

Debussy
Lefkowitz
Ysaÿe



YARLUNG RECORDS
BOB ATTIEH, PRODUCER

"...extremely gifted and polished....

Petteri plays with natural
raw talent and extraordinary
technical and musical finesse...
his personality infuses his music
with a charm and depth especially
welcome today. A young master."

—Hagai Shaham



Volume I

Petteri Iivonen *Art of the Violin*

1-4	Eugène Ysaÿe	
	Sonata No. 2 in A Minor	12:28
	Obsession	2:19
	Malinconia	2:52
	Danse des ombres	4:14
	Les Furies	3:03
5-7	Claude Debussy	
	Sonata for Violin and Piano in G Minor	13:13
	Allegro vivo	4:49
	Intermède: Fantasque et léger	4:11
	Finale: Très animé	4:14
	<i>with Kevin Fitz-Gerald, piano</i>	
8-9	David S. Lefkowitz	5:22
	<i>Eli Eli</i>	3:54
	Original Eli Eli folk tune by David Zehavi	1:29



The Merging Technologies Quartet

Merging Technologies has done the recording industry a great favor. The Swiss company, not much larger than Yarlung Records, is run by a small group of dedicated engineers and designers who took the original Direct Stream Digital (DSD) technology developed by Philips and Sony and made it usable for record labels. To Claude Cellier, Dominique Brulhart, Loïc Andrieu, Bertrand Van Kempen (at Merging Technologies near Lausanne) and Chris Hollebone (in London) we say a most hearty thank you.

Not only did Merging create the first user-friendly method of recording in 256fs (or Quad DSD as music writer David Robinson affectionately calls it) using Horus or Hapi converters, but they created the Pyramix software bundle that enables us to create tracks and adjust volume in Native DSD.

Yarlung is indeed grateful to Merging Technologies. Not only did David Robinson loan us his Hapi and Pyramix software keys to make these transcriptions from our SonoruS Series of analog tapes, but Merging Technologies generously sponsored our second quartet of albums: the Merging Quartet.

We are “analog people” at Yarlung Records. Our assistant producer Jacob and I well remember a live concert recording session at The Broad Stage in Santa Monica during which the lights went out and we lost power briefly in the middle of the concert. The orchestra did not pause. Our primary analog tape recorders kept rolling through the short blackout but the high resolution digital system we were using at the time crashed. By contrast, we used the Pyramix software on a simple desktop computer for over a week without a single instability or freeze or need to reboot. Stable computer technology is important to us and we are grateful to the thinkers at Merging Technologies for putting so much effort into the details of their system.

And for engineers (like Morten Lindberg at 2L in Norway) who prefer to work in high resolution PCM, Merging Technologies created “DXD,” which samples the music at 352.8 kHz with 24 bit depth.

Engineers have been vocal in their support of the sound quality they get using Merging equipment. George Gilliam, for example, who records the Dallas Symphony writes:

I still cannot believe the sound quality improvement in the audio control room, all due to the fine microphone preamps and converters in Hapi/Horus. These are the highest quality I've experienced. This is an incredible system that perfectly meets the needs for classical music recording and production. I can't imagine using anything else.

David Robinson writes bluntly and enthusiastically:

This is the best Quad DSD A/D and D/A out there.

From the Grammy® Award winning team at 5/4 Productions:

Taking DSD from 2.8 MHz to 11.2 MHz doesn't just step it up to the next level, it catapults it!

Let's end with a comment from Tim Martyn, a 4-time GRAMMY winning engineer:

Merging Technologies' Horus brilliantly combines all three requirements any engineer would expect from such a device: pristine sonics, an elegant yet simple user interface, and rock solid reliability.

The Horus handles up to 48 analog channels, and the Hapi (using the same circuitry as the Horus) handles 16 channels.

Thank you Merging!

Bob Attiyeh, producer



Petteri Iivonen: Art of the Violin

Producers Notes

I remember the first time I heard the name “Petteri Iivonen.” It was late in the evening, and my phone rang at home. “Hello Bob,” a dark voice greeted me, before I could say hello myself. “My name is Hagai Shaham. You do not know me, but I know a young violinist you must hear right away. He comes from Finland. His name is Petteri Iivonen.” This is the sort of call, at least from musicians like Hagai, that makes producers grin from ear to ear. “You’re *the* Hagai Shaham? The concert violinist? Of course I know who you are. I would be delighted.”

Hagai booked time for us in Alfred Newman Hall, a beautiful concert space at the University of Southern California where Hagai teaches. It is special when the world’s leading soloists take time away from performing for academic life, and even more special when they have the ability to teach well, and transmit their elusive arts to the next generation of masters. Hagai has good company. Famed violinist Midori Goto chairs the strings department at USC. Jascha Heifetz taught here. Gregor Piatigorsky taught here.

At my request, Petteri began his audition with Bach’s G Minor Sonata. Within three measures I knew I was hearing someone special. Even though Petteri was only 20 years old at the time, I realized I was hearing someone who would soon become one of my favorite violinists.

It is to support young concert musicians as they begin their international concert careers, to support people like Petteri, and pianist Orion Weiss and ‘cellist Elinor Frey before him, that Yarlung Artists exists. Yarlung Artists (www.yarlungartists.org) is a nonprofit which raises money to create debut albums: these recordings prove vital to young musicians’ careers. I told Petteri I would ask our advisors, and if they said yes, it was a “go.” Our advisors endorsed our plans, and Midori emailed immediately from USC, expressing her hope, support and encouragement.

Dean Robert Cutietta kindly invited us to record this album in Newman Hall, where I first heard Petteri play. Thanks to Rob, Yarlung Records had the pleasure of recording *Petteri Iivonen: Art of the Violin*, and *Ciaramella: Music from the Court of Burgundy* in the same week. And we ended our sessions for Petteri with a live concert recording session, from which we took the Lefkowitz and Bach performances on this album.



Petteri Iivonen
photo: Hagai Shaham

Thoughts on the Music

Belgian composer Eugène Ysaÿe lived from 1858 to 1931, and achieved great fame as a conductor, composer and concert violinist. As a violinist, he was perhaps best known for his interpretations of Bach and Beethoven. Ysaÿe's fascination, or indeed obsession with Bach inspired his writing of the sonatas — especially No. 2 in A Minor, which begins with a direct quotation from Bach's Partita No. 3.

Legend has it that Ysaÿe composed all six of his Op. 27 violin sonatas, or at least completed sketches of them, within a 24 hour period in 1924. The composer credited his inspiration to a concert in which Joseph Szigeti played Bach's G Minor Sonata (the same sonata Petteri played for me at our audition). Ysaÿe dedicated his 2nd sonata to Jacques Thibaud, and his 4th in E Minor, Ysaÿe's personal favorite, to Fritz Kreisler.

Hilary Hahn performed Ysaÿe's 2nd violin sonata in Walt Disney Concert Hall during her most recent Los Angeles recital. This was the first time I heard this piece performed live, and it was this work that I remember best from Hahn's exhilarating performance. When Petteri told me he was interested in recording this work, as well as Ysaÿe's 4th sonata, I was delighted.

Yarlung Artists was especially proud to commission David S. Lefkowitz to write *Eli Eli* for Petteri's recording and concerts. Lefkowitz wrote this work in honor of Hagai Shaham, who, like Petteri, has already performed this piece on three continents. Yarlung Artists is especially grateful to the Jerry & Adi Greenberg Foundation for underwriting this commission.



Petteri & Kevin in Alfred Newman green room during intermisson

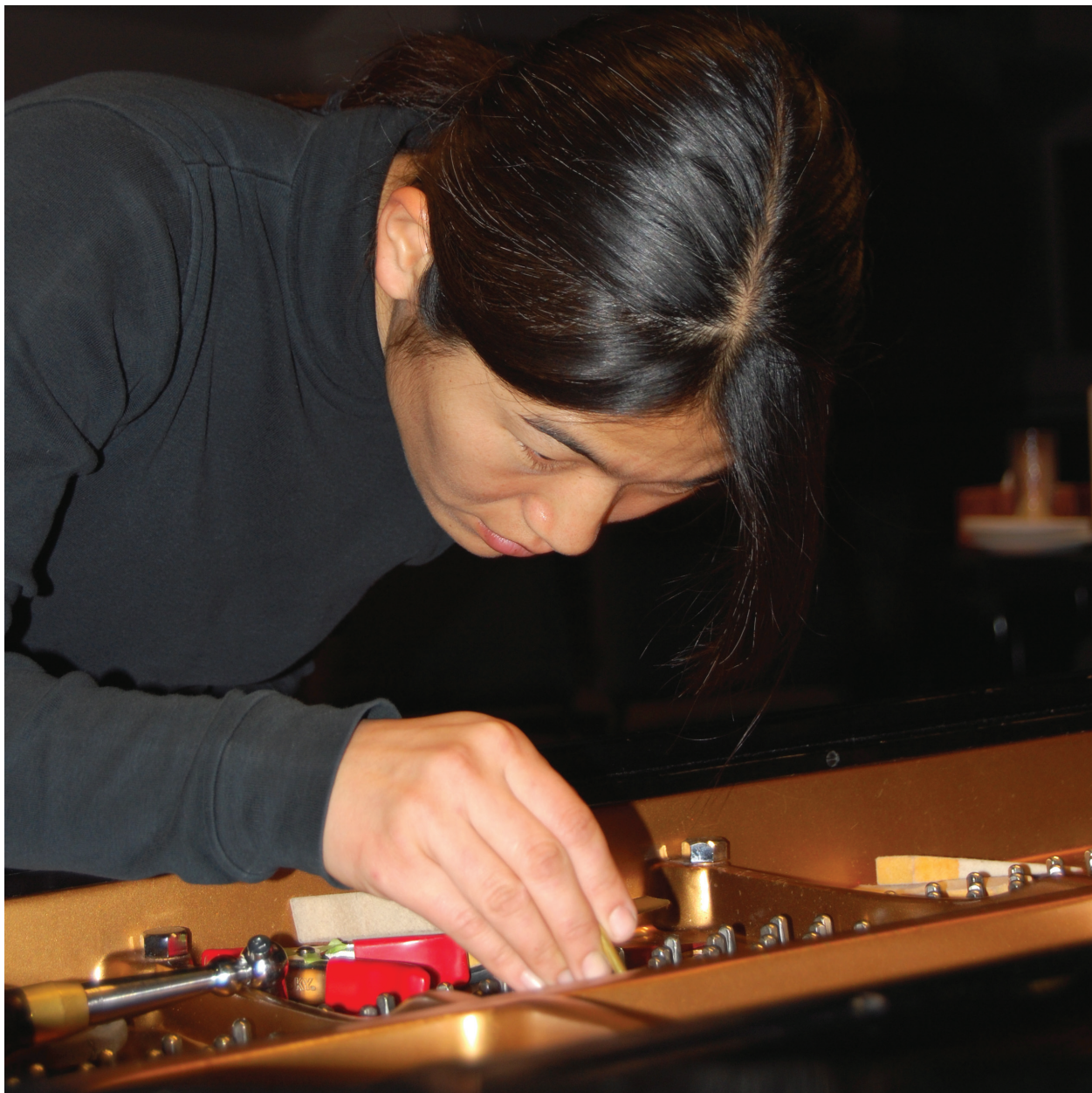
Lefkowitz took the now-popular folk tune by David Zehavi based on the poem *Eli Eli* written by Hannah Senesh (הנה סנש). Lefkowitz composed music that takes inspiration from the original theme. The new Lefkowitz work ranges from virtuosic exuberance to its culmination in the tragic monophonic melody of the original. Petteri performed this live for our concert recording session at USC, and has since played this work in Spain, France, Finland and Israel.

Hannah Senesh represents optimism and determination, even in the face of death. She left her native Hungary to move to Palestine in 1939. In 1943, Senesh joined the Haganah, and trained with the British army to parachute into Nazi-controlled Europe to help rescue Hungarian Jews who were scheduled for deportation to Auschwitz. She was captured and tried by the Nazis in 1944, and executed. Her poetry continues to inspire faith in the goodness of mankind, and indeed inspired this new work of music. Thank you David Lefkowitz, and thank you Jerry and Adi, for making this possible.

One of my favorite aspects of producing this recording was participating in the musical collaboration between Petteri Iivonen and Canadian pianist Kevin Fitz-Gerald. Kevin performs in concert halls around the world as a soloist, has recorded with five record labels including Yarlung Records, and performs regularly in partnership with other musicians including Patrick Gallois, Stephen Isserlis, Richard Stolzman, Alan Civil, Camilla Wicks, Midori Goto, Eudice Shapiro, Milton Thomas, Karen Tuttle, Donald McInnes, Ronald Leonard, and the Bartok, St. Petersburg and St. Lawrence String Quartets. Kevin also performs four-hands piano works with his wife Bernadene Blaha.

Petteri and Kevin perform the G Minor Debussy Violin Sonata on this album, and recorded additional sonatas which Yarlung Records plans to release in the future.

This sonata is one of my favorites, and was the last complete work that Debussy wrote before his death. He completed it in 1917, and performed it himself on piano with Robert Godet on violin. Debussy, perhaps the quintessentially “French” composer, who enjoyed celebrating his inheritance from Rameau and Couperin, nevertheless incorporates rich Wagnerian sonorities in this sonata, as well as influences from his gypsy friends, and musical styles from Spain and Asia. Debussy knew he was very ill when he wrote and performed this work. This music comes directly from the heart of this dying man, but at the same time includes a happier retrospective, not only of himself and his illustrious career, but of France in its heady period before the Great War. Light and Darkness combined. *Chiaroscuro*. In a note to Robert Godet in preparation for the premiere, Debussy wrote: “Don’t trust any piece that appears to hover in flight from heaven - it could have been brooded in the dark depths of a sick man’s brain! For instance, the finale of my sonata: the simple play on a thought that twists itself like a snake biting its own tail...”



Yasuyo Nakamura, Steinway technician

Petteri Iivonen was born in 1987, and began to study the violin at the Helsinki Conservatory when he was four years old. It is telling that Petteri won the Erkki Melartin chamber music competition when he was 15 years old: Petteri's nuanced talent as a musical collaborator (as a partner who listens) remains easy to hear, even in his solo and concerto repertoire.

Since 1997, Petteri's principal teachers have been Tuomas Haapanen and Hagai Shaham. Petteri continues to study despite his increasingly busy concert schedule of solo recitals and concertos in the United States, Germany, Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, Israel, Portugal, Spain and Italy.

Petteri has performed with Paul Neubauer and David Grossman of the New York Philharmonic, and Kevin Fitz-Gerald in Los Angeles. Petteri was invited to perform with pianist Ryan MacEvoy McCullough to open The Broad Stage in Santa Monica in 2008.

Petteri commands his instrument with ease. While much of his music is exceptionally beautiful, it is not beautiful for the sake of being pretty. I have heard very few violinist's with Petteri's ability to control color and timbre, and even fewer who use this ability for such musical and appropriate ends. Listen, just for some examples among many, to the colors Petteri employs in the first movement of the Debussy sonata, especially in the flautando sections. Or the extreme tenderness of the second movement of Ysaÿe's Sonata No. 2. And then compare that with the icy brilliance of the same sonata's fourth movement after the one minute mark. Note too the yearning of an entire nation, perhaps the entire Twentieth Century, in the arrival of the *Eli Eli* theme in tracks twelve and thirteen. And then evaluate this music in comparison with the titanic Bach Partita, and enjoy the world of color and emotion that Petteri delivers in this final work on our recording.

Petteri plays a Ferdinandus Gagliano violin, built in 1767, kindly loaned to him by OKO Bank Art Foundation. Kevin plays New York Steinway serial number 567908 in the Debussy violin sonata.

Yarlung Artists

Petteri's affable personality galvanized as much support for his debut recording as did his exceptional talent with the violin. Yarlung Artists wants to thank the underwriters who made this recording possible, especially Gary and Marcia Hollander, Ann and Jim Mulally, David and Margie Barry, the Jerry and Adi Greenberg Foundation for underwriting the commission of *Eli Eli*, Lawrence Davanzo, Kevin & Silvia Dretzka, Najib Canaan, Mike Rosell in memory of Joan Rosell, Sally Mosher and Carlos and Haydee Mollura.

Companies and Foundations that contributed vital support to Petteri's debut album include Salesforce.com, Red Sky Solutions, Gearworks Pro Audio, The Mari and Edmund D. Edelman Foundation for Music and the Performing Arts, Dean Robert Cutietta



and the University of Southern California, Phoenix Classical, OKO Bank Art Foundation, Los Angeles Philanthropic Committee for the Arts, Linn Records Scotland, and Karen Knauer Photography.

Petteri wishes to express personal thanks also to Steve Hoffman, Ron and Judith Rosen, Hagai Shaham, Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Dean Rob Cutietta, Midori Goto, Ann and Les Noriel, Mason Shefa, Steven Stucky, Ann and Jean Horton, David and Mahnaz Newman, Peachy and Bud Spielberg, Milo Talwani, Lynne Taciak, Ken and Sally Williams, Jan Freiburgs, Corwin & Ruby White, Anne and Jeffrey Grausam, Linda Attiyeh, Jim McDaniels, and Jerry Fecher. Without you, we would not have been able to release this album. Our sincere thanks.

Yarlung Artists is a 501(c)(3) public charity, and your contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. If you would enjoy supporting future musicians as they launch their international concert careers, please see www.yarlungartists.org, or write to us at:

Yarlung Artists
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We recorded this album in Alfred Newman Hall at the University of Southern California, where Hagai Shaham serves on the music faculty, and where Petteri came to study. Newman Hall exemplifies the warm and yet transparent and lively sound of the concert halls that I favor for recordings, and its acoustics adjust easily to provide different lengths of decay. We chose a legendary Austrian AKG C-24 stereo microphone with the original brass surround CK12 tube, made available to us by Gearworks Pro Audio. We used five-foot long Yarlung-Records-designed interconnects with a flat silver ribbon suspended in air for the dielectric, customized vacuum tube preamplifiers and no mixer. The signal path was as short as we could make it, with as few electronics between performer and final product as we could manage. We always try to record this way, but I feel Petteri's sound lends itself especially well to this sort of minimalist recording technique. I would like to thank our friends Jon Fisher of Gearworks Pro Audio for our beautiful microphone, and Joseph Rauen and Michelle Maestas, our valiant stage crew in Newman Hall, whose USC hospitality and boundless enthusiasm contributed greatly to our recording. We hope you enjoy the results.

Bob Attiyeh, producer





Art of the Violin

Petteri Iivonen, violin & Kevin Fitz-Gerald, piano

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|-----|-----------|--|
| 1-4 | Ysaÿe | Sonata No. 2 in A Minor |
| 5-7 | Debussy | Sonata for Violin and Piano in G Minor |
| 8-9 | Lefkowitz | <i>Eli Eli</i> |

This recording was made possible with generous support from:
Gary & Marcia Hollander

Ann & Jim Mulally	Salesforce.com and Red Sky Solutions
David & Margie Barry	Gearworks Pro Audio
Lawrence Davanzo	Phoenix Classical
Kevin & Silvia Dretzka	University of Southern California
Najib Canaan	Mari and Edmund D. Edelman Foundation
Mike Rosell	OKO Bank Art Foundation

Underwriting for the commission of *Eli Eli*:
Jerry & Adi Greenberg Foundation

Recorded in Alfred Newman Hall, Los Angeles, June 9-16, 2008

Recording Engineer: Bob Attiyeh

Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Kevin Gray

Monitoring Equipment: Elliot Midwood

Steinway Technician: Yasuyo Nakamura



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