

Arcadi VOLODOSLogensaal, Bienne | 03rd October 2018

Arcadi Volodos and Boris Berezovsky @ Art-Dialog Festival Biel

It is a rather unique opportunity to listen to two of the most distinguished Russian Pianists of our time within six days. The Art Dialog Society based in Biel, Switzerland, made this possible in October 2018. This society was founded to create new forms of artistic performances and to let them interfere with other ways of cultural expressions. Its festival usually takes place in spring and summer. It's due to the world-renowned pianists that their concerts were scheduled exceptionally this fall.



Arcadi Volodos premiered his new program and Boris Berezovsky found a day to perform here between his concerts in Greece and France. In the very sociable atmosphere of the Logensaal in Biel the listener had the chance to either listen to an excellent choice of Russian compositions and even to directly compare some of them. The two interpreters centered works of Sergej Rachmaninoff and Alexander Skrjabin in their programs – with the culmination in Skrjabin's fifth sonata played by both. So the listener gained a first-hand

comparison of two different master- interpretations via this cornerstone sonata composed in 1907.

Volodos demonstrated his very lyrical access by first playing a sonata and then the moments musicaux by Franz Schubert. In his way of simultaneously surveying the piece as a whole and bringing every single phrase of the work to its own complete expression he more and more approaches the great Vladimir Horowitz, his main paragon. Finally, in Skrjabin's fifth sonata, this way of playing provided an insight rarely conceived before – an experience of countless musical ideas on the verge to new tonal centers, but still hold together by Skrjabin's unprecedented understanding of completeness.

Now Berezovsky departs quite from the opposite. His understanding of thematic development is based on a horizontal viewpoint with a special focus on fluency and a very modest use of rubato. In his interpretations of the older Russian masters – especially Anatoli Lidaov – this resulted in a musical display of maximal transparency and elegance in no way inferior to any central European romanticism. For the fifth sonata by Skrjabin he again tried to maintain a central flux throughout the whole piece. When this didn't work out, it certainly was due to Skrjabin's manner of composition. So the listener primarily noticed the huge effort he took to perform this virtuosic piece in probably 3 minutes less time than Volodos. Regarding his focus on horizontal development it would be very interesting to once be able to experience Berezovsky's interpretation of Skrjabin's *Poem Vers la Flamme* op. 72.



So both pianists gave an example of their personal access to musical mastership. Each overwhelming in his own way. Arcadi Volodos by sometimes coming close to moments of absolute musical singularity; and Boris Berezovsky by building musical sculptures of unadorned clarity and classical beauty.

Many thanks to the Art Dialog Society for having realized such an exceptional double event.

Chrigu

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