

STCG Concert Report for 2019/2020



Another rewarding season although the last 2 concerts have been cancelled due to Covid-19, sadly including the Siberian Symphony Orchestra with pianist Freddy Kempf and 96 applying to go – we think this is a record for a STCG concert. We have again enjoyed your strong support with 4 two coach concerts and an average over 60 applying. The average price of a concert was £30. The weather has not been a problem particularly on 8 February when we were blown into Birmingham in record time and were not unduly impeded on the way back encountering little traffic at all. The only dampener were the restrictions placed on our venue by the reworking of the front of Symphony Hall but our normal facilities were mostly available on our 10 March visit. We may miss being able to take our drinks back to our seat?

From the 7 concerts that we have enjoyed so far my highlights are:

- CBSO, with the young cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason and Mirga conducting, filled the hall, a rare feat, with a dream-like Elgar Cello Concerto.
- Moscow Philharmonic as always impressive with their Russian music and encores.
- CBSO with an interesting programme, a bassoon and a clarinet soloist from the orchestra underlining how much of a world-class act the CBSO are.
- CBSO and Nicola Benedetti who, we all thought, wisely ditched the scheduled Bartok violin concerto for Tchaikovsky's, followed by a powerful Berlioz Symphonie fantastique conducted by the impressive young conductor Klaus Mäkelä.

And less so:

- Sir Simon Rattle and his LSO with, for us, challenging Berg songs but followed by an exhilarating Beethoven Symphony No. 7.

I am also heartened by the fact the least supported concert, CBSO's Bartók and Bruckner, was an enjoyable concert even though Mirga was absent.

Importantly, my thanks are again due to Bernhard and Graham for their support and excellent booking secretary duties, and of course to the expertise from Ken, Jenny and Yvonne. Boulton's drivers as always succeeded in getting us there on time without fuss and recently I was thanking my first lady driver Dot.

Next seasons highlights are as yet unknown but we are 'busy' waiting for the 'Classicals' and CBSO programmes to appear. We look forward to seeing you again during the next season.

Mike Rounsefell

April 2020