



<http://chicagoclassicalreview.com/wp-content/uploads/40103.jpg>

Stefan Milenkovich

Serbian-Italian virtuoso Stefan Milenkovich offered a stellar rendition of Sibelius' warhorse. Milenkovich brought icy stoicism to the opening of the Allegro moderato, and poignant ardor to the movement's second theme. His commanding technique was on display throughout, especially in his idiosyncratically inflected cadenza and searing delivery of the coda. Milenkovich's concentrated tone lent itself well to the emotional vehemence of the Adagio di molto, and his hooked bowing in the finale was snappy and buoyant. Mathieson maintained a firm hand in the orchestral tutti, though the orchestral accompaniment was often square and somewhat inflexible.

The concert's second half was devoted to Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 "Eroica," which was launched immediately after a much-appreciated update on the score at Wrigley Field.

Mathieson was uninspiring in the expansive Allegro con brio, mostly conducting in a moderate all-purpose one and doing little to organize the vast canvas. Her gestures were clear but nothing more, and important details (such as the new thematic material introduced in the development and the ubiquitous hemiolas) passed by seemingly unnoticed, though mitigated somewhat by the players' dedicated playing.

Things improved as the Beethoven progressed, however. Mathieson helped keep the Marcia funebre from plodding, the movement adorned with able playing by the IPO wind principals. The Scherzo had an effervescent energy, its barely contained vigor coming across well in Mathieson's restrained approach. Her reading of the Finale was poised without being subdued, though the tender Poco adagio became increasingly ponderous as it went on. The performance nonetheless culminated in an emphatic coda that received tumultuous applause after the double bar.

The Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra's next concert is 7:30 p.m. November 19 at Lincoln-Way West Performing Arts Center. Music director candidate Alastair Willis leads Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, the Bartok Concerto for Orchestra, and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 with soloist William Wolfram.

<http://www.ipomusic.org/index.php/home.html> (<http://www.ipomusic.org/index.php/home.html>)

Posted in [Performances](http://chicagoclassicalreview.com/category/performances/) (<http://chicagoclassicalreview.com/category/performances/>)

Leave a Comment