

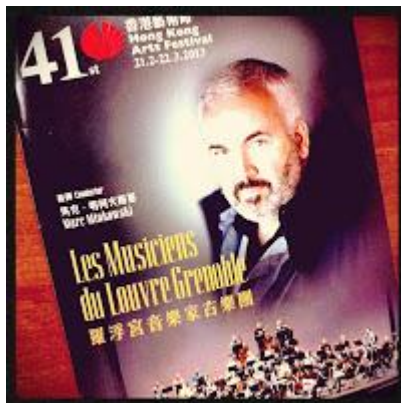
Monday, March 4, 2013

REVIEW: Les Musiciens du Louvre Grenoble with Marc Minkowski

Cultural Centre Concert Hall, Friday March 1

Source :

<http://payingpatronperspective.blogspot.hk/2013/03/review-les-musiciens-du-louvre-grenoble.html>



The thing about advance booking with the Hong Kong Arts Festival, one doesn't really know what seat one will be assigned with or one tended not to have any preferred section in fear that the demand may be high and one ended up not having any ticket. It was therefore with dismay that I found myself seating at the front part of house right, a section that tended to be overwhelmed by the double bass section. Luckily, for the MDLG, the double bass section was at the back and as far as I am concern, the orchestra sounded well balanced from where I was seated.

Conductor Marc Minkowski proved to be a charming narrator and conductor. For the opening piece, Gluck's *Don Juan ou Le Festin de Pierre*, Minkowski cheerfully narrated the story. Though with his heavy French accent, I did refer back to the program just to make sure I understand what he was talking about. The immediate sound and impact of MDLG was that it was very much at home with the music. It showed that the MDLG do not only understand Gluck's music but also made it their business to play his music very well. The tempi and style felt right and highlighted Gluck's considerable understanding of dance as an art form not only different but also independent of opera. The structure was crafted to build a dramatically potent ending and the MDLG did exactly that from elegant dances to the ominous passacaglia.

After the interval was the highlight of the evening, Rameau's *Une Symphonie Imaginaire*, a wonderfully assembled "symphony" that is based on orchestral suites from Rameau's operas, ballets and other works. This attempt is a result of the never-ending disappointment from music lovers that unlike Bach or Handel, Rameau didn't write symphonies or concertos. This "symphony" that Rameau was not able to write, however, was most enchanting with thanks to Minkowski, The combination and flow did not only showcase the genius of Rameau's melodic innovation and harmonic creativity, but also Minkowski's deep understanding and affection toward Rameau's music. The result was fabulous and MDLG played it with its usual exuberance and poetic sensitivity.

With or without the three encores, the evening was truly most satisfying.

Les Musiciens du Louvre Grenoble

GLUCK Don Juan ou Le festin de pierre

RAMEAU Une Symphonie Imaginaire (Imaginary Symphony)

Conductor MARC MINKOWSKI