****

**MORIARTY WINDS**

**13-15 June 2019**

**Uplyme (Dorset), Bridport Arts Centre** (Dorset)

**Creative Innovation Centre** (Taunton),

**Pendomer** (Somerset)

Owing to the various personnel changes over the four-concert tour this review is based on the performance at The Church of St Roch, Pendomer near Yeovil.

In the fourteen years of bringing professional chamber music to the region, this was the first wind quintet to be promoted by Concerts in the West. The visit by Moriarty Winds generated a lot of interest and except at one venue there were capacity audiences and very favourable reactions to their programme and playing.

Anna Kondrashina – flute; Amy Roberts – oboe; Matthew Wilsher – clarinet; Patrick Bolton – bassoon; Joel Roberts – horn formed the line-up at Pendomer and James Hulme (oboe) and Angharad Thomas (bassoon) played at one or more of the other venues.

Moriarty Winds’ programme began with an arrangement of the madrigal *I feign not friendship,* one of the 1612 set by Orlando Gibbons. The item proved to be an apt choice for players and audience alike.

The wind quintets of the Prague-born composer Anton Riecha (1770-1836) are the staple fare of the wind quintet. Moriarty Winds chose the Opus 88 E flat major. Apart from the suspect tuning of the initial chords, the performance was a successful showcase for the individual musicians with technically demanding phrases firmly handled by Joel Roberts and a well-controlled and sensitive sound throughout the extended tessitura of Patrick Bolton bassoon playing. The various tempo changes were part of a well-balanced and clear ensemble performance.

Claude Debussy’s *Petite Suite,* an early movement piece written in 1889 for piano duet, has undergone several transformations including an arrangement for wind quintet by Gordon Davies. Again, Moriarty Winds demonstrated clear and sensitive ensemble playing with memorable phrasing from Amy Roberts’s oboe in *Ballet* and a fine singing-like quality of Anna Kondrashina’s piccolo and flute in the *Menuet.*

Samuel Barber’s 1956 *Summer Music* is an attractive evocation of warmth, light, and summer indolence. It is however a piece of mood swings alternating between gentler long-held notes and subtle changes of metre and vigorously articulated rhythmic episodes. It is a test-piece for ensemble precision and Moriarty Winds scored highly in this performance. The wonderful instrumentation of Barber’s writing gives opportunities for finely nuanced solo contributions and these were generally well taken by each performer and especially Amy Roberts.

Paul Hindemith’s 1922 *Kleine Kammermusik No2 Op 24* is a product of his ambition to create music that would reflect a new ‘social and musical democracy’. He was aided by the clarity of his vision for form and structure, melodic development and counterpoint.

Moriarty Winds showed an enormous understanding of their individual roles at almost any given moment. The quiet and distant-sounding march-like accompaniment from Matthew Wilsher, Joel Roberts and Patrick Bolton to the beautifully controlled melodic phrasing from Anna Kondrashina and Amy Roberts in the *Ruhig und einfach* movement was particularly effective.

[www.moriartywinds.com](http://www.moriartywinds.com)

Andrew Maddocks 2019