



Octogenarian

Welcome, welcome, welcome!

Welcome to what we hope is the first of many issues of *Octogenarian* – your friendly reviewer and lobbyist for Bristol's music scene. Please see overleaf for a list of what we think will be the highlights of the upcoming performances to be found in Bristol. We hope to package fortnightly concert listings in a digestible form and provide a selection of reviews highlighting what you've missed and what you should have missed.

András Trio

Tamás András – violin

Gemma Rosefield – 'cello

Daniel Tong – piano

Thursday 25 February 1pm St. George's



In yet another beautiful 'oasis' of lunchtime chamber music, the András trio delighted a reasonably-sized, albeit predominantly grey-haired audience. The trio started as a duo. A bit of a contradiction in terms but a pleasurable one all the same: Tamas András and Daniel Tong played Léos Janáček's Violin Sonata, an excitingly varied piece in five movements. The slow movements in particular provided András with bountiful opportunity to show off the wonderful expressiveness of the violin. More surprising but no less appreciated were the muted violin 'explosions' of the Allegretto, if you will allow me a second paradox? However the best was yet to come: the highlight of the concert was the arrival (or appearance?) of Gemma Rosefield and her 'cello. In a recent survey, (the results of which are largely fictitious,) it was ascertained that the 'cello is the sexiest of instruments. If any other proof for this statement were required, it was available at this concert. This author found it hard to take his eyes or ears from Rosefield, and justifiably, as Dvořák somewhat favours the cellist in his 'Dumky' Piano Trio. The passionate Rosefield evidently inspired her partners to new levels of expression, and the six movements moulded into one package of delight like a carton of fresh free-range eggs: a veritable omelette of pleasure. Bon Appetit!

Dé' Fait.

We welcome submissions of reviews from all ; to submit a review or to write regularly or to receive this publication by e-mail please contact: ak6750@bristol.ac.uk

Ishay Shaer – Piano

Thursday 4 March 1pm St. George's

Liszt – Concert Etude La Leggerezza

Beethoven – Piano Sonata No. 27

Ravel – Scarbo from Gaspard de la Nuit

Chopin – Piano Sonata No. 3 & Etude No. 11



It is hard enough during that most precious and revered of times 'the lunch-hour' that one can tempt the muscle-efficient and vim-filled 'young-un' to the dusty, potentially fusty and often gloomy atmosphere of the classical concert hall – harder still when the weather for the first time this decade promised at least some semblance of an alternative to 'inside'. So, on this fine day instead of the nubile, go-getters that perhaps one would hope represent at least some of the audience, St. George's was filled with (well, sparsely smattered with) those who have perhaps seen enough rays of sunshine in their life to forgo another in the hope that they may hear something slightly more entertaining and (dare I say) stimulating than sitting on some Victorian steps alternately cloud and sun-bathing, commenting on the coming-and-going of a goose-pimple!

So... it was an audience of 'olds', three dogs (!) and your humble narrator that greeted Ishay Shaer for this remarkable piano recital, performed entirely from memory. Despite looking like a schoolboy (a schoolboy resentful about having to tuck his shirt in) Ishay Shaer gave a polished, exciting performance of a well chosen programme. From the opening swathes of sound (moving wonderfully to connected streams of notes punctuated by subtle cadences) of La Leggerezza to the coda of Chopin's Etude (played as an encore) he really did play wonderfully; demonstrating impressive control and attention to minute detail that made every phrase captivating. This was felt most keenly in the wonderfully produced al dente textures of the Liszt and particularly excellent Ravel – the intensity of Shaer's musicality perhaps easier to maintain/appreciate over the shorter duration of these pieces. The Beethoven initially excited the listener with floating melodies and textures

supported by simply expressive harmonies; though the second movement was, for the warped ears of this writer, just a trifle saccharine and perhaps even – crime of crimes – jolly! Chopin's piano sonata sounded wonderful in this hall so suited to piano music, though I felt at points that Shaer's approach was rather cautious and that his emphasis on control was perhaps so strong as

to make the music perhaps a little tame. Overall this was a thoroughly enjoyable recital with plenty to get ones dentures into that showed off a truly impressive pianist and enlightened me as to the preference of dogs regards music – Beethoven.

Yuri Bedwetter.

Rautio Trio

Jane Gordon – violin

Adi Tal – cello

Jan Rautio – piano

Joan Rodgers – soprano

Friday 5 March 7.30pm St. George's



Do you remember the days when Freddos were 5p each? And you could get a bag of crisps for 25p? Nowadays you won't get a pack for less than 60p. Crazy. Even crazier when you consider that to get into this concert, featuring one of the world's best sopranos and one of the UK's finest young chamber groups, I paid 50p. Fifty pence. 'Impossible!' I hear you cry. But no, with St. George's 'Cavatina' scheme, under-26s get in for a tiny amount to special concerts. And special was certainly the word for this one. Opening with Beethoven's *Variations on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu"*, the trio showed their uncanny ability to communicate subtly with one another through some sort of 6th sense: the ensemble was astounding, the individuals astonishing. Could they possibly be robots? The final variation, however, abolished all worries of a mechanical invasion, as humour and playfulness oozed

like treacle, or shone like the sun, or radiated like radiation. This cheekiness didn't last long, though, for it was time for Joan Rodgers to join the trio to sing *Seven Poems by Alexander Blok*, set to music by Shostakovich. Drama. Power. Intensity. It may sound like a shampoo advert, but there was no overpowering smell of goodenberry here, only the stench of death, the bitterness of love-loss, the emptiness of desolation. Heavy stuff. The Glinka *Trio Pathétique* offered some delightful recovery time, and yet was overshadowed somewhat by the prospect of more hardcore Shostakovich: his *Piano Trio No. 2*. From the ethereal cello harmonics at the start of the first movement, it is a rollercoaster ride that defines manic (2nd movement) depressive (3rd movement). The finale is a sort of nightmare carousel, provoking a deep desire to burst out laughing, and yet not in the slightest bit funny: it left you with the sort of shame you feel when you laugh at a joke about Madeline McCann. Wow. So there you are, a concert encompassing chocolate frogs, shampoo, theme parks and kidnapping. And literally cheaper than chips!

Vladi Vostock.

When?

8pm Wednesday 10 March

Where?

Colston Hall £7 under-26

Who?

Juice vocal ensemble/Gabriel Prokofiev

What?

G. Prokofiev/R. Barnard

7.30pm Thursday 11 March

Colston Hall £5 under-26

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra/Kirill Karabits/Peter Jablonski (piano)

Berlioz/Scriabin/Tchaikovsky

1.05pm Tuesday 16 March

Colston Hall £8 under-26

Milos Karadaglic (guitar)

Sor/Bach/Barios/Albeniz/Villa-Lobos

1pm Thursday 18 March

St. George's £6 student

Soloists of the Orchestra of the Enlightenment

Mozart/Schubert/Beethoven

7.30pm Saturday 20 March

Bristol Cathedral £5 student

Bristol Bach Choir/Soloists form The Sixteen

Monteverdi *Vespers (1610)*

1.05pm Tuesday 23 March

Colston Hall £5 or £3 BUMS

Silk Clarinet Quartet

Who knows...?

Pick of the Nose

7.30pm Friday 12 March

Colston Hall

LSO/John Adams

Britten/Sibelius/Adams