

JUDITH
Ingolfsson



VIOLIN

www.judithingolfsson.com

Judith Ingolfsson, Violin



Violinist Judith Ingolfsson made her first appearances on the international music scene as a prize winner of the celebrated Premio Paganini Competition in Genoa and the Concert Artists Guild Competition in New York. Winning the Gold Medal at the prestigious International Violin Competition of Indianapolis in 1998 provided her with the final breakthrough as an internationally sought-after soloist. In 1999, National Public Radio's "Performance Today" named her "Debut Artist of the Year" for her "remarkable intelligence, musicality, and sense of insight." The New York Times has since characterized her playing as producing "both fireworks and a singing tone," the Washington Post praised the "finely honed bowing and stylistic finesse" of her playing, and Strings Magazine described her tone as "gorgeous, intense, and variable, flawlessly pure and beautiful in every register."

Judith Ingolfsson has concertized throughout North and South America, Asia, and Europe, performing as a soloist with such prestigious orchestras as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Chamber Orchestra of Tokyo, the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, the Jena Philharmonic, the Philharmonischen Staatsorchester Mainz, the Bollington Festival Orchestra (UK), and the Brandenburgisches Staatsorchester Frankfurt-Oder. She had collaborated with conductors such as Wolfgang Sawallisch, Raymond Leppard, Gilbert Varga, Jesús López-Cobos, Rico Saccani, Gerard Schwarz, and Leonard Slatkin. She was also heard as soloist with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra in 2000 on its highly acclaimed 15-city North American tour, highlighted by performances at Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center.

Judith Ingolfsson's recital performances have taken her to many of the world's leading stages including Konzerthaus Berlin, New York's Carnegie Hall, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., Cleveland Museum of Art, La Jolla Chamber Music Society, Reyjavík Arts Festival, Pro Arte Musicale of Puerto Rico, La Asociación Nacional de Conciertos de Panamá, Macao Cultural Center and the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Center. An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated with the Avalon, Miami and Vogler String Quartets, the Broyhill Chamber Ensemble, and has appeared as a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Two on tour and at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. A welcome guest at music festivals, she has been invited to festivals in the USA, Poland, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, France, and the Netherlands. In 2010 she was artist-in-residence in Villa Esche in Chemnitz.

Judith Ingolfsson's current discography includes five CDs. She was the recipient of the 2001 Chamber Music America/WQXR Record Award for her debut CD on Catalpa Classics. Her recording of Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, available on the BPO Live label, was released in 2007. The CD "En Hommage: Simon Laks" was released on EDA in 2010. In 2011 Judith Ingolfsson released a highly acclaimed recording of the Ysaye Solo Sonatas on the GENUIN label and, together with the pianist Vladimir Stoupel, a CD on the AUDITE label including works of Shostakovich and Stravinsky.

Born in Reykjavik, Iceland to an Icelandic father and Swiss mother, Judith Ingolfsson began her violin studies at the age of three and gave her first public performance on Icelandic State Television at age five. At the age of eight she recorded as soloist with the Iceland Symphony for Icelandic State Radio and a few weeks later performed her orchestral solo debut in Germany. Her family immigrated to the United States in 1980, and at the age of 14, she was admitted to The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where she studied with Jascha Brodsky. She went on to earn her Master's degree and Artists Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music as a student of David Cerone and Donald Weilerstein.

Recent and upcoming engagements and projects include Judith Ingolfsson's special interest in twentieth-century composers. Together with pianist Vladimir Stoupel she performs and records extensively as the Duo Ingolfsson-Stoupel. The Duo has four upcoming CD releases planned in 2016 on Accentus Music, including works of Sergei Prokofieff, Gabriel Fauré, Louis Vierne, Alberic Magnard and Rudi Stephan. With the Jena Philharmonic and the Staatsorchester Mainz, she recently performed the Violin Concertos by Einojuhani Rautavaara and Nikolai Roslavets. Another upcoming CD release includes the Violin Concerto "The Grasshopper" by Joseph Holbrooke, recorded with the Brandenburgisches Staatsorchester Frankfurt for the CPO label.

She is currently Professor at the State University of Music and Performing Arts Stuttgart and co-artistic director and founder of Festival International "Aigues-Vives en Musiques" in France. She performs on a Lorenzo Guadagnini violin, crafted in 1750, and a viola by Yair Hod Fainas. She also uses a baroque bow made by the modern German maker Bastian Muthesius.

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Violin Concerto Repertoire

Johann Sebastian Bach

- Concerto in a BWV 1041
- Concerto in E BWV 1042
- Concerto for two violins in d, BWV 1043

Samuel Barber

- Concerto op. 14

Bela Bartok

- Concerto No. 2 (1938)

Ludwig van Beethoven

- Concerto in D, Op. 61
- Romance No. 1, Op. 40
- Romance No. 2, Op. 50
- Triple Concerto in C, Op. 56

Alban Berg

- Concerto (1935)
- Chamber Concerto for Violin, Piano and 13 Winds

Johannes Brahms

- Concerto in D, Op. 77
- Double Concerto in a, Op. 102

Benjamin Britten

- Concerto Op. 15 in d

Max Bruch

- Concerto No. 1 in g, Op. 26
- Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46

Ernest Chausson

- Poème op. 25

Antonin Dvorak

- Concerto in a, Op. 53
- Romance in f, Op. 11

Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst

- Concerto "Pathétique" Op. 23

Alexander Glazunov

- Concerto in a, Op. 82

Haflidi Hallgrímsson

- Poemi (1984)

Joseph Holbrooke

- Concerto "The Grasshopper"

Joseph Haydn

- Concerto No. 1 in C

Aaram Khatchaturian

- Concerto in d (1940)

Erich Wolfgang Korngold

- Concerto in D, Op. 35 (1946)

Simon Laks

- Poème for violin and orchestra

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

- Concerto in e, Op. 64
- Concerto for Violin, Piano and Strings

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

- Concerto No. 1 in B-flat, K. 207
- Concerto No. 2 in D, K. 211
- Concerto No. 3 in G, K. 216
- Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218
- Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 219
- Rondo in C Major, K. 373
- Adagio in E Major, K. 261
- Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola in E-flat Major, K. 364

Niccolò Paganini

- Concerto No. 1 D Major, Op. 6
- Concerto No. 2 b minor, Op. 7

Sergei Prokofieff

- Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19
- Concerto No. 2 in g, Op. 63

Joachim Raff

- Concerto No. 2 in a, Op. 206

Einojuhani Rautavaara

- Concerto (1977)

Nikolai Roslavets

- Concerto No. 1

Maurice Ravel

- Tzigane (1924)

Camille Saint-Saëns

- Concerto Nr. 3 in b, Op. 61
- Havanaise, Op. 83
- Introduction & Rondo capriccioso, Op. 28

Pablo de Sarasate

- Carmen Fantasy op. 25
- Zigeunerweisen op. 20

Alfred Schnittke

- Concerto Grosso No. 1 (1977)

Robert Schumann

- Concerto in d (WoO23)

Dmitri Shostakovich

- Concerto No. 1, Op. 77
- Concerto No. 2, Op. 129

Jean Sibelius

- Concerto in d, Op. 47
- 6 Humoresques

Karol Szymanowski

- Concerto No. 2, Op. 61

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

- Concerto in D, Op. 35
- Valse-Scherzo, Op. 34
- Sérénade Mélancholique, Op. 26
- Méditation, Op. 42

Henri Vieuxtemps

- Concerto No. 5 in a, Op. 37

Antonio Vivaldi

- Four Seasons, Op. 8

Henri Wieniawski

- Concerto No. 1 in f#, Op. 14
- Concerto No. 2 in d, Op. 22
- Fantaisie brillante nach Gounod's Faust Op. 20

Reviews

Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung

A Bohemian Paganini

Judith Ingolfsson Shines as Interpreter

"Born in Bohemia, Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst is unknown to most music lovers, although his contemporaries compared the virtuoso and composer to his role model Paganini. One of his main works is the Violin Concerto in F-sharp Minor, which is informed not by Paganinian "italianit ," but rather by German Romanticism, displays a verve that at times is reminiscent of Weber, is calculated for great impact, but never at the expense of the musical substance. A glance at the solo part shows why it hardly appears on concert programs: it is simply fiendishly difficult and on a par with what the devil's violinist from Genoa demanded from the instrument. For this reason, the achievement of soloist Judith Ingolfsson, who provoked thunderous applause with her radiant sound and stupendous virtuosity, deserves all the more praise."

Greenwich Citizen

Icelandic violinist turns up the heat with GSO

"The stunning soloist... for the Violin Concerto of Alban Berg was Icelandic violinist Judith Ingolfsson. A work that seeks to portray the agony of a dying girl, and a final acceptance of Fate, requires a sublime artist to portray it, and it found her in Ingolfsson's stunning, shaded, virtuosic performance.

Ingolfsson then played the Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso of Saint Saens, a crowd pleaser showcasing technique."

Mainzer Rhein-Zeitung (Germany)

"The soloist Judith Ingolfsson was convincing in the Violin Concerto No. 1 of Nikolai Roslavets. She effortlessly mastered the unusual melodies and double stops. Especially her clear sound - even in the most technically challenging passages - was a real treat."

Times Herald-Record

"Glazunov's Violin Concerto in A minor (1904) begins with a plaintive theme played by the solo violinist. Ingolfsson brought the music to life with her warm interpretation and impeccable technique. In a long, difficult cadenza, she gave a stunning display of pizzicato and double-stop bowing and finger work. The concerto is played without a pause, with the second movement acting as an interlude within the first. Ingolfsson handled the polyphonic variations with grace and skill, rewarded by a standing ovation from the enthusiastic audience."

Hamburger Abendblatt

"The violinist from Iceland movingly performed Chopin's Nocturne in C sharp minor with a clearly chiseled and yet languorous sound. Laks's lost version of the "Trois Pieces de concert" for cello and piano she reconstructed for violin and piano. Her playing was accordingly intense and authentic. The first movement came across dance-like, fanciful, and with subtle humor. In the "Romance" her crystal clear playing enthralled with a mournfully beautiful melody, while in the last movement she allowed lots of room for the comical accents.

In Ravel's Sonata for violin and piano, the duo displayed wonderful unity. Ingolfsson particularly brought out the light, lapidary, resigned character of the blues. The boisterous ballad-like character of the composition succeeded so well that it almost seemed like Kurt Weill's Pirate Jenny was singing. The duo played fabulously."

The Monterey County Herald

"Ingolfsson possesses artistic fire to be sure, but her playing is not flamboyant nor is it infused with hot theatrics. Rather she is a performer who projected qualities of depth, graceful mastery and serene assurance as she approached even the most daredevil passages of the richly layered and demanding Barber concerto. Her violin, crafted at the end of the Baroque era by Lorenzo Guadagnini, delivers an unusually gorgeous sound. Ingolfsson seems to dissolve into her playing such that the listener is drawn fully into the music. Her technical brilliance and poetic musicality illuminated the score Monday evening and her collaboration with Bragado and the orchestra was fluid and elegant. She played an unusually long encore from Baroque composer Tartini's famous "Devil's Trill" sonata, an utterly captivating performance that displayed another facet of her artistry while honoring the violin's 18th century origins."

Peninsula Reviews

"Violinist Ingolfsson demonstrated a charming personality on stage even before applying bow to fiddle. When she played, she produced a big gorgeous sound that enveloped you and carried you along on a rich and exciting musical journey. In the first two movements she gave us solid rich playing, lovely shaping of phrases and an intensity that commanded your attention every inch of the way. Her frenzied last movement, Presto in moto perpetuo, was a knockout. Her encore, Tartini's famous "Devil's Trill" in her own arrangement for unaccompanied violin included some of the continuo parts woven into the texture - a few of these sections we heard in multiple versions, both semplice and embellished. Her beautiful playing featured double stops, with contrapuntal lines twisting through them, and some occasional harmonics. It was spectacular!"

Märkische Allgemeine Zeitung

"The soloist Judith Ingolfsson played [the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D Major, Op. 35, by Piotr I. Tchaikovsky] with brilliant virtuosity on her 1750 Lorenzo Guadagnini violin and breathed life into the concerto with her sensitive playing. Ecstatic applause was the reward."

Märkische Oderzeitung

"Piotr Tchaikovsky's monster of a violin concerto was mastered by an Icelander. Judith Ingolfsson, who trained in the USA, sensationally swept through the abundance of notes, tone colors, and emotions. She mastered the depths of the instrument and, without batting an eyelash, took up the challenges of the Allegro with its technical refinements. She managed the turbo arpeggios, multiple stops, glissandi, wild octave leaps, and the flutelike harmonics so well that she received spontaneous applause after the movement's highly dramatic conclusion. At the end of her thrilling ride through hell on her 1750 Guadagnini violin she received prolonged applause, and reciprocated with an encore by Paganini."

Thüringer Landeszeitung

Judith Ingolfsson conjured up landscapes of the soul

"The Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1977) by Einojuhani Rautavaara at first tantalized the listeners by means of delicate tones and conjured up a listening experience that can hardly be expressed in words. Judith Ingolfsson is a violinist whose tonal magic on the violin one cannot forget."

Ostthüringer Zeitung

"Einojuhani Rautavaara's two movement Violin Concerto was convincingly presented by Judith Ingolfsson. The composition itself is marked by contradictions that are not resolved. On the one hand, a modern progression of intervals in the solo part displays twelve-tone sounds that are contrasted with traditional arpeggios, on the other. The orchestration is oriented on an interesting combination of percussion and celesta with pleasant, transparent timbres. The soloist thus succeeded in lending the composer a touch of likableness in spite of the intended stiffness, and the listeners acknowledged this with considerable applause."

Deseret News (Salt Lake City)

"Ingolfsson's recital was an absolute treat. A performer of consummate artistry, she wowed the audience with her musicality and technique. Ingolfsson is one of the rare breed of performers who looks past the notes into the heart and soul of the music. A recital with her is a journey of discovery. It's as if one is hearing these works for the first time."

Midland Daily News

"Guest soloist Judith Ingolfsson's amazing violin virtuosity highlighted a Midland Symphony Orchestra concert that had a particularly diverse program. So skilled was Ingolfsson that her playing on Saturday night sometimes sounded like that of two violins instead of one. She was featured on a solo sonata by Eugene Ysaie, who taught her teacher Jascha Brodsky. The piece certainly was a showcase for her impressive technique. Ingolfsson, an Iceland native now resident in Germany, then joined the MSO for Sarasate's "Carmen Fantasy," which uses mostly familiar themes from Bizet's opera "Carmen" to highlight the violin. Ingolfsson again made the most of the opportunity, and cameras allowed the audience to watch her fast fingering and her intense facial expressions. She and the orchestra were rewarded with an enthusiastic ovation for their efforts."

Märkische Allgemeine

"The audience was enthralled by the Icelandic violinist Judith Ingolfsson, who opened the evening with Giuseppe Tartini's (1692–1770) Sonata in G Minor ("Devil's Trill"). Extraordinary music that one does not get to hear every day. Three pieces by Piotr I. Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) concluded the concert. The Serenade melancolique, Op. 26, played delicately and with a lot of soul, the very intimate Meditation, Op. 42, no. 1, in which Ingolfsson's violin playing plucked at one's heartstrings, and, finally, a vivacious Valse-Scherzo, Op. 34. So much vitality and virtuosity, combined with high spirits and joyful music-making, were audible that the audience could not help but respond with shouts of bravo, stomping of feet, and enthusiastic applause."

Jungfrau Zeitung (Switzerland)

"Outstanding solo performance – Judith Ingolfsson hit the bull's-eye with Giuseppe Tartini's "Devil's Trill" Sonata in G Minor. In consummate Baroque style, she deciphered the intense masterpiece with her master instrument. The three works by Tchaikovsky - Serenade melancolique, Meditation and Valse-Scherzo - delighted with their sonorous melodiousness and virtuoso impetuosity. One was thus able to once again admire the violinist's brilliant playing."

The Washington Post

"Violinist Judith Ingolfsson and pianist Vladimir Stoupel brought power and purpose to a varied duo program at the National Gallery on Sunday. Ingolfsson draws a clear, ringing tone from her instrument, the overtones enhanced by pinpoint intonation. When they played together, the sum of these two fine artists produced moments of great imagination."

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

"Heavenly Devil's Trills - The violinist Judith Ingolfsson performed in Frankfurt/Main at the highest level with her duo partner, pianist Vladimir Stoupel. They rendered with distinct agogic Beethoven's Violin Sonata no. 10 in G Major, Op. 96 – at once brilliant, nimble, tendentiously soft, discreet, and with thoughtfully chosen tempos. As a duo, they showed themselves to be most advantageously attuned to each other. Judith Ingolfsson displayed enormous solistic virtuosity in Giuseppe Tartini's Sonata in g-minor "Il trillo del diavolo." She mastered the work with instinctive certainty, fluency, and ease. Stravinsky's Divertimento for violin and piano, based on his ballet "The Fairy's Kiss," came across as vigorously kinetic, often boisterous and dance-like."

Nuvo News (Indianapolis, IN)

"In Stravinsky's L'Histoire du soldat, her tone and her timbres carried just the right insouciance to join convincingly in the battle for the soldier's soul... the violinist confirmed her status among the top laureates in the IVCI's history."

Lexington Herald-Leader (KY)

"It is a disconcerting world that inhabits Sibelius' Violin Concerto... the violin is a furious, stormy wind, and Ingolfsson rode that wind with aplomb. Her best one was her singing low strings, as though a human voice is offering solace. She negotiated the virtuoso sections of the finale like a kayaker in ruinously difficult river rapids -- not one wipe-out."

Neue Musik Zeitung

"The violinist Judith Ingolfsson was musically outstanding in her performance of Mozart's Violin Concerto in A major."

Saratovskaya Oblastnaya Gazeta

"The naturalness of her artistic message, beautiful, deep sound, meticulously pure intonation, along with her lovely appearance and stage presence, made an extremely strong impression."

The Durango Herald

"Ingolfsson played with a pure, singing tone and projected ease and confidence from the stage. So masterful were the virtuoso sections that they became truly expressive gestures. Combined with her exotic beauty and widely-noted style sense, Ingolfsson's musicality kept the audience rapt."

Courier-Journal (Louisville, KY)

"Mozart's K. 219 concerto benefited from Ingolfsson's balance of assertiveness and cool precision. Few violinists can play softly without sacrificing the fullness of their musical lines; Ingolfsson succeeded whenever the challenge presented itself."

Chestnut Hill Local (PA)

"Internationally acclaimed violinist Judith Ingolfsson was the splendid soloist in Mozart's "Turkish" Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major. Her playing was characterized by a clear yet sweet tone, immaculate pitch, digital integrity and touching lyricism."

The Strad

"Violinist Judith Ingolfsson is a fine player. Her octaves were clean, her left hand agile and her tone often seductively sweet. The Mendelssohn [Octet for Strings] was an unmitigated delight. Ingolfsson led a lithe, lively performance. The Andante offered lots of lovely, soft playing; the Scherzo was deliciously poised and delicate; and, some tonal gruffness aside, the finale's vivacity was bracingly conveyed. Ingolfsson was a confident leader and not at all domineering (a common fault in this work), and all the musicians seemed to relish the music and each other's company."

The Vancouver Sun

"Ingolfsson brought an affecting sense of commitment to the piece [Barber Violin Concerto], wonderfully poetic and even improvisational in the first movement, darkly expressive and dramatic in the second. She commands both the technique to take the Moto perpetuo finale at breakneck speed and the tone to make it sound."

Omaha News Herald

"In the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, Ingolfsson was able to effectively execute the acrobatics of the piece with ease and keen musical insight. Her playing was most enjoyable during the more intimate, melodic moments of the piece, when she lingered on phrase endings and harmonics to let us hear the lustrous sound of her 1736 Stradivarius, "Muntz"."

The Wichita Eagle

"The superb violinist Judith Ingolfsson negotiated the lyrical melodies and the more agitated measures with soulful assurance. In the "perpetual motion" third movement, Ingolfsson displayed the precise bravura technique that won her the top prizes at several prestigious competitions."

The Washington Post

"The jeweled intensity of Judith Ingolfsson's Stradivarius, her finely honed bowing and stylistic finesse... were all the more impressive in that these aspects of her playing suited two works worlds apart: Bach's Solo Partita in B Minor, BWV 1002, and songs from Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess," arranged by Jascha Heifetz. In the Bach, Ingolfsson's bow defined the minute yet determining stylistic subtleties that divulge the particular character of each dance in the suite. Then she transformed her violin into a voice easily calling on the "portamento" swoops that capture the precise qualities of Gershwin's dramatic intent."

San Juan - El Nuevo Dia (Puerto Rico)

"This authentic virtuoso gave a lesson in good taste, interpreting with warm sound and grand sonorous phrasing. The artist revealed not only her almost inhuman virtuosity, but also her magnificent musicality."

The Washington Post

"Judith Ingolfsson played Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto with just the right mixture of easy grace, sonic luster and patrician refinement."

The Commercial Appeal

"Judith Ingolfsson captivated the audience with a romantic work by Wieniawski. Despite difficult passages, she played the piece deftly, producing a bittersweet effect by neither using too much force nor too much coloration. The audience's standing ovation rewarded her emotional performance."

The Baltimore Sun

"The performance was spectacular. It goes without saying that this violinist has mastered the mechanics of her craft, but what this budding superstar revealed went beyond technical command. She made this concerto absolutely and unmistakably her own...and approached it all with a panache of a true virtuoso. Nothing was held back...she was out to galvanize the orchestra and her listeners with the energy and power of Khachaturian's music."

Strings Magazine

"She is a truly outstanding player. Her effortless virtuosity is a tool in the service of the music; her tone is ravishingly beautiful, pure and adaptable, her sense of style is unerring, her expressiveness simple, direct, and strongly felt. Most striking, however, was Bach's C-major Solo Sonata: grand and noble in concept and execution, with every chordal and contrapuntal voice standing out, it was played with flawless sound and intonation, perfectly controlled pacing, phrasing and dynamics."

The New York Times

"On Saturday evening she gave a technically assured and interpretively astute recital at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Ingolfsson produced a tone that is firmly centered, gracefully rounded and tinted to match the score at hand...a sizzling account producing both fireworks and a singing tone...She moved easily between the work's ruminative and ecstatic passages and made her performance a journey to the soulful core."

NPR's Performance Today**THE DEBUT ARTIST OF THE YEAR AWARD**

recognizes a performer or ensemble for an outstanding radio debut:

"Ms. Ingolfsson's personality and temperament are reminiscent of a pre-WWII violinist. She plays with a remarkable intelligence, musicality, and sense of insight."

Discography



Stravinsky Divertimento - Shostakovich Sonata

AUDITE 92.576, released 2011

Judith Ingolfsson, Violin and Vladimir Stoupel, Piano



Eugène Ysaÿe: Six Sonatas for Violin Solo, Op. 27

GENUIN, released March 2011

Judith Ingolfsson, Violin



Simon Laks (1901-1983) en hommage

EDA, released 2010

Judith Ingolfsson, Violin, Leonid Gorokhov, Cello, Vladimir Stoupel, Piano

Trois pièces de concert for violin and piano

Sonate for cello and piano

Suite polonaise for violin and piano

Ballade „Hommage à Chopin“ for piano solo



Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35

BPO LIVE Label, released November 2007

Budapest Philharmonic with Rico Saccani, conducting



Judith Ingolfsson: Debut Recording

Catalpa Classics, released January 2000

Judith Ingolfsson, Violin and Ronald Sat, Piano

ERNST BLOCH: Sonata for violin & piano No.2 (Poème Mystique)

NED ROEM: Autumn Music, for violin and piano

J.S. BACH: Sonata for Solo Violin No. 3 in C Major, BWV 1005

HENRYK WIENIAWSKI: Fantaisie brillante on Themes From Gounod's "Faust"

CD Reviews

FANFARE MAGAZINE

"Violinist Judith Ingolfsson finds great warmth in the lower registers of her 1750 Lorenzo Guadagnini violin for the Sinfonia of Igor Stravinsky's Divertimento, but she also delivers its jagged rhythmic passages with cocky incisiveness—a brashness that strops a comparably sharp edge on her reading of the second movement ("Danses suisses"). The third provides her, as well as her sympathetic collaborator, pianist Vladimir Stoupel, with an opportunity to blend lyricism with slashing figuration, a challenge they meet with a combination of wit and verve. The last movement displays the unalloyed silver of her instrument's upper registers—as well of course, as the purity of her tone production—in its cantabile sections. The contrast of an almost metallic brightness with shadows, and shadowy dimness streaked only occasionally by light, that the two works offer, of course, allows Ingolfsson to draw upon the correspondingly contrasting sides of her musical personality, her tone production, and the capabilities of her instrument; all three respond to the challenges of Dmitri Shostakovich's late work. It seems to be a tough sell; even dedicatee David Oistrakh, who recorded the sonata with Sviatoslav Richter, and who set a very high standard, hardly popularized the piece. Ingolfsson and Stoupel play with reserved puckishness in the first movement, and they hack and slash their way aggressively through the second movement's thickets of irony. Ingolfsson sounds particularly commanding as she dispatches the movement's difficulties, and the engineers have captured the dynamic range of the instruments in the most tumultuous sections. By contrast, they set the pizzicato statement of the final movement's passacaglia theme and the first variations in a very subdued light,

which remains through the movement. Ingolfsson stands in relation to Oistrakh, she demonstrates probing insight into the sonata—as she does into Stravinsky's pastiche, and her pairing of them deserves a strong recommendation."

NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG

"Chamber music for violin and piano occupies a different status in the respective oeuvres of Igor Stravinsky and Dmitri Shostakovich. While Stravinsky's duos are predominantly arrangements of orchestral works, Shostakovich's Sonata op. 134 is his only work for this formation and represents a weighty composition from the composer's late phase. Violinist Judith Ingolfsson and pianist Vladimir Stoupel's idea of coupling Stravinsky's Divertimento of 1932 and Shostakovich's Sonata from 1968 on one recording offers the opportunity to explore the differences between the two works. The Divertimento, which is based on the ballet *The Fairy's Kiss*, makes use of a number of Tchaikovsky's salon songs and piano pieces. It is lovely how Ingolfsson and Stoupel bring out Stravinsky's approaches and alienations. In the introductory Sinfonia, both romantic melodiousness and mechanistic motion can be heard. Throughout all four movements, the performers allow the dance-like character of this ballet arrangement to shine out. Shostakovich's three-movement Sonata proves to be much less accessible. The duo in no way spares the listener, leading him through the unwieldy rhythmic and melodic structure and emphasizing the Sonata's non-sensual character at every opportunity. Splendidly presented is the final movement, a fifteen-minutelong Largo in the form of a passacaglia that contains the whole Shostakovich in a nutshell.

THE STRAD

Powerful recordings of two highly different Russian violin works

"Stravinsky's Divertimento is an arrangement of the music from his ballet *The Fairy's Kiss*, a homage to Tchaikovsky. Judith Ingolfsson and Vladimir Stoupel work hard to bring out the subtleties in the music, ensuring that this never feels like an accompaniment to a spectacle that's eluding us. Icelandic violinist Ingolfsson, a professor at the Stuttgart Hochschule, has a gorgeously rich and incisive tone, and her colorful shadings of Stravinsky's elegant and magical themes have a feather-light touch. She is given impeccable support by Stoupel, who achieves a delicious transparency of texture. Recorded sound is bright and clean, with a nice bloom on the violin.

Darker thoughts shadow Shostakovich's Sonata, yet here the players dare to rein in the expressive intensity, allowing it to creep in gently – the effect is as if one can hear Shostakovich refracted through the delicacy of the Stravinsky. It serves to increase the sense of bleakness and melancholy, from the slow build of the opening Andante through to the driving, dancing second-movement Allegretto. The passacaglia variations of the final, circling Largo, where the undertone of Bach's fugues seems ever present, are a well of tragic intensity – a gripping ending to a powerful and haunting reading."

GRAMOPHONE

"Though the booklet-note writer declares that between Stravinsky and Shostakovich there is a "disparity in the conception of musical art which could not be greater", they actually share qualities that make this a fascinating record. One is the love of dance rhythms.

It is obvious in the use of some of Tchaikovsky's songs and piano pieces for Stravinsky's Divertimen-

to based on his ballet *The Fairy's Kiss*, and it is again strongly present in the klezmer-like Allegretto of Shostakovich's powerful Sonata; all seized upon with great brio here, as they need to be. There is also the invocation of earlier composers, with Stravinsky's exuberant Tchaikovsky transformations and with Shostakovich's profound homages to Bach.

Ingolfsson and Stoupel draw the Bach inspiration out in the deceptively straightforward opening Andante and in the long Largo finale to Shostakovich's Sonata, a marvelous, haunting piece of extended musical thought which is handled with superb control. There is also a less readily identifiable but very Russian sense of energy in the more vigorous dance music, which can seem to be on the verge of breaking out of control, especially in the Shostakovich's central movement. Both composers also respond to the inspiration of bell sounds, something again very Russian and vividly invoked here.

These are both strong, perceptive performances, recorded closely and lucidly, in which the complicated ambiguities in the music of both composers take hold powerfully below the sometimes jaunty surface."

PIZZICATO LUXEMBURG

Evaluation: *** (5 stars)**

Bursting with Excitement

"With his *Divertimento*, Igor Stravinsky took up the classical tradition of Haydn and Mozart. He did this with his own characteristic, strongly rhythmized musical language, which is the first thing that strikes us about this recording. The duo Ingolfsson-Stoupel plays very communicatively, taking the listeners along on an exciting musical journey. Judith Ingolfsson elicits a nearly infinite palette of timbres from her violin – here and there filigree and gentle, then powerful, bursting with energy. At the same time, the duo never neglects the enigmatic, humorous character of the genre.

Dmitri Shostakovich composed the Violin Sonata op. 134 during the final years of his life, years that were marked by the composer's physical decline. Even though one should guard against interpreting the work from a biographical point of view, there is no mistaking the farewell to life. With impressive rhetorical skill, Judith Ingolfsson and Vladimir Stoupel emphasize the work's rather morbid mood. They fashion the Sonata keenly and pointedly in the Allegretto, and with fateful vehemence and a real storm of emotions in the concluding Largo."

HESSISCHER RUNDFUNK 2 - KULTUR

"The two musicians present expressive, almost tender Stravinsky, far removed from the neoclassical motoric style that this composer so readily cultivated during the 1920s. It is an imaginary dialogue between Stravinsky and his great model Tchaikovsky. The duo presents the *Divertimento* dreamy and playful, with delicacy and suppleness."

RBB KULTURRADIO

Evaluation: *** (5 stars)**

Virtuoso and resolute

"Violinist Judith Ingolfsson and pianist Vladimir Stoupel have made a new recording of two major chamber music works of Russian modernism: the *Divertimento* by Igor Stravinsky and the Violin Sonata by Dmitri Shostakovich.

Judith Ingolfsson and Vladimir Stoupel present the two works scrupulously and yet with great lightness. Their Stravinsky is convincing above all as a result of the virtuoso rendition of the lyrical melodies. They play the Shostakovich Sonata a bit slower than usual, which is however quite beneficial for the piece. Judith Ingolfsson really puts her all into the sustained tones, producing in a warm, resolute, and sometimes also aggressive sound. At the same time, she can scale back wonderfully to a gentle, sensitive pianissimo in the soft passages.

Vladimir Stoupel also proves himself to be an expert in the music of his two compatriots, solidly providing a foundation for the violin's excursions: crystal-clear ensemble playing with a sure feel for the subtle complexities and large contrasts."

RESMUSICA (France)

Evaluation: CD of the Month

"Judith Ingolfsson offers us an admirable and powerful version of the famous *Divertimento* for violin and piano by Igor Stravinsky. One can virtually hear the Franco-Belgian violin school in her bowing. Apart from her truly breathtaking virtuosity, Ingolfsson explores Stravinsky's world of expression with impressive intelligence, making the transition from sardonic-humorous to profoundly emphatic, lyrical playing in the blink of an eye. An extraordinary performance, not least due to the perfect accord and balance with the playing of pianist Vladimir Stoupel, who contributed his part to this absolutely successful recording.

Following Stravinsky's *Divertimento*, the duo carries us off to a completely different world with the Sonata op. 134 by Shostakovich. The present interpretation of the Sonata, which was first performed by David Oistrach and the composer himself, is likewise in a league of its own. With extremely intensive drama (that takes us to icy heights), the duo succeeds with its proven virtuosity (the central Allegretto) in conveying the dramatic and tragic character of the piece in an ideal manner. To be sure, this recital sends the listener away musically "overwhelmed." But it is for a good cause!"

KLASSIK.COM

Sovereign and self-confident

"That's what winners look like. The poses assumed by Judith Ingolfsson and Vladimir Stoupel in the cover photo of their first duo CD declare the musicians' self-confidence – and after one has heard the recording, one can say: justifiably

so. With Igor Stravinsky's *Divertimento* and Dmitri Shostakovich's Violin Sonata op. 143, the duo does not tackle pieces in which the technical-virtuoso mastery of the instrument is foremost. But all the more they demand skill in dealing with the literature of the twentieth century, which again proves to be enormously different in the two Russian composers.

The duo's playing comes from within; it comes across as natural and, consequently, convincing. The fact that this attitude can be recognized in all facets of the works contributes to the impact of the disc, which was released by Audite in collaboration with Deutschlandradio Kultur. Beyond the brilliant performance, the listening pleasure is intensified by the crystal clear quality of the recording.

After a fairytale-like introduction, the lively rhythm bubbles up in the first movement of Stravinsky's *Divertimento*, the "Sinfonia" – a first dramatic effect that the duo reveals in sparkling, always ballast-free interplay. The consistent lightness of the timbre, particularly that of the violin, which is also maintained in the lyrical-contemplative passages, has the effect of a magic potion in all the pieces: never intrusive, always flowing, and yet not pale. Also realized in this manner is the refined stylistic mixture of the second movement, the "Danse suisse" (Swiss Dance), which requires alternation between folkloristic and cantabile gestures. A homophonic movement, which has the apparent effect of blending the solo voices into a single chordal instrument, muscles its way in between. In the last movement, too, a "Pas de deux" with variations on an *Adagio* theme, the composer's subtle humor is rendered in a very natural manner, for example, when gentle staccato notes in the accompaniment join a chanson-like melody with which Ingolfsson can finally display the brilliance of her sound in the high range, or, as in the last variation, when the music is

reminiscent of the fundament of a pantomime act at the circus.

On the other hand, the associations evoked by Shostakovich's Violin Sonata, op. 134, are anything but cheerful. Even if not actually gloomy, the work at least has a consuming tension. The first movement of the unconventional sequence is an *Andante*: a tapping pulse that traverses the movement throughout the slow tempo, reduced dynamics, and incursions of noise music. In another mood, one could speak of a grandiose scene that Ingolfsson and Stoupel offer here. The following *Allegretto* has a lighter feeling; paradoxically, as it is actually a turbulent movement: Scratching tones are sustained against supple scales with a continuous up and down within the tonal space. In the third movement, *Largo*, the work comes full circle: after the climax of short solo passages in the piano and violin, they shape a shimmering fade out with reference to the sound of the first movement. The tension, however, is sustained beyond the end of the piece.

It will be of great interest to see whether Judith Ingolfsson and Vladimir Stoupel decide to make further recordings. With the works by Stravinsky and Shostakovich, the duo has proven that it feels comfortable particularly in the area of the classic modern style. And especially here, courage and self-assurance are necessary. The musicians obviously have both."

STRINGS MAGAZINE

"This is a terrific recording of the Six Sonatas for violin solo, Op. 27, by Eugene Ysaÿe. The Icelandic-American violinist Judith Ingolfsson is more than equal to all these challenges. She came to the music world's attention when she won the Gold Medal at the 1998 International Indianapolis Violin Competition. At that time, she captivated audiences with her radiant talent, her effortless virtuosity, her lovely tone, and her youthful, spontaneous expressiveness. Now, her talent has blossomed into consum-

mate instrumental mastery. Her intonation is perfect, and her tone is gorgeous, intense, and variable, flawlessly pure and beautiful in every register, under all circumstances.

Best of all, she projects the sonatas' musical and emotional content with all her old spontaneity. Her rhythm combines steadiness with flexibility; her tempo changes are poised, her mood changes totally convincing; her counterpoint is clear. She makes the slow movements sing with melting lyricism, and her fiery temperament sets the wild fast ones ablaze—the obsessive No. 2 is truly terrifying.

Even listeners who are not wholehearted fans of these sonatas will be unable to resist this performance."

STRINGS MAGAZINE

"Ingolfsson is a splendid violinist. Her virtuosity is dazzling, but never for show; her tone is warm, pure and beautiful. Her performance of the Tchaikovsky Concerto on this CD, recorded live in Budapest, has a heart-on-the-sleeve quality (complete with lots of slides) that would seem excessive if it were not so genuinely felt. The opening is dreamy and quite slow, heralding an approach leisurely enough to bring out significant lines, make tempo changes, take liberties, and hold fermatas. The finale is brilliant, full of humor and character."

FANFARE MAGAZINE

"... ardent and impassioned. The violinist's unique poetry, personalizing each of the diverse works, carries the recital. This sensitivity, rarer now perhaps than in past generations, should ingratiate her with audiences. And this first collection deserves more thoughtful attention than that almost automatically accorded to the megahyped debuts of hothoused prodigies. Highly recommended."