



musicinverness

December 2022 eNewsletter

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Ness Sinfonia +- NTS Highland Members Centre Zoom talk by Peter Medhurst

As we enter the season of pantomime (Oh! Yes we do!) we can look behind us at November and some memorable performances; Stephen Osborne at Nairn; the Mahler Players Wind Quintet at Cromarty; Maxi Martin and Julian Milford at Boat of Garten; Scottish Opera's Verdi Collection; and for me the most outstanding was cellist Robin Michael playing the Elgar Concerto with the Scottish Sinfonia in St Cuthbert's Church in Edinburgh.

December is always a fairly quiet month as we look forward to festooning our homes and getting ready to overindulge for several days. As a Founder Member of The Grumpy Old Mens Club I can't wait for Twelfth Night which The Bard opened with, "If Music be the food of love, play on!" and I can put my "Bah! Humbug!" sweatshirt back in the drawer for another year.

Exclusively Highland Christmas Market

Eden Court Bishop's Palace and First Circle Foyer. 2nd, 3rd and 4th December

From 10am to 5pm each day, the Bishops Palace and First Circle foyer will be filled with over 60 exhibitors waiting to welcome you, and outside you will find delicious street food and refreshments.

Could there be a better way to start your Christmas shopping?

For a full list of exhibitors, visit Exclusively Highlands' [Facebook page](#).

Exhibition on Screen - Cézanne : Portraits of a Life.

Eden Court Playhouse Cinema. Wed 30 November at 6.00pm and Sun 04 December at 3.00pm

One cannot appreciate 20th century art without understanding the significance and genius of Paul Cézanne. Filmed at the National Portrait Gallery in London, with additional interviews from experts and curators from MoMA in New York, National Gallery of Art in Washington DC, and Musée d'Orsay in Paris, and correspondence from the artist himself, the film takes audiences to the places Cézanne lived and worked and sheds light on an artist who is perhaps one of the least known and yet most important of all the Impressionists.

Scottish Ensemble by Candlelight SOLD OUT

St Andrew's Cathedral, Inverness. Friday 2nd December at 7.30pm

Scottish Ensemble return to the atmospheric surroundings of Inverness Cathedral for their annual seasonal treat - Concerts by Candlelight. Set within a shimmering array of candles, this concert will take audiences on a journey; from the baroque in the form of music by Henry Purcell and J.S. Bach to the present: Peteris Vasks, Sally Norris and Thomas Adès. An intimate evening of music; a moment of tranquillity; a performance to inspire and uplift.

Jazz Collusion

Nairn Dunbar Golf Club Lounge. Saturday 3rd December at 8.00pm

Top local pianist Andy Hodge brings his quartet, Jazz Collusion to Nairn Dunbar Golf Club to play swinging standards with freshness, fun and flair.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE - ACT 2 with Prelude and Liebestod

The Mahler Players (cond. Tomas Leakey) with guests.

Sat 3rd December at 8.00pm in Inverness Cathedral and Sun 4th December at 3.00pm in Strathpeffer Pavilion

The Mahler Players present two gala performances of the second act from Wagner's searingly intense opera *Tristan und Isolde*. The production features five soloists of world renown, including the legendary bass, Sir John Tomlinson, singing the role for which he has provided the benchmark for decades, King Marke. Sir John is joined by Peter Wedd, Lee Bisset, Alwyn Mellor and Frederick Jones.

To present a concert performance of one of Wagner's greatest works in the Highlands is a remarkable achievement and is being received with great interest, including coverage on BBC Radio 3 "In Tune" with Sean Rafferty. Seating is limited at both venues and tickets are selling well so, if you do not have your tickets yet, do not waste any time. www.mahlerplayers.co.uk

The Christmas Story in Renaissance Art

The Arts Society Highland illustrated lecture by Paula Nuttall on Tuesday 6th December at 11.30am in Nairn Community and Arts Centre.

This lecture tells the Christmas story through a selection of well-loved paintings and illuminated manuscripts by Italian and Flemish artists, including Botticelli, Fra Angelico and Jan van Eyck, together with many less well-known images. From the Annunciation to the Nativity, the Journey of the Kings and the Flight into Egypt, it explores the rich symbolism of Christmas imagery, highlights the ways in which spiritual ideas and devotional practice shaped the depiction of the narrative, and introduces some less familiar aspects of the story, such as the Midwives and Joseph's stockings.

Paula Nuttall is a specialist in renaissance art, with a particular interest in artistic relations between Flanders and Italy. She is Course Director of the V&A Medieval and Renaissance Year Course, and lectures for a range of institutions including the Courtauld and the Arts Society. In 2020 she collaborated on the exhibition Van Eyck: An Optical Revolution at the Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Ghent. Her numerous publications include *From Flanders to Florence: the Impact of Netherlandish Painting, 1400-1500* (Yale University Press, 2004) and a chapter on the Northern Renaissance in the *Oxford Illustrated History of the Renaissance* (2019).

Coffee served from 11.00am. Members Free. Guests £9.

Peter Pan - The Panto

Eden Court Empire Theatre. Numerous performances from Wednesday 7th December 2022 until Sunday 8th January 2023

When Wendy and her brothers encounter the mysterious Peter Pan, the boy who never grows old, they are whisked off on an adventure to Neverland. With the magical island under threat, can they help Peter and the Lost Boys defeat the villainous Captain Hook and his infamous pirate crew? *Peter Pan* is a swashbuckling adventure panto, with spectacular song and dance routines, an outrageous dame, hilarious comic and lots of traditional panto slapstick.

Let your dreams take flight and join the audience for a panto guaranteed to have you hooked this festive season!

Tickets from Eden Court Box Office. www.eden-court.co.uk 01463 234234 or in person.

Musick Fyne at Christmas

Wednesday 7th December at 8.00pm in St John's Episcopal Church, Forres, IV36 3BN Admission £10 in aid of the church.

Friday 9th December at 8.00pm in the Assembly Hall, WASPS Creative Academy, Midmills Building, Inverness IV2 3JP Admission £10 in aid of the Creative Academy.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without a memorable performance by James Ross and the musicians of Musick Fyne. The best way to tell you about this year's double event is to let James himself do the talking,

"I am delighted to share details of our two forthcoming performances of choral music for Christmas in Inverness and Forres. We are pleased to be returning to St John's in Forres, but also to be visiting a very exciting new venue, the WASPS Creative Academy (originally Inverness Royal Academy) in Midmills Building. We have given many performances in St John's over the years, and it is one of our favourite venues. The Wasps Creative Academy offers a wonderful atrium with a lovely acoustic and various balconies, which we shall be exploiting fully for our inaugural concert there.

Both concerts feature local premieres of a wonderful new work, 'Orisons of the Air' which we commissioned from Gordon Tocher to celebrate our 40th anniversary. Gordon has done us proud with a major new work, which references textually and musically the choral masterpiece 'O bone Jesu' by Robert Carver, and we will also be performing this piece as well as a selection of beautiful Christmas pieces by Palestrina, Schein and Tallis. Members of Coronach, including harpist Bill Taylor, will be contributing instrumental interludes.

We hope you will be able to join us at one of these venues for what promises to be a memorable evening of lovely choral and instrumental music."

The Royal Ballet : The Nutcracker (Live Screening)

Eden Court La Scala Cinema. Thursday 8th December at 7.15pm with Encore Screening on Sunday 11th December at 2.00pm

Join Clara at a delightful Christmas Eve party that becomes a magical adventure once everyone else is tucked up in bed. Marvel at the brilliance of Tchaikovsky's score, as Clara and her enchanted Nutcracker fight the Mouse King and visit the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Prince in the glittering Kingdom of Sweets. Peter Wright's much-loved production for The Royal Ballet, with gorgeous period designs by Julia Trevelyan Oman, keeps true to the spirit of this festive ballet classic, combining the thrill of the fairy tale with spectacular classical dancing.

The Florians Panto : Snow White

Florians Theatre, Bught Park. Friday 9th December to Saturday 17th December at 7.30pm with Saturday Matinee at 2.30pm. No Sunday performances.

Inverness's renowned Am-Dram company, The Florians are back in panto land again this year with "Snow White", written by local writer Kieran Lochore and directed by Morag Russell. Tickets are now on sale and can be accessed by visiting The Florians website www.florians.org.uk but hurry as they are selling fast!

The Osprey Music Society welcomes Alba Challah

Boat of Garten Community Hall on Friday 9th December at 7.30pm

Taking over the Klezmer Music mantle in Scotland from Moishe's Bagel after eighteen years are the six members of Alba Challah. Glasgow-based, their first few concerts have gone down a storm and having seen the programme the band has put together for TOMS another storm is guaranteed for Speyside. Tickets from ann.nap@btinternet.com or 01479 831213 07850 752757.

Live from The Met : The Hours

Eden Court La Scala Cinema. Saturday 10th December at 5.55pm

Soprano Renée Fleming makes her highly anticipated return to the Met in the world-premiere production of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Kevin Puts's *The Hours*, adapted from Michael Cunningham's acclaimed novel. Inspired by Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and made a household name by the Oscar-winning 2002 film version starring Meryl Streep, Julianne Moore, and Nicole Kidman, the powerful story follows three women from different eras who each grapple with their inner demons and their roles in society. The exciting premiere radiates with star power, with soprano Kelli O'Hara and mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato joining Fleming as the opera's trio of heroines. Phelim McDermott directs this compelling drama, with Met Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium to conduct Puts's poignant and powerful score.

Ness Sinfonia “Letters from America”

Nairn Community and Arts Centre. Saturday 10th December at 7.30pm.

Conductor Robin Versteeg and Leader Mark Osborne take the Ness Sinfonia through a programme combining orchestral masterworks by some of the best-loved American composers - Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, John Williams - with music inspired by America by Ernst von Dohnányi and Richard Strauss. Featuring Copland's colourful Billy the Kid ballet suite and Fanfare for the Common Man, and the Strauss Oboe Concerto with soloist David Cushman. Admission £10. See www.ness-sinfonia.org

National Trust for Scotland Highland Members Centre

Zoom Talk by Peter Medhurst on Mendelssohn in Scotland at 7.30pm

In the summer of 1829, the 20 year old German composer, Felix Mendelssohn and his friend Karl Klingemann went on a two week tour of the Scottish Highlands. They began their sightseeing in Edinburgh before making their way via Perth, Dunkeld, Blair Atholl and Oban - among other places - to the Western Isles, where Mendelssohn visited Fingal's Cave on the Isle of Staffa, inspiring his writing of the *Hebrides Overture*.

Peter Medhurst's work as singer, pianist and lecturer-recitalist has taken him all over the world and travels in the last few years have included tours of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, as well as mainland Europe. Closer to home, he has presented events at the King's Place, the Barbican, St John's Smith Square, and the Royal Festival Hall on subjects that range from Beethoven String Quartets, Mozart Operas, Vermeer's Music Lesson, The Twelve Days of Christmas, The Golden Age of Vienna, and 18th Century Venetian Art and Music. He has also directed presentations at the Wallace Collection, the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery and the V&A, linking the visual arts with the world of 17th and 18th century music-making.

He is a familiar face to audiences of music societies, regional theatres and British festivals, as well as to those of arts based organisations such as The Art Fund, The National Trust, and the Arts Society (formally known as NADFAS). Radio work has included Classic FM, Radio 3, and Radio 4.

The talk is free for members of the Highland Members' Centre of the NTS and others are asked to make a donation.

E mail highlandnts@gmail.com to get the zoom link.

And finally.....

Have a great Christmas, enjoy your Brussels Sprouts and I'll be back with more recommendations for January 2023.