
CONCERT REPORT-1

January 11th 2017

St. Nicholas church in Brighton, East Sussex

Program)

J.S.Bach: "Gigue" from Violin Partita No.2 BWV1004.

A. Dvorak: Sonatina G major Op.100.

F. Drdla: Souvenir.

J. MacMillan: After the Tryst.

E. Elgar: Chanson de Nuit Op.15 No.1.

Fumi Otsuki: Theme and 3 Variations.

Preface) From this concert, 'After the tryst' by J. MacMillan is newly included in the programme, so I would like to describe this piece briefly.

At first glance, this short piece looks conventional, with a simple rondo form (A-B-A-C-A-D-A). However, even though it lasts less than three minutes, it has many musical techniques, such as portamento, trill, and tremolo. Each of these, with varying length, speed, crescendo, fluctuation and tone colour, has an individual nuance. These colourful tones combine to create a patchwork and give the piece a unified character.

It's like a jewelry case with many small locked boxes containing individual gems. Thus, listeners can enjoy different parts of the piece by selecting, according to their inclination, which part to concentrate on, as if unlocking particular boxes to see the jewels hidden inside. This shows that the composer has confidence in the listener's sensibilities, as well as the players' ability to express the piece, of course.

This piece resembles 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland', in that it's like a short story (and in particular like "Haiku" - with only 17 moras, it is the shortest form of Japanese poetry.) containing many metaphors, with every word having significance. And likewise with this piece, the players feel as if they are being called upon to play all the parts of a symphony with just the parts of violin and piano. In order to successfully realize this work, painstaking effort to analyse each tone is necessary. Indeed, this work is like a piece of embroidery, made

with one stitch at a time, and requires great patience. It will give me great pleasure if my endeavours enable me to achieve my image of the piece.

The piano and violin parts are slightly entwined. This style, an avant-garde modification of polyphony, is attributed to Charles Ives works, such as "The Unanswered Question" and "Three Places in New England", although the twining is not as pronounced as it is with Ives' works. Strictly speaking, even without the piano the piece can be performed as cadenza, but closer analysis reveals that the piano part plays an important role in stimulating the movement of the violin, as well as supporting it by playing the melody softly a fifth lower. It is one of the charm points of the piece that the pedal point of the piano harmonizes the rippling melody of the violin. Moreover, the nuance produced by the pedal point varies according to the individual qualities of each piano, and cannot be controlled by the pianist. This piece has so many interesting artifices, which I will do my best try to bring out. It will be a great joy for me if the listener can enjoy it.

Process) Owing to rail strikes, it took about three hours from London to Brighton, even though it' s only a distance of fifty miles. I grew up in Japan, where public transport is only rarely stopped by strikes, so I felt really inconvenienced by it.

Nowadays, after twenty-two years in the U.K., I' m used to it.

St. Nicholas Church stands on a green slope of a hill in the centre

of the cosmopolitan city of Brighton. It is an elegant building of classical style.

Every church has its own acoustic character. I am not a scientist, so I cannot evaluate it numerically. At the rehearsal, I just try various things and try to form an image of the music, and then try to produce that sound during the performance. Before I went to St. Nicholas church, I imagined from the outside appearance photo that it would have a rigid, tiled inner wall like the stone-covered exterior wall. With such walls, high frequency sounds tend to be emphasized, so it takes time to get a balance between high and low frequency sounds. Fortunately, the hall has a mortar-like, soft inner wall and a wooden ceiling, which produced a good acoustic character. Although I was a little worried about the effects of the stone pillars, I was satisfied with the tone I was able to get.

Mr. Allesandro Viale, my pianist partner, gave me noteworthy view, as 'After the tryst' avoids the strong direct expression of continental music, especially the German style, and uses a minute wavering of sound to produce subtle expression. This might well be attributable to English tradition, but for Italians it feels quite exotic. On the other hand, since it is similar to Japanese traditional dance, with its use of slight physical motions to express different emotions, I feel a sense of intimacy with this character.