



Konsert: OSM Camerata, Endlersaal, Stellenbosch, 21.10.2017
Resensie Louis van der Watt, Universiteit Stellenbosch

Die OSM Camerata, die vlagskipkamerorkes van die Odeion Skool vir Musiek aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat, het 'n gevarieerde program aangebied waarin daar onder meer aan die werke van twee hedendaagse Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste prominensie verleen is. Eerstens op die musikale spyskaart was twee aptytwekkers, 'n transkripsie van JS Bach se *Psallite Deo nostro*, meer bekend as *Sicut locutus est* uit die D-majeur weergawe van sy Magnificat, asook 'n energieke weergawe deur die OSM-alumna, altvioliste Elsabé Raath, van die *Courante* uit sy Tjellosuite in D-mineur. Volgende was 'n transkripsie deur Lance Phillip, dosent in Koorleiding aan die OSM, van Jacobus Gallus se *Duo seraphim*. In hierdie werk, oorspronklik vir dubbelkoor, slaag Phillips baie suksesvol daarin om die kooridoom te transformeer tot 'n idiomatiese werk vir kamerorkes, waarin tipiese kenmerke van die Barok *concertato*-styl, soos die effek van *cori spezzati* ("gespasieerde kore" wat afwisselend sing/speel) baie goed verklanking vind.

Ná pouse was daar, benewens 'n aantal musikale bonbons soos die *Bokdans* van Honegger, knap uitgevoer deur die fluitsolis Nina Cilliers, asook transkripsies van die *Intermezzo* uit *Cavalleria rusticana* van Mascagni en die *Neuriekoor* (*Coro a bocca chiusa* – 'Toemondkoor') van Puccini, ook uitvoerings van twee werke van die Suid-Afrikaans-gebore en -opgeleide komponis Keith Moss. Die eerste was die *Concertino* vir Klarinet en Kamerorkes, 'n besonder treffende werk in een beweging met drie dele, waarin 'n vars harmoniese woordeskat gekombineer word met interessante ritmiek, en waarin die tipiese en idiomatiese eienskappe van die klarinet effektief ontgin word. Die solis, Naledi Dweba, het hierdie aspekte uitstekend weergegee. Die slotwerk was Moss se verwerking vir

kamerorkes van die Lettiese komponis Pēteris Vasks se komposisie, *Kekatu dziesma* ('Karnavallied'), met 'n meesleurende energie en uitstekende ritmiese samehang uitgevoer deur die groep.

Die sentrum van die OSM se uitvoering was egter hul uitvoering van vier werke van die Suid-Afrikaanse komponis Hendrik Hofmeyr, wat in September sy sestigste verjaardag gevier het. Die tjelliste Anmari van der Westhuizen, professor aan die OSM, het 'n virtuose en bravura vertolking van Hofmeyr se *Cadenza* gelewer. Met die ander drie werke van Hofmeyr, *Notturmo elegiaco*, *Super flumina Babylonis* en *Spookwals/Phantom Waltz*, het die Camerata werklik tot hul reg gekom. Hul spel was uitstekend. Daar was 'n wye palet van toonkleure wat opgetower is, die ritmiese samehang, ten spyte van die kompleksiteit van die komposisies, was besonder goed, die versmelting van die instrumentgroepe was aangenaam gemoduleer, en die groep se intonasie, byvoorbeeld waar daar unisone en oktaafpassasies of uiterste registers betrokke was, het rotsvas gebly. In hierdie werke, onder die knap en behendige leiding van Xavier Cloete, is die groep getransformeer tot 'n organiese geheel wat betrokkenheid, musikaliteit en toewyding uitgestraal het. Hoewel die Bolandse luisterpubliek soms geneig is om te maklik 'n staande ovasie te gee, was dit in hierdie geval welverdiend.

Luisteraars het die saal verlaat, beïndruk met die konsert wat 'n weerspieëling van velerlei besondere insette was: onder meer 'n uitstekende vlak van onderrig en musisering aan die Odeion Skool vir Musiek, asook 'n waardering vir die werk van Suid-Afrikaanse komponiste wat geblyk het uit die ruim aanbod daarvan op die program, asook uit die feit dat verskeie van hierdie werke spesifiek opdragwerke was, aangevra deur die OSM op inisiatief van Marius Coetzee, die innoverings- en ontwikkelingsbestuurder, wat die Camerata gestig het en bestuur. Dit was 'n verruimende luisterervaring.



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Review Louis van der Watt, Stellenbosch University

The OSM Camerata, the flagship chamber orchestra of the Odeion School of Music at the University of the Free State, hosted a varied programme which, among others, prominently featured the works of two contemporary South African composers. First on the musical menu was two appetisers, a transcription of JS Bach's *Psallite Deo nostro*, better known as *Sicut locutus est* from the D major version of his Magnificat, as well as an energetic version by the OSM *alumna*, Elsabé Raath (viola), of the *Courante* from his Cello suite in D minor. Next was a transcription by Lance Phillip, Choir Conducting lecturer at the OSM, of Jacobus Gallus's *Duo seraphim*. In this work, originally for double choir, Phillips succeeds in transforming the choral idiom into an idiomatic work for chamber orchestra, in which typical features of the Baroque *concertato* style, such as the effect of *cori spezzati* ('spaced choirs' singing/playing alternately), finds good sound expression.

After the interval, in addition to a number of musical bonbons such as the *Dance of the Goat* by Honegger, well executed by the flute soloist Nina Cilliers, as well as transcriptions of the *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria rusticana* by Mascagni and the *Humming Chorus* (*Coro a bocca chiusa* – 'wordless song') by Puccini, there were also renditions of two works by the South African born and trained composer Keith Moss. The first was the *Concertino* for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra, a particularly striking work in one movement with three parts, in which a fresh harmonic vocabulary is combined with interesting rhythm wherein the typical and idiomatic features of the clarinet are effectively exploited. The soloist, Naledi Dweba, presented these aspects excellently. The final work was Moss's arrangement for chamber orchestra of the Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks' composition, *Kekatu*

dziesma ('Carnival Song'), performed with captivating energy and excellent rhythmic coherence by the group.

However, the centre of the OSM's performance was their rendition of four works by South African composer Hendrik Hofmeyr, who celebrated his sixtieth birthday in September. The cellist Anmari van der Westhuizen, professor at the OSM, delivered a virtuoso and bravura interpretation of Hofmeyr's *Cadenza*. With Hofmeyr's three other works, *Notturmo elegiaco*, *Super flumina Babylonis*, and *Phantom Waltz*, the Camerata really came into their own. Their execution was excellent. They managed to conjure a wide palette of musical colours, the rhythmic coherence – despite the complexity of the compositions – was exceptionally good, the blending of the instrument groups was pleasantly modulated, and the group's intonation, for example where unison and octave passages or extreme registers were involved, remained unshaken. In these works, under the capable and skilful guidance of Xavier Cloete, the group was transformed into an organic entity radiating commitment, musicality, and devotion. Although the Boland audiences often tend to be too lenient with standing ovations, in this case it was well deserved.

Listeners left the hall impressed with the concert, which was a reflection of several exceptional inputs: this included an excellent level of teaching and playing music at the Odeion School of Music, as well as appreciation for the work of South African composers which was evident from the generous offering in the programme, and the fact that several of these works were specifically commissioned by the OSM and initiated by Marius Coetzee, the innovation and development manager, who was instrumental in founding and managing the Camerata. It was a liberating listening experience.