



THE SCOTSMAN

Friday 10 April 2015

In small town Scotland, a Mum gave her ten year old son a drum-kit. Nine years later Brodie McCash is a percussionist with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, and crucial to the successful performance of a John McLeod work, conducted by the composer himself.

Nyos - Caird Hall, Dundee

This is just one example of why NYOS continues to play a critical part in our nation's musical life, and with over 100 talented young musicians in the orchestra, experiences like this mean Scotland's musical future looks, and sounds, more than bright.

This dramatic programme began with Richard Strauss's seldom-performed symphonic poem Macbeth, a moody, complex piece, ably tackled with shimmering style.

Pianist James Willshire's spectacular musicianship and technical brilliance complimented the orchestra's skilled performance of McLeod's Piano Concerto, a highly atmospheric piece demanding virtuosic playing from all sections. Having previously worked with NYOS, there is evident respect here, with the composer drawing superb playing from these young musicians in this most testing of works.

If ever there was doubt that young people are too emotionally inexperienced to express the depth of feeling demanded by a work like Rachmaninov's Second Symphony, NYOS dispelled that fear with aplomb. They approached it with gusto, responding to the luscious orchestration with delicacy of touch, purity of tone, then verve and lavish sweeps of passion.

The mesmerising performances of the Strauss and Rachmaninov were coaxed from these young musicians by the encouraging enthusiasm and clear direction of delightful conductor Nicholas Collon. NYOS triumphed - catch them if you can.