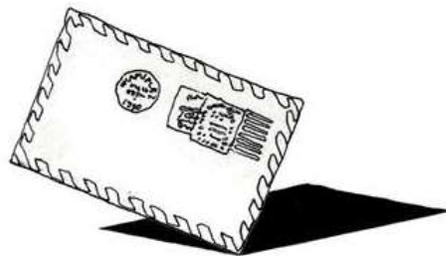


Letter from Mari



December 2008

I hope that you are feeling a sense of completion as the year comes to an end and the Holidays begin. Since many of you write that you enjoy staying in touch with my activities, I wrote this note earlier this fall:

I have just begun a concert tour which is taking me around the world, but I began this letter from our new home in Munich. We moved here this summer to be closer to the Bavarian State Opera, where Kent has been Music Director since 2006.

While we will miss living in Paris, we have been appreciating the clean air and lack of traffic in Munich. My daughter Karin and I still get to visit Paris every two weeks for her piano lessons with Igor Lazko.

As for my work, the season started with the Mozart Concerto KV 595 - his last piano Concerto. I played concerts in Tokyo and Saitama with the New Japan Philharmonic, created by Maestro Seiji Ozawa. It was conducted by the young German conductor Christoph Geschold. Together, Geschold, the New Japan Philharmonic and I were able to collaborate and come up with an almost chamber music-like performance, an optimal situation for a musician, due to the proximity and involvement of the audience.

Over the next two months, I will be travelling, crossing continents almost every other week. Hopefully, someone will invent a good solution for jet lag some day: it is not easy to concentrate on Messiaen when half of the brain is asleep.

...which brings me to my next trip. This is the 100th anniversary of Messiaen, and my sister Momo, who is a specialist in Messiaen, will be playing in a Messiaen series. This fall, in Tokyo, she will be playing the Twenty Regards, Catalogue d'Oiseau, Turangalila Symphony and Quartet For The End of Time. Together, we will also be performing the Vision de L'Amen.

The fall season also includes the Beethoven and Schubert Recitals, Beethoven Concerto No. 5 and Ravel Concerto, which I am re-introducing into the repertoire.

Finally, the recordings that I was focusing on during the beginning of the year will be released this fall - Beethoven Sonatas Op. 2 under the Pentatone label, and Beethoven Concerti No's 1 and 2 under the Analekta label. In 2009, I will begin another full season of recordings.

I also wanted to report news from other family members:

The fall season always has a very clear beginning for us with the opening concerts that Kent conducts in Montreal and Munich. This year, he also turned a page in his life by retiring from the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, his first engagement as a professional conductor, and where he worked for the last 30 years. He and the orchestra enjoyed so many amazing experiences and grew together in ways that can only be experienced over the course of an 'era.' He felt that it was time for the orchestra to get another leader and direction...like a parent letting a child leave the nest. Speaking of which...

Our summer also had very distinct 'lines' around it, due to our daughter's work. Karin spent the entire summer preparing her Concerto Debut (the Mozart Concerto KV 246). While this type of schedule is a big challenge for a nine-year-old, she truly enjoyed the process, and was honored to have many rehearsals (where I played the orchestral part) before guests such as pianist/musicologist William Kindermann and Dieter Rexroth. She played at a Gala concert in honor of Wachtang Korisheli, a pedagogue who trained many professional musicians, including Kent, in the small town of Morro Bay just outside San Luis Obispo, about four hours south of San Francisco. Mr. Korisheli conducted the San Luis Obispo Youth Symphony, which he created, to accompany Karin. It was a weekend filled with joy and celebration, as former students came from all over the world to honor Mr. Korisheli. The 1000-seat concert hall gave an enthusiastic standing ovation to Karin for her performance. We were happy that she enjoyed performing and played her best before such a large audience.

And accompanying her proud parents, were friends, including both our 'Forest Hill Family' and those from Russia and Japan. They all trekked to the small town of Morro Bay to help support Karin. She was very excited.

Then, to cap off the summer season, we took a 3-day vacation at our San Francisco home, and spent our time bowling, playing mini golf, visiting steak houses, eating hotdogs...

We wish you a few moments of pure joy and wonder as the Holidays unfold.

Mari

