

## Music



### **Sulki Yu and Alexander Karpeyev in Plymouth (review)**

*29th September 2008*

Lunchtime recitals in Plymouth's City Museum have always had the advantage that, if the musical interest ever flagged, there were always the pictures to look at.

But such was the totally enthralling playing from Sulki Yu and Alexander Karpeyev, pictured, that few probably even noticed that the interesting seascapes had now been replaced by more challenging modern creations.

From the opening of Schubert's A major Sonata to the final chord of the Elgar, there was a wonderful sense of lyricism, and humour when required, allied to complete technical mastery from both players, and moreover such a heartfelt sense of enjoyment which held everyone in its spell.

Sulki Yu's performance of Ysaÿe's solo violin sonata, Op 27 No 6, was simply second to none, and ranks as one of the best pieces of string playing heard in the city for many years.

It's a phenomenally difficult piece, but in Sulki's hands the work's musical integrity was always paramount, never once compromised by the extreme virtuosity of the writing.

Elgar's Sonata provided a superb finish to this well-balanced programme, and where Alexander Karpeyev achieved the seemingly impossible task of matching Sulki's powerful and expressive playing, on a piano with obvious limitations.

The only complaint must be that this superb and truly memorably recital has set a precedent which will be hard even to emulate, and virtually impossible to surpass.

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