



contemporary Wel-  
to a blend of soul,  
beat and calypso  
tro".  
performed in Kyoto  
a spent time as a

cabaret singer in Shanghai.  
The experiences spawned her  
book *Shanghai Sheba*, which  
she was invited to read on Na-  
tional Radio.

Sheba, SFBH, November 22.

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music REVIEW

Hesperion XXI, Town Hall,  
reviewed by Garth Wilshere

Exotic sounds

THIS was a much anticipated tour  
as the concerts by Hesperion XXI at  
the Festival in 1996 and 2000 were  
highlights.

In the event the concert was a  
little disappointing as the vibrant  
singer Montserrat Figueras, wife of  
the founder of the group Jordi Savall,  
was unwell and did not come to New  
Zealand. Neither did their daughter  
Arianna Savall who was also to sing.

This necessitated a significant  
change in the repertoire, so we  
got *Orient-Occident (A Dialogue  
of Souls)*, an interesting selection  
but different from that originally  
advertised.

All the vocals in this programme,  
bar the encore, were given to Savall's  
son, Ferran, who had a delicate tenor  
voice. It lacked the passion we would  
have got from his mother and sister. It  
meant a low-key more 60s sort of hip-  
pie folksong sound of world music:

All the performers were terrific,  
playing intriguing ancient instruments  
with exotic names – lira d'arco, rebab,  
viola da gamba, theorbo, and oud  
among them.

When the rhythmic flow is in place  
the sound is exhilarating and remi-  
niscent of authentic street musicians  
of the Middle East, North Africa and  
Irish folk music amongst other sound  
worlds.

We heard old Spanish, Moroc-  
can, Israeli, Turkish music, Sephardic  
songs, even English music in the mix,  
with the second half more interesting  
than the first. All superbly played and  
entertaining.

music REVIEW

Concert of Remembrance,  
Vector Wellington Orches-  
tra with the Orpheus Choir  
and guests, Michael Fowler  
Centre, reviewed by Garth  
Wilshere

Moving music

THIS was a powerful concert on the  
day of the 70th Anniversary of Kristall-  
nacht, the horrendous "Night of the  
Broken Glass", amongst the earliest  
of the atrocities inflicted on the Jew-  
ish population by the Nazis.

Special was the performance of  
*The Holocaust Requiem* written by  
Odessa-born, now Israeli resident,  
composer Boris Pigovat, who had  
been brought to New Zealand by  
the State of Israel for this, only the  
second ever performance, of his pro-  
foundly moving work.

Viola soloist Donald Maurice gave  
a powerful performance in the imagi-  
native viola role, which evokes and, in  
effect, comments on the progression  
of the work. His playing was warm  
and burnished.

Pigovat's music is evocative and  
disturbing in its depiction of the Holo-  
caust. With styles reminiscent of other  
Russian composers, including the  
rich melancholy of Shostakovich, the  
compositional style is still distinctly  
Pigovat's own.

Intense and strongly assured, it is a  
life-affirming piece that makes a tell-  
ing statement with subtlety. I want to  
hear it again and it deserves further  
performances.

The Vector Wellington Orchestra  
spent a lot of time preparing this work  
and it showed. They played with in-  
tensity and passion and, under Marc  
Taddei's powerful direction, pulled  
out all the stops.

I could see the reason for coupling  
**this with the Brahms's A German Requi-  
em**, but I am not convinced that  
this worked as it was a rather stolid  
performance.

The Orpheus Choir generally sang  
well, but the lack of numbers and  
weight in the tenors showed and the  
sopranos were not at their best. So-  
prano Jenny Wollerman was fine, if a  
little light voiced and Jared Holt was  
not at his best on this occasion, with  
some tuning issues. A worthy rather  
than memorable *German Requiem*.