

NEW RELEASE MUSO

Mai 2017

3 re-releases

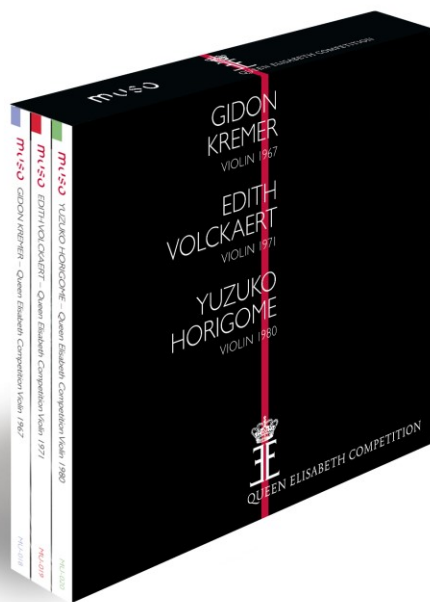
Historical recordings

Queen Elisabeth Competition – Violin

Gidon Kremer (1967)

Edith Volckaert (1971)

Yuzuko Horigome (1980)



The muso label continues its exploration of the archives of the Queen Elisabeth Competition of Belgium. After the three discs of the pianists Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden, Abdel Rahman El Bacha and Frank Braley released in 2016, the time has come to look at the other major instrument of the competition: the violin.

Whereas some historic performances of laureates are still available and have been released many times already, this box-set of three discs will enable us to relive some hitherto unreleased moments of the violin competition, featuring three laureates with very different personalities.

Chronologically we start in May 1967 – the year of Philippe Hirschhorn's First Prize – with the very first recordings of a young, 20 year old Latvian, **Gidon Kremer**. Winning third place that year, this exceptional musical personality already showed all the passionate musicianship that led him on to his well-known career over the past fifty years.

After this comes a disc of a Belgian violinist revealed by the competition of 1971, **Edith Volckaert**. This young woman from Ghent was precociously brilliant, becoming a great international soloist as well as a great teacher; her career was shattered by illness at the age of 42. She came fifth in the competition, and despite tiredness at some points in the Shostakovich First Concerto performed during the final, she displayed a radiant sonority, superb phrasing, technical clarity, with attention paid to every gesture, every note, her playing being both straightforward and extraordinarily natural. Her Second Concerto of Bartók played at the laureates' concert is amazing.

Finally, 1980 witnessed the success of a Japanese laureate who was immediately 'adopted' by the Belgian public and the international music scene: **Yuzuko Horigome**. Already highly impressive during the semi-finals (her Ysaÿe Sonata is quite simply splendid), she confirmed this impression in the final with a Brahms Sonata of incredible musicality, followed by a Sibelius Concerto that was one of the finest moments of the whole competition.

As, in 2017, we are having the first Queen Elisabeth Competition devoted to the cello – some 80 years after the first Ysaÿe Competition, won by David Oistrakh, this box-set gives us the opportunity of rediscovering some of the great moments of the violin competition.

Total time: 3h44'02"

Slip case

3 digipaks with booklets 12 & 16 pages

Texts by Michel Stockhem in English, French and Dutch

Live recordings 1967 – 1971 – 1980

Restored and remastered in 2017

Reference: MU-998

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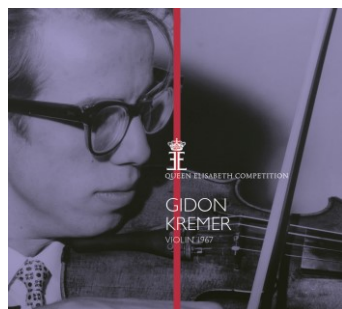
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Gidon Kremer

Queen Elisabeth Competition – Violin 1967



Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1856) – **Fantasie for violin and piano in C major, Op. 131**

Ernest CHAUSSON (1855-1899) – **Poème, Op. 25**

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934) – **Violin Concerto in B minor, Op. 61**

Gidon Kremer, violin

Marina Bondarenko, piano

Grand Orchestre Symphonique de la RTB – Daniel Sternefeld, conductor

National Orchestra of Belgium – René Defossez, conductor

Total time: 68'15"

Live recordings 1967

Reference: MU-018 – Bar code: 5425019973188

The Queen Elisabeth Competition for the violin of 1967 proved to be a fertile year for the massive Soviet delegation that had arrived in the attempt to sweep the competition, already won four years previously by the Russian Alexei Michlin.

In the final, three of the four laureates are Latvian, something that could not but ruffle the feathers of the Soviet authorities. Philippe Hirschhorn's first place was beyond doubt, he was more than imperial and playing like that had unquestionably not been heard since Leonid Kogan in 1951. Yet on the third step of the podium, the public discovered an extraordinary musician in a young man aged barely twenty: **Gidon Kremer**. He presented an unusual programme, performing the Elgar Concerto, a work rarely played in the final of leading competitions. He was disappointed at his ranking, yet such a nature could not leave the members of the jury indifferent, in one way or another!

All of **Kremer** can already be found in these very first recordings of someone who would mark the history of his instrument for the next 50 years. His playing is nervy, at times abrasive, yet always soulful. There is no sense of artificial beauty with **Gidon Kremer**; he is a fighter for art, an outstanding musical personality that his subsequent immense career has shown every day.

Edith Volckaert

Queen Elisabeth Competition – Violin 1971



Dmitry SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975) – **Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 77**

Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945) – **Violin Concerto No. 2, Sz. 112**

Edith Volckaert, violin

Grand Orchestre Symphonique de la RTB – René Defossez, conductor

National Orchestra of Belgium – Michael Gielen, conductor

Total time: 79'40"

Live recordings 1971

Reference: MU-019 – Bar code: 5425019973193

The violin competition of 1971 marked a first in the history of the competition, as it was a woman who won the First Prize, the Israeli Myriam Fried, who led the way for many other female laureates. Juicy detail of this year 71 also: the immense Zakhar Bron was on the twelfth step, a sign of the ever exceptional level of the Queen Elisabeth Competition!

That year the public discovered a young woman from Ghent, timid and outstandingly gifted: **Edith Volckaert**. She had already won several international competitions, and, with her amazing gifts, had been following since the age of six the classes of one who would be her only teacher: the pedagogue and soloist Carlo Van Neste. She came fifth in the competition, ending her performance of Shostakovich's First Concerto in a state of exhaustion before the man who first performed it and now jury member: David Oistrakh. On this disc she can also be heard in the laureates' concert where, now rested, she produced a magnificent performance of Bartók's Second Concerto.

The career of **Edith Volckaert** was shattered 20 years later by an illness that came far too early. She recorded little, and this disc enables us to pay homage to her art and to bring back to life what remains one of the finest moments in the history of Belgian laureates at the Queen Elisabeth Competition.

Yuzuko Horigome

Queen Elisabeth Competition – Violin 1980



Eugène YSAÏE (1858-1931) – **Sonata for Solo Violin, Op. 27/2**

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791) – **Rondo for violin and orchestra in C major, KV 373**

Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897) – **Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78**

Jean SIBELIUS (1865-1957) – **Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47**

Yuzuko Horigome, violin

Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden, piano

National Orchestra of Belgium – Georges Octors, conductor

Total time: 76'07"

Live recordings 1980

Reference: MU-020 – Bar code: 5425019973209

In 1980 the Queen Elisabeth Competition was played out in the context of the Cold War: the Russian candidates were absent, too many Soviet laureates having taken advantage of their success to cross to the other side of the Iron Curtain. The Americans therefore arrived confident they would be giving a demonstration, yet this was to neglect the contribution of Japan, that had three laureates among the top four. And, a remarkable fact, all came from the teaching environment of their own country.

Belgium was in delight as it discovered the winner of the competition that year: **Yuzuko Horigome**. She had already made a big impression during the semi-finals, notably with her performance of a sonata by Ysaÿe that showed remarkable clarity and determination. This formidable musician of 22 years confirmed in the final this excellent impression with a magnificent Brahms' First Sonata performed in thoughtful silence. Her Sibelius Concerto galvanised the orchestra and roused the public to a passion for one of the very finest performances of this concerto in the history of the competition.

Since this first success of an Asian laureate at the competition, **Yuzuko Horigome** has pursued a superb career in Europe and in her native country as a soloist yet also as a renowned teacher. Every day she shows that knowledge and talent, with regard to Western music, have been universal for a very long time.