

# Bremer Nachrichten

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## **Exceptional Talents on a Quick Visit**

The Curtis Symphony Orchestra has been invited by the Philharmonic Society to perform at the Glocke

BY MICHAEL PITZ-GEWWENIG

**Bremen.** After a selection process which is regarded as the toughest in the world, students who receive a scholarship to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia are considered the best of the best. Leonard Bernstein, Paavo Järvi, Hillary Hahn, to name a few, have studied there. For three years there has been a collaboration with the Philharmonic Society Bremen and the Bremen University of the Arts, due to the initiative by Barbara Grobien, Chairperson of the Philharmonic Society Bremen.

This year, the Curtis Symphony Orchestra performed as part of its European Tour together with the Finnish conductor Osmo Vänskä in the Great Hall of the Glocke.

Due to Osmo Vänskä's striking orchestration, Maurice Ravel's 2<sup>nd</sup> Suite from Daphnis and Chloé - which was an orchestral and virtuoso firework - came alive in differentiated tones and excellent dynamic fine tuning.

There is no need to mention this brilliant youth orchestra's flexible modulation and intuitive musicality. They also gave an impressive performance of Krzysztof Penderecki's Double Concert for Violin, Viola and Orchestra. Lush sound and subtle rhythmic motor skills led to an electrifying night of music.

Having two outstanding instrumentalists like Benjamin Schmid (violin) and Roberto Diaz (viola) take over the solos, it is hardly surprising that the interpretation was convincing all around. This was mainly due to the fact that the two soloists - thanks to their intensive interplay - also guided the orchestra's musicians through all the challenging parts of this sonically and rhythmically complicated work.

## **Brahms performance less accomplished**

Concessions, however, had to be made after the break during Johannes Brahms' Concerto for Piano No. 1 in D Minor. This might have been due to the soloist. He did not succeed in guiding the youthful orchestra over the shallows of the score like he did during the Penderecki performance. Peter Serkin was particularly brilliant in the outer movements with his powerful motor skills, but they resulted all too often in stereotypical force rather than expressive, compelling music.

The slow middle movement lacked its inherent exploration of sound variations. The sound variations lacked exploration in the slow middle movement of its inherent inner peace.

There were only a few bars where the soloist and orchestra really played together. Against this background, Osmo Vänskä could not succeed in making the orchestra and the soloist a communicative

unity. It was also disconcerting that the piano was clearly not tuned as required. What makes concerts of this kind so incredibly exciting is the fact that one listens to the works in a new way, because the interpretations are presented like raw diamonds. They are sparkling, but the final touch is still missing. During Brahms the edges were quite audible.