

Violinist Zina Schiff Biography

Violinist Zina Schiff has been described by the New York Times as an instrumentalist of "Luscious high voltage...vintage Heifetz." The comparison to the legendary Heifetz is apt, as Zina is a Heifetz protege. With her special blend of passion, poetry and communicative power, she has dazzled audiences throughout North America, Eastern and Western Europe, Israel, and Australia.

Zina's many awards include the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Award, the San Francisco Symphony Foundation Award, and a grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Fund for Music. A student of Ivan Galamian at The Curtis Institute of Music, she is the only violinist to have won both the Junior and Senior Auditions of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Named one of the "Top Ten College Winners" by Glamour Magazine during her senior year at the University of California at Berkeley, Zina was selected as an "Outstanding Young Artist" by Musical America and honored as a "Distinguished Alumna" by Louisiana State University in Shreveport, where she earned her masters degree in liberal arts.

Zina has performed at such summer festivals as Aspen, Music from Bear Valley, Mendocino, Sewanee and Newport, Rhode Island, where her artistry was described as "pure perfume". Radio listeners are familiar with Zina's appearances on National Public Radio's **Performance Today**, WGBH's Morning Pro Music in Boston, and New York's WQXR. Television viewers worldwide saw Zina on the PBS "Nova" program entitled "What is Music?", where she performed the Sibelius concerto on an experimental violin by Texas A & M professor Joseph Nagyvary and led to her recording *The Stradivarius Puzzle*. She performed the New York premiere of Richard Nanes' Hebraic Lament at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine for the 7th Annual Interfaith Concert of Remembrance.

Zina's first recording was the score for the MGM movie, **The Fixer**, composed for solo violin by Academy-Award winner Maurice Jarre. Her CD debut was with the Israel Philharmonic - a Bach/Vivaldi album and **The Lark Ascending**, featuring the music of Vaughan Williams.

Solo disks on the 4Tay label are King David's Lyre, a celebration of Jewish music and Here's One, an American collection which was featured in 50 countries on the radio show Art of the States. Both of these CDs were selected as Critics Choices for 1997 by the American Record Guide. *Cecil Burtleigh: Music for Violin and Piano* on the Naxos American Classics series received the same honor from the American Record Guide for 2002. Her second Jewish CD on 4Tay, *The Golden Dove: Masterpieces from the Russian Jewish Folk Music Society*, was praised by Gramophone

for its “fiery fingerwork ... bittersweet melancholy.” Her most recent recording on the 4Tay label is *Elijah’s Violin*.

Audiences on four continents have been spellbound by Zina’s “sensational violin talent” (San Francisco Chronicle) and her “complete mastery of the violin ... she took her audience’s breath away in a programme worthy of her teacher Heifetz” (London Daily Telegraph).