

# Symphonia Boca Raton at Roberts Theatre – Gerard Schwarz conducts Piston, Carter & Mozart – Marika Bournaki plays K466

Sunday, December 02, 2018 Roberts Theatre, Saint Andrews School, Boca Raton, Florida

*Reviewed by David M. Rice*

Gerard Schwarz began with Walter Piston's engaging 1941 Sinfonietta. In the opening Allegro grazioso strings sang out sweetly but soon became embroiled with winds in more-complex harmonies, the pace picking up but relenting to a gentle ending. The winds are also prominent in the Adagio, and the ensemble brimmed with energy in the Finale.

Marika Bournaki's development as a prodigy is chronicled in the film, I am Not a Rock Star. Now in her late-twenties, she demonstrated artistic maturity in K466. Schwarz ably balanced the syncopated violins and violas with the steady beat of the cellos and basses in the dark introduction, its moodiness instantly dissipating with Bournaki's gentle lyrical phrasing. In the ensuing dialogue, she dashed off passagework with aplomb, and then gave an intense and stirring traversal of Beethoven's cadenza. In the 'Romanze' Bournaki forcefully contrasted the stormy second interlude with the graceful surrounds, and, following the stormy first pages, Bournaki and Schwarz partnered to keep the Finale sparkling, via further Beethoven. As an encore she played the Andante spianato from Chopin's Opus 22.

Following intermission the strings gave Elliott Carter's Elegy (1939) a heartrending reading, and completed the concert with Mozart's 'Linz' Symphony. When the composer arrived there in the fall of 1783 he learned that he was expected to provide a Symphony scheduled for four days ahead. He set about writing one. Schwarz led an outstanding account of K425, lending gravity to the innovative Adagio introduction, then matching the Allegro spiritoso marking; attacks were incisive, punctuated by trumpets and timpani, and the strings swayed in the subsequent slow movement. The Minuet was stately, with charming oboes and bassoons in the Trio, and the impulsive main idea in the Presto Finale was accented subtly by the bassoon and launched a series of fine solos.

## **Walter Piston**

Sinfonietta

## **Mozart**

Piano Concerto No.20 in D-minor, K466

## **Elliott Carter**

Elegy

## **Mozart**

Symphony No.36 in C, K425 (Linz)

Marika Bournaki (piano)

Symphonia Boca Raton

Gerard Schwarz