

Arts & Entertainment

Kimball concert strikes unresolved chord

Review by Shelley Sperry

Contrary to pre-performance puns on its name, the London Early Music Group ambled onto the stage of the Kimball Recital Hall not at 7:45 p.m., but, quite fashionably, a few minutes after 8 p.m. Friday. For the next two hours, an audience of gigglers, note-takers and lap-patters participated in an emphatically joyful demonstration of Renaissance revelry.

The London Early Music was formed in 1976 by its current director and luteist, James Tyler, a New England native. Tyler's own Renaissance-style compositions are familiar to viewers (and listeners) of the BBC Shakespeare plays shown during the past few years on PBS. Other group members — Glenda Simpson (vocals), Duncan Druce (violin), Alan Lumsden (wind instruments), Oliver Brookes (cello), and Barry Mason (lute) — are Olde Englanders (predictably merry) and all hold prominent scholarly and artistic positions throughout the world.

The evening's tidily organized program of 19 short pieces — most of them secular, one third of them vocal



Photo courtesy Kimball Hall

The London Early Music Group

— included examples of each musician's virtuosity. Both Tyler and mezzo-soprano Simpson aggressively addressed the audience with grins, grimaces, and winks for which they were rewarded with several sustained ovations.

Highlighting the first half of the con-

cert were a lute duet by a Florentine composer known only as "B.M.," and a solo violin sonata by a close colleague of Monteverdi, Biagio Marini.

Barry Mason and James Tyler brought to life the lute harmonies, which were foreign sounds to most listeners. One minor and one major mode contra-

puntal piece balanced the two instruments, allowing each musician to display his skills of embellishment in the upper line.

Druce would perhaps not object very very much to the title of distinguished "fiddler." The slight dissonance of the piece, its sweet, thin notes juxtaposed to the slapping and scraping bow work reminiscent of a Tennessee hoedown brought a bit of the dancing, striving, individualistic aspect of the Renaissance into the auditorium. Druce was aided by an energetic continuo of cello and lute.

The second half of the program was met with even more enthusiasm from the audience than the first. The group ended several pieces with flourishes designed to create a stir and a giggle. All manner of dulcians, flutes, baroque guitars and lutes were hoisted to lips and knees. Finger gyrations were rapid and intricate.

The infatuation continued between Simpson and the listeners. Her rrrreverberating Italian libretti and extraordinary control of dynamics were consistently reiterated. In "La Grima-netta" by Giovanni Riccio and "Bella Mia, Questo Mio Core" by Giovanni Stefani, she and the instrumentalists created an impressively unified emotional climate.

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'Lavender Moonlight': A Mannequin Romance



By Pat Clark

Last Week: April May June spent little time in the rinse cycle, washing out maybe once and for all her infatuation with Randall Hitler. She was understandably upset with Randall, who had disappeared and had not contacted her since the day they set foot in South Africa. She determined that she much preferred the company of Walker Treadmill, who had merely thrown her into the South Atlantic and disappeared without a trace.

As her arms grew steadily more weary and the tide began to rise, April started to become less selective about who came along to rescue her. Walker Treadmill would be nice, she thought, but the odds on him were getting kind of remote. Or, if Randall just happened by and saved her life, she guessed she could forgive him for not having called.

Even a total stranger would do, she decided, as a wave of salt water lapped her face. Yes, a total stranger. He wouldn't even have to be exceptionally handsome, although handsome would be a nice bonus, and make for a more romantic story to tell the folks back in Nebraska. If he comes along before I finish counting to 10, she told herself, I won't mind if he is rather a plain-looking sort. Plain-looking but kind.

One... two... three... her mental scoreboard recorded the count. Given the unusual circumstances and all, a plain-looking guy who was only occa-

sionally kind would do. She felt her hand slip a little on the dock support. He could also be slightly overweight, she decided. Perhaps interesting eyes.

Four... five... six... OK, scrap the interesting eyes. Let's just call the guy fat. He could even have a mean streak, April decided, the salt water stinging her eyes as it bullied her with wave after wave of seaweed-laden tide.

Seven... eight... nine... never mind the mean streak. He could be the ugliest goon who ever walked the planet, with the personality of a cobra and the brains of an after-dinner mint, as long as he gets me outta here!

Nine and a half... nine and three quarters... she couldn't understand why the water was churning so violently. Was she going to die? She dare not think it.

In her concentration, April hadn't noticed a luxury yacht bearing down on her. A little cherubic guy with skin the same rough, earthy shade and texture as cat box litter and wearing a white commodore's cap threw her a line.

"Didn't we meet somewhere before?" he shouted, picking up an inner tube and lobbing it in the general direction of April. "Paris I think it was, or maybe in Chemistry lab back at Yale. Do you have dinner plans?"

"Murglederplakarulongf," April responded, as politely as one could hope to respond with a luxury yacht sloshing salt water into one's mouth. With her last ounce of energy she let go of the dock support and grabbed the inner tube.

"I'll bet you're a Pisces," the guy in the commodore's cap shouted at her as he started to reel her in. "Pisces is very compatible with whatever it is I am, I hear. Hey baby, whattya say you and I get out of this place and try something a little more private. Why don't you come on up and see my etchings?"

April held onto the inner tube and let her mysterious benefactor drag her to the side of the boat, where she stepped up a small aluminum ladder and found herself aboard the yacht.

"Your name is April May June, no doubt," said the guy in the commodore's cap. He reached for April's hand, raised it to her lips and kissed it lightly. "Hello, I am Dante Lavender."

Next Week: Love is a Stranger.

Music styles diverse yet quality, talent equal

By Todd R. Tystad

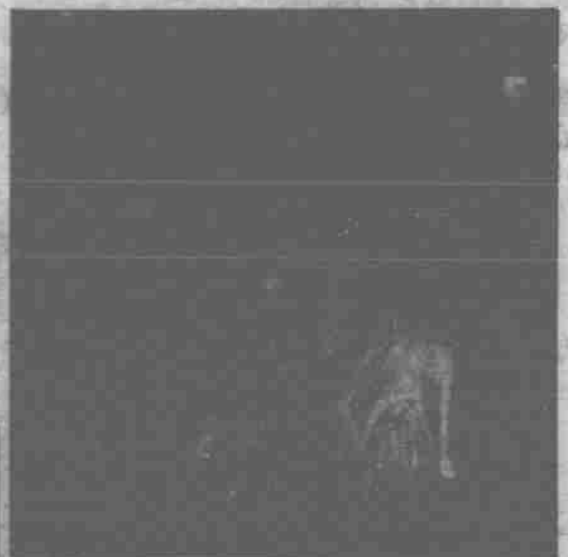
Not everyone these days has friends that are trusting enough to let someone else get his hands on their private record stock. Many times my home collection gets a little too well-known and the vinyl gets to looking shinier on the other turntable. Borrowed music is the theme of this piece, so let's get started.

Records

It's silly to lump the work of the Talking Heads, Rickie Lee Jones and King Sunny Ade together. All three represent musical styles and are light-years apart. The common factor here is not the magnitude of contrast, but the striking display of talent and quality music. Not one of these acts can be said to rate higher than another, and the fact that the three styles stand so far apart makes it impossible to make such a rating. Here lies some of the best sound you'll ever get your hands on.

The Talking Heads have released a mini-LP on Sire Records featuring extended versions of two cuts off of *Speaking In Tongues*. "Making Flippy Floppy" and "Slippery People" sound better than before. Unlike some extended play cuts, which feature only an added extra of 30 seconds of guitar solo, Talking Heads' leader David Byrne has restructured both of his songs. They don't appear adulterated, but expanded with a purpose. Byrne has taken his 1983 dance sound from *Speaking In Tongues* and flavored it for more danceability. The effort is successful and both cuts are a top-notch job.

"Making Flippy Floppy" is perhaps the most interesting dance song on the album. For the mini-LP Byrne has restructured his approach. The song starts with a bare beat, but develops into the same driving force as the album version. The extended cut seems to give Byrne the room to



expand his message: dance to the music. The lyrics come across as interesting, to say the least; but the Talking Heads' instrumentation is where the action is.

"Slippery People" rates about the same, although the overall effort never comes across as strong as some of the other material on the album. "Slippery People" employs a pseudo-gospel rebound that takes more than a little something away from your concentration. Nevertheless, both cuts come off as more powerful than the album versions. Strike another success niche for the Talking Heads.

Rickie Lee Jones has managed to produce another of her seemingly effortless usuals. Record stash searches have yet to find a poor effort by Jones. Does this woman ever do anything short of breath-taking?

Few people in the recording industry have the ability to do Jones' work. Emotions flow from the heart as Jones delivers every cut with perfection on her new seven-song mini-LP titled *Girl at Her Volcano* (Warner Bros.).

Two of the songs were recorded live. Those cuts give Jones the opportunity to do her stuff for an audience, yet sound just as perfect as the tried and true studio cuts. Particularly interesting on this disc is Jones' recording of "Under the Boardwalk". Jones has succeeded in doing a fantastic job on this fresh and exciting song.

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