

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

We speak to some young virtuosos of the Swiss music scene about their careers and future prospects

## ≡ MIRJAM TSCHOPP VIOLIN AND VIOLA



HERBERT SCHERZ

piano that was written for me.' And she happily recalls other works to which she has given birth in recent years: 'One of my personal highlights was when I premiered, with conductor Semyon Bychkov and the WDR Symphony Orchestra, Nicolas Bacri's Third Violin Concerto, which was specially written for me. It is one of the greatest things I've done.'

Tschopp made her solo debut as a violinist at the age of 13 and went on to study at the Winterthur Music Academy with Aida Stucki Piraccini; she has also been taught by Franco Gulli (violin) and Christoph Schiller (viola). In 2000 she was sole prizewinner of the Max Rostal Competition for viola in Berlin.

'Gorgeously eloquent' was how *The Strad* described Mirjam Tschopp for her playing on her recording of Ahmet Adnan Saygun's Violin Concerto last September. The 29-year-old Swiss musician is one of those rare string players who excel equally on the violin and the viola, and in June she records the same composer's Viola Concerto. 'It's a great piece,' she says, describing it as very dark, dramatic music. 'I feel honoured to have the chance to record it.'

Perhaps inspired by the example of her mentor Anne-Sophie Mutter, Tschopp is busy expanding the repertoire for both instruments: 'I'm very much looking forward to playing the premiere next month of Swiss composer Claudia Ulla Binder's *Schlingen*, a piece for viola and

## SWISS PIANO TRIO >>

ANGELA GOLUBEVA VIOLIN  
SEBASTIEN SINGER CELLO  
MARTIN LUCAS STAUB PIANO



ANITA SCHLAEFLI

The Swiss Piano Trio, winners of last year's International Johannes Brahms Competition, the 2003 International Chamber Music Competition in Caltanissetta and the 2001 Migros Chamber Music Competition in Zurich, has had enough of entering competitions. 'Two first prizes are sufficient,' says Sebastien Singer, the trio's cellist. 'We have proved that we can do it if we want.'

The international recognition brought by these successes has resulted in a busy concert schedule. The trio has recently completed a tour of eastern Europe, which will be followed by trips to Latin America, China and Italy. Though the members have attended masterclasses with artists such as the Alban Berg Trio and Menahem Pressler, Singer is adamant that the trio is focused on finding its own style: 'We are glad to be exposed to different influences, but we always want to do our own interpretation of the music.' Common group values seem to be a high priority for the trio. Singer comments that the sounds of Angela Golubeva's 1774 Gennaro Gagliano violin and his 1861 Miremont cello complement each other well, despite being made nearly a hundred years apart: 'We both use Benoît Rolland bows as well, which is some more common ground.'

The trio members feel a responsibility to live up to the group's name by championing Swiss music. Next year will see them perform the world premiere of the triple concerto written for them by Swiss-born New Yorker Daniel Schnyder.

The group's most recent CD, on the Musique Suisse label, features works by Schnyder, Frank Martin and Paul Juon.