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Taconic festival makes impressive debut in Manchester

By Jim Lowe – STAFF WRITER | June 28, 2017

Taconic Music opened its new Summer Music Festival with an unexpected splash, Sunday at Burr and Burton's Riley Center in Manchester. But first it was a traditional chamber music concert — well played.



Pianist Jon Klibonoff PROVIDED PHOTO

The afternoon's biggest success, both with the audience and critically, was Paul Schoenfield's *Café Music for Piano Trio*. The three-movement work employs authentic jazz styles in a sophisticated classical blend.

Violinist Joan Genova, Taconic's co-artistic director with her husband Ariel Rudiakov, cellist Caroline Stinson and pianist Jon Klibonoff delivered the work with rhythmic flair and nuanced, beautifully lyrical playing. In particular, the slow movement, *Rubato: Andante moderato*, was exquisite in its tender intimacy.

Klibonoff went it alone for Maurice Ravel's "Valses nobles et sentimentales," eight virtuosic waltzes not to be danced to. Klibonoff is a fine pianist and he used all the colors at his disposal to illustrate the work's different moods from tender to witty to raucous.

It was a virtuoso performance of virtuoso writing.

The program opened with Richard Strauss's *Piano Quartet in C minor, op. 13*, written when the composer was 19. Genova, Rudiakov on viola, cellist Thomas Landschoot and Klibonoff played with virtuosity and passion and delivered the work's Romanticism. While not always cohesive, the performance achieved the work's rich colors and grandeur.

Dessert was saved for last — and it was a surprise.

Irish singer and actress Maxine Linehan, joined by Taconic faculty and students, delivered a short but electric preview of her show "What

would Petula do?" which will be presented Sept. 2 as a benefit for the festival's education programs. The audience was thrilled.

If Sunday's concert is any indication, the Taconic Music Festival could well add its name to Vermont's top chamber music destinations.

TACONIC MUSIC SUMMER FESTIVAL

The Taconic Music Summer Festival presents Festival Concerts, with its faculty, at 4 p.m. Sundays through July 16 at Burr and Burton Academy's Riley Center in Manchester.

Tickets are \$25; call 362-7162, or go online to www.taconicmusic.org.