



Cellist Natalie Clein. Picture: Supplied.

FESTIVAL

Adelaide Festival 2019 review: Natalie Clein

Rodney Smith, The Advertiser

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Natalie Clein

Classical Music / England

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For all the complexity of this twenty-one movement, six-work program, cello virtuoso Natalie Clein's sole concert during the Festival proved a very simple affair.

A plethora of darkly romantic pieces before interval was contrasted with a second half full of vivid, airy objectivity and this was all held together through Clein's uncanny ability to mould her playing to both light and shade so persuasively.

For example, the concert's final work, Beethoven's *C major Sonata Op 102 No 1*, found her pulling back to merge as a true duo partner in the most classical sense with pianist Katya Apekisheva, both violin and piano sounding as one in the intricacies of Beethoven's mature style.

Earlier though, in the plangent colours and tonalities of Rebecca Clarke's mighty *Sonata for Viola (or Cello) and Piano* she was forthright, even dogmatic in its declamatory romantic utterances leading the heavily written piano sonorities at every turn.

Clein is above all an intelligent player who senses the delicate nuance here, the stylistic trait there encasing them in finely wrought interpretations that always make sense.

Her golden tone effortlessly filled the Town Hall whether in quiet contemplation, such as Bloch's *From Jewish Life* or in the effervescence and song of South Australia's own Natalie Williams' *The Dreaming Land* in its world premiere tour, a beguiling, hugely attractive work.

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With Apekisheva in top form responding to her every musical whim, Clein could allow her brilliant musicianship full rein in this riveting, high octane recital.

— Rodney Smith

