

A Laureate Recital

By Tom Aldridge



Violinist Simone Lamsma

When a chamber concert dwindles down to a recital, the soloist's exposure goes dramatically up, even if he/she is accompanied. We heard a lot of the featured IVCI laureate, [Simone Lamsma](#), in Tuesday evening's concert, all the more so for her being accompanied by Rohan De Silva, one of the official competition pianists. Their program of Dvořák, Mendelssohn, Arvo Pärt and Schumann explored the backwaters of the 19th-century representatives while giving us Pärt's most beautiful creation, *Fratres*.

And it was *Fratres* which stole the show from the other offerings. It has been scored for many chamber combinations; I first heard it in string quartet form as played by the now legendary Kronos Quartet. This was my first exposure to its duo format. With its ever-shifting chords heard constantly by De Silva, it was Lamsma who decorated them with heavy see-saw arpeggios, harmony on double stops and rolled chords lightly plucked. The effect was magical, mystical, searing and confirming that more can be done with ever-shifting harmony by itself than one would have previously thought. Throughout its ten minutes it was beautifully wrought by both players.

Prior to *Fratres* we heard Dvořák's Four Romantic Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op. 75, followed by Mendelssohn's Sonata in F for Violin and Piano. Schumann's Sonata No. 2 in D Minor for Violin and Piano ended the program. None of these pieces represented their composers at their best. Indeed the Schumann D Minor Sonata sounded like a forerunner to Brahms' much superior violin sonata in that key, a repertoire standard.

Though Lamsma possesses all the technique one would expect from a fiddle player of her stature, her tone suffered often from excessive wobbling, most blatantly on her sustained notes wherein she was at least a half-step wide. This is a trait that is evidently not noticed nor thought to be a negative playing aspect by many musical professionals as well as many concert patrons. After all, she is a silver medalist. But those who have optimum vibrato control, such as Augustin Hadelich, the gold medalist from that competition year, deserve higher praise for simply playing more beautifully.

Thus for the next in the IVCI Laureate Series we look forward to the first Indy appearance on March 10 of S. Korea's [Soyoung Yoon](#) since she won the *silver* medal in the 2010 IVCI. Her tone was nicely controlled. Feb. 10;