

Guitar virtuoso thrills local audience

MORRISBURG - It is, of course, a cliché to say it, but Daniel Bolshoy, the virtuoso who presented a solo concert in Morrisburg on March 15, 2008, displayed such extraordinary skill on his guitar, that he really did make it appear easy.

However, the large audience in attendance at the Operating Engineers Institute was very aware, right from the artist's opening selection, that they were listening to a master musician.

Bolshoy's Morrisburg concert ranged from the whimsical melodies of composer Augustin Barrios to the dramatic, varied improvisations of Clark Ross in his *McGillicuddy's Rant*.

Throughout his program, the classical guitarist was simply outstanding.

As personable as he is talented, Bolshoy laughingly described himself to the crowd as a "Russian-born, Israeli-trained, Canadian boy from Ottawa who lives in Montreal."

Certainly he has performed all over North America, and has been a guest soloist with symphony orchestras and chamber orchestras in most major cities.

He is a frequent performer at music festivals and Arts centres, as well as a showcased young talent on CBC.

When he is not on tour, Bolshoy teaches guitar at Concordia University as well as teaching guitar master classes at other educational institutions.

During an evening of wide-ranging works, Bolshoy also shared stories and anecdotes with the audience that gave insight into the composers featured in his program and their music.

People particularly enjoyed Bolshoy's description of how he introduces classical music to teenagers in high schools he visits.

"I tell them that Paganini, who played violin and composed for violin and guitar, was the original 'rock star'. He wore long black coats and played with such an extraordinary passion that people whispered that he must have sold his soul to the devil for his talents...just as they often describe modern rock artists. That gets them interested in classical music."

Mario Pronovost, Jeanne Ward and Cory Coons, all on the board of the St. Lawrence Acoustic Stage Performances Inc., which sponsored Bolshoy's March 15th performance, were thrilled with the concert and with the response of the public.

"Things went very well tonight," Coons said.

"We had a good crowd. Bolshoy is incredible. He plays like he has two or three instruments in his hands, not just one guitar. And he is also a charming story teller."

An unexpected highlight of the evening was the announcement that the artist was celebrating his 32nd birthday that evening.

The audience sang him a rousing "Happy Birthday."

Bolshoy responded by saying that "it is a real pleasure to be with you and spend my birthday with you in Morrisburg. My mother," he added, grinning, "hates you."

Following a well deserved standing ovation and encore at the end of the evening, Bolshoy was presented with a framed certificate by the board of the St. Lawrence Acoustic Stage Performances.



A classic evening

Guitar virtuoso Daniel Bolshoy presented an outstanding program at the Operating Engineers Training Institute on March 15.

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