



elgood guitarist Picture: Wattie Cheung

wrong/but you're gonna miss me when I'm gone".

We will, but at least we had the chance to rediscover just what we'll be without.

DAVID POLLOCK

full of life, he was an impractical, yet somehow appropriate companion for Doty's partner, Wally Roberts, then dying of Aids.

"I said I wouldn't write any more dog poems," Doty says, but in time there came a new retriever, Ned, who bounces into the pages of his forthcoming collection, *Deep Lane*, on a walk in a cemetery, a rebellious streak of life among so many dead.

Doty was reading with Ottawa-based poet Erin Moure, whose work delights in crossing cultural boundaries, both between French-speaking and English-speaking Canada, and in her translations from and collaborations with poets in Spain, Portugal and Galicia.

Her background in philosophy means complex conundrums are never far from her work, though they are often handled with a playful touch.

SUSAN MANSFIELD

MUSIC

MINIMAL: REICH IN GLASGOW

GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL

★★★★

THE first gig in minimalist icon Steve Reich's Glasgow weekend was very much a concert of two halves – well, strictly speaking, three.

Kicking off a four-hour marathon was a 90-minute set from percussionist Joby Burgess and clarinettist Pete Furniss that inevitably felt like a warm-up for the main event, when Reich and the London Sinfonietta took to the stage.

After a botched *My Name Is* – abandoned when a computer

crashed, apparently – Furniss delivered a perky *New York Counterpoint* for multiple clarinets, but Burgess's version of *Electric Counterpoint* for xylosynth – a xylophone/synthesiser hybrid – felt entirely misguided.

Swedish guitarist Mats Bergström showed how *Electric Counterpoint* should be played after the first interval. His compelling performance of its original electric guitar version was full of sly wit.

Reich himself joined London Sinfonietta percussionist David Hockings for an elegant *Clapping Music*.

It was after 10pm before the players got round to Reich's new Radiohead-inspired *Radio Rewrite*, but it was worth the wait. A powerful, energetic *Double Sextet* brought the long evening to an ecstatic close.

DAVID KETTLE

MUSIC

BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

OLD FRUITMARKET, GLASGOW

★★★

THE BBC SSO is expert at unravelling and presenting the most complex of new orchestral scores. Ultimate success, though, boils down to music that is actually playable, and a conductor whose confidence in its meaning feeds through to the performance.

Taking both points into consideration, Saturday's concert of freshly composed orchestral works, conducted by Richard Baker, was a qualified success.

It started extremely well. Arne Gieshoff's *Stanza*, an iridescent cocktail of cartoonish textures in which every single note counts, was an impressive follow-up to its premiere at last year's St Magnus Festival.

That same fastidious craftsmanship underpins Alasdair Nicolson's *The Last Meeting*, based on the final moments of the ancient Orpheus story.

What Baker failed to do was bring alive the broad narrative sweep which Nicolson facilitates through a series of alluring instrumental characterisations – the sensual piccolo set against a soft cushion of strings, or the ripe manliness of the horn calls. A good story needs strong characters, but this occasionally nervous performance left them half-baked.

Andrew Simpson's *Phantasmagoria*, when not derivative or clichéd, had moments of moody inspiration. And while the spatial effects in Stuart MacRae's *Earth* – a visceral surround-sound experience – induced a stimulating aural disorientation for the listener, unnecessary complexities, particularly in the string writing, rather numbed its genuine possibilities.

KEN WALTON