



Calum Huggan marimba

20th January 2018

Calum Huggan captivated the audience with his marimba playing on Saturday afternoon in Ardrishaig hall. He has performed solo debuts within the major concert houses across Germany and the UK, as well as performing with orchestras including BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Mannheim National Theatre, Jyvaskyla Sinfonietta Finland and the English National Opera. He has worked alongside some of the most recognised and talented creatives in the arts. Calum is a sought after percussion tutor and workshop leader.

The afternoon was started with '*Libertango*' by composer Astor Piazzolla. The music was a frenzy of argentine sounds that whipped the audience into a whirlwind, this was followed by Variations on Dowland's '*Lachrimae Pavanna*' – originally a work for lute, the marimba imitated the sound of a Renaissance lute and Calum's playing was greeted with murmurs of agreement from the audience members.

Just before the interval we were left with a piece of music written for marimbist Momoko Kamiya by Takatsugu Muramatsu, its title '*Land*'. This piece was my personal favourite and Calum told us that this piece reminded him of the Isle of Skye (a place where he was born and where he calls home) and the undulating sound of the exotic marimba seemed to convey the sound of Scottish rolling hills.

As we all sat down after the interval again we were given an impromptu pop quiz which was comedic but informative and in Calum's words the audience received "Top Marks". Calum performed the 2nd and 3rd movements of '*Caritas*' a piece by Solemn and Majestic by M. Burritt, the second movement was sweeping and swelling with emotional sounds while the third movement came straight out of a music box. The second last piece was E. Sejourne's '*Nancy*', a sombre and sweet piece of music that stayed so quiet that the audience was afraid to breathe.

The afternoon was finished with '*Dr Gradus ad Parnassum*' by C. Debussy and the music was arranged for marimba by Calum Huggan himself. The piece comes from a collection of six piano miniatures dedicated to the composer's then three-year old daughter and what was inside her toy box which was conveyed through the playfulness of the piece.

Eve Maxwell