



EDITOR'S PICK

CHRISTMAS WITH JESUS COLLEGE CHOIR

DIKSI-
"We have never seen anything like this, it's brilliant"



LATA-
"Fantastic and Fabulous"

RUSHAN-
"They have good voices, the harmonies were good as well and they did take on some pretty tough arrangements"



SABERI-
"Beautiful and nice to hear a choir with such a lot of heritage and tradition"

SASEA- "It was really good"

JAMES-
"Fantastic"



CHRIS-
"It was brilliant"

Ah yes I find myself writing another review on a Christmas concert! When asked to review it, the first thought that crossed my mind was "oh boy here comes another one." But then again the Sri Lankan inside my said "Hey it's a foreign choir, should be good so let's go watch it!" Classical music has the power to make an individual be transported to different realms of life when listening to it, but the delicate balance of how this happens is all in the hands or more realistically speaking in the hands of those who present it.

Little did I know that I was about to be blown away by the magnificent and beautiful harmonies that were going to flow through the hall of Ladies' College presented by The Choir of Jesus College, University of Cambridge, at which the First Lady was the Guest of Honour.

The evening started off with a song titled "Mother of God, here I stand" composed by John Taverner and then flowed on into more classical pieces ranging from the 15th to the 19th century. Those in the audience who normally don't appreciate classical music might have been expected to fall asleep or leave the hall, but right throughout the pieces there was pin drop silence only to broken by thunderous applause at the end of each song performed. Soloists in this half included Max Cockerill who sang "A spotless rose" composed by Herbert Howells and Peter Lidbetter who did an exceptional job on "Three Kings from Persian land afar" arranged by Peter Cornelius.

My favourite from this half would have to be "Jesus Christ the Apple Tree" composed by Elizabeth Poston which had very intricate harmonies induced into it with the choir performing this song extremely well.

The second half kicked off the traditional arrangement of everyone's favourite Christmas tune "Jingle Bells" by Ralph Allwood and many more interesting hymns and carols.

You and I both know how local audiences react to news that a Sri Lankan is accomplishing something great in a foreign land. So when Choral Director Mark Williams announced that Jaliya Senanayake would be taking on the solo of all time favourite, "Oh Holy Night" Seventy percent of the audience naturally responded with the perfect Sri Lankan "shaaa" while the other thirty percent went "ssssssss" (Yeah, even I don't know how that came about, since it's usually used when something atrocious is said).

Jaliya did a fantastic job on the song and since the song is a personal favourite as well, I paid extra attention to it and by paying that one bit of extra attention I learnt something that I seemed to have missed in the entire concert.

Every soloist was backed perfectly by the choir; they did not over power any of the soloists and it is that kind of subtlety that makes listening to music of this genre even more worthwhile and mind you this was without the use of any microphones!

Sapphira Armitage did a brilliant job on "Lux Aurumque" She held unto a note for so long that it was too cool to be true! The second half also included very interesting renditions of "Deck the Hall" and "Bell Carol" ending off with the moving piece "I wish you Christmas" which I happened to be singing while typing this article so yeah that was my favourite piece.

Berti Baigent and Benjamin Morris did a brilliant job on accompanying the choir on the piano and Berti also added flavour



with his amazing skills on the tambourine. Kudos to Mark Williams who kept the audience even more entertained with his fantastic sense of humour between every two songs. There is something about the British and their humour that cracks you up and has you in fits of laughter.

All in all, a fantastic day at the theatre and for those who missed it, you certainly missed a fantastic concert.

PIX BY Kushan Pathiraja



VASTHA-
"It was really good"



SHASHI-
"Excellent show"



DMITRI-
"I really liked it"



SAVI-
"Lovely concert"

