

North East of Scotland Music School 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recital

## Lunchbreak Concert

Rachel Groves, Alex Brown, Benedict Stammeijer, Drew Tulloch

Aberdeen Salvation Army Citadel  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Reviewed by Roger Williams

Amongst the many alumni of NESMS, Lisa Milne(Soprano) and Ian Wilson(Recorder), are merely the tip of a considerable musical iceberg which spreads far and wide. In 40 years of steady growth this remarkable institution is in good health, as was shown by the many talented students that performed today.

The concert started off with Rachel Grove on flute. A clear, pure tone in the highest register was beautifully judged for the Prelude by John Rutter. The following ostinato sparkled with some very deft playing, and the mood was caught in a perfectly balanced partnership with Drew Tulloch on the piano. The wonderfully shaped and long melodic line of Bozza's Aria in g minor, contrasted well with the final lilting, jazz-inspired City Life 3, by Paul Hart. This was a magical start to the recital.

Alex Brown is a pianist possessed of bright, clear fingers, as his Mozart Sonata in C Major (yes, the famous one!) demonstrated. Though this piano possesses a warm, rich and resonant tone, Alex's fingerwork was light and transparent in texture. If the first Mazurka would have benefitted from a bit more poise, the second was splendidly characterised, especially the exotic mysteriousness of the central section.

The final items were played by Benedict Stammeijer on recorder. A deep and attentive hush fell over the room as he started the Allegro of a sonata in g minor, formerly attributed to Vivaldi. The highly expressive ornamented melodic line was played with a rich and flexible tone – something of a rarity on this most common of instruments. In the following fugue Benedict showed how neatly he could play, while the remaining two movements merely emphasized his total mastery of both instrument and music. To end this most impressive recital a Bossa Nova from the New World Dances by John Golland brought us right up to date, with a driving rhythm shared by both recorder and piano.

Tribute must be paid to Drew Tulloch, who, in his usual attentive way, ensured that the performers were entirely at home with perfectly judged ensembles. One of the largest audiences of the season erupted in spontaneous applause for all the performers, and for this important anniversary of NESMS.