaster, violinist Jeremy Constant, and Marin's Sympho...

SIX PEDALS AND 176 KEYS

by Terry McNeill

Tuesday, February 24, 2009



Concerts featuring two pianos have been on the upswing in Sonoma County, due mainly to the work of the Twenty Fingers Club, a group of well-trained amateurs devoted to

conventional and arcane repertoire for 176 keys and six pedals. Club members don't perform as often as they would like, as two-piano...

Symphony

TWO WORLD PREMIERES AT UKIAH SYMPHONY CONCERT

by Larry Flor

Sunday, February 22, 2009



On a rainy Feb. 22, with lots of weekend entertainment available, a unique and exciting concert occurred on the bucolic Mendocino College campus where the Ukiah Symphony, under the baton of conductor Les Pfutzenreuter, performed works of the old and the

"brand new" and something in-between. On the ...

Symphony

SHIFTING THE CENTER OF ATTENTION

by Steve Osborn

Saturday, February 21, 2009



Symphony programs often resemble three-ring circuses, organized in time rather than space. In the first ring, the symphony offers an overture or similar fare to whet your aural appetite. Then, in the center ring, comes the main attraction, usually a soloist displaying his chops in a concerto or othe...

Chamber

SOMETHING AWESOME FROM THE STATE OF DENMARK

by David Parsons

Friday, February 20, 2009



The Trio con Brio Copenhagen returned to the SRJC Chamber Concerts Series Feb. 20 in a program devoted to two massive piano trios, prefaced with an anniversary cello/piano duo. Although Mendelssohn's *Song without Words*, Opus 109, was chosen to open

the program in honor of the composer's 200t...

BEYOND THE SOPORIFIC

SYMPHONY REVIEW

Marin Symphony / Sunday, March 01, 2009

Of Britain, Bizet and Balanchine

Alasdair Neale, conductor

Jeremy Constant, violin

Marin Symphony Chorus

with guest pre-concert appearance by Katita Waldo, San Francisco Ballet



Jeremy Constant

CONSTANT BEAUTY AT MARIN SYMPHONY

by Donna Kline

Sunday, March 01, 2009

A stormy night did not seem to deter an enthusiastic Marin County audience March 1 from attending the fourth concert of the Marin Symphony 2008-2009 season. Marin's Civic Auditorium was nearly filled to capacity to hear the Orchestra's own concertmaster, violinist Jeremy Constant, and Marin's Symphony Chorus perform works by the English composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), and Georges Bizet's (1838-1875) Symphony No. 1 in C Major.

The Lark Ascending, composed before World War I and based on lines by British poet George Meredith, was superbly performed by Mr. Constant on his 1700 Stradivarius. This work is a stunning and beautiful poem of musical imagery. After the orchestra's brief introduction, Mr. Constant's solo entrance began a five-note theme that instantly depicted the gracious bird soaring higher to the heavens. Mr. Constant's performance was breathtaking and the audience seemed to be captivated with every note. This work is lyrical and often nostalgic, and Mr. Constant's unforgettable performance set the tone for another memorable evening with the Marin Symphony. A standing ovation for Mr. Constant was certainly deserved.

Juxtaposed to the resounding "Lark" was a performance of the composer's powerful *Dona Nobis Pacem* (Give Us Peace), sung by the Symphony Chorus under the direction of Stephen McKersie, and accompanied by the orchestra. This is a reflective and thought-provoking statement to the horrors of war. Composed in 1936, it was the composer's plea (and warning of wars to come) for peace after his own horrific experiences during World War I. Inspired by Walt Whitman's poetry and selected Biblical passages, *Dona Nobis Pacem* is sung in six movements and performed without a break. Solo sections connect the six movement's passionate entreaties for concord, and were hauntingly sung by soprano Helen Zindarsian and baritone Matt Trevino. Although written in English, the lyrics were projected on a screen behind the orchestra so the audience could easily understand the plaintive poetry and literary message of the composer. It was a welcome addition, giving the entire listening experience even more impact.

In keeping with the Symphony's homage to music written for the dance, the concluding work was Bizet's effervescent Symphony. Composed in 1855 when Bizet was seventeen and a student at the Paris Conservatory, it was lost and forgotten until 1933, when it was discovered and finally premiered two years later. It has been in a standard in the orchestral repertoire since that time, and in 1947 choreographer George Balanchine created a version for the New York City Ballet Company. The Marin Symphony, under the baton of Alasdair Neale, presented a praiseworthy and commendable performance, with special kudos to the Principal Oboist, Margot Golding, for her expressive and chaste playing of the main theme in the second movement. The Orchestra played well all evening, the elegance of the strings and section balances superb.

by [Terry McNeill](#)

Thursday, February 19, 2009



Reactions from listeners to the music of Philip Glass usually are of two types. One group flees quickly from the hall and concludes that Glass is a mere shadow of the greater minimalist composers Reich, Adams and Riley. Others, with more patience and curiosity, give the music time to unfold and, esp...

the music time to unfold and, esp...

SHORT WORKS PROVE LONG ON CHARM

by [Terry McNeill](#)

Thursday, February 12, 2009



Russian pianist Halida Dinova returned to familiar territory on Feb. 12 — the recital stage at San Rafael's JB Piano Emporium — and produced a concert short on major repertoire works but long on charm and drama.

The small audience well knew what would be forthcoming: an evening of virtuoso playing, ...

VIGOR AND PIZZAZZ

by [Terry McNeill](#)

Sunday, February 01, 2009



The Russian pianist Dmitry Rachmanov is a careful and attentive player with ample power when needed, and he brought these qualities to a Super Bowl-day audience Feb. 1 at SRJC's Forsyth Hall. Though the repertoire

was a little conventional, the performances were probing and memorable. In several wa...

Choral and Vocal MOSTLY MOTETS SINGS AT VESPERS

by [Joanna Young](#)

Sunday, January 25, 2009



Mostly Motets, a North Bay a capella vocal ensemble, presented a Vespers concert January 25 in Petaluma's First Presbyterian Church. Director Steve Moore conducted the well-rehearsed ensemble, consisting of twelve singers, in sacred works by Byrd, Dufay, Josquin, Tallis and Victoria — all leading c...

Chamber PIANISTIC LARGESSE IN MARIN

by [Terry McNeill](#)

Sunday, January 25, 2009



Marin pianist Ken Isaka has been getting around lately, playing frequent concerts, competing in high-level competitions, writing about music and investigating rare repertoire that incites new interest. But he is seldom

heard in a formal winter recital setting, with a good piano, and with somewhat s...

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