

Comment by Danny Dalmaso

(Miami University John E. Dolibois European Center in Differdange) following the 3rd session of our common week-end.

MUDEC - John E. Dolibois European Center / Mus189L - Prof. Georges Backes

It was more than an incredible experience to see the progression of Luxembourg's orchestra "Solistes Européens" in just two days of practice and seeing the final product during the performance at the Philharmonie.

Our professor Georges Backes put together this weekend to show us first hand how Christoph König's vision on the pieces by Joseph Haydn and Jacques Ibert were able to become a reality. We were clearly able to see this after a short Q&A with König when he explained his interpretation of the pieces. His ideas were to make these magnificent pieces of art as interesting as possible by focusing on the dramatic change in dynamics along with letting some of his featured master musicians add embellishment and improvisation all while keeping and respecting the genius of Haydn and Ibert.

The entire hall was filled with the strong, warm sound of strings on the very first note that was played in Joseph Haydn's Symphony number 85 "La Reine." König dissected the beginning of this Symphony during the rehearsals down to every sixteenth note played by each instrument to make sure that the first sound the audience heard from the orchestra did Haydn's majestic piece justice.

My favorite piece performed was very unique from most other music I have heard at the Philharmonie. This was, Jacques Ibert's Symphonic Suite "Paris". This piece of music took you out of the concert hall and right into the City of Love. You could feel the hustle and bustle of the metro railways and crowds through the atonal dissonant sounds coming out of the piano. During the second movement "Faubourgs" the string musicians became percussionists as they aided the timpani in a light hum that was equally as mesmerizing as the hypnotic charming of the oboe. After the audience was hypnotized into thinking they were in Paris, a party full of dancing awaited that lifted heads and lightened up hearts for an easy going evening followed by the the metropolitan city that awaited the morning after.

Joseph Haydn's Symphony number 87 seemed like a difficult piece for the musicians to play individually, but an even more difficult task for the musicians to put together. The first movement, vivace, was rehearsed the most when we were at rehearsal due to what seemed like the complex layering of the instruments where the sound was able to grow with the long crescendos and die with the short decrescendos. The second movement, Adagio, was very appealing to listen to from how the music moved and how the trembling strings carried the oboe as it sung to the whole hall.

The last piece performed allowed the audience to laugh and cry. Jacques Ibert's "Divertissement" had a lot of contrasting movements that allowed the audience to do just so. The beginning was very quick, bringing back all

of the hustle of a big city like Paris, and then moved into dark and solitude sounds of Nocturne. Moving into Valse created a lot of suspense that led into the growing march of the Parade.

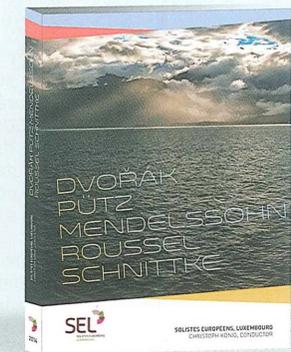
König's ideas were exemplified in the last movement "Finale" bringing back all of the sounds from the Parade in first Ibert piece that was played in the concert, which brought the event to a close leaving the audience with light hearts and good spirits.

Christoph König was able to share his love and appreciation for music and taught us that not only classical music is timeless, but that every time a piece is heard, it is heard differently because every listener will have his or her own interpretations.

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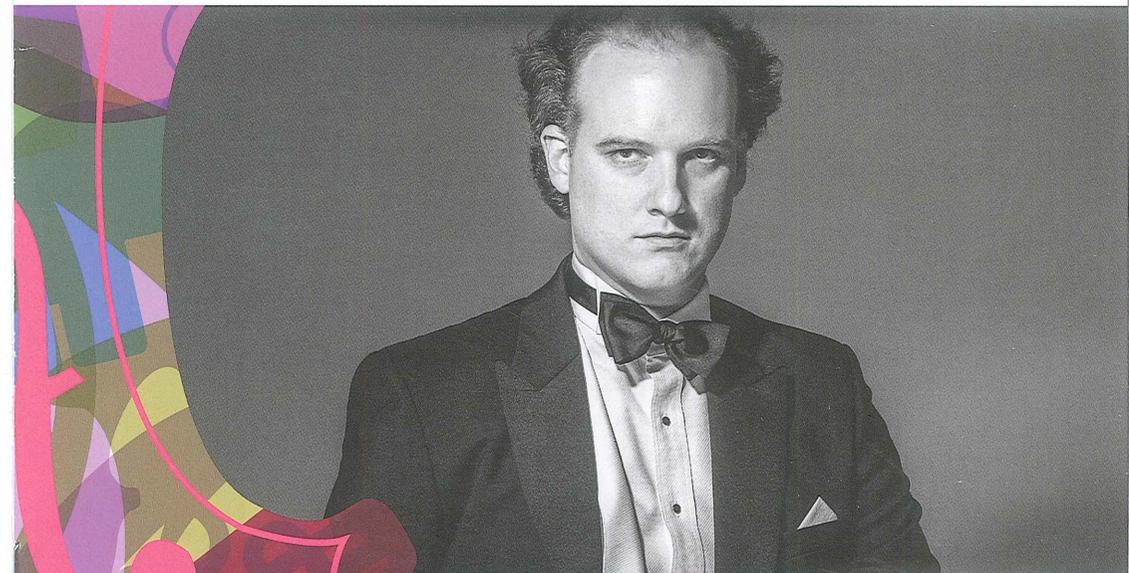
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Jean Muller, piano
Solistes Européens, Luxembourg
Christoph König, direction

