

## Classical

### Singing Praises

**The Jerusalem International Chamber Music Festival's programme is perfect.  
No less.**

There has never yet been in the State of Israel an international festival of chamber music like the New Festival opening at the YMCA auditorium in Jerusalem on August 30. The Festival is for two weeks and will include an incredible programme with a line up of performers one would be more likely to see at leading world festivals.

This is all the "fault" of Elena Bashkirova, the wife of Daniel Barenboim, who has succeeded in achieving the unbelievable, to kill the ridiculous musical pretentiousness, keeping it well away from the event. Bashkirova has harvested heavenly works of incredible beauty and quality; she is not just tickling our ears, but penetrating the very depths of our minds and hearts.

The New Festival's concerts do not insult the audience's intelligence. The artists arriving are among the greatest in the world. The most exciting surprise: one of the greatest tenors of today, Rolando Villazon, who will be singing the Lieder cycles "Diechtherlibe" and "Liederkreis" by Schumann with Daniel Barenboim. I have heard Villazon on many occasions and I am always amazed anew: his voice rings like the voice of Placido Domingo in the early 1960s when he was young and living in Tel Aviv. Robert Holl will also be singing songs by Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky and Borodin. Where could you hear such incredible songs as these? The epitome will be singing Schubert's song cycle "Winterreise", with Barenboim at the piano, of course.

For the sake of change, the artists arriving do not belong to the world's geriatric wards, but to a new generation that is thrilling the world: The "child" Nabil Shehata on the double-bass, and the youngster Emanuel Pahud, a great flautist, will grace the stage. Bashkirova is not only playing but also giving a wonderful opportunity to our young, superb Israeli players including Guy Braunstein, Amichai Grosz, Ori Kam, Matan Porat and Yael Karet, the new promise of Israeli pianists. There are also many others who are excellent.

After a careful analysis of the concert programmes, there seems to be not even the slightest error. Bashkirova is presenting superb programmes that includes combinations of well known works together with the new, the exciting and the unknown. A wonderful mixture. A musical feast with a combination of spices that are out of this world. And this really is an opportunity not to be missed.

Hanoch Ron,  
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