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SCRUTINY | Talisker Players: Gibberish and Chaos on the Fine Edge

By Robin Roger on October 28, 2015



Talisker Players (Photo: Alexandra Glass)

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The Talisker Players, Tuesday, October 28, 2015



It isn't easy to present nonsense verse with some of the same wit and meaninglessness. There has to be enough reality to ground us but enough distortion to make us appreciate how tenuous our grasp is. Emotional truth is essential to make the effort to stay with the words worthwhile. Performed properly, nonsense verse is liberating and even exhilarating. If it's overdone, it becomes simply oppressive.

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This website was developed and hosted by [Chris & Kim](#). In their program, Renovated Rhymes, a selection of nonsense verse set to contemporary music, the Talisker Players maintained a precarious balance between meaning and absurdity with the deftness of elite gymnasts. Grounded by the confident and robust instrumental support the Talisker ensemble always provides, two high-flying vocalists, tenor James McLennan and baritone Doug MacNaughton, soared from one insouciant perch to another. McLennan launched the evening with a mildly mischievous selection of verses from Gordon Nash, set to music by American Composer, Robert Jordahl. In these lyrics about love, human or gastronomical, the nonsense made the touch of ambivalence of love tolerable. In each of his performances. McLennan sang not only with

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