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KURT NIKKANEN

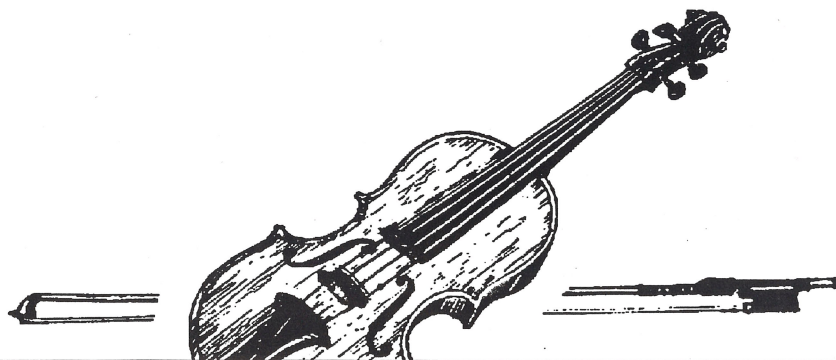
• VIOLIN •

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Sunday, September 29, 1991
Vancouver Playhouse

 A CBC Broadcast Event



Meet the Artists

Kurt Nikkanen

Considered one of the world's leading young violinists, Kurt Nikkanen has received unanimous rave reviews for his dazzling orchestral and solo performances around the globe. In the few years since his emergence, he has performed with distinguished orchestras and on prestigious recital series, made triumphant debuts in Europe and the Far East, toured throughout the United States and made his recording debut, rapidly fulfilling his promise as an international virtuoso.

Born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1965, Kurt Nikkanen began violin studies at the age of three. He won his first competition at the age of ten and made his Carnegie Hall debut two years later, performing the Saint-Saëns Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso with the New York Youth Symphony. At fourteen, he was invited by Zubin Mehta to perform Paganini's Concerto No. 1 with the New York Philharmonic in a Young People's Concert; that same year he performed the Bruch Concerto with the Boston Pops, conducted by John Williams. Another early highlight was the world premiere of Jeffrey Mumford's Violin Concerto in 1982 with the American Composers Orchestra.

In the summer of 1988, Kurt made his debut with the Cleveland Orchestra at the Blossom Music Festival, performing the Glazunov Violin Concerto under the baton of Vladimir Ashkenazy. Following this highly successful appearance he was invited to make his British debut, performing the Elgar Violin Concerto with Libor Pesek and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. Later that season *The Washington Post* praised his Kennedy Center recital, calling him "a complete artist, poised, knowledgeable, and technically as well-equipped as any violinist alive."

Kurt Nikkanen's orchestral and recital engagements have taken him throughout the United States, Europe and the Far East. Highlights of the 1990-91 season were his triumphant debuts in London, Munich and Barcelona during two separate European tours with Vladimir Ashkenazy and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Kurt's busy summer schedule included performances at the Mostly Mozart Festival with Gerard Schwarz, his Salzburg Festival debut under the baton of Horst Stein (televised live throughout Switzerland, Germany and Austria), and appearances at Festivals in Aspen, Switzerland and

Montpellier. The summer concluded with a performance at the Proms with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a broadcast recording of the Brahms Violin Concerto with the BBC Radio Orchestra.

Kurt Nikkanen's acclaimed debut recording of the Tchaikovsky and Glazunov concertos with the London Philharmonic and Yuri Simonov was released on the London-based Collins Classics label earlier this year. Scheduled for release shortly is an all-Bartok recording with pianist Rohan DeSilva.

A recipient of the Alfred Neuberger and Waldo Mayo Talent Awards, and a first prize winner at the Mozart Festival and Aspen Concerto Competitions, Kurt Nikkanen has studied with Roman Totenberg and Jens Ellerman. He received his Bachelor's Degree in 1986 from the Juilliard School, where he was a scholarship student of Dorothy DeLay. A tennis and fitness enthusiast, he currently resides in New York City.

Tonight's Canadian debut of Kurt Nikkanen is being recorded for broadcast at a later date by CBC Stereo's "Arts National" (105.7 FM).

Schofer/Gold
173 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10024

Rena Sharon

A native of Montreal, Rena Sharon studied at the Eastman School of Music and at Indiana University under Menahem Pressler and Gyorgy Sebok. She has performed extensively as accompanist throughout Canada, the United States and Europe, receiving a special diploma for "Best Pianist" at the International Voice Competition of Rio de Janeiro. Prior to becoming an Assistant Professor of Accompaniment and Song Literature at the UBC School of Music, she was on the faculty of Oklahoma State University, the Music Academy of the West and was later head of the Accompanying Department at the Victoria Conservatory. Rena is an active chamber musician who has participated at the Seattle and Olympic Chamber Music Festivals as well as the Reizende Muziekgezelschap in Amsterdam. She is a frequent guest of both the Vancouver Recital Society and the Vancouver Chamber Music Festival.

• ABOUT OUR PRINTED PROGRAMS •

The Vancouver Recital Society strives to be financially responsible, and we do care about our environment. The paper we use for these concert programs, 'Topkote', is in the same price range as non-glossy papers, and is, according to our sources, 100% re-cyclable.



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If you have some spare time and would like to volunteer for the Recital Society, call 736-6034 and ask Barb for more information.

Program

Sonata in E^b major, Ludwig van Beethoven
Opus 12 No.3 (1798) (1770-1827)
for piano and violin

Allegro con spirito
Adagio con molt' espressione
Rondo - Allegro molto

Beethoven's first published set of piano and violin sonatas dates from the very end of the 18th century and, for the most part, reflects the conventional "accompanied" piano sonata style of the classical era.

The E^b sonata, dedicated to Beethoven's teacher Antonio Salieri (of Mozart and Salieri fame) is in the standard three movement format, comprising a sonata allegro opening, a rather extended Adagio con molt' espressione and a lightweight, even Mozartian finale.

Sonata in F minor, Sergey Prokofiev
Opus 80 (1946) (1891-1951)
for violin and piano

Andante assai
Allegro brusco
Andante
Allegroissimo

Prokofiev began work on his First Violin Sonata during the relatively trouble-free days following his "re-integration" into Soviet life in the late 1930s. But the composition of the work proved to be protracted and difficult; indeed, it was not finished and made ready for its premiere until after the Second World War (by which time the composer had finished the more accessible Second Sonata in D major).

Though an unquestionably challenging work, the F minor sonata may well be Prokofiev's greatest chamber composition; intensely personal, its wide-ranging character encompasses a varied world, from the expected Prokofiev wit tempered with bitter irony through to the very depths and heights of emotion. Not that this breadth and diversity is any way suggested by the composer's cryptic programme note, which asserts that "the first movement is severe in character and is a kind of extended introduction to the second movement, a sonata allegro, which is vigorous and turbulent, but has a broad second theme. The third movement is slow, gentle and tender [while] the finale is fast and written in complicated rhythm."

Apparently suggested by Handellian models, the work begins with a terse slow introduction succeeded by a modified sonata-form movement of aggressive, almost brutal intensity (immediately recalling aspects of the so-called "war sonatas" for piano solo). The third movement is more lyric though scarcely less serious while the brilliant, rhythmic finale drives to a resigned, even chilling return of the opening mood: no happy endings, not even the reassurance of traditional instrumental bravado to conclude this dark, disturbing but great work.

INTERMISSION

Sonata in D minor, Camille Saint-Saëns
Opus 75 (1885) (1891-1951)
for violin and piano

Allegro agitato; Adagio
Allegretto moderato
Allegro molto

Not unlike Brahms, the otherwise phlegmatically prolific Saint-Saëns felt the inhibiting weight of the Beethoven traditions where the writing of sonatas was concerned. (Indeed, he steadfastly refused, point blank, to compose piano sonatas after "that old boy".)

But with the drive to create a distinctly French chamber repertoire that was under way in the last quarter of the 19th century, Saint-Saëns did try his hand at two works for violin and piano.

The first, the D minor Sonata, is a deceptive blend of virtuosic theatrics and compositional innovation. Consider, for example, the fugal development section of the first movement; the linking of the opening movement and the sentimental slow movement as well as the similar fusion of the neo-Mendelssohnian scherzo and the perpetuum mobile finale.

Though the ruthless "cyclic" designs of Saint-Saëns' more humourless rival Franck are all too well-known, this less frequently heard sonata reveals a creative mind of considerable subtlety and invention, beguilingly obscured by surface charm, brilliance and verve.

— Program notes by David Duke



IMPORTANT BROADCAST DATES

Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar, so you can hear again (or hear for the first time if you missed them) three highlight concerts from last season's Recital Series and Chamber Music Festival. All concerts will be heard at 8 pm on "Arts National" (105.7 FM).

Friday, October 11

— the memorable recital given last May by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa.

Friday, October 18

— the exuberant performance of the jazzy Turtle Island String Quartet that had an enthusiastic audience cheering wildly at this summer's Festival.

Wednesday, October 30

— the stirring recital by Steven Isserlis and Rena Sharon that opened the Festival.

The Vancouver Recital Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Communications and the Challenge '91 Program; the Government of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture; the City of Vancouver; the Hamber Foundation; the McLean Foundation; the Vancouver Foundation and the Cherniavsky Club for the Performing Arts.

The Vancouver Recital Society's Hamburg Steinway is maintained and serviced by Johann B. Krebs.

The Vancouver Recital Society is most grateful for the generous assistance of its honorary auditors, Collins Barrow.

Next Concert

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 8:00 PM

Ralph Markham, Kenneth Broadway,

duo pianists

Overture to <i>The Magic Flute</i>	Mozart/Busoni
Fugue in C minor, K.426	Mozart
Fantasy in C minor, K.475	Mozart/Grieg
Sonata in D Major, K.448	Mozart
Sonata in C Major, K.521	Mozart
<i>Reminiscences de Don Juan</i> (Grand Fantasy on Themes from Mozart's <i>Don Giovanni</i>)	Liszt

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du Maurier Arts Ltd. is committed to the enrichment of Canada's cultural mosaic. Administered by a Council of dedicated Canadians, du Maurier Arts Ltd. has contributed more than 20 million dollars in direct grants and marketing support to Canadian arts organizations since its inception as the du Maurier Council for the Performing Arts, in 1971.

The list of arts organizations who have benefitted from the support of du Maurier Arts Ltd. number in the hundreds. They represent all forms of visual arts, music, theatre, and dance - including opera, jazz, musical theatre, symphony, pops, poetry readings, workshops, master classes, exhibitions, literary series, talent searches, and festivals of every kind.

Funding applications are assessed and grants allocated by a Board which meets annually. Honorary Council Chairman is The Honourable Pauline M. McGibbon, C.C.; Council Chairman is Wilmat Tennyson; Council President is Cliff Minshull; Directors are Roberta Beiser, Fred Davis, Carol Hinks, Marie Lambert and Marg Southern. Fay Olson is Executive Director.

Whilst ticket sales are a vital source of income, they do not cover the entire cost of operation. We must raise money each year through contributions in order to meet our obligations. We operate on a very careful budget and your contribution of any size will make a difference.

Please help us to continue bringing the very best — the cream of young musical talent from around the world, with your **tax deductible** contribution. Donations payable to the Vancouver Recital Society may be mailed to:

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