

A delicious and magical night with Haddo choirs

It was a strange sensation passing through the ticket office at Haddo House Hall just prior to the concert given by Haddo Junior Choirs on Friday.

The room was packed to the gunnels with excited youngsters dying to get on with the concert. When one reads that the musical director of the choirs, Alice Dennis, has upped the membership of 25 a decade or so ago to an incredible 135 today you can see what I mean. The anticipation of what they had to offer was considerable and no-one was disappointed.

It was not only the young people who were excited. During the concert I sat next to the parents of one of the members, Emily Milne and from them I experienced the enthusiasm which plainly pervades the whole organisation.

It is justified. The Children's choir started off with a traditional version of 'Tumbalaika', and then tackled Britten's 'The Ride by Night'.

From there they worked through Quilters 'Blossom Time' and gave a super rendition of 'Zingari Bridal Day' by Brahms. In each case we were impressed by the musical quality of their performances.

Alice and her husband Jerry, who accompanied the choirs on the piano, get the kids – from six to twelve year olds to sing in parts, to sing clearly and to sing out of sheer pleasure. It comes over very well.

Developing the individual talents in the Children's Choir also appears to be in order and several solos, duets and trios sang to the audience. All gave of their best and although invidious to select just one, it really was a treat to hear six year old Jessica O'Brien sing 'Little Trotty Wagtail'. Bearing in mind that there are no mikes at Haddo, I heard every word beautifully sung and I was right at the back of the hall. Super.

The Youth Choir also had their individuals entertain us. Eleanor Dennis gave her usual quality offering with Handel's 'Here Amid the Shady Woods' and Vikki Moffat's singing of Gluck's 'Oh del Mio Dolce Ardor', a difficult piece, was enjoyable.

Several members of the Haddo Choral and Operatic Society (George Lawrence, Andy Clubb and Lisa Moffat), entertained with some Mozart, Schubert and G and S.

The level of the choral work, which won the Youth Choir creditable position in last Year's 'Sainsbury's Choir of the Year' - Scottish heat, was evident when they sang 'Blow Bugle, Blow' (by Westbrook) and 'Kodaly's Dancing Song', both testing items.

However, I felt that special tingly feeling when they rendered the song 'People will say we're in Love' from 'Oklahoma'. It was just delicious and stays with me yet.

John Smith.