



## **Bibby Piano Duo**

**7<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

It may have been Bonfire night in Lochgilphead last Saturday, but the audience at Ardrishaig hall were treated to a very different type of fireworks in the opening piece in the recital given by the Bibby Piano Duo - Shostakovitch's Festive Overture Op.96. This accessible and testosterone fired piece, full of driving rhythm and sizzling flute/piccolo effects, so characteristic of the composer's armoury, was delivered with panache by the two sisters, Nicola and Alexandra.

We then entered the more intimate world of Schubert in his Grande Sonate Op.30. Whilst less performed than some of his duet compositions, this was pure Schubert, loaded with beautiful long melody shifting from major to minor and the three movements complimented each other perfectly. Although not technically demanding, this music requires sensitivity and clarity. Schubert is all about song, and, in this piece particularly, the sisters' many years of playing together really shone through with delicious phrasing and dynamic control.

Schubert was followed by Ravel's transcription of Debussy's much-loved "Prelude à l'après-midi d'un faune". To reduce the original ravishing score into duet form is a tall order, but, despite its inherent short-comings, the rendering of the piece was very sincere, and the best was made of the awkward return of the opening theme toward the end of the piece.

The first half of the concert ended with four of Brahms's Hungarian Dances. These popular pieces were a "hit" with the audience and delivered with conviction.

After the interval we were treated to a relative obscurity by the 20th century composer English composer York Bowen - his Suite Op 52. The three movements, Prelude, Dance and Nocturne, each demonstrated the integrity of this neglected composer's work, which was well executed.

The Grande Finale was Saint-Saëns' "Carnival of the Animals. This popular favourite with its humorous - and clever- portrayal of the animal kingdom was a thoroughly enjoyable romp to end the programme and the audience's enthusiasm earned them a delightful Brahms Waltz encore.

This was a well-balanced and choreographed evening's entertainment delivered with sincerity and charm.