

LAURA VAN DER HEIJDEN and TOM POSTER SUNDAY 4th OCTOBER 2015

Athenaeum Winds
Benjamin Grosvenor
[Laura v/d Heijden](#)
Pomegranate Trio
Gould Piano Trio
Murray McLachlan
Martin Roscoe
Barbican Piano Trio
Fejes Quartet
Royal Quartet
Beard Quartet
Divertimenti
Doric Quartet
Scottish Opera -
Rodelinda
Beinn Artair Piano Trio
Scottish Ensemble
Arta Arnicanne

SUPERB MUSICAL EVENING WITH MUSIC NAIRN

Music lovers in Nairn were able to enjoy a memorable musical event last Sunday evening at the Nairn Community and Arts Centre when two winners of the "BBC Young Musician of the Year" played. The very young English cellist, Laura van der Heijden was 15 when she won the competition in 2012; the now internationally established pianist, Tom Poster, won the piano section in 2000. Together they gave a virtuoso duo performance of cello sonatas, cleverly arranged to enable both musicians to exhibit their superb individual musical skills. The concert opened with Glinka's sonata in D minor. Written originally for viola and piano, it had a clearly Russian flavour complete with dissonant harmonies, all of which helped the composer to be regarded as the father of Russian classical music. This was a relatively short, but intriguing, piece which led artistically to the first of the evening's major pieces: Beethoven's sonata in A (Opus 69), the third of his 3 cellos sonatas.

This major work in four movements was composed when Beethoven was almost completely deaf and is the more remarkable because of this. Once again both performers had ample opportunity to exhibit their considerable musical skills, answering each other in an interchange of musical humour and joy exactly as the composer had clearly intended. Following the interval, this remarkable musical pair played "Kiss on Wood" by Scottish composer James MacMillan. This short piece with religious connotations started with an explosive interchange between the two instruments and ended with a fading away to nothingness after which, at the performers' request, they went directly on to the major work of the evening – Rachmaninov's sonata in G minor (Opus 19). This was written after the composer's self-confessed "rebirth" and was so readily identifiable as the composer's own – that is, of course, if you were also acquainted with his second piano concerto or had watched the film "Brief Encounter".

Overall, this was a musical evening to remember. The rapport and musical communication between these two now internationally renowned performers was remarkable, particularly considering the youthfulness of the cellist who exhibited a musical maturity well beyond her years. During a post-performance interview young Laura confessed that she had asked Tom (who has played in the past with many international musicians, including cellist Steven Isserlis) if he would go on tour with her, and he had readily agreed. Next year Laura will be taking a year off from performing when she goes to university to study – what else but musicology. When she returns to the concert stage we will certainly be inviting her back to delight, once again, the music-loving people of Nairn.

John Bell

