

Music Society . Season Report

Eighteenth Season 2006-2007

The Eighteenth season of concerts has provided some wonderful musical moments and I am pleased to report that attendances have been excellent and our audiences as keen as ever to come to Vinehall for chamber music of the highest quality.

We started the season with Tim Hugh and Friends, who played works by Strauss, Schoenberg and Schubert. Their performance of the Schubert String Quintet was one of the most moving and memorable performances I can remember at Vinehall – an enormous testimony to the skill and understanding of the players.

The second concert was by the Vanbrugh Quartet. Now based in Ireland, this talented quartet performed works by Borodin and Schubert. Following the outstanding performance of Schubert by Tim Hugh, I was concerned that they would have less impact, but their performance of the great G major quartet was riveting from start to finish.



La Serenissima

In November we welcomed one of the leading period music ensembles, La Serenissima. Their programme 'The birth of the violin concerto' was pure Baroque entertainment from start to finish and with numerous players on stage, with some unusual instruments there was plenty on which to both feast the eye and the ear.

In February for our Sunday afternoon concert we welcomed one of England's most distinguished pianists, Peter Donohoe. He performed works by Bach, Mozart, Brahms and Beethoven. When one hears a pianist of such international repute playing Beethoven's last sonata, then it is possible to appreciate the depth of understanding that comes with years of exploring these great works.

The March concert was by The London Conchord Ensemble. With about twenty players on stage, we were treated to concertos by Bach and Mozart, including Bach's Brandenburg No 2, with a horn part taking the place of the usual high trumpet. It worked brilliantly and the whole evening gave so much pleasure. It was an ideal concert for younger musicians to have attended, and I am pleased that some did.

The May concert was given by the outstanding British piano trio, the Barbican Piano Trio with James Boyd. They performed works by Haydn, Schumann and Taneyev. Ticket sales were a little low for this concert because, I suspect, people were uncertain about the Taneyev work. There was no need for concern! As the pupil of Tchaikovsky and teacher of Rachmaninov, it is not surprising that Taneyev wrote some wonderfully rich Romantic works and the audience thoroughly enjoyed the Piano Quartet.

The final concert was by London Winds led by the clarinettist Michael Collins. They performed the Brahms Clarinet Quintet and the Schubert Octet - perfect music for a summer's evening. The rain held off and plentiful Pimm's assisted the mood. As usual we left the theatre doors open and the birds sang along – they seem to enjoy our music making!

As usual, I am indebted to all those who have given practical assistance, including the Everist family for their help with the programmes, Mrs. Elsie Smith and Miss. May Johnson who have organised the refreshments, Mrs. Heather Howorth and the bursarial department who have provided administrative help throughout the season. I am also very grateful to Mrs. Perry, our chefs, who have provided delicious suppers for our performers and Andy Rennie who has helped set up the Pre-Prep hall for each concert. Many thanks must also go to all our sponsors, whose help is enormously valuable. This season I would particularly like to thank Helen Ridout who has been our page-turner.

We look forward to welcoming you to the new season, and if you are uncertain about whether a particular concert will suit you or your children, then Mrs. Harmer or me will be happy to advise. If in doubt, come!

AGW