

Saturday 22 June 2024

## Eva Doroszkowska at the Menuhin Room

Eva Doroszkowska, Menuhin Room, Portsmouth, June 22



The Menuhin Room isn't playing it safe, bringing the music of Grażyna Bacewicz amongst others to its Saturday lunchtime series. Eva Doroszkowska's programme led us in gently with Lūcija Garūta's *Meditation* which soon became expansive but after that there was no hiding place. Her 4 *Preludes* were, as one might have expected, banned by the philistine arbiters of Soviet taste but technically demanding music that demands to be listened to as well as played properly can bring proportionate rewards with it. They were staccato and uneasy but with rapturous high drama, too, and Eva's impassioned playing set the tone for what was a closely themed set of C20th music by female composers from the Baltic states and Poland.

Ester Mägi's *Three Sea Tableaux* surged, rippled and glittered, often up and down scales, and gave the house Steinway one of the more rigorous workouts it's been given recently and revealed it in all its glory up to its busy finish. If we sometimes go to sit and gaze at the timeless movement of a languid summer shore of the sea, this was not that sort of sea. None of this concert's music is likely to be heard on Classic FM's relaxing *Calm Classics*.

Mägi's *The Ancient Kantele* to finish was more mystical and mysterious perhaps but not lessening in intensity, ending on the widest span between crossed-over hands that I've ever witnessed.

Before that, though, the Bacewicz *Sonata no. 2* was possibly the main attraction. There is so much going on in her music that one never feels one has got to the bottom of it, the first movement as unrelenting and ardent as all else if not more complex. The *Largo* was sepulchral and without becoming dissonant still wouldn't allow itself a clear conscience until the 'neo-classical' finale was exactly that, with recognizable elements of traditional toccata given cubist, abstract or other C20th treatment until its theatrical climax, all of which Eva delivered with panache.

The Menuhin Room broke no box office records today but it was heartening to see very fair numbers attend for such adventurous repertoire and the generous reception it was given convincingly made the case that quality of appreciation is as worth having as quantity.

Sometimes an encore isn't quite appropriate however well-deserved it might be but Eva's Rameau *Le Rappel des oiseaux* was an excellent idea, as if to return us back home to safety, order and everything in its place. It makes me think now of the ending of *Brief Encounter*,

*You've been a long way away. Thank you for coming back to me.*

Posted by David Green at 15:40

Labels: Music



*The Perfect Book*



David Green

