

## Concert in the Alter Ratsaal Baden-Baden: "Johannes Brahms and the Schumann family"

... The violin played an important role this morning. The guest was violinist Natasha Korsakova, who has delighted the audience in the Alter Ratsaal on several occasions... Clara Schumann's Romances op. 22 are dedicated to Joseph Joachim. When she heard the 22-year-old at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in 1853, he left a deep impression on her. "So ingenious, so noble, so simple and yet so moving to the core", she commented - and the same can be said of the three Romances: the first two (D flat major and G minor) are heartfelt and songful, while the third (B flat major) is full of throbbing passion. It is not only the intense interplay between the two interpreters that is convincing, but above all Natasha Korsakova's agogic sensitivity, her clear tone and her natural expression - you can expect technical mastery from her in all situations anyway.

The Waltzes op. 39 for four hands by Johannes Brahms have a special charm; they exist in various versions and are heard here for the first time in a version for violin and piano - written by Paul Klengel (1911), a brother of Gewandhaus-cellist Julius Klengel.

The "Hungarian ground" comes into its own here: the violin sounds fiery, sensual, graceful - right down to the finest pizzicati. In places it seems like a single invitation to dance...

A further connection between Johannes Brahms and the Schumann family ultimately leads via the youngest Schumann son Felix, whose artistic talent could not really develop as he died all too early of tuberculosis...

Johannes Brahms' Sonata in G major op. 78 ("Rain Song" Sonata), which closes the morning, is influenced by Felix's illness and death: It is no coincidence that it was written for piano and violin - after all, Felix Schumann had originally considered becoming a violinist...

The wonderfully subtle violin theme of the first movement unfolds in a great arc of tension, accompanied by delicate movements in the piano - and with such a fresh forward momentum that there is spontaneous applause afterwards. The song of mourning, the melancholy, even the occasionally agitated character of this sonata - Natasha Korsakova and Ira Witoschynskij play all of this expressively, with a natural flow, but without false sentimentality.

The audience in the well-attended Ratsaal gave a hearty round of applause.

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