



Review of recital on Saturday 6 October 2012 - Oxana Shevchenko

At a time when BBC Radio 3 are highlighting the piano as a great solo instrument, it was fitting that a near capacity audience in Ardrishaig Hall should be treated to possibly one of the finest piano recitals ever heard at this venue. Given by the young Kazakh pianist, Oxana Shevchenko, it became immediately clear why she had won 1st Prize at the Scottish Piano Competition in 2010 and other prestigious prizes around the globe.

Oxana's programme was an eclectic mix of great piano writing from Mozart - Sonata in A maj. K33, Chopin's beautiful Andante spianato et grande polonaise brillante in E flat maj. Op 22, and Stravinsky's Three movements from Petrushka. After the interval she played Ravel's 5 "Miroirs" and ended the main programme with his "La Valse". This was followed by an encore, a sparkling sonata by Domenico Scarlatti.

Virtuosity is a "given" now with the new generation of young pianists, - amply demonstrated throughout her programme - but what she gave us went far beyond that. From the very beginning of the Mozart it was apparent that here was someone who cherished every note and nuance of each piece, with virtuosity subservient to the music. The clarity and dexterity of her passage work was incredible and greatly enhanced by judicious use of the sustaining pedal; the range of dynamic, colour and rhythmic drive were also truly astonishing. This was indeed highly honed, intense and focused playing of the highest order.

To choose highlights from such a wonderful programme is well nigh impossible, because it was all so splendid, but her rendition of "Petrushka's Room" was truly memorable - she was Petrushka right there in that room. Also Ravel's "Sad Birds" was stunning - no birds have ever been more sad. Oxana Shevchenko - watch out for her name; she surely has a great future ahead of her.