

Hebrides Ensemble

Perth Concert Hall

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It was a typically enterprising, wide-ranging, provocative programme from the Hebrides Ensemble, conveyed in wonderfully fresh, vivid performances. There was a sizeable audience to experience the trio's craft, in one stop on a three-concert tour taking in lesser-visited venues across Scotland, and even streamed live online (watch it again via the Hebrides Ensemble website). Which makes it all the more bewildering that future Hebrides events like this could be in jeopardy, following Creative Scotland's apparent decision to withdraw regular funding.

Appropriately enough, however – though coincidentally – their eastern Europe-inspired programme revolved around the dumka, a rather melancholy, thoughtful lament. Janáček's Brahmsian early Dumka got a passionate, full-throated performance from violinist Zoë Beyers and pianist Huw Watkins, one of expert pacing and remarkably sustained intensity – following a pungent, if strangely brief, selection from Bartók's Mikrokosmos from Watkins to open the concert, so forthright and colourful that you'd never guess these were educational pieces.

Dvořák's Dumky Trio formed the concert's main focus, however, for which Beyers and Watkins were joined by Hebrides co-founder William Conway on cello for a spirited, gutsy

Brief, hilarious, angry, and blazing with honesty, Andrea Dunbar's Rita, Sue And Bob Too bursts onto the stage of the Citizens' like a play from the past that is somehow more contemporary than most plays written today. As in Alan Clarke's much-loved 1987 film, the story of the 80-minute play – first seen in London in 1982 – is simple; a married man in his late 20s starts a back-seat affair with his two teenage babysitters, aged just 15, one night when he is driving them home to the run-down Bradford housing estate where they live.

In this stage version, though, the focus is less on Bob and his dilemmas, and much more on the two girls, the bond between them, and the role Bob plays in driving them apart.

The women of the community

account, one that was unafraid to play up the work's heart-on-its-sleeve emotion while still delivering impeccable detail and nuance. The eight brief movements of Nigel Osborne's The Piano Tuner, taken from his opera of the same name, were fresh and finely crafted, each given its own vivid character, although the lack of even a brief programme note made the unfamiliar piece rather more opaque than it needed to be.

DAVID KETTLE**MUSIC****Kendrick Lamar**

Hydro, Glasgow

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Kendrick Lamar is routine-