

Luis Bacalov's Misa Tango and Karl Jenkins' Requiem were presented by Perth Choral Society for their spring concert.

Not many Societies or professional groups would have the courage to present two contemporary works as a main concert of their season, but this was an inspired decision. The incisive direction of Peter Rutterford produced a spirited response from both choir and orchestra, making the best possible case for the two works.

Both pieces were new to Perth and thus created some misgivings for some, but they provided a most exciting evening's entertainment for the enthusiastic audience. The chorus was impressive from the opening notes of the Kyrie, compellingly supported by the richness of Mezzo soloist Merryn Gamba and the emotive accordion playing of Mark Bousie. The tango rhythms accentuated by Mark's sensitive understanding of the piece complemented the vocal performance with choir and orchestra blending so well together. There were many differences in tempo, dynamics and mood, with challenges to choral pitch, which were met and overcome, making this a very exciting piece. Mark Ashmore's rich baritone voice was strong, clear and well articulated throughout.

Karl Jenkins' Requiem also gave lots of opportunity for the choir to show its command of dynamics and rhythm. The choral balance was evident throughout, with tremendous response to the orchestral accompaniment provided by the Angus Chamber Orchestra - especially in the "Dies Irae" and the "Rex Tremendae."

The inclusion of five Japanese *haiku* poems was innovative and the gentleness of these (sung in Japanese by the ladies of the choir) with the evocative flute playing of Nicloa Maynes adding to the atmospheric effect of these. Treble soloist William Holland coped admirably with the demands of the Pie Jesu, ably complementing Merryn Gamba's mellow tones. The concluding "In Paradisum" featured a lovely harp solo by Helen Thomson and the peaceful ending was exquisite.

The performance was greatly appreciated by an enthusiastic audience who were, as were choir and orchestra, privileged to be part of a most exciting, innovative programme and Perth Choral Society are to be congratulated on their excellent performance.