

Stimulating Vitamin Injection

Jönköping Posten review by Lief A Jansson

Concert: The Red Violin

Jönköpings Sinfonietta

Principal: Dennis Kim

Soloist: Elizabeth Pitcairn

Conductor: Hannu Koivula

Place: Jönköpings Konserthus

Yesterday's concert became a stimulating vitamin injection on a lovely autumn day. With an American soloist, a Korean principal and a Finn at the podium it became even a cosmopolitan mixture which all added to the experience.

The new Musical Director Helle Solberg greeted the audience and announced that finally the new chief conductor and principal player had landed in Jönköping. The compositions representing three different centuries was on the menu. So what makes Beethoven so extraordinary? Well, my colleague a long time ago, T. A. Hoffmann, wrote that "he opens an unknown kingdom for humanity, a world without anything in common with the exterior mental awareness." So maybe we are affected when the music takes hold of us. The Sinfonietta played marvelous and the 4th Symphony was a beautiful performance which bode well for the future. Especially the woodwinds sounded exquisite.

Samuel Barber's violin concerto turned out to be a very romantic and approachable work from 1939. The American soloist Pitcairn performed her fellow countryman Barber's concerto with all the virtuosity one could expect. Sure the music sounded American with the 1st movement's funny syncopated rhythms, the 2nd movement's beautiful melody first exquisitely presented by the oboist before a whirling perpetuum mobile with elements of dance finished the piece.

It is uncertain whether we, the common listener, is able to hear that the soloist was performing on a famous Cremonese instrument, but probably the soloist is extremely inspired by handling such a perfect instrument. Something that the violin makers of Cremona mastered in the 18th Century.

Elizabeth Pitcairn gave full honor to the concerto and gave a perfect encore in Gershwin's "It Ain't Necessarily So" with Kerstin Jansson at the piano.

Our present Century was represented by a son of Jönköping Jonas Valfridsson with his award winning piece "The Only Thing You Keep Changing Is Your Name." An interesting piece with elements from Bartok, Copland and today's film music. The piece evolved forward like a river with dramatic streams and water falls.

Koivula now begins a fortunate development of the Sinfonietta. Obviously stimulating for the orchestra with his clear gestures and driving tempi.