The Vancouver Chopin Society

2012-2013
15th Anniversary Season

WOJCIECH SWITALA
DENIS KOZHKHIN
DANIIL TRIFONOV
RAFAL BLECHACZ

GALA PERFORMANCE, May 12, 2013 @ 3 PM
When Polish pianist, Wojciech Switala made his Vancouver debut in 2007, Lloyd Dykk wrote in the Vancouver Sun:

“He especially shone in the Chopin half, beginning with two nocturnes, ... Switala put the slightest clues of menace into his languorous, sensuous beginning and then the keyboard suddenly erupted into tigerish, racing octaves.”

His recital here was a true revelation for those who attended, but it came as no surprise as he belongs to the international elite of outstanding Chopin interpreters, so we welcome his return to this special season celebrating the 15th anniversary of our Society.

Wojciech Switala’s 2 CDs: Waltzes and Other Works and Rondos, Allegro de Concert, recorded for the National Edition, won the Grand Prix du Disque Frederic Chopin award in 2000 and 2005 respectively. The only other pianist who won this award twice was Murray Perahia.

Few people know that he was close to winning the 12th International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1990, having highest scores on the board but he walked out of the semi-final round. He won the prize for best performance of a Polonaise.

Wojciech Świtała has given concerts in most European countries, Argentina, the United States and Canada.

**Programme:**

- Schumann Arabeske Op. 18
- Schumann Fantasiestücke Op. 12
- Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6
- Intermission
- Chopin Nocturne in E Major, Op. 62
- 4 Mazurkas Op. 67
- Ballade No. 4 in F minor
- Debussy 6 Preludes

*A reception for all will follow the concert*

Switala recorded Chopin’s music on period instruments. Call Sikora’s Classical store for details.

Following the last recital, there will be a reception to celebrate our 15th Anniversary. We hope all of you can join us at this reception.

Lee Kum-Sing - Artistic Director
Iko Bylicki - President
For a number of years, the Vancouver Chopin Society has featured piano recitals with some of the greatest keyboard artists alive at Kerrisdale’s Magee Theatre at 49th Avenue and Maple Street. Though not exactly a venue that carries the same audience recognition or prestige of The Playhouse, The Chan Centre or the Orpheum, Magee has a few unique advantages over its better known rivals.

The theatre was opened in 2000 largely due to the active fundraising efforts of the students, parents and staff of Magee Secondary School spearheaded by former principal Eric Schiemann. The last of the great school theatres and auditoriums built in Vancouver, it is used primarily as a training facility for the school’s Music and Theatre Departments, but it is also available much of the time as a facility for outside groups and productions. With 525 seats, it is a medium sized hall with a large performance stage and available orchestra pit. It has spacious and comfortable backstage dressing rooms as well as rehearsal and warm up space as required.

The theatre is run by senior students with standard professional lighting and sound equipment in the control booth above the entrance area. The seats are comfortable and easily accessible with good sightlines from every vantage point and the acoustics are excellent and without the downtown sirens cutting through the performances. There is a very large lobby where the Chopin Society holds its traditional and often lavish receptions for the audience and artists to meet one another at the conclusion of every performance. And the parking is free and close by.

For a highly professional facility with better than average audience access and location, this venue has often provoked a condescending and negative reaction from those who feel that unless it is the Chan, Orpheum or Queen Elizabeth Theatre, the experience must be at best, doubtful. We would love to see these sceptics going to Europe where there are hundreds of music events every year in similar small semi professional venues but delivering a high calibre music experience.

A number of prominent artists, actors and musicians have been graduates of the school’s performing arts and related programmes, including Judith Forst, Margot Kidder, Heather Thompson, Tom Northcott, Bing Thom, Raymond Chow and Dal Richards. And the Chopin Society has introduced to Vancouver audiences on this stage pianists of the highest international calibre including first place winners, laureates and jury members of the Tschaikovsky and Chopin International Piano Competitions, among others. In this venue, characteristic of many European halls, we all share a more intimate setting.

We continue to make our concerts available to our audiences in various parts of the city, making regular use of the Vancouver Playhouse and the Chan Centre, but the Magee Theatre is our main venue.

**Programme:**

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<tr>
<td>Chopin</td>
<td>Sonata No. 2</td>
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<td>Liszt</td>
<td>Benediction du Dieu dans la solitude</td>
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<td>Wagner-Liszt</td>
<td>Overture from Tannhauser</td>
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<td>Schubert</td>
<td>4 Impromptus op.90</td>
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<td>Prokofiev</td>
<td>Sonata No. 6</td>
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*A reception for all will follow the concert*
What the critics say

Wojciech Switala

“This was amazing playing: the accuracy of his fingerwork, the sparkle of his arpeggios, the unbelievable lightness and celerity that he gave to his runs and, above all, his ability to make the piano sing”.

Lloyd Dykk, Vancouver Sun

Denis Kozhukhin

“Where the Prokofiev was concerned, Kozhukhin’s fiery, firmware presence was the defining factor in shaping a performance of extraordinary power and drive. There was subtlety in the shading of its bittersweet lyricism, and lustre in its flamboyant hard-bitten irony.”

The Scotsman, October 2011

Daniil Trifonov

“Mr. Trifonov has scintillating technique and a virtuosic flair. He is also a thoughtful artist... he can play with soft-spoken delicacy, not what you associate with competition conquerors.”

The New York Times, July 2011

Rafal Blechacz

“The whole second half was given to the 24 Preludes by Chopin... He made the whole set seem like a stroll through an art gallery, aphorisms that ranged from “a gleam of pure Chopin sunshine,” as a writer characterized one of them, to the darkest morbidity, and this modest young man, looked surprised by the standing ovation and long cheers... We were lucky to have heard this concert. Chopin needs him.”

Lloyd Dykk, Vancouver Sun

“On the back of these, other aspects of his impressive, non-showy technique and a natural, pragmatic musicianship fell into place – an unmannered feel for rubato, a tensile liveness powering the velvety lyricism and irresistible, fluid decorations, and an infectious generosity of style and personality, ”

London, 26.10.2011 Classicalsource.com

CONCERT 3 Daniil Trifonov
Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 8 PM
Chan Centre

“...The 20-year-old Daniil Trifonov, fresh from his victory at the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow, showed astonishing skills in works by Scriabin, Chopin and Liszt... this young man is a formidable virtuoso.”


Born in Nizhniy Novgorod in 1991, Daniil Trifonov is emerging as one of the brightest new names of the next generation of pianists. When we presented Trifonov for the first time in Vancouver when he was just 16, we already knew that he has exceptional talent.

During the 2010/11 season he won medals at three of the most prestigious competitions in the music world: the Chopin Competition in Warsaw (Bronze Medal), the Rubinstein Competition in Tel Aviv (First Prize) and the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow (Gold Medal).

Trifonov has been invited to perform worldwide during the 2011/12 season. Highlights include debuts with the Vienna Philharmonic, London Symphony and Mariinsky Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic, Russian National Orchestra. He also gives performances at the Salle Pleyel Paris, Carnegie Hall New York, Suntory Hall Tokyo, Wigmore Hall London, Musikverein Vienna; and venues across Europe, North and South America, Middle and Far East. In summer 2012 Trifonov will perform at festivals including Verbier, Montreux, Tivoli, Kremerata Festival, Lockenhaus, Grafenegg, La Roque d’Anthéron, Klavier Festival Ruhr, as well as Blossom Festival and Chautauqua Festival in the USA.

Future engagements include New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra and Philharmonia Orchestra, as well as recitals at Lucerne Piano Festival, London Queen Elizabeth Hall, Paris Auditorium du Louvre, Zurich Tonhalle, Washington Kennedy Center, New York Carnegie Hall (Stern auditorium), Berlin Philharmonie and Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Programme:

Scriabin    Sonata No.2, Op.19
Liszt    Sonata in B minor
Rachmaninoff    Variations on a Theme by Chopin, Op.22
FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It is our pleasure to welcome you here, and sincerely thank you, our supporters, as we enter an exciting 15th season. It would not be possible without you!

We have established a great history of a yearly four-concert series that includes established artists, as well as rising talents.

We are adamant on continuing to provide you with high-calibre artists, while maintaining the lowest possible price for subscriptions. We are able to do this because our society is entirely run by wonderful and dedicated volunteers.

Together with your support, we look forward to the next 15 years ahead.

OUR POLICY IN CHOOSING THE ARTISTS

The Vancouver Chopin Society is distinctive in its approach to featuring artists of the keyboard not by their famous names, but for their specialty in Chopin’s music and exceptional performances of classical repertoire. And with our unique international connections, particularly in the European countries, the Chopin Society has been able to bring to Vancouver audiences top Chopin interpreters such as Nelson Freire, Rafal Blechacz, Ingrid Fliter, Dinna Yoffe, Juana Zayas, Wojciech Switala, Kevin Kenner, Zbigniew Raubo, Janne Mertanen, Ingolf Wunder and Daniil Trifonov. These musicians have won the highest possible critical acclaim worldwide for their recitals and recordings of the music of Chopin and other composers, though some are generally not so well-known in North America. In many cases the Chopin Society has introduced them first to Vancouver.

Consequently, the Vancouver Chopin Society, which incidentally is the only Chopin Society in Canada, has been able to bring the highest caliber of artists to Vancouver audiences of music lovers, teachers and music students at very affordable ticket prices.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

The future of classical music lies with the young generation, and in recognition of that we offer the following programs and activities.

Every year, the VCS presents at least one by-donation concert featuring an outstanding young pianist, working towards a career in music. Proceeds from these concerts go to young musicians and help advance the career of young talents.

The VCS also offers scholarships for outstanding young musicians in the province of British Columbia.

The VCS provides master class programs with some of the artists performing in our regular series.

CONCERT 4 Rafal Blechacz
15th Anniversary Gala Performance
Sunday, May 12, 2013 at 3 PM, Chan Centre

“…A multitude of figures, powerful basses, cascades of octaves, foaming arpeggios are “tamed” by the pianist with impressive clarity. In a fascinating way he reveals the contrasting character of little bells’ clear peals in the Scherzo and the gloomy motifs of “the funeral march” in the finale.”

Berlin, Der Tagesspiegel

We still remember Polish pianist Blechacz’s unforgettable performance in the sold out concert in the Chan Centre in May 2008. He is truly a charismatic pianist. Winning the first prize at the International Chopin Piano Competition in 2005 opened the door for him to grand concert halls and assured a contract with Deutsche Grammophon. Since then Blechacz has been developing an impressive career, playing in the most famous concert halls and releasing four CDs under the ‘yellow label’ of DG. The most renowned music festivals, such as Salzburg in Austria, Verbier in Switzerland, La Roque-d’Anthéron in France, Klavier Festival Ruhr in Germany and the Gilmore Festival in the United States keep inviting Rafal Blechacz to revisit. His appearances have evoked enthusiasm and acclaim from music critics and concert goers around the world. He has also performed with symphony orchestras under the direction of such noted conductors as Valery Gergiev, Mikhail Pletnev, Charles Dutoit, David Zinman, Marek Janowski and Jerzy Maksymiuk.

His third recording, Chopin Concerti with the Concertgebouw Orchestra under the baton of Jerzy Semkow, honoring the Chopin anniversary year of 2010, received a “Best of the Year” honor from Gramophone magazine, and the Preis der Deutschen Schalplattenkritik, a prestigious recognition from Germany’s music critics. His latest CD, Szymanowski and Debussy was chosen as a Disc of The Month in May 2012. Rafal Blechacz is one of DG’s best-selling young artists – his stunning albums have sold more than 160,000 units worldwide.

Programme:

| JS Bach       | Partita No. 3 in A minor, BWV 827 |
| Beethoven    | Sonata in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3   |
| Intermission |                                |
| Chopin       | Two Polonaises, Op. 40            |
|              | Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp minor, Op. 39 |
| Szymanowski  | Sonata No. 11 in c minor, Op. 8    |

Details of the reception following the gala concert will be announced later.
The society aims to promote cultural interaction among the people of Vancouver, who come from a rich variety of ethnic backgrounds, and to emphasize the importance of music in our lives. We have chosen CHOPIN to name the Society because of the universal appeal of Frederick Chopin's music and his world-wide recognition as one of the greatest composers.

The VCS is a member of the International Federation of Chopin Societies, based in Vienna. This connection puts us in touch with some fifty other Chopin Societies worldwide, creating exciting possibilities for inviting international musicians to Vancouver.

The Vancouver Chopin Society is a registered charity. All donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged in VCS concert programs. Our activities are presented mainly through the assistance of volunteers. If you are interested in helping us as a volunteer, please call 604.871.4450
Subscription form

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Vancouver, B.C, V5Z 4C2

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