

Opus Two

William Terwilliger, violin
Andrew Cooperstock, piano



Falling In Love With Classical Opus Two

By Suzanna Bowling

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"I recommend this CD for Gershwin lovers everywhere."

The University of Colorado came out in force at 54 Below to help cheer on fellow teacher and concert player Andrew Cooperstock and to hear a performance of *The Music of George Gershwin* by the duo Opus Two. **Opus Two combines the talents of William Terwilliger, on violin, and Andrew Cooperstock, on piano. Starting off with Jascha Heifetz's arrangement of a medley of *Porgy and Bess*, the sweet lyrical strands of the violin and the lilting thrills of the piano let us know we were in the presence of art in it's purest form. The strains of the loving "Summertime" filled the normally bold entertainment at 54 Below and the contrast was overwhelmingly unique. All of the emotions of the music were highlighted as the violin soothed, lamented, turned to joy, uplifted as the piano played the straight man, holding the emotional upheaval and giving it a base in which to return.** Richard Samuel Roberts the first African-American period photographer showed visually how the familiar score can be seen afresh, as images of the time, were projected onto the screens.

Arranger Eric Stern introduced Ashley Brown (*Mary*



Poppins) who sang "Nice Work If You Can Get It" and showed why cutting this song from *An American in Paris* was just wrong. This was an amazing arrangement by Mr. Stern for the trio who performed it with warmth.

Short Story, for Violin and Piano, was the only work written by Gershwin for these two instruments and until Opus Two all but disappeared. This piece was like unearthing a long hidden treasure.

The Three Preludes for Piano, also arranged by Heifetz, had strains of Adam Guettel's music. I could hear how *Floyd Collins* was influenced by this piece.

The screens showed the last ballet in *An American in Paris*, as the duo used Heifetz's arrangement. In listening to this duo I saw what I was missing in the Broadway version. Here the music held the passion, the joy, the exuberance of life and love in the "City of Lights."

Composer Eric Stern arrangement of Selections from *Girl Crazy*, written especially for Opus Two and Ashley Brown was a throw back to the old film, so before Opus Two we see and heard a young Judy Garland singing "Bidin' My Time" from the movie version. "Embraceable You" (another cut song from *An American in Paris*) and "I Got Rhythm," had energy, enchantment and an electric end that had the room-yelling BRAVO!

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