

Music



REVIEW: Julian Lloyd Webber with Pam Chowhan

3rd June 2011

There isn't a readymade recipe for the perfect recital, but a winning technique and the utmost musicality must rank high among the ingredients.

Years of experience should also ensure that the programme is interesting, varied, of just the right length, and not bogged down by unnecessary chit-chat in between the items.

It came as no surprise then, that cellist, Julian Lloyd Webber's recital should be as close to perfection as possible.

Opening with a Bach Adagio, here was a simple, uncluttered well-known melody which was all about Julian's glorious tone, highly-expressive phrasing, and quite exceptional range of dynamics.

Works by Frank Bridge, and his pupil, Benjamin Britten were unfamiliar territory, yet, with their melodic piquancy and rhythmic invention, provided the perfect continuation. A soul-searching performance of Fauré's popular Elégie led sublimely into a much-neglected rarity, Delius's one-movement Sonata.

A charming work by Julian's father, William, was the ideal aperitif for the evening's undoubted highlight, Rachmaninov's epic G minor Sonata. Here, accompanist, Pam Chowhan simply came into her own with the formidable piano part, despite having to cope with an instrument that was really not fit for the purpose.

Despite the piano's obvious shortcomings, this was a hugely enjoyable recital, and the ultimate accolade must go to Julian for committing every single note to memory – something to which every solo recitalist of merit surely needs to aspire.

PHILIP R BUTTALL

