

Gazette & Herald

Wessex Concert Orchestra and Lauren Reeve-Rawlings, St John's Church, Devizes

1:42pm Thursday 2nd April 2009

REVIEW: Wessex Concert Orchestra and Lauren Reeve-Rawlings St John's Church, Devizes
CLASSICAL music is seen by too many as as the dull grandfather of the musical spectrum, consisting of pieces known by numbers, not catchy titles, composed by long-dead musicians whose names we learned as historical facts at school and can't imagine as living people.

So it was a delight to hear a classic classic, Mozart's Horn Concerto No 4, whose final movement must be among the few horn pieces everyone recognises and can probably even hum, performed with great skills and a broad smile by a teenager.

Kington St Michael talent Lauren Reeve Rawlings, who is about to set off on a professional career after her success in the recent BBC Radio 2 Young Brass Musician of the Year contest, played with a gleeful joy which set the piece alight, giving it the freshness and fun Mozart intended 300 years ago.

Her performance was not the only one during the evening to bring smiles to the faces of her audience, following on from Gabriel Faure Masques and Bergamasques Suite which came as a surprise to those who only knew the composer for his Requiem. No gloom and mourning here but a series of light, sprightly movements, charmingly played.

The orchestra, who are embarking on a more classical programme than usual, gave a rounded performance, though I wondered if more strength in the woodwind and brass sections would not have gone amiss.

They were all clearly enjoying their evening too, reminding the audience that music-making is supposed to be about having fun.

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