

REVIEW:**Jason Vieaux: Castelnuovo-Tedesco Guitar Concerto with Gerard Schwarz leading the Eastern Music Festival Orchestra**

Greensboro News & Record By Peter Perret Special to the News & Record

“Vieaux played this intimate rhapsodic and intensely romantic three-movement work beautifully”

EMF music review: HyeKyung Lee's world premiere, and performances by Jason Vieaux and Kun-Woo Paik

GREENSBORO — There were five stars at Saturday night's Eastern Music

Festival concert at Guilford College:

It was the world premiere of an impressive work, commissioned by EMF, by HyeKyung Lee. There were three world-famous musicians: guitarist Jason Vieaux, pianist Kun-Woo Paik and maestro Gerard Schwarz. And there was the world-class Eastern Festival Orchestra. Bonnie McElveen Hunter, a business executive, philanthropist and former diplomat, has been instrumental in the EMF project to commission new works from prominent composers.

Lee has written a touching masterpiece, “Climbing Tomorrow,” dedicated to Michele Kang, the founder and CEO of Cognosante, a technology company devoted to health issues. From the first note, intriguing colors shimmered while a seven- or eight-bar harmonic progression in a minor mode captured our attention in the manner of a

chaconne — creating an expectation and building to peaks of excitement through the use of repetition and creative orchestration. Percussive eruptions and changes of rhythmic intensity built to a convulsive high point two-thirds of the way through the 10-minute work, repeating itself at the end in a fitting conclusion. I would love to hear the work again and hope Schwarz will program it soon.

In a change of order from the printed program, the Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco Guitar Concerto was played next.

With an exquisitely hushed orchestra to back him, Vieaux played this intimate rhapsodic and intensely romantic three-movement work beautifully. His unamplified tone rang clearly through Dana Auditorium, and his impeccably clean technique elucidated this somewhat meandering piece.

Artist Management

This was followed by a work that is usually a concert closer. Paul Hindemith's "Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes by C. M. Weber" packed woodwinds by fives to make the largest orchestra yet of the season. The jaunty and often jocular outer movements are popular with orchestra musicians and audiences alike. The second movement, with its quasi-oriental flavor, features a fugue and a set of variations for percussion before bowing out with an om-like final chord. The third movement, which Schwarz conducted in a daring slow two-beat rather than the more usual but prosaic six was the musical highlight of the entire work. It featured the fine filigree of the principal flutist, Les Roettges.

After intermission, the audience was treated to a stupendous performance of Sergei Rachmaninoff's "Second Piano Concerto in C minor," played by Paik, a French-Korean pianist.

Framed by a halo of silver hair, Paik started very quietly and in eight measures had set the tone of power, modulating from F Minor to the home key of C Minor and preparing us for the over-powering string unison. Power and lyricism were the descriptors that

constantly sprang to mind, both from the singing legato of the pianist — one note yielding languorously to the next — to the powerful sensuous strings and from the fine horn solo of Kevin Reid and the delicate second movement clarinet solo of Shannon Scott to the entire viola section, which in the third movement intoned the famous theme later known as "Full Moon and Empty Arms."

What a soloist, what a concerto, what a concert!

https://www.greensboro.com/blogs/gotriad_extra/emf-music-review-hyekyung-lee-s-world-premiere-and-performances/article_18a7e74f-b61d-5173-a800-dd54044195e0.html