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Style

Pancaroglu's Heavenly Harp Music

Turkey should claim harpist Sirin Pancaroglu as a national treasure. A major talent of international caliber and a superb musician, she performed a program of French music dating from the early 17th century to the present Tuesday evening at the Maison Francaise.

Pancaroglu, through her performance and informative program notes, made a strong case for recognition of the harp as "an instrument of interest and capability." From the sonorous "Pavane and Branles" of Anthoine Francisque to the compelling and dramatic 1955 "Sonata" by the French Canadian Pierick Houdy, she displayed the full range of her astonishing technique and musicianship. The 25-year-old Ankara native could, with maturity, rank with the legendary virtuosos of the 19th century.

Her interpretation of Pierre Sancan's 1975 composition for the Paris Conservatory Competition, "Theme and Variations," was flawless. Sancan's work is unique and wonderful, jazzy and joyous, and deserves a prominent place in the standard harp repertoire. Pancaroglu's confident artistry in the Sancan piece was matched by her superb performance of Marcel Tournier's Sonatine, Op. 30, and Felix Godefroid's show-stopping variations on the "Carnival of Venice," a work of orchestral proportions. Let us hope that Washingtonians will have many more opportunities to enjoy Sirin Pancaroglu's artistry and share her enthusiasm of the harp as an exciting and passionate concert instrument.

—Judy Gruber