

Mp3 Janet Chvatal And Scott Kritzer - In The Blue Hour



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We present new versions of arias and duets for voice and guitar in a chamber setting. 15 MP3 Songs

CLASSICAL: Traditional, EASY LISTENING: Mood Music Details: Chvatal, Kritzer make sweet music

02/24/04 JAMES McQUILLEN From Rock Hudson and Doris Day to Paul Reiser and Helen Hunt, there have been performers whose chemistry is so convincing it's hard to believe they're not romantically linked beyond the stage or screen. The voice-and-guitar duo of Janet Chvatal and Scott Kritzer is like that. You could be forgiven for assuming they're married -- they are, just not to each other -- because their affectionate rapport could put most couples to shame. Their concert Sunday afternoon at the Church of St. John the Baptist, on the campus of Oregon Episcopal School, came across like an aftershock from Valentine's Day. The performance, which marked the debut of the church's Coulter Concert Series, was the duo's first in Portland in three years. After all that time, their easygoing intimacy, which takes the form of a certain archetype of the male-female relationship, was immediately familiar to anyone who'd seen them before. Chvatal, a beauty with a permanent smile, told the audience that they're both hopeless romantics; Kritzer, stoutly handsome and self-deprecating, demurred, saying it's "not a guy thing." She gently coaxed him to talk more; he grudgingly assented. And as is their tradition, they awarded one of their CDs to the husband and wife in the audience who had been married longest (the winners, at 58 years, narrowly edged out another couple who could claim only 57). It all might seem cloying if they weren't such solid musicians, or if their programming wasn't so thoughtfully considered. But they are, and it is, so Sunday's concert was typically enchanting. The instrumental combination helped, too -- the quiet sound of the guitar focused the audience's attention, putting listeners in a better position to be beguiled by Chvatal's sweet soprano. They were especially strong in their Spanish and Latin American repertoire: three of the "Songs of Puerto Rico" by Ernesto Cordero; Heitor Villa-Lobos' arrangement for voice and

guitar of the fifth of his "Bachianas Brasileiras"; and Manuel de Falla's lullaby "Nana." Particularly impressive was the way they expressed great warmth and depth of feeling through what was essentially a clean and careful technique. Kritzer took a few solo turns, notably an arresting performance of Isaac Albeniz's "Asturias" arranged for guitar. The two wrapped up the afternoon with songs from films -- which they turned into a cinema quiz for the audience -- and selections from their latest disc, of operatic arias. In introducing the encore, Franz Schubert's setting of "Ave Maria," Chvatal told the audience it was the first song they played together -- which was a lot like hearing the story of a couple's first date. James McQuillen: c/o The Oregonian A&E, 1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, OR 97201.

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