

LIVE GIG REVIEW

"KISS MY ARTS" ON JOY 94.9

30 January 2012

The Details:

Artist: 3 Shades Black

Venue: Old Council Chambers - Trades Hall

Date: 2nd February, 2012

Presented by: Midsumma

Tune in to the **Kiss My Arts** show with Kylan and Amy on Joy 94.9. Mondays at 9pm.

Rating



Making it perfectly Queer!

By Amy Bastow

It's a truth universally acknowledged, that the gays and the arts have always gone hand in hand, and the Midsumma event I attended last Thursday celebrated the long and proud tradition of composers being as gay as the day is long. The event I'm talking about is Homophonic.

How often do you hear music by gay composers? Well, more often than you'd think. You may remember the embarrassing incident involving the Governor of Texas, Rick Perry, in December last year? Perry's "Strong" ad campaign included the following quote - "There's something wrong in this country when gays can serve openly in the military but our kids can't openly celebrate Christmas or pray in school." The really hilarious and embarrassing thing about this political ad campaign is that the music used in the ad was actually written by a gay man, the composer Aaron Copland. Hmm. Gay music is all around us!

Homophonic was a concert of classical music by queer composers. The program featured established composers, alongside young

Melbourne artists, including Wally Gunn, Naima Fine and yours truly.

The concert opened with a piece by Pauline Oliveros. Although not my most favourite piece on the program, it did show just how well-rehearsed and polished the performing ensemble was - sometimes a rarity in new music concerts. The concert continued with an exceptionally colourful and entertaining composition by Naima Fine. In my opinion, this was the best piece on the program, and quite a feat, given that this young composer is relatively new to the game.

The Old Council Chambers at Trades Hall was packed by this point and starting to feel the effects of the heat. The next piece on the program, perhaps appropriately about the notion of suffocation, was performed by the Atticus String Quartet with extreme passion, finesse and sensitivity. As the composer of this piece, I was blown away by their professionalism.

Before breaking for intermission, an unexpected arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* for 2 double basses and a bassoon was very cute and charming.

A John Cage piece involving a fish tank was next on the program; whereby musicians would play depending on where the fish swam. A piece composed by Rick Burkhardt, using only spoken voice followed, which was an incredibly fascinating thing to watch. And the final piece on the program was composed by Melbournite, Wally Gunn. Just when you thought it was all over, an ultra fabulous classical arrangement of Queen sent concert-goers home tapping their little homophonic feet. A special mention must go to director, Miranda Hill, for providing some extremely interesting quotes about gay composers in-between pieces. A wonderful success of a classical concert.

4 out of 5 kisses!