

Kokoro: The Living Tradition, St. Peter's Church, Bournemouth

9:54am Monday 16th May 2011

By Mike Marsh

PROJECTING the Living Tradition theme right into the 21st century with two new works and honouring Sir Dan Godfrey (now resting in St. Peter's graveyard) whose enterprise brought composers such as Parry and Elgar to Bournemouth to conduct their own music.

Parry was baptised in this very church and from his Songs of Farewell Canticum gave a sublime performance of My Soul there is a Country. Their breathtaking excellence was also accorded to Elgar's Lux aeterna, a choral arrangement by James Cameron of 'Nimrod'.

Set between these was the premiere of Marc Yeats' shadow, and the moon. Yeats' described this work as "not abrasive", and programme notes referred to recycling musical material.

I'm sure there wasn't a single bum note from Kokoro, but as for recycling, my tip is; go for the ultimate!

Stephen McNeff's Lux showed a nicely integrated work for octet; well constructed, effective and of considerable substance.

The premiere of the late Geoffrey Burgon's Songs between the Soul and the Bridegroom sets a most touchingly conceived love poem with imaginative simplicity, taking nothing from the text, and here given a definitive performance by Canticum.

The Road to Ardtalla by James MacMillan is a rocky one. Maybe he hopes it will add to the 'cultural heritage' of Islay, but until I've also

visited the place and taken a wee dram of its famous whiskey, I'll reserve my opinion. Whereas I unreservedly welcome his A Child's Prayer.
Stunning!

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