

Music



Judith Hall and Craig Ogden in Plymouth (review)

25th January 2008

Judith Hall and Craig Ogden brought a real down-under feel to Plymouth's Sherwell United Church, with their superb recital of music for flute and guitar. The weather, too, after days of seemingly never-ending rain, came up some with glorious sunshine, even if the temperature wasn't quite of antipodean proportions!

Opening with Rodrigo's *Serenata al Alba del Día*, these two Australian-born artists combined with complete empathy, in a performance which entirely captured the composer's intentions.

Poulenc's three *Mouvements Perpetuels* transferred quite successfully across from the piano original, but it was in Giuliani's *Grand Duo Concertant* that each performer's immensely accomplished playing really came to the fore, simply brushing aside the technical difficulties in a reading full of classical poise, yet never devoid of humour.

Cave Painting by Melbourne guitarist and composer, Philip Houghton, very effectively evoked the natural landscape of his country's interior, in a piece of contemporary writing which, unlike so many similarly descriptive works, had sufficient structure and melodic shape to bring it off.

While Villa-Lobos's reworking of his *Bachianas Brasileiras No 5* was felt less successful than the original, and guitarist, Timothy Walker's somewhat melodically-challenged flute additions did very little to enhance a guitar study, again by Villa-Lobos and now revamped as *Flute Flight*, Craig's nicely laid-back introductions, finely complemented by Judith's more considered utterances, ensured that everyone had much to enjoy in this ideal lunchtime fare.

PHILIP R BUTTALL

