

Repin

April 8, 2006

By *DIANE LEIGH DAVISON*,
Special to *The Daily Record*

There are concerts that seem to remain forever as musical markers in our minds. Vadim Repin and Nicolai Lugansky's recital March 31 at the Meyerhoff will undoubtedly become one of those significant memories.

From the first notes of Béla Bartók's Rhapsody, the hall was seized and engulfed by the voluptuous and pure sound of Repin's violin, rivaled only by the muscular and passionate response of Lugansky's piano. Bartók's colorful and distinctive work draws from native Hungarian folk songs and gives way to layers upon layers of Bartók's modern and frenetic energy.



Vadim Repin in recital at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall.

A recital more than anything else leaves a soloist more artistically naked and vulnerable. From Bartók to Franz Schubert's Fantasia, to César Franck's Sonata following Arvo Pärt's Fratres, Repin displayed an astonishing range of musical sensitivity and a velvety virtuosity reminiscent of the few and true great ones such as David Oistrach.

Schubert's delightful and galloping piece was obviously chosen not only for its charm but also for its demanding part, one that many talented violinists have been too intimidated to perform — including the very one it was written for, Josef Slavik, who failed to master it in his only performance of the piece. The ease, playfulness and the tonality of the violin revealed how much of a master Repin now is.

Fratres by Pärt introduced us to a contemporary semi-monotone composition, quite beautiful and serene, considered akin to the American minimalists like Phillip Glass.

Lugansky proved himself to be the equally shining partner in this double recital, his prowess and eloquence evident and unflinching.

Franck's Sonata served as the perfect conclusion, one of the most beautiful and celebrated sonatas for piano and violin ever written. Belgian-born Franck will forever be remembered particularly for this work. The narration of unparalleled brilliance was inspired by Eugene Isaye, his countryman, for whom it was composed. Isaye is one of the most famous virtuosos of all time.

The standing ovations the pair received astonished even them, as they each lasted over five minutes, prompting not one, but two wonderful encore performances. It was a real shame the house was barely half full for this rare occasion.

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