

Noble emotion

Pianist Matthias Kirschnereit sparkles in concert with the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen

LIPPSTADT : From time to time you will almost certainly attend a symphonic concert that includes works you can more or less whistle. You enjoy recognizing them, but you may equally enjoy the surprisingly fresh approach to the all too familiar. The unfamiliar may also have its charm, however: works of uncommon composition that may even merit closer attention.

Such was the program on offer at the symphonic concert organized by the *Städtischer Musikverein Lippstadt* with the orchestra of the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen, the piano soloist Matthias Kirschnereit, and the **spirited young conductor Brandon Keith Brown with his intense orchestral awareness and his precise musical interpretations.**

The start of the program, the single-movement Symphony No 2 in E flat major by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, proved slightly perplexing—not because the composition heavily disguises its three-movement structure, but because of the orchestra's rather crude playing of it: elegance and elasticity came largely from the woodwind section, which deserved the honors overall on this evening.

Between vivacity and frenzy

The sound of the strings, at first still somewhat dry, was a stark contrast in Ludwig van Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. **Here Brandon Keith Brown achieved a brilliant feat of interpretation, directing the orchestra at high speed precisely along the knife-edge between vivacity and frenzy. There he introduced some elegant dynamic developments, an altogether elastic sonority in which only the timpani were allowed to rumble a little. His frisky Allegro, highly differentiated, was a genuine *scherzando*. The gestures of thanks he received from the orchestra and the enthusiastic applause from the audience were well deserved.**

The core of the program consisted of two rarely performed concertinos for piano and orchestra by Robert Schumann. And who better to interpret them today than Matthias Kirschnereit? One reason why these two compositions are so seldom heard may be that they are rightly overshadowed by Robert Schumann's great piano concerto. Even the G major *Konzertstück*, Op. 92, a kind of renewal of Beethoven's style of composition, fails to equal the rich color palette of the concerto.

Nor could Matthias Kirschnereit's brilliant mastery of the virtuosic challenge, despite all intensity of sound, prevail here against the exaggerated pounding of an orchestra intent on equal prominence. The Concert Allegro in D minor, Op. 134, was a different matter. Here he sparkled with tone color and breadth of sound differentiation. His most convincing partners here were the woodwinds, from whom the soloist coaxed an impressive sound sensitivity. His encore from Robert Schumann's *Kinderszenen* displayed noble emotion.

Thus this concert bestowed on the listener an evening with a highly esteemed pianist, **a conductor reputed to be a rising star amongst today's young musicians, and an orchestra, the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen, that demonstrated a commendable tonal development.**
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