



## **Review of Concert by “Cuillin Sound” Wind Trio ~ 16th March 2013.**

The prestigious wind trio, “Cuillin Sound” from Manchester performed for an eager 80 strong MAAA audience in the Council Chamber, Kilmory, last Saturday. This was the fifth concert in their current ABCT tour, with a visit to Oban Music Club to complete the tour the following day.

Cuillin Sound is a woodwind trio with a real difference. Three of Britain’s leading players, Amina Hussain (flute), Sarah Watts (clarinets) and bassoonist, Laurence Perkins, form a beautifully balanced ensemble, ideal for this and other music club venues. They named their group after being inspired by the land and seascapes around Skye and Raasay, and their relaxed playing style comes to the fore in all their music, especially in their Scottish pieces. Their generous programme was varied and included works by classical and contemporary composers, three of them with very Scottish dimensions.

Totally memorable was the 1<sup>st</sup> item after the interval, “The Heart of the Hebrides” by Rebecca Mackay, not only because of the evocative sounds of the music, but also for the accompanying visual images, superlative colour scenes of the Hebrides, projected onto a large screen. The combination was effective and strangely moving and was much appreciated by the audience.

Two more pieces with a Scottish flavour were “Celtic Knotwork” , arranged for the Trio by the respected Glasgow composer, Eddie Maguire, and “From the Western Isles”, arrangements of Hebridean folk melodies by Laurence Perkins himself, who was also responsible for arranging most of the other music – few composers having actually written music for this combination of instruments.

Other items in the more traditional classical style included pieces by Beethoven, Kummer, Lorenzo and Villa-Lobos. Beethoven’s “Don Giovanni Variations” were full of fun and Gaspard Kummer’s Trio was actually written for these instruments and was skilfully crafted, often calling for virtuoso playing of the highest order.

Outside the concert hall, school workshops are a speciality of the group - (Kintyre, Bute and Dunoon took advantage of this, but on account of exams, Mid Argyll could not this time). However, for the dozen or so young people present, it was very instructive how the three artists watched one another carefully and blended perfectly. This was shown in a very extreme way when they played “The Carnival of Venice” in a hilarious slapstick manner: - “as you have never seen or heard it before”.

The whole evening was one of great enjoyment and our three musicians fully deserved the warm and long lasting applause at the end, which earned a sparkling short French encore - “Scherzo by André Tomasi. They, like the audience, were most grateful to the Council for their hospitality for this special concert.

John Holt