

Biography

California-born 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 protégée. With her special blend of passion, poetry and communicative power, she has dazzled audiences throughout North America, Eastern and Western Europe, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. In the United States, Zina has soloed with such major orchestras as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Rochester, Brooklyn, San Antonio, Nashville, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle.

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. As a student of Ivan Galamian at The Curtis Institute of Music, she 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. She also completed a Master of Jewish Studies degree from Spertus Institute. Zina was guest speaker at the 2014 convention of the American String Teachers Association. Her talk, “The Ten Commandments of Jascha Heifetz,” appeared in the August issue of String Magazine.

Zina has performed at such summer festivals as Aspen, Music from Bear Valley, Mendocino, Sewanee and Newport, 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 and Live from Fraser 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* and performing at the Bush Presidential Library. She gave the New York premiere of Richard Nanes’ *Rhapsodie* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and has subsequently performed it internationally, including at the Budapest Spring Festival.

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 discs on the 4Tay label are *King David's Lyre* 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 Burleigh: Music for Violin and Piano* on the Naxos American Classics series received the same honor from the American Record Guide for 2002. Other recordings include *The Golden Dove*, *Elijah's Violin*, and the *Bloch Violin Concerto* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, chosen as "Recording of the Month" by Music Web International and given a "10/10" rating by ClassicsToday.com. Her recording of the Brahms Sonatas on MSR Classics was lauded as "a glorious performance" by Gramophone. Zina recorded the Sibelius and Barber Violin Concertos and the world premiere of Ben-Haim's *Three Songs Without Words* with the MAV Concert Orchestra of Budapest, conducted by her daughter, Avlana Eisenberg. Her most recent releases are a Hollywood-themed CDs, including sonatas of Zeisl and Copland; and a French-inspired CD featuring Bloch's *Poeme Mystique*, which Gramophone (Nov. 2016) extolled as a "compelling new disc."

February 2017

596 words