

What a difference a day makes

MUSIC

Ngeringa 24
Curator and recorder:
Genevieve Lacey.
Ngeringa Cultural
Centre, Mount Barker
summit, South Australia,
April 23-24.

GRAHAM STRAHLE

A wonderfully inspired, nature-themed concert experience has taken place in the Adelaide Hills that one feels sure has never been attempted before. At the superb new Ngeringa Cultural Centre concert hall, recorder virtuoso Genevieve Lacey devised a series of performances spread across two days that explored the different qualities of light over a 24-hour cycle.

Starting with “daytime” in the morning, then noon, dusk, “owl light” and back to morning again,

she and her artist colleagues had the audience captivated from start to finish.

There was so much fresh thinking in Ngeringa 24, as the concert series was dubbed, that it bamboozled at first. Gone was any conventional set program, and in its place was a kaleidoscopic sweep of short pieces by Francesco Landini, JS Bach, Ludovico Einaudi, Astor Piazzolla, Peter Sculthorpe and dozens more composers, plus numerous solo improvisations.

Interspersed between the five concerts were poetry readings, electronic effects, creative lighting and black-and-white “lyric visuals” from filmmaker Sera Davies.

Such an eclectic concept could not have worked without a high-calibre team behind it, deep in their respective arts. And that’s exactly what it proved to be.

Lacey was mesmerising. As an improviser she thrives in the mo-



RUSSELL MILLARD

Recorder player Genevieve Lacey was mesmerising in an inspired program exploring the qualities of light across 24 hours

ment, within an aesthetic that is closely tied to nature. Her recorder playing had the effect of altering one’s sense of time, slowing it down and attuning the listener to birdcalls, to the burbling of water and to contemplation itself.

Her performance of *Miss Genevieve’s Nocturne* by Brett Dean (dedicated to her in 2006) with

electronic tracks was a highlight in the second concert.

Trumpeter Phil Slater was right with her as an improviser. He can almost disassociate with time altogether and produce a soft-toned, jazzy wandering of notes that seems to escape into another world.

Cellist Umberto Clerici, harpist

Marshall McGuire and guitarist Karin Schaupp were absorbing, each bringing different levels of energy and intensity to their performances. Clerici seemed to re-compose Schubert’s *Arpeggione Sonata* on the spot, finding a new dynamism in this work.

McGuire and Schaupp were no less wonderful; indeed, it was im-

possible to say whose musicianship shone the brightest. But their spellbinding playing as a duet in Enrique Granados’s *Oriental* was perhaps the best of all.

Ultimately this is what the weekend was about: a rare close-up opportunity to hear the full artistry of these marvellous musicians.