



Jean Johnson & Steven Osborne

17th January 2015

Steven Osborne is an internationally acclaimed pianist and one looked forward to the recital by him and his wife Jean Johnson, a clarinettist. To arrange the event to start in mid afternoon on a Saturday might be regarded as risky and when the day in question turned out to be dark, cloudy and threatening snow, one was apprehensive that these talented musicians would be performing before a handful of people. These fears proved unfounded. It was gratifying to find a large audience. The artists defied the elements and played a programme of great distinction, generously donating their remunerations to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

The programme was ingeniously designed to display the talents of the performers, either together or as individual soloists. The first and last items were the two sonatas for the clarinet and piano which Brahms composed towards the end of his life. These mellow, reflective works were given fine and sensitive performances and it was interesting to witness the skill of Steven Osborne in adapting the technique of playing solo or with a symphony orchestra to the subtle demands of a discrete accompanist. Between these works, the audience heard Steven give a splendid performance of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No 28. H was followed by Jean Johnson in a sonatina for solo clarinet by the Hungarian-American composer, Miklos Roza. The occasion turned out to be a prestigious one and the Mid Argyll Arts Association is to be congratulated in being able to attract to Ardrishaig artists of the calibre of Jean Johnson and Steven Osborne.

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