

Rather than draw attention to himself, Berick makes the listeners join in his own enjoyment of the music. He phrases with meticulous care, and the beauty of his full-bodied tone is ravishing. Whether playing passionately or with utmost delicacy, his bow control is such that the instrument always sings, and the four strings form a seamless sonorous continuum - in the third movement of Bartok's Sonata, this made the melody flow as smoothly as oil. What a joy to hear him play Bach's Partita No. 2, culminating in the famous Chaconne. He rendered this difficult work so expressively, in tune, and with complete ease - never a scratch or shriek. (In the Chaconne, the unforced purity of his playing brought tears to my eyes.) That he managed to maintain a steady beat in each of the five movements made the music flow with uncommon clarity.

- *The Montreal Gazette*

"Berick didn't let the audience down. Right from the start, it was clear he was in complete control of the work, and the orchestra in turn was inspired to raise the level of its playing... For his part, Berick set the tone from the opening few notes, drawing the most passion from the music but never sounding saccharine. The work's Russian character is most clearly heard in the beautiful second movement Andante, and here Berick was superb. He was the pace car at the outset of the third movement, which begins after a brief pause at the end of the second. He had a little hop in his step at the beginning, moving through the rapid notes with ease.

- *The Windsor Star*

The four-movement sonata, expressively performed by Ms. Artymiw and Mr. Berick, evokes Handel's operatic style with ornamented, emotive melodies; the weeping lines of the Larghetto sounded like a trademark Handelian lament. The first segment ended with Saint-Saëns's Rondo Capriccioso, played with flair by Mr. Berick.

- *The New York Times*

For most fun of the evening, though, I'd have to nominate the Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major, for Violin, Viola and Orchestra, K. 364... The evening's guests soloists, violinist Yehonatan Berick and violist Rebecca Albers, were having such a good time "conversing," it was infectious. Who could climb to the top and claim the highest notes in the exchanges between the instruments? First Albers won, flashing Berick a smile; later it was his turn. Of course, it didn't hurt that the playing of this pair was stellar — Berick's high-flying and free, Albers' soulful and throaty — what a sound!

- *The Ann Arbor News*

Paganini, a champion virtuoso, composed 24 of these exercises, not just one, in the early years of the 19th century as a daunting challenge to other violinists, contemporary and in the future. "I double dare you to try them," he seemed to say. Berick took the challenge and, from what one heard, certainly mastered the approximately 80 minutes of music. From memory, he aggressively and convincingly negotiated his way through chords, trills, string crossings, ricochets, arpeggios, staccatos, pizzicatos, scales, octaves and what have you. Since these Caprices were not intended to show off the violin's beauty of tone but a violinist's ability to execute technical acrobatics, Berick caused this listener to marvel rather than revel. But marvel I most assuredly did at his stunning accomplishment.

- *Herald Telephone*

One should mention the eminently powerful contribution of Israeli violinist Yehonatan Berick. At the end of the day, the best moment of the concert was the Ravel sonata for violin and cello. Here is an astonishing work, quite revolutionary even for the era, that Mr. Lysy and violinist Berick had obviously prepared with great care of the synchronization of the movements, and most importantly, the sound. Indeed, with one as with the other, there was the same quality of vibrato, as sober in the violinist's playing as in that of the cellist, and consequently, the same quality of sound, that, in some registers, merged the two instruments into one.

- *La Presse*

As soon as the theme of the first movement sounded, it was clear to the audience that something exceptional was taking place. It was not Berick's technical security that so amazed; Although this is already a respectable trait in itself, it merely demonstrates manual skill. No, it was the exceptionally fine violin tone, and the rounded, ever-heartfelt design, of which the listener could conclude: only so, and not otherwise, should this concerto sound. Berick's violin sings with a sweet, warm tone, soft and intensive even in the highest range, but has enough brilliancy as well, making runs clear and audible. Throughout the three movements, all listened spellbound to the young, celebrated soloist. And the encore - a solo sonata movement by Bach - sounded refined and mature.

- *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*

Berick returned to Windsor after a five-year absence, and it is hoped that his next visit is sooner. The towering violinist displayed total mastery of the Brahms, a work of immense challenge and requiring a large measure of expression. Technically, Berick had no trouble, especially in the tricky first movement cadenza and the rhythmic, Hungarian dance passages of the third movement. As is often the case, the audience instinctively clapped at the end of the first movement. It's almost a knee-jerk response of relief after the music. But Berick's playing was so articulated and impassioned, there was polite applause at the second movement, as well. After the final notes were performed, most of the 1,200 in attendance rose to their feet for a sustained standing ovation. Berick's sound is far from overpowering - he aims for the quieter, more subtle approach in his playing. That makes him a marvelous performer of the pianissimi in the first and second movement. There is not the slightest hint of treacle in his playing, although he clearly seems captivated by the work's gorgeous tonality. Berick's notes are rapturous, well-rounded and focused.

- *The Windsor Star*

For the most part, the first concert of the season was one of those fortunate ones when mechanics and technique are forgotten and the total musical experience takes over. Berick's warm, passionate and gypsy-like tone quality suited the Brahms, as it moved through sections rhapsodic, wistful and plaintive, searching and unpredictable.

- *El Paso Times*

The Israeli-born violinist is a young man to watch; he plays with poise, intensity and control. Berick created a well-paced allegro, attacking the score with warmth and energy. In the adagio, Berick's gracious tempo emphasized his sweet, round tone and the lyrical side of his artistry. Berick lit into the passionate themes of the dance-like finale with gusto, tossing off technical fireworks with flare.

- *Cincinnati Enquirer*

(The Shculhoff Solo Sonata,) composed in four movements, which, under the fingers of an ordinary violinist would become a simple exercise in virtuosity, was turned by Mr. Berick into a major work. What perfect control of the instrument, what clean and powerful sonority, even at the most perilous heights, and what musicality.

- *La Presse*

Truly exciting was Saint Saëns Sonata No. 1 in D Minor, Opus 75, for violin and piano. Violinist Yehonatan Berick and (pianist Max) Levinson played the rapid-fire finale with panache, but what was truly moving was the lyricism and the emotion with which they imbued the remainder of this romantic virtuoso sonata. Berick, an excellent violinist, plied the lines with a silky expressive sound that felt like it came from the heart. This was a performance of passions, power and beauty.

- *Rutland Daily Herald*

Berick boasted a silken tone in the Rondo, and considerable flair in the Ravel. His warm vibrato was shown off to high effect on the G-string during Ravel's opening solo.

- *Cincinnati Post*

The Kreutzer Sonata is considered one of the highlights of Beethoven's heroic expression. Here it was played verbatim by the violinist Yehonatan Berick and pianist Ohad Ben-Ari, and there were many wonderful moments in this performance. Throughout it their polished technique sparkled and gave pleasure in itself: the precision of phrases, clear ascents of Berick to impossibly high notes, the piano sounding like waterfalls under Ben Ari's hands, clearer than ever - all of these accumulated into an impressive performance.

- *Ha'aretz*

Berick is an imposing figure on stage, tall and robust, but his playing can be delicate when called for. His passage work in the massive 25-minute opening movement of the Beethoven (concerto) was graceful, articulating the multiple trills and making the difficult cadenzas seem easy. He is not a showman, preferring to let the music flow through him and into the violin. This was most in evidence in the rapturous second movement, surely one of the most affecting in classical music. The third movement displayed just how impressive an instrument the orchestra can be in full flight. Easily keeping pace with Berick, the orchestra delivered every nuance in the finale, and both soloist and orchestra got a well-deserved three curtain calls.

- *The Windsor Star*

Yehonatan Berick gave this late example of Mozart work, written in the last year of his life, a glistening, most highly charged performance. With his gleaming tone and able technique, Berick, an Israeli-born violinist, led the group through the work's varied moods with brio and poise.

- *Seattle Post Intelligencer*

Berick played three miniatures popularized by Heifetz, and brought them all to life. Leaning into notes and toying affectionately with rhythms, he seems to have drawn more influence from Itzhak Perlman. Berick's sweet and nuanced style was much appreciated in Schubert's Piano Trio.

- *Montreal Gazette*

The pleasure of playing together was evident in everyone. It was especially enjoyable to hear - and see - the extraordinary playing of violinist Yehonatan Berick, a musician in the most comprehensive sense of the word.

- *Le Soleil*

Hanani and Tocco were joined by Yehonatan Berick, an exceptionally fine violinist. His unusually sweet tone often tugged at the heart, yet was able to give full voice, without harshness, to the spikier moments. Berick also proved worthy of the five songs from "Porgy and Bess". His playing was physically animated.

- *Berkshire Eagle*

Yehonatan Berick and Martin Roscoe joined forces to produce a masterly account of Elgar's Sonata. It was, in a real sense, a revelatory performance that reached the emotional heart of the work. Berick brought passion and commitment to the violin part and was matched by Roscoe with piano playing of the utmost subtlety and tonal colour - not a nuance of shading or expression was missed.

- *Leicester Mercury*

Israeli Berick and Italian Lysy presented us a Brahms the likes of which I have not even heard from Montreal Symphony. There was neither *schmalz* nor *bel canto*, but a unified style, sober rigorous, and above all very expressive, in effect such an intense common thought that the instruments seemed an extension of each other. And, here as well, what intonation: exemplary.

- *La Presse*