



American Record Guide

July/August 2014

Hye-Jin Kim, violin

Debussy & Janacek: *Sonatas*; **Sibelius:** *5 Pieces*; **Smetana:** *From My Homeland*

With Ieva Jokubaviciute, piano

Concert Artists Guild 112 – 61 minutes



Miss Kim's playing is superb – warm, polished, expressive – supported and amplified by the pianist's sensitive accompaniment. The recorded sound is spacious and balanced. With the musical and technical side buttoned up, the frosting on the cake is the program: except for the Debussy, all music that one doesn't hear often. And it really is a recital program, not an installment in a complete cycle of anything.

Aside from his violin concerto, Sibelius wrote quite a bit for the violin. The five movements of Op. 81 could almost constitute a sonata; they certainly illustrate

the composer's unique feel for instrumental tone. Janacek always sounds like Janacek. I don't think I'd previously heard his sonata, but I'm glad to be introduced to it by this performance. The Smetana pieces embody the composer's Czech nationalism on a miniature, personal scale, so unlike the big gestures of *Ma Vlast* and *The Bartered Bride* but yet no less pungent and evocative. I could go on, but you get the point: if the music of these composers appeals to you at all, this program gives you a particularly rewarding hour of enjoyment.

HANSEN