

International journeying with Duo Col Legno

By Leon Gray

A fascinated audience were suitably intrigued when Duo Col Legno teamed up to celebrate a sense of place on Sunday at Pyes Pa Auditorium.

Demonstrating an enthralling, natural synergy that exists between their two instruments, marimbist, Yoshiko Tsuruta and cellist, Heleen du Plessis, presented a programme of diverse international repertoire celebrating culture and identity.

Merging Romantic era yearning with contemporary freshness, the duo cleverly re-imagined Tchaikovsky's *Andante Cantabile* and Faure's *Après un Rêve*; Du Plessis's warmth at the bow complemented beautifully by subtle accompaniment from Tsuruta.

The meditative yet opulent *Song of 'Almah* by Beall, and the duo's own arrangement of *Three Japanese Songs* offered the plaintive and elemental; the last Japanese song hinting at the dizzying repertoire that was to follow under Tsuruta's hyper-charged mallets.

The thrill of edgy, passionate, wry and dramatic performance drove the remainder of the programme with stunning renditions of works by Farr, Pärt, Ourkouzounov and Klatzow.

The exciting use of extended performance techniques, and divergent harmonies and melodies saw the audience treated to a living masterclass in the disruption such repertoire offers and the inspiration felt when it is brought to life.

The unquestionable gifts of Tsuruta and du Plessis were evident throughout, not least in the passion with which they spoke about works with which they had connections; their unfailing energy echoing the endless energy exuding out of international contemporary composition and arrangement.