

October 21, 2014

Five stars

Location: De Harmonie, Leeuwarden

Event: Concert by Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra with Liza Ferschtman

Attendance: 250 people

Wonderful Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra and four delightful experiences

Leeuwarden – This season the Stadsschouwburg De Harmonie has included a few gems to its series, 'Classical Music'. Yesterday, the first gem made its appearance. A performance by the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra with violinist Liza Ferschtman. Those who did not attend were unfortunate. Reactions varied from 'unearthly beautiful' to 'matchless' and 'heavenly'. Audience members who visited the bigger Dutch concert venues over the last years, were again present tonight. "This is a wonderful homecoming". Not all enthusiasts of this genre made their way to this theater, but The Harmonie has now really made its presence known. This performance will be talked about for a long time.

Liza Ferschtman knew exactly what was expected of her in the 'Souvenir d'un lieu cher' (memory of a dear place), a musical postcard of Tchaikovsky, directed to his benefactress Nadazjda von Meck, who made her country home available to him. With small rubati and by adding depth to the virtuoso passages, she proved her class and drew the audience in. She navigated with ease the tricky runs and became one with the music and her colleagues during the lyrical passages. They were supreme, Ferschtman and the others. Wonderful.

Beyond the presence of Ferschtman, the Concertgebouw strings also displayed their honorary status among chamber orchestras. Sixteen souls with one single thought, executed with a flawless accuracy. Compelling rhythmicity in Holst's 'St. Paul's Suite' was a perfect example of this. The Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra showed resolute contrasts and surprising developments of melodies. For example, the last movement included two simultaneously played well-known folk tunes. And then the Nocturne by Dvorak, built from subtleties. It was a tender, stilled and almost tangible evening.

Violinist and artistic manager Michael Waterman arranged the Second String Quartet by Brahms, which premiered yesterday. This multi-colored, driving work full of lyricism and with a Hungarian ending, had more body, more dynamics, but also – in this performance – more mildness than the original. The music flowed like a gentle breeze. A concert with four pieces, transformed to four delightful experiences.

Rudolf Nammensma