

JOSEPH SWENSEN

Violin

Y. LILY FUNAHASHI

Piano

Sunday, Nov. 24th, 1985
Queen Elizabeth Playouse

6th Season 1985—1986



VRS VANCOUVER
RECITAL
SOCIETY

Meet the Artists

JOSEPH SWENSEN

Joseph Swensen was born in New York in 1960 into a musical family; both his parents are professional musicians and his younger brother and sister are performing musicians as well. He began violin studies at the age of 5 and gave his first public performance in New York two years later. By the age of 13 he had won competitions at both the Aspen Festival and the Juilliard School where he studied with Dorothy DeLay.

In 1978 Joseph Swensen was awarded a sponsorship by the Leventritt Foundation, and two years later he was the recipient of the first Avery Fisher Career Grant. In the same year he appeared as soloist in a 13 concert tour with the Rochester Philharmonic under the baton of David Zinman, which included his debut at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Mr. Swensen's busy schedule takes him to Europe several times a year, both for recital and concerto performances. He has appeared in such capitals as Munich, Prague, Vienna, Paris, Amsterdam, London and Stuttgart.

A fine chamber musician, Joseph Swensen has appeared as guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and has performed at the festivals of Spoleto, Aspen and Marlboro.

In 1980 he was invited to perform in a chamber concert with Isaac Stern at Carnegie Hall honouring the maestro's 60th birthday.

Next season begins with a European tour in which he will perform recitals in Frankfurt and at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. He will also play both Bach Concerti with the Baroque Orchestra of Berlin. His orchestral engagements include appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the North Germany Radio Orchestra of Hamburg with Charles Dutoit. He will also tour Scandinavia with the BBC Symphony of London and will tour Austria, including Vienna with the Tonkuenstler Orchestra.

Exclusive Management:

ICM Artists, Ltd., 40 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019

A Member of the JOSEPHSON Talent Agency Group

Y. LILY FUNAHASHI

Born in Fukuoka, Japan, Y. Lily Funahashi immigrated to the United States in 1970 with her family. After receiving her Bachelor of Music degree with honours from the University of Wisconsin she continued her studies at the University of Southern California where she received her Masters degree in Music while studying with John Perry. Currently enrolled in the Juilliard School, Miss Funahashi is pursuing further graduate studies under the guidance of the eminent pianist and teacher, Adele Marcus.

Lily Funahashi performed frequently in recital and with orchestras in her adopted home state of Wisconsin and, having a special affinity towards chamber music, she has participated in duo recital and chamber music concerts in the major music centers of Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston and Washington DC. In the 84/85 season Miss Funahashi joined violinist, Joseph Swensen for recitals in Germany.

The VRS is proud to present Joseph Swensen and Y. Lily Funahashi in their Vancouver debut. This concert is being recorded by CBC Radio for broadcast at a later date on the Programme, "Arts National".

Please ... and Thank you ...

The Vancouver Recital Society is greatly appreciative of the continued support of those who have renewed their subscriptions for this sixth season and is delighted to welcome a large number of new subscribers.

The VRS is a non-profit society. The real cost of these recitals is not reflected in ticket prices and is only partially met by box office income. **The Society is almost totally dependent upon membership support and donations and cannot survive without them. If you enjoy the concerts please consider making a tax deductible contribution.**

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The Vancouver Recital Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Vancouver Foundation through the Donald Alexander Baxter Fund, the City of Vancouver, and the Community Arts Council of Vancouver.

Programme

Sonata No. 5 in F Major for Piano and Violin, Op.24 (1801)

The "Spring" Sonata

Ludwig Van Beethoven
(1776—1827)

Allegro

Adagio molto espressivo

Scherzo: Allegro molto

Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

Beethoven composed his Opus 24 Sonata in Vienna during 1801, when the young composer was establishing himself with his aristocratic patrons and producing his first major works. The "Spring" Sonata (no one is sure who thought up the apt but unauthorized nickname) represents Beethoven at his most classical. Though we currently view the work as a violin sonata, composers and audiences of that era considered the work to be a piano sonata accompanied by violin — a small but quite significant difference and an attitude which explains the melodic prominence of the keyboard and the "pianistic" nature of much of the figuration for both instruments.

Sonata for solo violin (1944)

Bela Bartok
(1882—1945)

Tempo di ciaccona

Fuga: Risoluto non troppo viva

Melodia: Adagio

Presto

When violinist Yehudi Menuhin asked Bartok to write a work for solo violin, he was doubtless aware of both the refugee composer's uncertain financial situation and his at best delicate health. It is natural to speculate, perhaps, about Menuhin's motivation, but there is little question that this timely commission provided the impetus which produced one of the great landmarks of the violin repertoire.

The Sonata has a reputation for being both technically demanding for the performer and inaccessible to the general audience. Certainly it is a formidable challenge for even the most brilliant virtuoso. But perhaps the question of accessibility is less acute today than it was 40 years ago. Although the harmonic style is terse and often strikingly dissonant, the Sonata is also very consciously traditional in form and inspiration. The opening *Tempo di ciaccona* is cast in a modified sonata form and is followed by a fugue very much in homage to J.S. Bach (an evocation of the fugues in Bach's unaccompanied violin sonatas). The lyrical slow movement is in the spirit of many similar "night music" sections in the composer's later works, while the concluding *Presto* is a frenetic and drivingly purposeful rondo.

Intermission

Romance, Op.11 for violin and piano (1877)

Antonin Dvorak
(1841—1904)

Dvorak's Romance is a short concert work with a convoluted background. It was originally conceived as part of an early (and somewhat unsuccessful) string quartet written during the arduous years of his apprenticeship in Prague. In 1873 Dvorak's music came to the attention of the Viennese critic Hanslick (through the positive recommendation of no less than Johannes Brahms) and Dvorak's career took a quite dramatic turn for the better. International publishers began clamoring for his work and, anxious to make the most of the situation, the composer extracted the lyrical Romance and re-worked it as a piece for violin and orchestra. In this guise (and in the reduced version for violin and piano we will hear this evening), the composition is one of the earliest of Dvorak's works in the standard repertoire.

Sonata No.3 in d minor
for Piano and Violin, Op. 108 (1888)

Johannes Brahms
(1833—1897)

Allegro
Adagio
Un poco presto e con sentimento
Presto agitato

Johannes Brahms abhorred the virtuoso concert repertoire of his own age and, in reaction, consciously tried to write recital music of previously unexplored seriousness and scope. In essence Brahms' mature sonatas are of virtually symphonic proportions but conceived for the more limited resources of the chamber duo. As such, they are the perfect showcase for a team of performers who prefer to stress intrinsically musical values rather than more theatrical technical gymnastics.

The d minor sonata was conceived concurrently with the A Major violin sonata (Op.100) at the resort town in Hofstetten on Lake Thun in the summer months of 1886. Brahms delayed the final completion for the work for two further years settling on a definitive version only in 1888.

Programme notes by David Duke.

Dear Music Lover,

In 1982 we presented the legendary pianist, Annie Fischer, in a recital that will long be remembered by those privileged to have heard it. We took the proceeds from that concert and set up a fund, the "Gessler Fund", in order to promote an annual concert by a talented young British Columbian performer. Once upon a time...long before his Leeds Competition victory, Jon Kimura Parker was our first Gessler artist.

On SUNDAY, JANUARY 12TH, 1986 we shall bring back from the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia another young British Columbian pianist of whom we are exceedingly proud.....

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Next Concert

Sunday, February 9th, 1986 at 8:00 p.m.

Miklós Perényi, Cello Ferenc Rados, Piano

Suite Italienne Igor Stravinsky
Suite No.4 in E flat Major Johann Sebastian Bach
Rhapsody (1928) Béla Bartok
Sonata in F Major, Op.99 Johannes Brahms