

Concert review: Kirsteen Davidson-Kelly (****)

Tuesday's lunchtime concert at the Reid Concert Hall – just one of the series of free weekly concerts organised by the University of Edinburgh that runs throughout its term time – showed just how far the minimalism of composers such as Steve Reich and (especially) Philip Glass has reached. Kirsteen Davidson-Kelly's immaculately performed piano recital included music by just two composers, yet the spectres of the US minimalist masters were never far away.

Davidson-Kelly was one of the founder members of experimental multi-keyboard ensemble Piano Circus, as was composer Max Richter, so it was no surprise that she had a natural affinity for his restrained, glowing music. The three short Richter pieces that Davidson-Kelly played seemed to strip music down to its bare essentials: not a note was wasted. And likewise, in her finely nuanced readings, Davidson-Kelly made every melody sing, and every chord chime with precisely the right weighting. These were unfussy, modest performances, but her suppleness and precision spoke volumes.

The pieces by German-born and Edinburgh-based composer, Vroni Holzmann, were more expansive, more ambitious, yet similarly reflective and resonant. The opening 'Wandelung – Preface', evoking a frozen winter scene, made do with widely spaced chords and gently rippling arpeggios, yet the effect was magical. Bittersweet melodies surfaced in Holzmann's 'Zwei Welten' and 'Wandelung', turning over and over, and seeming to view the same material from different angles.

There were sudden explosions of wilder, stormier music in 'Wandelung', yet in the end the music sank back into contemplation. If the pieces occasionally seemed to outstay their welcome, Davidson-Kelly's elegant, graceful playing

ensured that the listeners were captivated throughout.

☒ More of Vroni Holzmann's music is performed at the [Edinburgh Society of Musicians](#) in Belford Road on 18 February 2012.

The [Reid Concert Hall's lunchtime concerts](#) continue with an organ recital by John Keys on 27 January, and a concert given by soprano Rachel Wheatley on 31 January 2012.