



Serenata Series Concert

Timothy Constable - Percussion

This review is completely partial (in the sense of not impartial). The impresarios of the concert under consideration - Robert Constable and Jane McKellar - are firm friends of mine; I've known and admired Robert's son Timothy, the principal performer, for many years; one of the composers whose work was highlighted is my brother. Such are my conflicts of interest, if I weren't me I wouldn't trust anything I say.

Nevertheless, it is a now well-known fact that the Serenata series of concerts at 5 Keogh's Road was a triumph of internationally-renowned musicianship, judicious choice of repertoire, and congenial atmosphere. Timothy Constable, who presented the final concert, on Sunday 11 November, is a percussionist of great achievements and musical curiosity. His program began with a Bach sonata and was followed by some Korean ritual music all of which he'd transcribed himself and arranged for marimba. The start of the second half featured Timothy's own composition, *Last Waltz*, with two players on drums, and was performed outside while the Valley's finest music-lovers nibbled canapés and sipped Yarrowa Estate wine in the afternoon sun. The final piece of the concert, by Japanese composer Minoru Miki, required considerable and entertaining athleticism from the performer.

In between were two contributions from local composers: Martin Wesley-Smith's *For Marimba and Tape*, from 1982 and a staple for marimba players around the world, and Timothy's father's *Stargazer*. The fiendishly difficult Wesley-Smith was played with skill and panache. The much more spare and contemplative *Stargazer*, inspired by artist Fraser Gunn's photographs of night skies in New Zealand, was accompanied by the composer on the piano.

Varied music superbly performed and charmingly presented, there was nothing not to like. Of course, I would say that, if only because I'd helped Robert collect chairs from the Hall and take them back the next day: my efforts would be diminished by an unsatisfactory concert. But of course a conflict of interest doesn't necessarily mean a dishonest or untrue assessment by a reviewer, and I can assure you that everything I've said about this event is utterly trustworthy.

Peter Wesley-Smith