

Kallisto

Kelowna Community Concert Association opened its new season last Saturday with a female vocal trio, Kallisto from Vancouver. The performers were Fabiana Katz, Catherine Laub and Karen Mang.

They are a highly touted group and I was looking forward with keen anticipation to hearing the program. Sadly, they failed to live up to their billing. All the ingredients were there – well trained voices, a reasonable stage presence and, on paper at least, an eclectic program.

The program opener was an ethereal folk song which they sang as they slowly entered the stage, a great way to start the program.

As the evening progressed it was evident that their forte is slow, contemplative music, which is best in small doses. They kept the slow pace for nearly the entire program. It was stodgy, ponderous, and frankly, for me at least, boring. Even when we were told that they were going to “kick it up a notch”, it was a very small notch. Songs like Waltzing Matilda and Chattanooga Choo Choo should have had some rhythmic vitality and a sense of forward movement. Their version did not.

Even the Christmas songs, including a sing along, failed to generate any excitement for me.

Perhaps their most effective song was the beautiful “Wood River” for which their tempo was perfect. The other songs became just too much of the same.

The voices were undeniably well tuned, although there were some edgy soprano sounds. For the most part they blended their voices well, but there were times when each seemed to be singing a solo rather than a trio. I felt that they failed to really sell their songs, almost as though they were just going through the motions, rather than singing from the heart.

A concert such as their season opener is not indicative of the usual quality presented by Community Concerts, indeed the rest of the season promises to be splendid.

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Marvin Dickau is an Organist, Pianist and Conductor who has an A.Mus. from the University of Alberta. He has conducted choirs and small orchestras, given solo piano and organ recitals and accompanied many singers and instrumentalists in Kelowna and Calgary. He is currently Minister of Music at First United Church and Executive Director of the Kelowna Kiwanis Music Festival.