

Leisure/events

Classical choices from Duke Ellington to Baroque

BY PHILIP R BUTTALL

Devon Baroque returns with a new concert series for 2011, *Europe in Transition*, a title which might equally be applied to the ensemble itself.

Having already built up an enviable reputation with its historically-correct performances of works from the Baroque, under the charismatic direction of Margaret Faultless, the ensemble is now investigating music from the pre-classical period, or "style gallant" of the mid-18th century, which emerged as the Baroque was going out of fashion.

Devon Baroque's programme opens with Boccherini's *Cello Concerto in G*, once more featuring outstanding cellist, Sebastian Comberti, Haydn's *C major Violin Concerto*, with Margaret Faultless playing the demanding solo part, two *String Divertimenti* by Mozart, and ending with Boyce's charming *Symphony in F*.

The first concert takes place on Friday, February 18, at St James Church, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, then in the sumptuous surroundings of Paignton's Oldway Mansion the next night, and concluding with an afternoon performance in the superb acoustic of the Great Hall, Dartington on Sunday, February 20.

The Exeter and Paignton concerts start at 7.30pm, and the Dartington one at 3pm.

For tickets call Exeter Phoenix on 01392 667080.

This weekend's 2011 Peninsula Arts Contemporary Music Festival at Plymouth University promises "a programme of live performances supported by current research, philosophical debate and critical commentary," according to Peninsula Arts director of music, Simon Ible.

Highlights include the Ten Tors Orchestra in the Roland Levinsky Theatre tomorrow at 7.30pm, and *Going North*, a recital by Brazilian-Canadian pianist, Luciane Cardassi, in the Sherwell Centre on Sunday at 2pm. For full details call the box office on 01752 585050.

The next recital in the Kelly College Concert Series in Tavistock features Victoria Curran (trumpet) and Clive Matthews (piano) on Wednesday, February 16 in the Melvin Hall at 7.45pm.

Victoria and Clive, both graduates of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, met in 2007 and now dedicate part of their busy performing careers to working together as a permanent duo.

Their wide-ranging programme includes music by Poulenc, Henry Mancini, Duke Ellington, Gershwin, Enescu, Janacek and de Falla.

Tickets are available at the door – for details of subscription discounts, call 01822 617498.

Newton Abbot & District Society of Arts (NADSA) is another flourishing local concert-series, founded some 50 years ago, which has been bringing top-quality artists to the Teignbridge area each season.

The Canteloube Trio – Jennie-Lee Keetley (oboe), Richard Russell (clarinet) and Stuart Russell (bassoon) – presents a programme of music by Mozart, Tansman, Beethoven, and Milhaud at Teignmouth Community School on Saturday, February 19, at 7.30pm. Tickets are available at the door on the night.



Learn how to animate your vegetables at quirky festival

BY SARAH PITT

Outdoor son et lumiere comes to Exeter with a city history of Vikings, Romans and Second World War bombers, as part of the Animated Exeter festival.

The film will be projected onto the north face of the cathedral next weekend on February 18, 19 and 20, as the flagship event in a city-wide festival of moving images in all their forms.

The quirky extravaganza offers film screenings and have-a-go workshops for all ages, and is aimed both at animation enthusiasts and people simply curious to see "how it is done".

Highlights include a "how to animate your vegetables" session with Andy Wyatt, creator of the children's CBBC TV series *Ooglies*, using vegetables and stick-on eyes. There will be screenings of humorous cartoons for grown-ups from 2D animator Joanna Quinn, creator of *Girls' Night Out* and *Body Beautiful*, and a Bafta award-winning sequence in an animated *Canterbury Tales*.

"Joanna has a very very humorous sense in her work," says festival organiser Susannah Shaw. "*Girls' Night Out* is like a Beryl Cook idea of Welsh girls on a night out, and she has stuck with the characters in *Body Beautiful*."

The flagship event is a history of Exeter being projected onto the cathedral, called *Isca Obscura*, Isca

being the Roman name for Exeter. It has been created by London animation company Tundra, who have incorporated special effects from students doing digital research at Plymouth University.

"Tundra do a lot of large-scale projections for music festivals which is strong graphical stuff," says Susannah. "We have had a test, to see what works and what doesn't, and it is amazing."

The animation includes a sequence where Second World War bombers attack the historic heart of the city, and the lesser-known story of St Sidwell, a medieval maiden murdered by her jealous stepmother. Even the cathedral cat, subject of a recent book, gets a mention.

The projection can be seen free of charge each evening from Friday to Sunday, February 18 to 20, from the Cathedral Green.

The falling cost of digital animation has made such a spectacle possible, and means the festival can offer lots more workshops. Now, all it takes is a laptop and a camera to have a go at animation techniques.

Workshops include an ongoing "animation lab" running at Exeter's Spacex gallery, and a life drawing animation class with Joanna Quinn, whose celebrated animations start with her drawings.

There will be some workshops at the Plough Arts Centre in Great Torrington, North Devon, too, including

a day creating an animated landscape, complete with special effects like magic carpets and fire-breathing dragons.

"The software is so much cheaper now that it is much easier for people to have a go," says Susannah.

Young people tend to be the naturals, she says.

"We run adult workshops as well and they are really popular, although they are not as confident as young people; with young people you don't have to encourage them at all."

You don't have to make films at the festival though. There will also be plenty to watch. Children's offerings include the classic *Finding Nimo*, to the less well-known *Esterhazy*, a quirky German film about a bunny from Vienna who finds sanctuary in the no man's land between the barbed wire of the Berlin Wall.

"It is so cute," says Susannah. "That is part of our world animation day. We try to show as much international animation as possible."

For those with a burning desire to make a career in animation, the festival includes a careers day on Friday, February 18.

"I would say it is the best job you could have," says Susannah, an animator herself, who has worked for Aardman, of *Shaun the Sheep* fame.

To succeed in the industry, she says, you need a lot of patience. A few seconds of animation can take hours to achieve.

Screenings at Animated Exeter include, clockwise from top left, *Esterhazy*, about a rabbit who finds sanctuary amid the barbed wire on the Berlin Wall; *Family Ties* and *Body Beautiful*, both by Joanna Quinn who creates cartoons from her illustrations; the *Cook and Duck* by Patrick Bokanoski, part of a *Box of Delights* afternoon of film for young audiences; and, below a history of Exeter beamed onto the cathedral



"If you are an animator, I don't think you even realise how painstaking it is," says Susannah.

"They are completely obsessed with it; I think you have to be. People who succeed in animation don't notice the time going past."

Other events include an evening of Polish animated films, with Polish food, at the Phoenix on Saturday, February 19, and a chance to explore Exeter's underground tunnels and meet an animated Robert the Rat.

Animated Exeter is from Monday, February 14 to Saturday, February 26. Visit www.animatdexeter.co.uk.