



Manrico Padovani, Violinist

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Biography

Manrico Padovani is the first Swiss violinist to perform live in concert the complete cycle of the 24 caprices op. 1 for violin solo by N. Paganini in Zurich (2006).

Born in Zurich to parents of Italian origin he studied in the master classes of Aida Stucki-Piraccini (also Anne-Sophie Mutter's teacher) in Winterthur, who decisively influenced him, and Herman Krebbers in Amsterdam.

R. Ricci, F. Gulli, V. Pikaizen, B. Belkin, D. Zsygmondy and K. H. Stockhausen also influenced his playing.

Given as one of the most interesting Swiss violinists, also supported by the "Ann-Sophie Mutter Foundation", he won a wide range of prizes at the "Vienna International Music Competition", at "Ruggiero Ricci's International Master Competition" in Berlin, at the "Academia Chigiana" in Siena, the "Swiss Youth Music Festival Prize", three times the "Juefer-Hablitzel Prize" of the Swiss Musicians' Association, as well as awards from the Julias Bar and the Schuler Foundation. The important "Jubilee prize" of the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) was also among his award.

"Forceful lyricist", "Enchanting, bewitching violin", "A rising star in the future violinists' heaven", "Devil's fiddler", are only a few of the words used by the critics to describe the emotions stirred up by Manrico Padovani during his performances distinguished by a breathtaking skill united to rhythmic tension and an exceptional mastery of the instrument.

After his debut at the "Lucerne Festival" and at the "Stadtcasino" Basel, he performed all over Europe, in America and in Asia with orchestras like the "Stuttgarter Philharmoniker", "Russian Philharmonic Orchestra", the "Sudwestdeutsche Philharmonie", the "Akademische Staatskapelle St. Petersburg", the "Radio Sinfonie Orchester Basel", the "Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana", "Stadtorchester Winterthur", the "Regina Symphony Orchestra", the "Guri Philharmonic Orchestra Seoul" etc. under the batons of conductors like R. Barshai, M. Viotti, A. Boreiko, H. Griffiths, M. Andreae, J. Lu, B. Perrenoud and P. Altrichter.

Besides the already published recordings on CD and DVD (a.o. violin concertos by Brahms, Beethoven, Prokofjew nr. 1 and Paganini nr. 1), the new releases on DVD and CD will include live performances in Vienna (DVD with a live virtuoso solo violin recital at the Bosendorfersaal, published by IPA), Prague (DVD Playing Beethoven Violin Concerto) and in Seoul (CD playing Paganini's second violin concerto op. 7 "La Campanella").

Manrico Padovani was also invited for a recording of the soundtrack for Eric Bernasconi's feature film *Sinesthesia*, to be presented at the Berlin International Film Festival in 2010.

Highlights of the current season will be a.o. the New Years Concert at the Smetana Hall in Prague, as soloist with the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, and the recording of the 24 caprices by N. Paganini.

Manrico Padovini plays on the Stradivarius 1722 "Jupiter" violin, kindly loaned out from the Nippon Music Foundation.

Critical Acclaim

“After the Radio-Sinfonieorchester Basel conducted by M. Viotti had played Prokofjew’s ‘Symphonie classique’ the violinist Manrico Padovani struck an entirely different note in Camille Saint-Saëns’ ‘Introduction et Rondò capriccioso’ for violin and orchestra. With softly nuanced yet precisely delineated tones the Zurich violinist produced – as if by magic – from the very first entry an atmosphere of enchantment in the concert hall and proved himself thereafter to be a master of lyrical phrasing with a fine sense of tone colours. This raised the composition far above its status as a show-piece for virtuosos, even if Padovani later in Sarasate’s Carmen Fantasie confirmed his position as a front-raking virtuoso with his mesmerically beautiful playing of the harmonic passages.”

-Luzerner Neuste Nachrichten

“Howard Griffiths and the orchestra complemented the soloist in such a way as to make it possible for him to give a well-defined interpretation of substance. Manrico Padovani did full justice to the often horrendously difficult solo part (Saint-Saëns Violin Concerto No. 3). Above and beyond his mastery of all the technical difficulties he impressed with his full and unstrained volume of sound up to the very extreme positions. In addition he succeeded in creating a most lively interplay between him and the orchestra... Giving another sample of his quite extraordinary talent the young artist – as an encore – played a ‘Ballade for solo violin’ by the Belgian E. Ysaye. Whatever tests one can apply to a violinist’s technique, those horrendously fast runs and those trickily many-part chords are it, and Padovani mastered them triumphantly.”

-J. Röthlisberger, Zuger Nachrichten

“... Prokofjew’s Violin Sonata No. 1 was given a disquieting atmosphere by the soloist; in the subtle rhythm, the delicate working-out of the themes a tense tremor could be heard, which felt quite aggressive, but all the more fascinating for it. It allowed him to develop a number of moods representing a kaleidoscope of abrupt changes, some provocative, some, hypnotizing...”

-Basler Zeitung

“Judged by his achievements Manrico Padovani is one of the great hopes of the younger generation of violinists.”

-H. Meier, IMF Lucerne, Luzerner Zeitung

“... Quality often became self-evident, like for example in the Zurich violinist Manrico Padovani, who attracted a good deal of attention with his virtuoso performance of sonatas by G. Tailleferre, A. Honegger and F. Poulenc.”

-E. Kohlhaas, IMF Lucerne, Frankfurter Allgemeine

“... Here an obviously natural talent for the violin is allied to a temperament which is as tempestuous as it is enthralling. His extraordinary virtuosity enables him to master the most extreme violinistic difficulties, not just reliably, but with the greatest assurance. ... During the performance of Prokofjew's Concerto D-major Op. 19 the young violinist grew in stature as a soloist. Breathtaking skill united itself to rhythmic tension, to a dance-like grace and to a sparkling spirit. ... Aply seconded by M. Albrecht and the City Orchestra, Padovani was rewarded with tumultuous applause for his impressive performance.”

-R. Wolfensberger, Landbote Winterthur

“...And finally the performance of the 26-year-old soloist provided the scintillating climax of the musical event. The young Manrico Padovani proved himself to be on top of his task. His astonishing virtuosity mastered all the tricky bits and his song-like delivery made all the hearts go out to him. It was a signal experience that Manrico Padovani and the Gruppo Concertistico della Svizzera Italiana offered their audience.”

-S. Wenger, Interlakner Festwochen

“Paganini's Concerto Op. 6 No. 1 turned the startlingly young soloist into the audience's declared favorite. Paganini's most important concerto offers the soloist every conceivable opportunity to display his talents: dizzying arpeggios and multi-part playing tumble about headlong, letting Padovani have a field with this acrobatic piece and leaving the audience spellbound. Manrico Padovani showed how to bring off such a tour de force brilliantly and effortlessly. ... Having witnessed his amazing talent, his audience rewarded him with tumultuous applause and loud cries of bravo.”

-S. Kaufmann, Landbote Winterthur

“...Then came the turn of soloist Manrico Padovani who interpreted the concerto for violin and string orchestra by F. Mendelssohn-Bartoldy. The young virtuoso was admired for his polished technique, the mellowness and smoothness of his sound and the exceptional mastery of his instrument, even in the most difficult passages...”

-Rivista di Lugano

“... The 15 string instruments of the “Gruppo concertistico della Svizzera Italiana” perfectly sustained the virtuosity of Padovani’s parables. Padovani proved maturity in his interpretation, showing off an extremely brilliant marking of phrases...”

-L’informatore

“... While listening to Padovani, we put ourselves for a second in the shoes of the virtuosi of that period, of the violinists who once faced the same scores. One really comes to believe that those who were capable of a valuable performance were indeed very, very few...”

-S.M.B., Giornale del Popolo

“... The violin-piano recital I attended last Saturday within the musical event organized by “OGGI-musica” was definitely the most interesting and captivating I have listened to in the past years... On the programme were compositions of Honegger, Wettstein, Hoch, Pärt and Lutoslawsky... It is not easy to offer a programme of this kind: it takes courage, energy and determination, along with the abundant ability to carry it out... These all are gifts that Manrico Padovani and Yukiko Hori proved to have in the proper amount. Padovani played with great liveliness and confidence, readily seizing each piece’s figure. His interpretations were excellently performed and profoundly felt...”

-F. de Carli, Corriere del Ticino

“...Those were deeply satisfying moments when the violinist Manrico Padovani set the concert hall aglow with the incandescence of his Furioso, and this in rare harmony with the orchestra (the Stuttgart Philharmonic). The concert itself was a display of musical gems... So prolonged was the applause that Padovani was moved to an extended encore with breathtaking double stops, sending the audience into raptures again... A forceful Finale marked the end of the concert that once more confirmed the excellent name of the Tak-Abo-concerts.”

-Liechtensteiner Volksblatt

“Manrico Padovani risked it all on Paganini’s First Concert – and won.”

-Südkurier Konstanz

“Accentuating the violin’s grand sweep is his forte.” (Dvorak, concerto in A minor op. 53)

-Badische Zeitung

Padovani plays Paganini like a hero

Blessed with a name of operatic resonance, the young Swiss-Italian violinist Manrico Padovani plays like a hero in this marvellous concerto marvellous, that is to say, when attacked with such technical brio, tonal lustre and musicality. Padovani commands a superbly equalised scale and does not lean too much on the G-string, although he rightly makes more of it in the central Adagio espressivo, where Paganini is depicting a prisoner in a dungeon.

Spiccato is splendidly precise; staccato is evenly audible; left-hand pizzicato pings nicely; harmonics all ring out; but cantilena is also beautifully flexible, with sensitive dynamic variations that make the melodies really touching.

Padovani clearly enjoys the Sauret cadenza, as do I, even though it uses non-Paganini effects. The finale has real bounce, with variations of colour in the episodes. The DVD is very plainly filmed and there seems to be no audience, even though everyone is giving a real performance. The little orchestra is tidy and adequate but backwardly placed, something even more apparent on the audio CD. Sound quality is excellent on both discs. Do you need just 38 minutes of music in two formats? In any case, Padovani, a pupil of Aida Stucki, is certainly worth a hearing.

-TULLY POTTER The Strad Magazine, January 2010

Anne Sophie Mutter on Manrico Padovani

As you might be aware, I have been supporting highly talented musician for many years through my foundation

In particular, I would like to draw your attention to the violinist Manrico Padovani. Even if not supported by my foundation directly because of age reasons he is one of the few young soloists whose musicality is exceptionally sensitive and expressive which characterizes his strong personality.

I would be extremely grateful if you support this special artist, and give him the opportunity to become enrolled in your special program.

-Anne-Sophie Mutter

Munich, 16. April 2009