

# pressquotes

## MIDORI - VIOLIN

### **Philadelphia Orchestra / Britten Violin Concerto**

"Goto's spirited performance, accented by a dramatic use of pizzicatos, roused the audience to a chorus of bravos."

*Mainichi Daily News*, June 2008

### **Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra / Mendelssohn Violin Concerto**

"Midori performed [Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor] with an intimate, chamber music quality, often leaning in close to the orchestra to explore subtle musical interactions. Her sound was extremely light and pure, projecting through the enormous hall even at soft dynamic levels."

*Cincinnati Enquirer*, April 2008

### **Cleveland Symphony Orchestra / Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto**

"Midori gave a memorable performance drawing a standing ovation after just the first movement. The superstar violinist has a quality that sets her apart: She listens, and not just to her fellow musicians but to herself, paying rapt attention to a high phrase in the first movement, refining and enriching the tone as it was sustained. She was like a bel canto singer in the cadenza, handling the bravura passagework in astonishing fashion. But she also brought some grit to the old warhorse, attacking the finale with surprising ferocity..."

*St. Petersburg Times*, March 2008

### **National Symphony Orchestra/ Leonard Slatkin / Bartók Violin Concerto No.2**

"Midori's playing was intense, assured and polished throughout. She clearly was comfortable with this difficult work and its many mood shifts, imbuing the concerto's spikier moments with deeper layers of meaning..."

*Washington Times*, October 2007

### **Symposium on Contemporary Music**

"Her most persuasive strategy, not surprisingly, was her exquisite rendering of the music itself. Here the importance of the performer in contemporary music became clear. Instead of serving as a vessel, faithfully carrying well-loved songs, intact, to an expectant audience, the artist is a kind of translator. The intensity on Midori's face, and in her body, as she played Kurtag or Lutoslawski, persuaded the listener that there was something to be discovered."

*The New York Times*, April 2006

### **LSO & Sir Colin Davis / Sibelius Violin Concerto**

"...and if Davis was King Lear, then Midori was Cordelia in their performance of Sibelius's Violin Concerto. She was characteristically strong-willed, a free spirit throughout – particularly in the opening measures where the remoteness of her dynamics lent an ethereal quality. There was space and freedom and there were very personal, pliant phrasings. In the slow movement, her inwardness was affecting and we were all ears as she put it to rest, barely grazing the final glissando."

*The Independent*, December 2005

### **San Francisco SO / Prokofiev Violin Concerto No.1**

"Midori was on hand to bring her incisive sound and fearless sense of lyricism to Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto ... Midori, as always, brought her considerable artistic arsenal to bear on the Prokofiev, delivering the hallucinatory first movement with sweet, slightly glassy tone and incomparable precision. She also dug into the central scherzo with winning ferocity."

*San Francisco Chronicle*, September 2005

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## **In recital with Charles Abramovic**

"...Stylish even in extreme passion – Midori and Charles Abramovic delight their audience at the Mozarteum ... Whether in Mozart, Beethoven, Ravel, Tchaikovsky or Rautavaara, Midori has a technical finesses and certainty of style that are unmatched..."

*Die Presse*, August 2005

"...Midori invested herself in her emotionally laden playing, yet never dripping with sentimentality. And to finish with, a real heartwarmer: Tchaikovsky's Valse-Scherzo, a virtuosic piece full of variety with a fully notated cadenza and many rapid passages of double stopping, which sounded most pleasant to the ear in Midori's playing. The acrobatic passages were most expressive. You can play it differently, but not better – it simply has to be Midori..."

*www.drehpunktkultur.at*, August 2005

"...Why is her playing unmistakable? Firstly, for her very noticeable and considerable movement when playing, and then for her tender, delicate tone, forbidding all emotional excesses, movingly beautiful when piano and pianissimo, without heavy forcefulness when forte..."

*Salzburger Nachrichten*, August 2005

## **Prokofiev Violin Concerto No.1 with Dortmund Philharmonic Orchestra**

"...Violinist Midori pressed her cheek against her violin with great tenderness and allowed the first bars of Prokofiev's violin concerto to blossom with melodic intensity. Later, she employed her whole super-slim body to do justice to the enormous demands of this work. In the second movement, the scherzo with its grotesque, scurrilous character, she vivaciously scrapes out devilish sounds, and plays with breath-taking virtuosity. Expression is more important than beauty, temperament than depth. Her silver tone in the tuneful third movement is full of lyrical sweetness and charisma..."

*Westfälische Rundschau*, June 2005

"...the kind of artist who charms her audience with her refined, fragile expertise; a graceful, beguiling tone..."

*Ruhr Nachrichten*, June 2005

## **London Philharmonic & Ingo Metzmacher / Beethoven Violin Concerto**

"...Once launched upon her long lines, so finely spun, infinite in their pianissimo charms, it was as though an angel sang. And what poise! To sail with ease across the larghetto is one thing: to make the first cadenza unruffled as a pond is quite another ... Midori's almost other-worldly refinement and technique..."

*The Times*, March 2005

"...Midori's refined tone and subtly poised expression had the orchestra responding with the air of an intimate conversation. The German word "innig", an untranslatable description that transcends the self-centred overtones of "introvert" or "interior", was made for this experience..."

*The Independent*, March 2005

## **Recital with Robert McDonald at the Barbican, London**

"...At times the listener is tempted to close the eyes in order to hear the miracle for what it really is...Midori is one of the most unsparingly rigorous of musicians"

*The Times*, November 2004

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## **Stockholm Philharmonic & Alan Gilbert / Sibelius Violin Concerto**

"Midori's playing in the dynamic lower register was impossibly quiet, forming the basis from which the intensity and passion of the first and especially the slow movement rose. The colourful soundscape of the Guarneri was at its most versatile in her hands...Midori created a resonant, Sibelianic earthy atmosphere in the lower registers which was carried into the orchestra. In the wildly virtuosic material of the finale this soloist conjured up a dance of the spirits."

*Helsingin Sanomat*, September 2004

## **Recital with Robert McDonald, National Concert Hall Dublin**

"Bach's Violin Sonata was so rewarding. It was straight, impeccable in technique and shape, and acutely aware of the three-part discourse between left hand, right hand and violin...The combination of technical facility and urbane good manners in the Saint-Saëns was neatly captured, and that was exemplified by the driving energy and perfect ensemble of the finale, and in the way Midori handled the long note that links the opening Allegro and the following Adagio. She made it so tantalising that one wished it could have gone on all night."

*Irish Times*, April 2004

## **Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra & Paavo Jarvi / Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto**

"In the first half, Midori brought her extraordinary artistry to the Tchaikovsky Violin concerto. Her sound is not large, but it is refined and flawless, and her technique is spectacular. Hers was a deeply personal interpretation of Tchaikovsky...her first movement cadenza as a stunning high-wire act, with such gorgeous sound the audience seemed to be holding its breath. The slow movement was intimate and nostalgic, and she phrased with poeety and nuance. She dug into the finale robustly, playing with brilliance and breathtaking speed."

*Cincinnati Enquirer*, February 2004

## **Philharmonia Orchestra & Jiri Belohlavek / Dvorak Violin Concerto**

"...bent double in the stormy rhetoric of the opening, Midori ... took on the full might of the orchestra – and would then suddenly draw in her bow, and indeed the audience, for a moment of intimate duetting with the oboe ... Midori's irresistibly fine, intensely focused quiet playing came into its own..."

*The Times*, January 2004

"...Crouched like a gladiator, she launched herself at the music as if it was an animal she must tame; and tame it she did ... but in the Adagio she conjured a wonderful air of gentle mystery ... there was a chamber-like intimacy between orchestra and ensemble. Controlling the dynamics minutely, she was not afraid to let her violin almost – but never quite – sink into the orchestral textures..."

*The Evening Standard*, January 2004

## **Berlin Philharmonic & Mariss Jansons / Bruch & Mendelssohn Violin Concertos, Sony 87740**

"...Overall, and in the face of formidable competition, this is a clear winner."

*Gramophone*, January 2004

"The idiomatic emotional range of the Bruch is especially impressive, a significant performance that combines appealing dark tone and virtuosity oriented toward expression rather than showiness. The Mendelssohn is also persuasive, with a lovely slow movement."

*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, November 2003

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"...Midori's unfailingly sweet yet sturdy renditions of the solo lines hover as if in midair, making for a captivating light-and-dark contrast in both works."

*Boston Herald*, August 2003

## **In recital with Charles Abramovic**

"Midori and her accompanist Charles Abramovic lavished on us one wondrously effervescent run after the next. A tightrope act – across abysses, mastered in the most exquisite *piano*. And where others start to flounder, Midori's music is obviously only just beginning."

*Tagesspiegel*, November 2003

"Her playing possesses a soft, sleek, smooth tone ... always moving and captivating ... filled with tenderness, floating sensuousness with fine piano and pianissimo tones. A surprise of the most sublime nature!"

*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, December 2003

## **Toronto Symphony Orchestra & Keith Lockhardt / Mendelssohn Violin Concerto**

"The sheer musicality it still there, giving her playing the naturalness of breathing. She virtually sang her way through the concerto, its phrases seamlessly joined, its technical challenges seemingly non-existent for her."

*Toronto Star*, October 2003

## **Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra & Andreas Delfs / Brahms Violin Concerto**

"...Midori's playing remains impressive. Her sound was focussed, her pitch was right on and her rhythm was utterly clear, even when she was bending in expressively."

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, September 2003

## **In recital with Robert McDonald**

"...Her colour spectrum from the faintest note, to dazzling sounds, to crunching bow attacks is exemplary. Even more noteworthy is her absolute security of intonation, even in the most intricate passages..."

*Landshuter Zeitung*, May 2003

The fusing of great concentration with filigree details allowed Midori and McDonald to turn this most technically difficult work into an exciting and gripping experience ... Midori and Robert McDonald were scintillating in their dancing spirit, and they swept the audience away with their lively playing.

*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, May 2003

"...The perfection of Midori's stupendous grip and bow technique, her sensitive tone ... and Robert McDonald's sophisticated piano playing aided the unwieldy work to have an un-dreamt-of effect..."

*Schwetzingen Zeitung*, May 2003

"...Apart from the enormous technical supremacy ... Midori makes music of what ever she plays..."

*Mittelbayerische Zeitung*, May 2003

## **New York Philharmonic & Zubin Mehta / Elgar Concerto**

"In the second half, Elgar's continuously rhapsodic Violin Concerto might have been a total contrast, from a point near in time: it was exactly contemporary with Webern's compact, dense and atonal Op. 6 pieces. Midori, the soloist, found certain Webernian features in the score: the vehemence an extreme pianissimo can convey, the sense of song in an instrumental line and even, in the finale,

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the bouncing of a three-note pattern into an upside-down form. Webernian, too, was the way her determination and tight control spoke volumes.”

*New York Times*, January 2003

## **National Symphony Orchestra & Leonard Slatkin / Elgar Concerto**

“One wonders if there is a more purely and reliably satisfying violinist than Midori now before the public. In the 20th year of her career - which happens to be only the 32nd year of her life - she continues to play with an extraordinary mixture of youthful freshness and absolute technical assurance. She has just the sweet, solemn temperament for the Elgar work, and that, combined with her huge tone, judicious use of portamento phrasing, and the altogether sympathetic accompaniment of Slatkin and the NSO, made for a memorable conclusion to the afternoon.”

*Washington Post*, December 2002

## **20th Anniversary Album / Sony Classical 89700**

“She plays the opening item, Hartmann's arrangement of Debussy's "La fille aux cheveux de lin" with such delicacy she seems simply to be musing to herself, and her simple gravity in Elgar's Chanson de nuit, the last item, taken steadily, turns it into a sort of prayer. Such an approach could easily have lapsed into sentimentality, but emphatically not so here. Kreisler's Spanish Dance *La Gitana* and his arrangement of Poldini's *Poupée valsante* make a delightful contrast, full of fantasy; and the longest of the pieces, Amy Beach's Romance brings the widest contrasts of dynamic and expression, making it far more than a salon piece.”

*Gramophone*, December 2002

## **In recital with Robert McDonald**

“There's plenty of soul in her playing, and, what's more, she's managed to hold on to a distinctive style... Her most immediately obvious trademark is the way she launches herself into fierier passages with a no-holds-barred gusto... her interpretations are always thoughtful, her pacing is sure and sensitive, and she has a good rapport with her pianist, Robert McDonald.”

*The Guardian*, November 2002

## **French Recital Disc with Robert McDonald / Sony Classical 89699**

“Dans ce récital de sonates francaises, c'est pourtant bien le brio, le panache et justement, la fantaisie qui conquièrent d'emblée. ... D'un bout à l'autre du disque, Midori et son partenaire de longue date Robert McDonald s'entendent à merveille. Dynamique commune, bel équilibre des voix, éloquence naturellement partagée font de leur association un véritable duo.”

*Diapason*, October 2002