

ALCHEMY: MUSIC, WORDS & SONG
University of Plymouth Sherwell Centre
07/04/06

Magical confection left this audience utterly spellbound

University of Plymouth Director of Music, Simon Ible, certainly conjured up a magical confection for the concluding event in the current Peninsula Arts Alchemy: The Arts and Science of Transformation exhibition and lecture series.

Perhaps with some kind of veiled significance, Simon had amassed a mere thirteen performers with which to weave his spell, namely the eleven instrumentalists from the Ten Tors Chamber Orchestra, Irish mezzo-soprano, Carolyn Dobbin, and local storyteller, Clive Fairweather. But, by an intriguing mix of music and the spoken word, the result was certainly enchanting, and never once did any art-form predominate, to the detriment of the listeners' enjoyment and the programme's design.

Violinist, Malcolm Latchem, led his string players with his customary efficiency and, if the playing had just the occasional rough edge, this in no way detracted from the overall success of the performance, and especially with the additional contributions from flautist, Anne Kimber in some of the numbers.

Clive Fairweather's well-practised characterisations and sheer panache enthralled the audience on every occasion, though it must be said that conductor, Simon Ible's, witty and anecdotal introductions often came a close second. But the real touch of pure magic was ultimately afforded by the delightful voice and charming demeanour of Carolyn Dobbin, whose effortless delivery and clear diction were simply a joy to hear, and which positively left the appreciative audience spellbound!

REVIEW by PHILIP R BUTTALL
