

LUNCHBREAK CONCERT SERIES 2015 – 2016

CAMILLI QUARTET

ERIN SMITH: First Violin

NANDITA BHATIA: Second Violin

ELIN PARRY: Viola

OLIVIA CLAYTON: Cello

ABERDEEN SALVATION ARMY CITADEL

Thursday, 22 October 2015

The Camilli String Quartet, formed in 2013 when its members were studying at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, are a young, attractive, all-girl Quartet whose performance for the Lunchbreak Series today was deliciously melodic and much appreciated by the audience. After the concert, a lady asked me what the Trinity Laban Conservatoire is. It was formed in 2005 as a merger of two older institutions – Trinity College of Music and Laban Dance Centre. It is situated in Greenwich near the Old Naval College.

The Camilli Quartet is currently involved in a tour of Scotland. Their first piece was composed expressly for the current Scottish Tour by second violinist Nandita Bhatia. Entitled “Till All the Seas Gang Dry” it was a short four movement quartet based on Scottish folk tunes. The first movement used an old bagpipe march entitled Jewel of a Hundred Years. It was both tuneful and jaunty with a more soulful middle section that was echoed briefly to end the movement.

The second movement was called Till All the Seas Gang Dry and uses the tune My Love Is like a Red Red Rose. This was an imaginative variation on the original tune which came through beautifully at the heart of the music.

The third movement was based on the tune Ae Fond Kiss. This was possibly the most imaginative setting. I would never have thought of setting this music using pizzicato strings, how wonderfully clever and imaginative! The tune did come through clearly, bowed later on.

The viola took centre stage at the start of the final movement based on the tune Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot. This movement was full of fascinating harmonic and melodic departures, wonderfully imaginative yet wholly tonal. I think the audience thoroughly enjoyed this piece.

The second work in the programme was also very tuneful. Dvořák’s String Quartet No. 12 popularly known as “The American Quartet” along with Borodin’s String Quartet No. 2 is possibly the most melodically rich work in all of the string quartet literature.

The two faster outer movements were the best in today’s performance, intense, lively playing with plenty of bite and in the final movement, wonderfully light and fluent playing by first violinist Erin Smith. I could not really fault the two middle movements. There was rich cello playing of the melody in the Lento by cellist Olivia Clayton and fine pizzicato playing too. The lively third movement worked well with excellent ensemble. I just felt that some of the solos could have had more bite and possibly more expression. This is music that does not need to be polite it needs to say to the audience, “Hey you, listen to me, aren’t I absolutely great!” Get that girls and you are top of the heap!

Still, all said and done it was a splendid concert and today’s audience were all hoping it will not be too long before the Camilli Quartet come back to Aberdeen.

