



important ways of getting music to a different public – to people who may never have been to a club or concert but who, serendipitously, can develop an interest in Jazz after hearing it as they ate their lunch one afternoon in June. Some students from the Guildhall were there listening and probably every generation was represented in the audience – a very pleasing sight from the stage, I must say. It was good to see such an array of feet tapping under the smart suits of the City – as Duke Ellington said ‘Nil significat nisi pulsatur!’

Liveryman Tina May

to decide who to vote for”. There’s no question that the music was stimulating, exciting, and of high quality throughout. Not many audiences have the discrimination to pick a bass player from six outstanding young musicians. Our unique format clearly should continue.

Particular thanks to Tina May, Bill Ashton, Andy Panayi, Keith Howell, Steve Plumb and Bernard David, who found time in their busy lives to come to the event. Watch out for notification of the Winners Gig in March 2008, which will be recorded by Andy Cleynert (courtesy of Bernard David), and hopefully for an article in November’s *Jazzwise* magazine.

Pastmaster Nigel Tully



lacked “played-in” relaxation and emotional fulfilment – in other words, fun.

Tapes were rolling as part of the award, which possibly added tension to so much new music, yet the one standard they chose was the dirge-like, minor-key *How Deep is the Ocean*. It typified an evening of technical brilliance but only moderate fell-good factor.

Jack Massarik, Evening Standard

WIGMORE HALL PLATFORM CONCERT

March 2007

The second of the Maisie Lewis concerts for the 2006/7 season was out of the ordinary in two particular ways. Firstly, instead of the usual two artists or groups, there were three. Secondly, the concert featured the accordion, a rarity in the UK but a very popular proponent of classical music in various parts of Europe, especially Scandinavia and the Balkans. And it was a Balkan performer, the Slovenian Borut Zagoranski who stole the show at the Wigmore Hall on 5 March.

In his four pieces Zagoranski demonstrated not only a remarkable technical command of his instrument but also a phenomenal musical personality. He caught the audience’s attention with a beautifully modulated performance of Mozart’s *Andante*, a work conceived for mechanical organ. The striking thing about the accordion, at least in Borut’s hands, is the way in which the instrument breathes like a blown instrument or indeed like a singer. At times it sounds like a quaint chamber organ but at others its character is entirely individual. This was most noticeable in the two contemporary works. Sofia Gubaidulina’s *De profundis* is now a recognised classic, exploring the extensive range of wonderful effects possible from the instrument and Zagoranski showed exactly how a work of this kind can touch the heart and mind of the listener. Makkonen’s *The Flight Beyond the Time* was a brilliant technical essay, delivered with extraordinary élan. The audience loved it.

By contrast, the performances by pianist Mikhail Shilyaev were disappointing. Shilyaev is an outstandingly gifted player but he seemed out of sorts on this evening. Many in the Company know what he is capable of, his performance of Beethoven for the Company medal in

2006 being especially memorable. Nobody can deliver the goods consistently so the lacklustre Liszt can be forgiven. Bartók’s *Improvisations on Hungarian Peasant Songs* showed glimpses of Mikhail’s great talent and I hope we hear more of this promising artist.

The Rautio Piano Trio chose to dedicate their slot to one work, Ravel’s only work for the medium. This was, in my view, a sensible idea.

It gave the concert a real focus and it meant that they could deliver one of the great masterpieces of the trio repertoire. The Rautio three are an experienced group and have already assimilated the knack that marks out all good chamber music partnerships, namely the gift of making the ensemble sound natural, unforced and instinctive. Yet they also possess individual talent that makes the technical demands in a piece like the Ravel seem insignificant. What was really impressive was the way in which Ravel’s remarkable textures and harmonies were lovingly realised so that at least this member of the audience was enthralled from start to finish. It is invidious to pick one of the three but, for me, Jan Rautio’s piano playing was a model of sensitivity, coaxing the best out of violinist Jane Gordon and cellist Katherine Jenkinson. How lucky we are to have such a wonderful outlet for young talent of this calibre.

Senior Warden Leslie East



Mikhail Shilyaev



Borut Zagoranski

**The
Rautio
Piano
Trio**

