

Showcase concert - Thursday 24 September 2020, 7 pm

First half: Miguel Sobrinho, viola, Ivelina Krasteva, piano and Findlay Spence, cello

Brahms, Sonata for viola and piano op. 120 No.1 in F minor

Knox, Pocket Concerto for viola with cello

Second half: Sirius Chau, flute, Kumi Matsuo, piano

Debussy, Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune

Hindemith, Sonata for Flute and Piano

Leung, As the Wind Resonates

Schubert, Introduction and Variations "Trockne Blumen" for Flute and Piano in E minor, D 802 (Op. post. 160)

Recital at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London

Review by Christopher Axworthy:

Wonderful to hear live music in St. James's again thanks to Canan Maxton and her Talent Unlimited.

A small audience due to distancing regulations but a very distinguished one. I could just discern amongst this masqueraded audience Dr Hugh Mather, Lisa Peacock, Julian Jacobson, Mathew of the McLachlan clan and the distinguished composer Howard Blake. Our indomitable courageous hostess Canan Maxton of course presented the artist.

An interesting programme that showed off to the full the artistry of these musicians selected for this annual showcase recital.

From Brahms to Schubert and Hindemith with two contemporary works by Knox and Leung.

A superb Brahms Sonata from Miguel Sobrinho and Ivelina Krasteva ... has the piano ever sounded so sumptuous - a Bosendorfer bass and a Bluthner treble in these expert hands. The viola of Miguel who seemed to grow in stature as he nurtured the most beautiful sounds from his instrument.

Unbelievable pyrotechnics took us by storm when the cellist Findlay Spence joined Miguel for a new work by Knox that inhabited a quite scintillating roguish sound world - not sure if Irish or Scottish but definitely a native participation.

Remarkable musicianship and sheer resilience from both performers.

After a sumptuous performance of Debussy's *Après midi.....* from Sirius Chau and Kumi Matsuo - a truly magical performance was followed by the inevitable Hindemith Sonata for flute (I think he must have written for every instrument including the kitchen sink- what versatility!) For my ears it was in the work by Leung where an alto flute is called for: 'As the wind resonates' that we could appreciate the true magical sounds from both artists. This was before finishing the concert with a scintillating performance of the Schubert Variations on *Trockne Blumen.....* can it really be by Schubert? - a virtuoso piano part, of great difficulty as Dr Hugh Mather exclaimed, played by a pianist whose fingers seemed to cling to the keys with limpet like tenacity whilst Sirius spun his magic web of extraordinary beauty and dexterity.

Hats off to Canan Maxton for having found these players who are obviously headed for the stars, with a little help from Talent Unlimited.