

REVIEW: Poems of Ecstasy at Liverpool Philharmonic Hall with the RLPO and Vasily Petrenko

Nov 9 2009

[\(http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/liverpool-entertainment/echo-reviews/2009/11/09/\)](http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/liverpool-entertainment/echo-reviews/2009/11/09/) by

Catherine Jones

[\(http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/authors/catherine-jones/\)](http://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/authors/catherine-jones/), Liverpool Echo

[Add a comment \(#sitelife-commentsWidget-bottom\)](#)

[Recommend \(#none\)](#)

IF The Who were reincarnated as a symphony orchestra they would sound something like the RLPO in thunderous flight on Saturday night.

Vasily Petrenko had the Phil turned up to an eardrum-perforating, filling-loosening, Spinal Tap 11 in this heroic interpretation of Alexander Scriabin's Poem of Ecstasy.

Scriabin is perhaps best known for his collection of piano concertos - he was himself a pianist and even had a fascination with building the instruments.

Yet he also believed music was the most highly evolved of the arts and ecstasy the most highly evolved of the emotions - and brought both together in this ambitiously lyrical and grandiose symphonic poem.

The Phil, with the horn section augmented to nine and half-a-dozen trumpets also among the throng, gave the piece the gloriously energetic treatment it deserved, with blustery, sweeping, terrific hell-for-leather moments.

But there were also impressively tender passages, Petrenko coaxing sudden sensitive and expressive interludes from woodwind, harp and a singing violin solo from leader Jim Clarke.

Writing on his blog last week, the young conductor had described the entire programme as "absolutely fantastic and not too often performed".

While not strictly true of the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner's Tristan and Isolde, which opened proceedings in luscious, romantic fashion, it was certainly the case with Detlev Glanert's amplification of Brahms' Four Serious Songs.

Add a comment
