

Soyoung Yoon dazzles IVCI Laureate audience

By Tom Aldridge



2010 IVCI Silver Medalist
Soyoung Yoon

Today's mix of highly talented young fiddlers includes a preponderance of technical skills and well honed musicality. Very few of these rising stars also play their instruments with great beauty. [Soyoung Yoon](#) is one such violinist. In her first Indy appearance since winning the silver medal in the 2010 IVCI, Yoon re-confirmed to me that she should have won the gold medal that year over [Clara-Jumi Kang](#), whom I have heard since. With her pianistic partner Chih-Yi Chen, a mainstay of this series, Yoon gave us a breathtaking account of works by Tartini, Prokofiev, Brahms, and Ravel.

Our violin/piano duo began with Giuseppe Tartini's (1692-1770) famous "Devil's Trill" Sonata (in G Minor), a piece violinists like to challenge themselves with, explaining why we've often heard it over recent years (and decades). This very late Baroque/early Classical piece offers technical challenges as great as any from that era . . . ironically except for any trills to speak of. In the final Allegro of the 3rd and final movement, Yoon played a cadenza (i.e. solo) almost entirely of rapid passage work and double stops, weaving her way through this juggernaut with seeming ease. What was more unusual was her rich tone, consistently played at the limit of vibrancy without crossing into obvious wobbliness. It's this trait which causes her to stand out from most of the laureate pack, as well as many touring professionals.

Next came Prokofiev's dour Sonata No. 1 in F Minor. Op. 80, often heard as a participant's choice in the IVCI's semi-finals. Throughout its four movements, Yoon maintained her tone through many taxing passages, such as muted scale runs in both directions, almost a Prokofiev trademark (compare his 1st Violin Concerto). In addition we heard pizzicatti as well as her playing "sul ponticello" (almost on top of the bridge) for the required sinister effect. Musically and technically she played it as well as anyone at her level. Tonally she played it as well as I've ever heard it.



Pianist Chih-Yi Chen

The sunny, lyric Brahms Violin Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 100 came as a welcome contrast to the doldrums of the Prokofiev. Opening with its "Prize Song" allusion to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* from 20 years earlier, Yoon and Chen both "sang" their way through this three-movement thicket of well crafted moments, all of them genial, including the slow-fast progression repeated twice in the second movement.

Ravel's one and only show piece (discounting *Bolero* of course), *Tzigane* works well with either violin and piano or violin and orchestra. Yoon started it by herself, playing with the required "hair" to evoke its Gypsy-like patina. Following the dance perorations suggested by the traditional *czárdás*, Chen's piano enters, and the two build to a roaring climax. This (of course) produced a standing ovation, as well as a "settling down" encore: Tchaikovsky's "Valse Sentimentale." Throughout the recital I must confess to enjoying Yoon's beautiful tone as much as anything else. *March 11;*

<http://www.nuvo.net/indianapolis/soyoung-yoon-dazzles-ivci-laureate-audience/Content?oid=3059037>