



JORY VINIKOUR

conductor, harpsichordist

Jory Vinikour is recognized as one of the outstanding harpsichordists of his generation. A highly diversified career brings him to the world's most important festivals and concert halls as recital and concerto soloist, partner to several of today's finest singers, and increasingly as a conductor. Born in Chicago, Jory Vinikour came to Paris on a scholarship from the Fulbright Foundation to study with Huguette Dreyfus and Kenneth Gilbert. First Prizes in the International Harpsichord Competitions of Warsaw (1993) and the Prague Spring Festival (1994) brought him to the public's attention, and he has since appeared in festivals and concert series such as Besançon Festival, Deauville, Nantes, Monaco, Cleveland Museum of Art, Miami Bach Festival, Indianapolis Early Music Festival, etc.

A concerto soloist with a repertoire ranging from Bach to Nyman, passing by Poulenc's *Concert Champêtre*, Jory Vinikour has performed as soloist with leading orchestras including Rotterdam Philharmonic, Flanders Opera Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonic of Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, and Moscow Chamber Orchestra with conductors such as Armin Jordan, Marc Minkowski, Marek Janowski, Constantine Orbelian, John Nelson, and Fabio Luisi. He recorded Frank Martin's *Petite Symphonie Concertante* with the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Armin Jordan (Suisse Romande, 2005), and also performed the Harpsichord Concerto by the same composer with the Symphony Orchestra of the MDR in Leipzig's Gewandhaus under the direction of Martin Haselböck in January of 2003.

A complete musician, Mr. Vinikour is gaining a reputation as a conductor (studies with Vladimir Kin and Denise Ham) and music director. His recent appearances with Musica Angelica (Los Angeles' Baroque orchestra) were greeted with great enthusiasm by press and public alike. Conducting his own ensemble, *Le Point du Jour*, he accompanied stellar counter-tenor David Daniels in a five concert tour – Köln Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, München Herkules Saal, the Concertgebouw, Barbican Center. For *France 2* television, he has directed Annick Massis in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* and arias by Händel.

He has appeared extensively in recital with artists such as Hélène Delavault, Magdalena Kozena, Annick Massis, *et al.* He has accompanied legendary Swedish mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter in recitals in Sweden, Norway, Spain and Paris and at La Scala in Milan. With lutenist Jakob Lindberg, their programme of English and Italian music of the 17th century, entitled *Music for a While* was released by Deutsche Grammophon in early 2005.

Bach's Goldberg Variations, released on Delos International in 2001 received excellent reviews throughout the world. John von Rhein of the Chicago Tribune named it as one of 2001's top ten classical CD's, an honor that was also accorded to Mr. Vinikour's recording of Bach's seven harpsichord toccatas in 1999. Händel's "Great" suites (1720) will be released by Dutch Record Company in October, 2007. Jory Vinikour is closely associated with the musical activities at the Château de Chimay in Belgium, and teaches harpsichord at the Austrian Baroque Summer Academy in Gmunden.

Jory Vinikour, harpsichordist

Mr. Vinikour performs and records regularly with Les Musiciens du Louvre (Mark Minkowski) and has performed and recorded with Les Arts Florissants (William Christie), Concerto Köln (René Jacobs), L'Ensemble Orchestrale de Paris (John Nelson), Moscow Chamber Orchestra (Constantine Orbelian), and performed with Chicago Music of the Baroque (Thomas Wikman), Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (Christopher Hogwood, Marek Janowski, Fabio Luisi, Marc Minkowski) and has worked for opera houses and festivals throughout Europe (De Nederlandse Opera, Aix-en-Provence, Zurich, Glyndebourne, Nice, Paris, Lisbon, Flanders Opera, et al).

GLUCK :

Armide

- Opéra de Nice 1996 dir. Marc Minkowski
- concert tour and recording DGG Archiv 1997 dir. Marc Minkowski

Iphigénie en Tauride

- Opéra de Paris 2006 dir. Marc Minkowski
- concert tour and recording DGG Archiv 1999 dir. Marc Minkowski
- Opéra de Paris, directed by Graeme Jenkins 1995 dir. Marc Minkowski

Orfée

- concert tour and recording DGG Archiv 2001 dir. Marc Minkowski

HANDEL :

Agrippina

- Théâtre de la Monnaie - Théâtre des Champs Elysees, directed by Rene Jacobs (David McVicar production) 2000

Alcina

- Opéra de Paris, 2008 dir. Minkowski

Il Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato

concert and recording EMI 1999, directed John Nelson

Ariodante

- concert tour and recording DGG Archiv 1998; production Opéra de Paris (Jorge Lavelli) 2001, dir. Marc Minkowski

Giulio Cesare

- Netherlands Opera 2001 (Ursul and Karl-Ernst Herrmann); Opera de Paris 2002 (Nicholas Hytner); concert tour and recording DGG Archiv 2002; Zurich Opera (2005), dir. Marc Minkowski

Radamisto

- Zurich Opera 2004 dir. William Christie (staging by Claus Guth)

Semele

- L'Opéra de Flandres 1998 (Robert Carsen); Théâtre des Champs-Élysées 2004 (David McVicar), dir. Marc Minkowski; Zurich Opera 2007 dir. William Christie (with Cecilia Bartoli in the title role) (Robert Carsen)

Theodora

- Glyndebourne Festival 2003 dir. Harry Bicket (prod. Peter Sellars)

Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno

- Zurich Opera 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007 (Jurgen Flimm); various tours, dir. Marc Minkowski; 2008 Teatro Real (Madrid), dir. Paul MacCreesh

Arias from Orlando and Rinaldo

- Ewa Podles, contralto, Moscow Chamber Orchestra (Constantine Orbelian, Delos International 2001

MOZART :

Così fan Tutte

- Opera de Paris, dir. Armin Jordan 2003

La Finta Semplice (and other works)

- Salzburg Festspiele, 2006, dir. Michael Hofsteter

Don Giovanni

- Festival d'Aix en Provence 1999 (dir. Daniel Harding, prod. Peter Brooks) Recording Virgin Classics 1999

Idomeneo

- Sao Carlo, Lisbonne 1995, dir. Marc Minkowski
- L'Opéra de Paris (Bastille) 1996, dir. Marc Minkowski
- L'Opéra de Flandres (David McVicar) 1998 et 1999, dir. Marc Minkowski
- Festival d'Aix-en-Provence (Olivier Py) 2009, dir. Marc Minkowski

Mitridate

- Salzburg Festspiele, 2005, 2006 version by Kramer, Minkowski, Vinikour, dir. Marc Minkowski

Il Re Pastore

- Théâtre de la Monnaie, 2006, dir. Enrique Mazzola

Die Zauberflöte

- Opera de Paris, Teatro Real Madrid (prod. Forá del Baus), 2005, dir. Marc Minkowski

RAMEAU :

Les Boréades

- Opéra de Lyon-Opéra de Zurich 2004, dir. Marc Minkowski

Les Grands Motets

- concert tour and recording Erato 1994, *Les Arts Florissants* dir. William Christie

Platée

- Opéra de Paris, 2006, dir. Marc Minkowski

ROSSINI :

L'Inganno felice

- concert and recording Erato 1996, dir. Marc Minkowski

STRAVINSKY :

The Rake's Progress

- Théâtre des Champs-Élysées 2007, dir. John Nelson
- Opéra de Paris 2008, dir. Edward Gardner

Special projects :

Rolf Liebermann

Medea

- Paris Opera 2002, director of musical studies (Daniel Klajner, dir. Jorge Lavelli, prod)

B.A. Zimmermann

Die Soldaten

- de Nederlandse Opera 2003 rehearsal coach, harpsichordist

Solo recordings

- George Frederick Händel – Suites (1720) and other pieces (Dutch Record Company, late 2007)
- Jory Vinikour in Recital – (Delos, 2005)
- Bernard de Bury : *Les Quatre suites pour clavecin* – (BNL Bernard Neveu, 2005)
- Frank Martin : *Petite Symphonie Concertante* – (Suisse Romande 2004) – *Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne* dir. Armin Jordan
- *Music for a While* : Italian and English songs of the 17th century (Deutsche Grammophon 2004): Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzo-soprano; Jory Vinikour, harpsichord; Jakob Lindberg, luth
- Johann Sebastian Bach : Goldberg Variations – (Delos International, 2001)
- *Chaconne* : Chaconnes and passacaglias for the harpsichord from 1634- 1978 (Consonance 1997)
- Johann Sebastian Bach : Toccatas – (Mandala/Harmonia Mundi 1999)
- Soundtrack to Jefferson in Paris (Merchant/Ivory) : Jacques Duphly : *La Boucon*, and various chamber music. (Angel/EMI 1995)

Continuo

Gluck : *Armide* (1999), *Iphigénie en Tauride* (2001), *Orfée* (Deutsche Grammophon 2003)

- *Les Musiciens du Louvre* dir. Marc Minkowski

Handel :

Il Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato (EMI 2000)

- *L'Ensemble Orchestral de Paris* dir. John Nelson

Ariodante (1999), *Messiah* (2001), *Giulio Cesare* (Deutsche Grammophon 2003)

- *Les Musiciens du Louvre* dir. Marc Minkowski

Arias from Orlando and Rinaldo (Delos International 2001): Ewa Podles, contralto, Moscow Chamber Orchestra dir. Constantine Orbelian,

Musica proibita (Decca 2005) : Arias by Caldara, Scarlatti, Handel. Cecilia Bartoli, mezzo-soprano, *Les Musiciens du Louvre* dir. Marc Minkowski

Mozart : *Don Giovanni* (Virgin Classics 1999)

Mahler Chamber Orchestra dir. Daniel Harding

Rameau : *Les Grands Motets* (Erato 1994)

Les Arts Florissants dir. William Christie

Rossini : *L'Inganno felice* (Erato 1996)

Les Musiciens du Louvre dir. Marc Minkowski

Concert Review

by Classical Voice

Two virtuosi, one great concert

By Truman C. Wang

Saturday, April 28, 2007

PROGRAM

Handel	Selections from GIULIO CESARE
Handel	Selections from SEMELE
J.S. Bach	Concerto in d, BWV 1052
Rameau	Selections from PLATEE

Jory Vinikour, conductor/harpsichordist
Celine Ricci, soprano

Performance of Saturday, April 28, 2007 at Zipper Hall,
Colburn School of Music

One famous conductor once remarked angrily, when his temperamental star soprano tried to upstage him, that “under the Sun, no one sees the star!” Those were the days when singers ruled and conductors did their best to follow – or not. Democracy might be the new norm in state politics of the day, but it had little bearing in music.

Fast forward the clock to year 2007, the salacious scandals and feuds are still there, but they are now the province of vain stage directors and producers. Surely, they argue, singers should be able to climb walls and jump through hoops onstage, and still sing with perfect pitch and legato without batting an eyelash, right? No wonder many singers today prefer the concert platform to the opera house stage.

No such injustice was wrought on soprano **Celine Ricci** on the Zipper stage last Saturday night, where she found a sympathetic partner in the conductor/virtuoso harpsichordist **Jory Vinikour** in a well-chosen program of bravura Handel arias that showcased her considerable lyrical and dramatic skills. No clash of Titans here, just two fine musicians relishing each other’s company and making delightful music together.

And delightful it was. The Handel selections ran the full emotional gamut, from Cleopatra’s mournful “*Piango*” and illusions of happiness (“*Da Tempeste*”) to Semele’s bratty outbursts in “*I Myself Shall Adore*”. Traversing these extremes of emotions, Ms. Ricci delivered beautifully controlled phrasing of light and shade, with some

memorably dramatic accents and word-pointing. Her command of the coloratura was skillful and fluid. One really felt she was having a grand ball dispatching the bravura lines with joyfulness and rhythmic buoyancy. Maestro Vinikour gave only minimal direction, content to be an accompanist in the unfolding drama.

After the intermission, it was Mr. Vinikour's turn to show off at the harpsichord. The d-minor concerto by J.S. Bach, with its extended cadenza in the first Allegro, served this purpose admirably. In the beautifully-controlled Adagio, the harpsichord produced the illusion of the singing human voice – easy to do on the modern piano, but nearly impossible on the harpsichord. It was a breathtaking feat.

Another pair of bravura arias, from Rameau's opera "Platee", found Mr. Vinikour once again in the supporting role and Ms. Ricci strutting her stuff, more confident than ever and this time with almost demonic fury. She truly believed the words she was singing, "*Essayons du brilliant! Donnons dans la saillie*" "*let us try something brilliant! let us go mad!*" In a sense, it was a perfect embodiment of the morally depraved world of the 17th-Century French Court of Louis XV.

As an encore, a Handel aria from "Rinaldo" provided an equal opportunity for virtuosic displays by both Vinikour and Ricci, and they totally ate it up. It's hard to believe this was the last concert the season. For devotees of Musica Angelica, unarguably So Cal's finest Baroque ensemble, the 2007-2008 season promises to be the best that's yet to come. I can hardly wait.

Visit www.musicaangelica.org for ticket and subscription info.



[Truman C. Wang](#) is editor-in-chief of Classical Voice, whose articles have appeared in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune, the Pasadena Star-News and other Southern California publications.

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THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2007

Musica Angelica weaves a virtuoso tapestry



Angelic

Review of concert April 29, 2007
All Saints Church, Beverly Hills

Rodney Punt, Arts and Culture Critic

Before the refined era of *Sense and Sensibility*, there was a more ribald one; let's call it *Self and Sensuality*. For their last concert of the season, our intrepid historic period orchestra, **Musica Angelica**, just home from sacred-music touring in Europe, let their wigs down in a decidedly giddy romp through High Baroque works that gilded every artistic lily with secular extravagance, leaving sacred introspection on the road. Two bona-fide Baroque virtuosos, Soprano **Céline Ricci** and Harpsichordist-Conductor **Jory Vinikour**, joined the band in a program titled "Virtuoso Tapestry" with works by three culminating masters of the era, **George Frederic Handel**, **Johann Sebastian Bach** and **Jean-Philippe Rameau**.

Young Ricci comes to Los Angeles with an impressive array of first-tier

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engagements already behind her, the local anticipation worth the wait. Of petite and willowy frame, dark curls and winsome smile, she shined in a series of showy soprano arias from operas of Handel and Rameau. Her voice spectrum varies from light amber to bright silver and is well-focused if not large in size. Possessing a stunning technique, she sings - in vibrato-less Baroque style - every roulade, trill, and heroic ascent free of constriction and with perfect intonation. One might be inclined to forget content with a delivery system like Ricci's. Fortunately we didn't need to choose.

Cleopatra's two final arias from Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, "Paingero" and "Da Tempeste," provided Ricci a full range of emotional transformation from despair to triumphant joy. Two more from the self-celebratory operatic oratorio, *Semele*, "Myself I shall adore" and "No, no I'll take no less" (the latter rhyming with "Than all in full excess!") are confessions of unashamed Baroque exhibitionism. The "excess" could well refer to the amount of notes in any one of the arias. Ricci at times impersonated a vocal ventriloquist, her lips still but passages peeling as rapidly as a keyboard's. Two instrumental movements of Handel by the orchestra complimented her vocal numbers in this set.

Perhaps the most interesting musical fare of the afternoon was the selection of Rameau excerpts, instrumental and vocal. Long the most neglected of the three featured composers, Rameau is enjoying a justly-deserved revival. Like so many French composers to follow, he was as much interested in orchestral color as formal statement, and the featured excerpts were particularly satisfying and revelatory. Ricci again soared (with musical laughs, among other vocal novelties) in the recitative "Formons les plus brillant concerts" ("Let us create the most beautiful concerts") and the aria "Amour, lance tes traits" ("Love, shoot your arrows") from Rameau's *Platée*. The former could have served as Rameau's mission statement (...the latter, perhaps as mankind's?) Two additional instrumental numbers of Rameau featured the mellow coloring of the orchestra's wooden flutes and the crisp freshness of its plucked strings.

Sandwiched between the two vocal groupings was Bach's *Concerto in d minor*, BWV 1052, providing the main vehicle for harpsichord soloist Vinikour, who also conducted. A native of Chicago with a career mostly pursued in Europe, he's a digital dazzler fully on par with Ricci's vocal wizardry. Vinikour's Bach was suave and propulsive, with a particularly pleasing delivery of the aria-like Adagio. Some - this reviewer among them - might have preferred additional sound-reinforcement for the light-timbered harpsichord, whose passages were lost in full ensemble playing, and whose solos in this "Virtuoso

Tapestry” seemed a musical fabric pre-softened by Downy.

Throughout the concert, Vinikour, as conductor, led the crack Musical Angelica band with efficiency, charm and verve, infusing his duties with an optimistic bonhomie fully in sync with the extroverted nature of the High Baroque era at its most self-assured.

The afternoon closed with a derivative potpourri encore by Handel’s younger contemporary and sometimes protégé, **William Babell**, whose showpiece for soprano and harpsichord, based on Handel’s wildly popular early opera, Rinaldo, provided the best opportunity for something of an equal-footing duet for the two soloists.

Stay tuned for October when Musica Angelica kicks off its new season, and regular conductor **Martin Haselböck** returns with guest artists for more thrills and chills.

POSTED BY JOSEPH MAILANDER AT 8:50 AM

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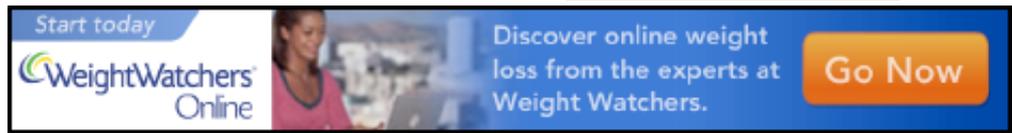
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Classical

Daniels/Le Point du Jour

★★★★★ Barbican, London

Thursday March 1, 2007

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Singers keen to explore unfamiliar baroque repertoire could devote many years to the music of Alessandro Scarlatti. His son Domenico famously composed more than 500 keyboard sonatas, but Alessandro had already set the family standard with more than 70 operas, and somewhere between 600 and 800 chamber cantatas. David Daniels' outstanding Barbican recital with the ensemble Le Point du Jour ended with one of those cantatas from the early 1690s, *Perchè Tacete*, a sequence of short arias and recitatives, prefaced by an instrumental *sinfonia*, and pivoted around an exquisite lullaby that Daniels sang with unsullied beauty of tone and purity of line.

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On form like this, Daniels is peerless among countertenors. Almost every item in this programme of 17th-century Italian music was delivered with perfect poise, every detail exactly placed, the sound honeyed and even. There were no vocal fireworks, no virtuoso displays of technique for their own sake; everything was perfectly scaled, except curiously in Ottone's monologue from Monteverdi's L'Incoronazione di Poppea, which Daniels opened with, making it just too intimate for the Barbican Hall. Either he, or our ears, quickly adjusted, though.

On their own exemplary account, Le Point de Jour played instrumental pieces by two of Monteverdi's musicians from St Mark's in Venice, Dario Castello and Biagio Marini, as well as a Scarlatti Concerto Grosso. There were also the inevitable encores, three of them, by Caccini, Lotti and finally an aria from Handel's Orlando that Daniels sang with such heart-stopping simplicity that the audience hardly dared applaud when it came to an end.

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Seen and Heard

Seen and Heard Concert Review

Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Frescobaldi, Marini, Castello: David Daniels; Le Point du Jour; Barbican Hall, 27.02. 2007 (SL)

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The line-up of the group around David Daniels reads like a who's who of period musicianship from both sides of the Atlantic: Elizabeth Blumenstock, violin, Sharman Plesner, violin, Nadine Davin, viola, Phoebe Carrai, cello, Elizabeth Kenny, lute, and – the only other man on stage – Jory Vinikour director on harpsichord and organ. It was Vinikour who stage-managed the tricky job of getting these world class players together, and his idea to call the band "Le Point du Jour" – not just because it refers to a collection of his beloved Couperin's pieces for harpsichord, but because "the name signifies daybreak or dawning, ideal for a group of old friends who together form something new."

The evening's first item was, perhaps surprisingly, a vocal one – the great monologue of frustration and jealousy that Ottone sings at the very start of Monteverdi's "Poppea": *E pur io torno qui, qual linea al centro...* (Yet still I return like a line to the centre). Immediately two things became clear. Firstly, there was a total meshing of voice and instruments, each leaning and entwining with the other without a second's doubt or imprecision. Secondly, Daniels needed to up the power as either he had under-estimated the acoustic or, as is more likely, he was working his voice into the acoustic and just hadn't got it to where it needed to be. It was with relief that those sitting higher up and further back in the hall heard him nurturing and rounding out his sound with every succeeding piece he sang, until by the end of the first half the voice was where it was meant to be: full, vibrant and velvety, capable of forte and piano within a syllable.

Before that interval, we heard Frescobaldi's "Cosi mi disprezzate". This composer isn't especially known for his vocal works, and although a charming account of the ubiquitous state of scorned *amor* so beloved by his contemporaries, and carefully sung by the countertenor who kept his score at hand, it wasn't really in the same class as the Scarlatti motet "Infirmata, vulnerata" which ended the first half. With this piece Daniels made the most of the expressive text, using his renowned legato to good effect.

Between these items, the players showed off not only their individual – and mighty – talents as soloists, but also gave an object lesson in making music together, as a true chamber group. Lightning-fast technique and superb bow control was taken for granted – there was still time to speak with the eyes and body, to share a moment of musical delight with their colleagues. A rarely-heard sonata by Castello (described as a shadowy figure working with Monteverdi in the Venice of the early sixteen hundreds) was a minor revelation, as was the *passacaglio* in G minor by another lesser-known Italian of the time, Biagio Marini, published in 1655. These superb players laid out this fine music as would a master-jeweller his stock for our perusal, each gem of a phrase carefully cut to show off its inner fire.

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No such careful introduction was needed for the start of the second half as Le Point du Jour gave us a *tour de force* of a reading of Scarlatti's *Concerto grosso* no.2 in C minor. Breathtaking in their virtuosity, thrilling in their execution – all magnificent yet Blumenstock and Carrai in particular seemed to be flying on another plane of music making. Stirring stuff.

The official end of the evening came as Daniels returned with the marathon cantata by the same composer, *Perchè tacete, regolati concerti?* which translates as "Why are you silent, you well-ordered harmonies?" offers an apt first recitative after the opening three-movement sinfonia. By now Daniels was in full flight and took us on an emotional roller-coaster of unrequited love, his superbly floated higher notes and gently spun legato phrasing turning the lullaby section into something truly beautiful.

His musicianship and rapport with his colleagues on stage was not unappreciated, and he was obliged to offer a full three encores: Caccini's *Amarilli mia bella* (what else?), the cheeky "*Pur dicesti*" of Cesti, and finally a return to his mainstream repertory which silenced the Hall: Handel's gentle masterpiece *Già l'ebro mio ciglio* from "Orlando".

Sue Loder

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New York Times

CLASSICAL MUSIC: CLASSICAL RECORDINGS; Anne Sofie von Otter Sinks Her Teeth Into the Baroque

By ANNE MIDGETTE

Published: January 16, 2005

'Music for a While: Baroque Melodies'

Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzo-soprano; accompanists. Deutsche Grammophon Archiv B0003460-02.

SOME singers make recordings that are all about themselves. Anne Sofie von Otter, the Swedish mezzo-soprano, has a gift for making recordings that are about something else. Her rate of production indicates that she has a terrific recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon, and her success rate is high: each new recording tends to have its own character and personality, giving this able communicator interesting things to do with her voice and the listener interesting things to hear.

"Music for a While" is a foray into Baroque song, an area in which Ms. von Otter has considerable expertise after a string of Handel roles and recordings. It is also an area on which a lot of singers are putting their stamp, but to her credit she offers a fresh and diverting take on the music.

Baroque music is often presented as something polished and exceedingly fair. Ms. von Otter bites into her program with a manic take on Benedetto Ferrari's "Amanti, Io Vi So Dire" ("Lovers, I Can Tell You"), singing with a crazy, rough decadence that feels true to the period, even if not many singers would dare to fling themselves so heedlessly into sounds bordering on ugliness to put across the character of the song.

This is only one of many facets of the disc, which moves from Italy to England (Purcell and Dowland) with energetic accompaniments on harpsichord (Jory Vinikour) and theorbo (Jakob Lindberg and Anders Ericson).

Ms. von Otter certainly shows that her voice isn't ugly. While she demonstrates that a Baroque trill might not match today's prettified notion of one, she also shows dark, round operatic power, in Barbara Strozzi's "Udite, Amanti" ("Hear, Lovers"), and all the sweet, heavy promise of Purcell's "Sweeter Than Roses."

Carefully planned, with instrumental solos providing transitions, this is an eminently satisfying journey. ANNE MIDGETTE

Classical

Regal revelations

Annick Massis/

Jory Vinikour

Wigmore Hall, London

French soprano Annick Massis is a woman with style. Walking on to the platform in a simple yet striking grey dress, she has an assured, almost aristocratic allure, which is mercifully free from the self-dramatisation of divadom. Her accompanist, the Canadian Jory Vinikour, trots behind her. Dressed in a velvet suit and a florid Louis XIV waistcoat, he looks like a bashful valet in the service of some great lady. They make an impressive team.

Massis first came to prominence at Glyndebourne in 1997, as Adèle in Rossini's *Le Comte Ory*: her flawless musicianship and impeccable comic timing redeemed what was unquestionably one of the festival's weaker efforts. As if acknowledging that turning point in her career, she closed her programme with Adèle's big act one aria, creating the same magic, laying bare the character's self-deluded sensuality with a combination of spectacular vocalism, verbal innuendo and subtle wit.

Technically, she's staggering. Her voice – bell-like in its upper registers, warm and sweet lower down – is incredibly beautiful. The long, extravagant lines of Monteverdi's *Quel Sguardo Sdegnosetto* are sculpted with immaculate breath-control. *Bel Raggio Lusinghier* from Rossini's *Semiramide* reveals coloratura of dazzling precision and a phenomenal ascent to a gobsmacking top E.

She is also, however, an outstanding actress, nursed in the dramatic tradition that produced Molière and Racine. The latter's *Phèdre* was the source of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, and there's a touch of the Comédie Française in Massis's version of Aricie's great lament – the restrained yet tragic stance, the sparse, declamatory delivery, the flickering subtlety in which every note and gesture speaks volumes. Handel's Cleopatra (from *Giulio Cesare*) is often portrayed as a childish sex-kitten; Massis turns her into a regal, sensual figure, and the result is revelatory.

She's fabulous in comedy, too. A wicked smile crosses her face as she exposes the erotic yearnings of Rezia, the heroine of Gluck's *Les Pèlerins de la Mecque* or *La Rencontre Imprévue*, the opera on which Mozart drew for *Il Seraglio*. She presents us with Offenbach's Eurydice as an encore, hissing her resentment of Orpheus with gleeful spite.

Throughout, Vinikour is a perfect foil. Recitals of operatic arias with piano or harpsichord accompaniment (he plays both) are tricky to get right and you tend to miss the orchestra. Vinikour – whether enveloping Rameau's Aricie in tendrils of consoling sound, or turning the prelude that heralds Semiramide's arrival into an appealing nocturne – was exemplary throughout and the absence of a band wasn't felt.

Tim Ashley

***** Unmissable **** Recommended *** Enjoyable ** Mediocre * Terrible

La Semaine d'Anvers, 10 juillet, 1998

Marc Minkowski dirige Poulenc pour le dernier concert à l'Opéra

L'attention du public est allée vers les deux œuvres de Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), le "*Concert Champêtre*" pour clavecin et orchestre, que la célèbre Wanda Landowska créa en 1929, sous la direction de Pierre Monteux et le superbe "*Gloria*" pour soprano, chœurs et orchestre datant de 1959, un des sommets de l'œuvre du musicien.

Le concerto n'est certes pas un pastiche des clavecinistes baroques mais il est essentiellement français de style et d'élégance, dans un esprit contemporain mais avec des allusions au passé. **Jory Vinikour, jeune artiste brillant, s'y tailla un vif succès par un jeu net et articulé, des contrastes et une vivacité spontanée...**

This concerto is certainly not a pastiche of Baroque harpsichordists, but it is essentially French in its style and in its elegance, in a contemporary spirit, but with allusions to the past. **Jory Vinikour, brilliant young artist, enjoyed a great success with his crisp and articulated playing, contrasts, and spontaneous vivacity...**

ConcertoNet.com

Paris

Maison de Radio France

01/25/2002 –

Joseph Haydn : Symphonie n° 22 « Le Philosophe »

Francis Poulenc : Concert champêtre

Igor Stravinski : Pulcinella

Jory Vinikour (clavecin), Lynne Dawson (soprano), Rolando Villazon (ténor), Denis Sedov (baryton)

Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France, Marc Minkowski (direction)

On se demande pour quelles raisons le Concert champêtre de Poulenc est si peu souvent donné, car il emporte l'adhésion du public, grâce à l'interprétation qu'en donne le claveciniste américain Jory Vinikour, roborative, d'une verdeur réjouissante dans les mouvements extrêmes, mais non sans rondeur dans l'andante central. Obtenant un excellent équilibre avec l'instrument soliste, Minkowski est à l'unisson, incisif et vif...

One might ask one's self why the Concert Champêtre of Francis Poulenc is so seldom heard, as it won the audience's enthusiasm, thanks to the interpretation of the American harpsichordist, Jory Vinikour, energetic, with an invigorating freshness in the outer movements, but not lacking roundness in the central andante. Obtaining an excellent balance with the solo instrument, Minkowski was in unison, lively and incisive...

Simon Corley

Dominigo 31 de Octubre de 1999 : EL NORTE (Monterrey, Mexico)

Evoca Orquesta riqueza musical de Francia

Par Alejandro Fernandez

La temática predominante de este segundo concierto fue una excelente combinación de obras francesas del Siglo 20, aunque rigurosamente “La Siesta del Fauno” de Debussy es todavía del Siglo 19, además del “Pajaro del Fuego” del ruso Stravinsky, pieza dedicada para la escena francesa.

En este halagodar panorama se incluyó el estreno local del “Concert Champêtre” de Francis Poulenc que sirvió para renderle homenaje en el centenario de su nacimiento.

El “Concierto Campestre” es una de las pocas obras escritas en este siglo para el clavecín y fue inspirado al autor por su relación con la renombrada clavecinista Wanda Landowska quien reveló al compositor las obras de los clavecinistas franceses de los siglos 17 y 18.

Obra singular, deliberadamente “neo-clásica” en la que se conjugan los lenguajes modernos con una evocación del pasado, el concierto sirvió para el total lucimicolo del norteamericano Jory Vinikour, que cuenta en su trayectoria participaciones al lado de grupos tan deslucados como Les Musiciens du Louvre de Marc Minkowski y de Les Arts Florissants de William Christie.

El triunfo de Vinikour fue total. No hubo pasaje que escapara a su puntual virtuosismo y a su extrema musicalidad. Como encore regaló la obertura para “Pygmalion” de Jean-Philippe Rameau.

The dominant theme of this second concert was an excellent combination of French works of the 20th century, although strictly speaking, Debussy’s Prelude to the afternoon of a Faun , while the Firebird of the Russian Stravinsky was written for the French stage.

In this panorama was included the local premiere of the Concert Champêtre of Francis Poulenc, which served to honor him on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

The Concert Champêtre is one of the few works written for harpsichord this century and was inspired by the composer’s relation with the famed harpsichordist Wanda Landowska, who introduced Poulenc to the works of the French harpsichordists of the 17th and 18th century.

A unique work, deliberately “neo-classic” in that it combines a modern language with an evocation of the past, the concerto was served by the total brilliance of the North American Jory Vinikour, who includes in his resumé participation with such as Les Musiciens du Louvre of Marc Minkowski and Les Arts Florissants of William Christie.

Vinikour’s triumph was total. There was not a passage which escaped precise virtuosity and his extreme musicality. As an encore, he treated us to the Overture to Pygmalion of Jean-Philippe Rameau.

ROTTERDAM TAGBLAD

15 DECEMBER, 1995

Rotterdam Philharmonic

"... (Poulenc's Concert Champêtre) subtly played by soloist Jory Vinikour. Even the restless audience was silent."

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, December, 2001
Top Ten Classical CD's

Bach, "Goldberg Variations"; Jory Vinikour, harpsichord (Delos, two CDs): The thought of yet another version of this keyboard masterpiece joining the nearly 50 others in the record catalog doesn't exactly quicken the pulse. But the Chicago-born Vinikour, who is pursuing a busy performance career in Europe, puts a distinctive stamp on his set. With every repeat observed, his version combines thoughtful scholarship and imaginative vitality, making the variations a fresh listening experience.

John von Rhein

Early Music America : Fall 2001

With a plethora of available recordings of J. S. Bach's (1685-1750) Goldberg Variations, some of near legendary status, one approaches yet another addition to the discography of this masterwork with trepidation. In few other instances does the weight of a recorded legacy make the challenge of offering a fresh, individual voice (and of overcoming the danger of being deemed inconsequential) so daunting. All the more reason then to admire Jory Vinikour's magisterial new account, which convincingly dispels the listener's fears that this is "just another" version.

The pleasures of Vinikour's performance begin with his superb technical command of the harpsichord, which produces a rich, resonant, and pliable tone capable of adapting to the enormously diverse characters of the variations. The astonishing inventiveness with which Bach investigates the possibilities of a quite ordinary bassline is beautifully complimented by Vinikour's flexible and sympathetic playing. All repeats are taken, which contributes to the quality of each variation as a thorough exploration of a distinctive, ineffable mood. The effect of this approach is most striking in the Chromatic variation 25, which, at over 10 minutes in length, is not a second too long and achieves an otherworldly, cosmic character. By turns ruminative, lyrical, brilliant, and regal, this new CD warrants the following recommendation : even if you already own several outstanding recordings of the Goldberg Variations, do not fail to check out this one.

Fanfare January 2002

This is an exceptional Goldberg Variations... Few harpsichord recordings sound this good. More important, perhaps, Vinikour's is a joyously spirited performance. Vinikour's graceful lyricism, his light-fingered speed, as in the lightly dancing fifth variation, and his occasional nobility, as in the elegant 16th variation, reveal a musician who is tasteful as well as nimble, and idiomatic as well as scholarly.

L'Echo Républicain 19 mai 1998
Le Clavecin dans toutes ses Nuances :
Un éblouissant concert de clôture

La XIV^e édition du Mai du Clavecin s'est achevée de façon superbe, dimanche après-midi dans la salle à l'italienne du musée des Beaux-Arts.

Une des raisons de son succès, et ce n'est pas la moindre, tient au programme, à son intelligence et à son équilibre, une première partie consacrée à François Couperin (Huitième Ordre), la deuxième à Jean-Sébastien Bach (ouverture à la française).

Couperin et Bach, deux maîtres contemporains à quelques années près. En apparence aussi différents que possible, et pourtant si proches par moment que leurs personnalités finissaient par paraître complémentaires.

Au point que ce que l'on pourrait dire de l'un à propos de telle ou telle page s'appliquerait aussi bien au second à l'occasion.

Il fallait un interprète de haut niveau pour réussir ce pari périlleux de passionner le public avec un choix aussi ambitieux.

Jory Vinikour a réussi à capter notre attention, à nous captiver sans une minute de lassitude, avec une aisance remarquable et une flamme communicative.

Son jeu, à la fois léger et rigoureux, n'avait rien de pesant ou de convenu. Il parvenait à créer la surprise au moment où on ne s'y attendait pas, à passer à la fantasia à la plus sereine des sensualités sans rompre pour autant le fil conducteur des partitions.

Sûr et précis dans ses attaques ou ses enchaînements, il a su nous entraîner dans une aventure où toutes les notions apprises, les idées toutes faites, les théories savantes n'avaient plus aucune importance.

Seul comptait le plaisir éprouvé à écouter une musique familière toujours renouvelée que l'on ne cesse jamais d'approfondir ou de découvrir.

Un plaisir né de mille nuances, d'un respect scrupuleux de l'esprit des œuvres, d'une exigence sans faille.

Yves BASTIDE

ouest france

Nantes

Lundi 4 juin 2001

**Jory Vinikour au Printemps des arts
Un claveciniste en costume XVIIIe**

Gravissant dans la pénombre l'escalier de la Tour du Fer à Cheval au Château des Ducs de Bretagne, on avait l'impression de remonter le temps pour une rencontre historique. Et c'est exactement ce que l'on a vécu par le truchement du clavecin de Jacques Braux, mis en valeur par une salle dont l'acoustique, idéale, auréole également toutes les sonorités, et par **le jeu remarquable de Jory Vinikour, un jeune maître qui dépasse les contingences terrestres** (au point d'égarer ses chaussures) pour s'identifier au plus haut niveau avec les musiciens qu'il interprète.

Les œuvres qu'il a choisi de révéler au Printemps des Arts sont de Bernard de Bury, un illustre inconnu du XVIIIe que l'on redécouvre aujourd'hui à travers des "Suites" en tout point comparables à celles des plus grands clavecinistes : Louis et François Couperin, L. Marchand, N. Clérambault et même J.-Ph. Rameau.

Quand on pense que ce "Premier livre de clavecin" est l'œuvre d'un compositeur de 15 ans, qui devait entrer à l'Académie royale de la musique avant de devenir surintendant de la musique, puis, compositeur de cantates, de ballets, de spectacles et tragédies lyriques, on se dit que le Printemps des Arts ne manque pas d'œuvres à s'inscrire dans ses futures programmations. Et les interprètes ne manquent pas puisque Jory Vinikour et les musiciens baroques de la jeune génération s'y consacrent passionnément tout en fouinant dans les bibliothèques pour découvrir d'autres trésors oubliés.

J. L. D.

Finger fliegen über die Tasten

MÜNSTERSAAL / Das zweite Konzert für "Cembalomusik

in der Stadt Basel" bestritt der Cembalist Jory Vinikour

VON GISELLE REIMANN

BASEL. Die meisten vom amerikanischen Cembalisten Jory Vinikour gespielten Werke des Cembalo-Abends im Münstersaal stammten aus dem 16 und 17. Jahrhundert, der Blütezeit der Cembalomusik. Die zeitgenössische Musik war vertreten durch die "Toccatas" von Harold Meltzer, die eigens für Vinikour komponiert wurden. Der Solist schickte am Konzertabend der Reihe "Cembalomusik in der Stadt Basel" dem Werk ein paar Worte voraus: Die Musik sei in einer "eher konservativen Sprache verfasst", meinte der Interpret. Tatsächlich hörte man in den modernen Klängen das ferne Echo der barocken Komponisten. Die Musik wagte sich nur bedingt in den wirklich scharfen Dissonanzbereich, faszinierte dafür aber mit einer ganz anderen Klangkonstellation.

Charakteristisch für die Toccatas von Meltzer ist, dass sie auf Fermaten zu verharren pflegen, um dann eruptiv in fließenden Melodien auszubrechen. Schon hier war zu erkennen, wie sorgfältig und exakt Vinikour arbeitet. Dies war bereits in den Werken von William Byrd, John Bull und Johann Caspar Kerll aufgefallen - allesamt Kompositionen, in denen das Motiv jeweils über verschiedene Stimmen hinwegzieht, sich immer wiederholt und teilweise in sich selbst übergeht. Auffallend war die Konzentration, mit der Vinikour die Linien ausführte und die sich auf das Publikum übertrug.

Doch richtig loslegen konnte Vinikour erst nach der Pause. Die "Pièces de Clavecin" von Jean-Philippe Rameau ermöglichten es dem Solisten, seine ganze Virtuosität unter Beweis zu stellen. Es folgte ein derart waghalsiges und dennoch bis ins Detail exaktes Spiel, dass ein Raunen durch das Publikum ging.

Ein perlender Lauf jagte den nächsten, wobei es Vinikour gelang, auch im schnellsten Tempo noch die einzelnen Motive herauszuheben und die entsprechende Stimme etwas mehr zu gewichten.

Den Abschluss bildeten drei Sonatensätze von Domenico Scarlatti, die nicht minder virtuos waren. Vinikour spielte auf dem antiken Cembalo auf dem Jahr 1750, als gäbe es einen Preis für besonders flinke Finger zu gewinnen.

Bei all dem furiosen Spiel bewahrte der Solist allerdings in jedem Lauf und in jeder einzelnen Note die Kontrolle, überliess nichts dem Zufall und schien in jedem Moment die Musik ganz bewusst zu formen.

Ein Glück also für das Publikum, dass sich Vinikour sehr schnell zu einer Zugabe überreden liess. Und weil es so schön war, folgte gleich die zweite Zugabe.

MITTWOCH, 18. JANUAR 2006

Basellandschaftliche bz Zeitung

Most of the works performed by American harpsichordist Jory Vinikour dated from the 16 and 17th century, the most prosperous epoch of harpsichord composition. Contemporary music was represented by Harold Meltzer's Toccatas, composed for Mr. Vinikour. The performer prefaced his performance with a few words : basically that this work was written in a more or less conservative language. In fact, one could hear the echo of Baroque composers in these modern sounds. The music rarely used any harsh dissonances, but fascinated the listener with its new harmonic constellations... Here already, one noticed to what extent Jory Vinikour works with care and precision. ...

But the real outburst came after the intermission. Rameau's pieces provided the artist with the occasion to prove the the totality of his virtuosity. His playing was so daring, while remaining exact to the last detail, that a murmur could be heard crossing the audience. One passage chades the next, and Jory Vinikour succeeded, even at the highest velocity, to underline the different themes, and to balance the corresponding voices. The concert ended with three sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti, no less virtuose... The artist always kept control of each passage and of each individual note, leaving nothing to hasard, and seemed to consciously conceive the music at all moments...

WEDNESDAY, 18. JANUARY 2006 Basllandschaftliche

La plupart des œuvres jouées lors de la soirée clavecin par le claveciniste américain Jory Vinikour étaient du 17^e/18^e siècle, époque de prospérité de la musique pour le clavecin. La musique contemporaine était représentée avec les toccatas de H. Meltzer qui ont été composés spécialement pour Jory Vinikour. Le musicien prononçait comme prologue à cette œuvre quelques paroles : « la musique serait plutôt d' une langage conservateur » jugeait l' interprète. En fait l' on pouvait entendre dans les sons modernes l' écho des compositeurs baroques. La musique ne touchait que de manière limitée le domaine des dissonances vraiment aigues – mais fascinait par des constellations mélodieuses nouvelles.

Pour les toccatas de Meltzer il est caractéristique, qu' elles insistent sur des « fermâtes » pour aboutir ensuite de manière éruptive dans les mélodies « coulantes ». Déjà ici on pouvait constater à quel point Jory Vinikour travaille avec soin et exactitude. On pouvait déjà le remarquer pour les œuvres de Byrd, Bull et Kerll – tous des œuvres où le thème se poursuit sur plusieurs voix, se répète constamment et se rejoint parfois. Il était frappant d' observer la concentration avec laquelle Jory Vinikour exécutait ces « lignes » - et cette concentration se reportait sur les auditeurs.

Mais le vrai « déchaînement » de Jory Vinikour a eu lieu seulement après la pause. Les « pièces de clavecin » de Rameau donnaient à l' artiste l' occasion de prouver l' intégralité de sa virtuosité. Le jeu était tellement osé tout en étant exact jusqu' au dernier détail que l' on entendait un murmure traverser le public.

Un « passage » chassait le suivant...et Jory Vinikour réussissait – même lors de l' ultime vitesse – de souligner les différents thèmes et de pondérer un peu plus la voix correspondante. Le concert se terminait par 3 sonates de Scarlatti, qui n' étaient pas moins virtuoses. Jory Vinikour jouait sur le clavecin ancien comme s' il y avait une médaille pour des doigts particulièrement rapides.

Lors de ce jeu « furieux » le soliste gardait pourtant le contrôle pour chaque passage et chaque note individuelle et ne laissait rien au hasard et semblait concevoir consciemment la musique à chaque instant.

Une chance pour le public, que Jory Vinikour acceptait rapidement de jouer un « bis ». Et parce que c' était si bien il y avait immédiatement un deuxième.



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