



RNCM NEWS

Spring 2014

A Year to Remember

Alexandra Dariescu's incredible year in music

News

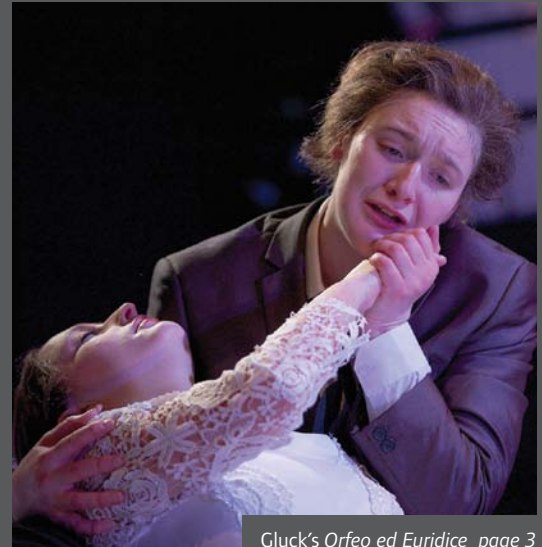
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Toby Hughes

RNCM MAKES ROSL HISTORY

Second year undergraduate **Toby Hughes** has made history by becoming the first ever double bassist to win the Strings Section Final of the Royal Over-Seas League ARTS competition.

Now in its 62nd year the ROSL ARTS, the arts division of the Royal Over-Seas League, has developed a diverse portfolio of arts activities in music, visual arts and literature. It is devoted to the career development of talented young professional artists and musicians from the UK and the Commonwealth, and also presents readings and literary events at its central London headquarters.

On his win Toby, who is currently studying for a BMus with **Jiří Hudec** and will soon tour Italy, Spain and France with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, said: *'It was a great experience competing in this year's Royal Over-Seas League to such an experienced and insightful panel of judges, and it's amazing to*

have made history this year. I'm very much looking forward to competing in the finals in May!'

Chris Hoyle, Head of the School of Strings, added: *'This is further exciting news for the RNCM's flourishing double bassists, and bravo to his teacher Jiří Hudec, Principal double bass with the Czech Philharmonic.'*

In addition to winning £5000 Toby now has the opportunity to compete for the Gold Medal and First Prize in the ROSL Annual Music Competition held at Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, on Tuesday 6 May alongside alumnus **Huw Wiggan** (saxophone, 2008) who won the Wind and Percussion Section Final (see page 20).

Adding to the College's success in this year's ROSL ARTS competition, first year undergraduate **Dominic Degavino** was one of two RNCM students to compete in the Keyboard Section Final. In acknowledgement of his outstanding talent, the 18-year-old, who studies with **Helen Krizos**, was recognised as the competition's most promising pianist, receiving £1000.



Dominic Degavino

STUDENTS COMPETE FOR BBC TITLE



One student from the RNCM and four from Junior RNCM have been selected to compete in the category finals of the 2014 BBC Young Musician of the Year Competition.

Undergraduate pianist **Hayley Parkes**, 18, will participate in the Keyboard category, while saxophonist **Jessika Gillam**, 15, trombonist **Lewis Bettles**, 18, and percussionists **Jess Wood**, 16, and **Elliott Gaston-Ross**, 15, all students of JRNCM, will take part in Woodwind, Brass and Percussion respectively.

Talking of this year's event, Competition Manager Kerry Clark said: *'The category finalists show a remarkable level and breadth of talent. We're looking forward to continuing to work with these outstanding young musicians over the coming months and watching their progress through to the 2014 final.'*

A total of 450 entries were received from musicians aged eight to 18, with five going through in each category. The category finals, semi-finals and final can be seen on BBC Four between 18 April and 18 May.

SELL-OUT SUCCESS FOR GLUCK

RNCM Opera presented Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *The Drunkard Cured* (L'ivrogne corrigé) to sell-out audiences at the Studio Theatre in March.

The production, which was double cast and directed by **Stefan Janski** with set and costume design by **David Cockayne** and lighting by **Paul Botham**, received fantastic reviews from regional and national press.

The Times awarded it an impressive 4*s and Robert Beale stated in the Manchester Evening News that the singers *'gave some of the best performances I've seen in an RNCM opera.'*



Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*

PLATFORM
STRENGTHENSTHE
PLATFORM

Following the launch of **The Platform** last year, the School of Vocal Studies and Opera has embraced its new partnership with **Edvard Greig Kor**, the ensemble of Bergen Opera and the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

In October and November sopranos **Catriona Hewitson** (supported by the Mona McGlone Award) and **Catrin Woodruff** (supported by the Richard Newitt Fund), and baritones **Graham McCusker** and **Steven Griffin** took part in the College's inaugural engagement with the organisation, travelling to Norway for rehearsals and performances of Bach Motet *Jesu meine Freude* and Mozart's *Requiem*. Bergen Opera also awarded a chorus contract to alumnus **Matthew Moss** (tenor, 2010) for its production of Beethoven's *Fidelio*.

Additionally, The Platform also boasts new partnerships with **Northern Ballet** and the **Academy of St Martin in the Fields**, both of which offer performance and educational opportunities for students. The partnership with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields launched officially at The Bridgewater Hall in January when violinist and director Joshua Bell took part in a Q&A with other members of the organisation.

THREE IN A ROW FOR
RNCM ENSEMBLES

It's a hat-trick for RNCM ensembles as the **Solem Quartet** makes it three wins in a row at the Royal Over-Seas League ARTS competition.

Solem, comprising violinists and 2013 graduates **Michael Jones** and **Catherine Landen**, postgraduate violist **Alistair Vennart** and fourth year cellist **Stephanie Tress**, won the Ensemble A Section Final of this year's competition, continuing the success of the Aurora Percussion Duo and Tempest Flute Trio who won the Ensemble B category in 2012 and 13 respectively.

Michael said: *'The competition was an extremely enjoyable experience as we entered the process with no expectations of reaching the final and were absolutely gob-smacked when the adjudicators announced that we had won! We programmed music for each stage that showed off our strengths, and I think that our passion for performance shone through.'*

The Quartet's performance of Haydn's String Quartet in D major Op 20 No 4 and Three Divertimenti by Benjamin Britten secured them £10,000 and a performance opportunity at Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, during the finals in May.

Alistair, who is supported by the Headley Trust, added: *'It was a real pleasure to get to the final and the audience was extremely receptive and supportive. It means a great deal for us to win the competition.'*

Solem Quartet



Alongside the prize money and a performance at Queen Elizabeth Hall, it's a platform for international exposure which is very, very exciting!

Jeremy Young, Head of the RNCM's International Chamber Music Studio, added: *'I'm delighted that the Solem Quartet are winners of this significant competition. The RNCM Chamber Music Department is one of the most prestigious and active in Europe and Solem have made much of their opportunities whilst students here. I congratulate them warmly.'*

FIRST FOR SIMON PASSMORE

Simon Passmore has become the first British pianist to win the Grand Prix Pianos Maene in the 18-24 category.

Simon, currently in his fourth year studying with **Murray McLachlan**, was one of 24 pianists – and the only UK entrant – to take part in the biannual competition, held in Brussels, Belgium. The success comes just months after the 23-year-old won a prize at the 21st Chopin Festival in Maxovia, Poland.

Simon Passmore



CHAUHAN IS CBSO'S FIRST CONDUCTING FELLOW

Postgraduate conductor **Alpesh Chauhan** has been appointed the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's inaugural Conducting Fellow.

Alpesh, aged 23, is currently studying for an MMus in Solo Performance (Conducting) with Clark Rundell after joining the RNCM as an undergraduate cellist in 2008. The year-long position means that he will now gain access to some of the world's best conductors, artists and musicians as he works alongside CBSO Musical Director Andris Nelsons.

Talking of the Fellowship Birmingham-born Alpesh said: *'I am very excited at the announcement of this prestigious post with the CBSO and to be the first person to take it up. Not only is it a total joy and thrill to listen to the Orchestra – both in rehearsals and performances – but it also serves greatly in my own development as a young conductor. I feel extremely privileged to hold this position of learning, developing and working alongside my home team!'*



Alpesh Chauhan

Alpesh has a long association with the CBSO. In 2005 he joined its Youth Orchestra, quickly becoming Principal cellist, and in 2007 participated in conducting masterclasses as part of the Youth Orchestra Academy with Associate Conductor Michael Seal. Now, in addition to his studies, he

conducts the Bournville String Orchestra and is Assistant Conductor of Birmingham Schools' Symphony Orchestra.

CBSO chief executive Stephen Maddock said: *'The CBSO has a long-standing reputation for discovering and developing young conductors including current Music Director Andris Nelsons, Associate Conductor Mike Seal and previous Music Directors Sir Simon Rattle and Sakari Oramo. The conducting fellowship is the latest initiative by the CBSO to offer outstanding opportunities to young professionals wishing to work with one of the best orchestras in the world.'*

'We're thrilled that Alpesh is the first person to be offered and to take up this new role that we hope, will in turn, inspire a whole new generation of talented and passionate music professionals.'

PANFILOV WINS WORSHIPFUL AWARD

Postgraduate pianist and Leverhulme Scholar **Alexander Panfilov** has won the Worshipful Company of Musicians Maisie Lewis Young Artists' Award.

Established in 1969 by Sir Edward Lewis in memory his wife, the Award provides funding for the Musicians' Company Concerts. As a result, Alexander, a pupil of **Graham Scott** who is also supported by Liberty Living Plc, now has the opportunity to perform at Wigmore Hall during the 2014/15 season.



Alexander Panfilov

RNCM RECORD BREAKERS

In January 16 students broke the world record for the most musicians to play the same piano simultaneously.

Sponsored by International Piano magazine and in aid of *Your RNCM*, the students performed *Ticcatoccatina*, a short work for 32 hands by postgraduate composer **Tom Harrold** (winner of the Patricia Cunliffe Composition Award), beating the current record set by 15 musicians in Vallouise, France on 13 June 2004.



Record Breakers

Talking ahead of the event, Tom said: *'I am really excited to be attempting to break this world record. The sound of 16 people playing a single piano at one time should be really intriguing, and I am looking forward to (hopefully) breaking a world record!'*

Taking place in the Carole Nash Recital Room and screened live in Manchester city centre, pianist **Murray McLachlan** confirmed that all stipulations were met during the performance and the RNCM now awaits official confirmation from Guinness that it's the proud owner of the new World Record.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Technical and Production Manager **Nick Ware** was successful in the recent ballot for the nomination of a member of Support Staff to join the Board of Governors. He succeeds **Anna Wright**, who served in this position for seven years.

Postgraduate mezzo-sopranos **Heather Lowe** and **Emma Stannard**, and soprano **Bryony Williams** have been chosen to join the Glyndebourne Chorus this summer.

Postgraduate tenor **Stuart Overington** was recently appointed Director of Chetham's Chamber Choir.

Tutor in Vocal Studies **Jeffrey Lawton** has been appointed President of the Manchester-based Wagner Society.

The **Virr String Quartet** (violinists Charlotte Moseley and Emily Mowbray, violist Emma Alexander, and cellist Polly Virr) and the **O'Brien Piano Trio** (violinist Anna O'Brien, cellist Michael Newman and pianist Jeremy So) were announced joint winners of the 2014 Nossek Prize, while the **Diaphane String Quartet** (violinists Luke Coomber and Clemence Hazael-Massieux, violist Benoit Morel and cellist Alistair Howes) won this year's Weil Prize.

Mezzo-soprano **Michaela Parry**, whose studies are supported by a Drapers' Scholarship, will give a recital at the Oxford Lieder Festival as one of the singers on its Young Artists Platform.

Jessika Gillam, a Junior RNCM saxophonist and BBC Young Musician of the Year finalist, presented a talk at the Manchester round of the world-famous TED Talks, held at the University of Manchester in March.

STUDENTS REACH BBC BRASS FINAL

Third year students **David Gillson** and **Ryan Watkins** were two of four musicians to reach the finals of the 2014 BBC Young Brass Award.

Cornet player David and trombonist Ryan performed in the semi-finals of the annual competition in January, and competed for the final award at the BBC Philharmonic Studio at the end of March, accompanied by Grimethorpe Colliery Band.

The Young Brass Award was originally launched as the Young Brass Soloist Award in 2004 and has gained a strong track record for spotting talent. The RNCM has featured prominently throughout the decade, with past winners including alumni **Katrina Marzella** (Solo baritone, Black Dyke band), **Lewis Musson** (Solo euphonium, Central Band of the Royal Air Force), **Ben Thomson** (Principal tuba, Orchestra of The Royal Opera House), and **Matthew White** (Solo euphonium, Cory Band).

Talking ahead of the competition, host Ken Bruce said: *'It's an honour to be*



Finalists (L-R) Grant Jameson, Matilda Lloyd, David Gillson and Ryan Watkins

hosting BBC Radio 2's Young Brass Award. It is so important to support and nurture young musical talent and I'm proud the station gives these emerging stars the chance to shine and be heard.'

Frank Renton, conductor and presenter of Listen to the Band, added: *'It's wonderful that yet again Radio 2 is searching out the best young brass players in the UK and providing a stage for them. Every one of the winners*

thus far has gone on to do great things in their chosen careers, and no doubt taking part in the Young Brass Awards has given a great impetus to their futures. It's a joy to be involved.'

The RNCM prides itself of offering exceptional tuition and performance opportunities to brass students from all over the world. In September, this will enhance further with the launch of the brand new Philip Jones Centre for Brass.

HICKS BOUND FOR NEW YORK

Third year pianist **Tom Hicks** is one of 22 young musicians selected to compete in this year's New York International Piano Competition.

Open to pianists aged 16 to 21, the week-long event is dedicated to providing professional artistic development. Tom, a student of **Murray McLachlan**, will travel on an all-expenses paid trip to New York in June and

will compete for cash prizes and concert appearances in addition to having the opportunity to engage in networking sessions, exchange information and cultivate a support system that will aid his pre-professional years.



Tom Hicks

BBC PERFORMING ARTS SUPPORTS RNCM OUTREACH

RNCM Outreach was one of 58 community organisations to be awarded a grant from the 2013 BBC Performing Arts Fund.

A total of £5000 was given to the department to support its Youth Perform project; a musical theatre group established in 2009 to provide performance opportunities for children from families with no history of Higher Education. The funding marks the second time RNCM Outreach (which also runs weekly open access sessions supported by the Eric and Margaret Kinder Charitable Trust) has benefitted from the organisation, and will be used to help recruit new members from hard to reach communities across the city, and work with them on more challenging repertoire to develop their skills and confidence as performers.

Outreach Manager **Fiona Stuart** said: *'We are delighted to receive this funding and grateful to the BBC for their support. It will be invaluable in encouraging and developing young performers to achieve the highest standards, and will enable them to work alongside leading theatre practitioners and RNCM students, staging events both within our own professional venues and also out in the community.'*

Miriam O'Keeffe, Director of the Fund, added: *'I think the arts are really important, socially. As a society it is something that can bring people together. We support*

community groups and emerging talent. The money is made available through phone voting on BBC 1 entertainment shows, and we have an open applications process. It's been an amazing year, looking at the breadth of theatre happening around the country.'

Over the past 10 years the Performing Arts Fund has contributed over £4 million to the UK's performing arts sector, through its annual awards of grants for theatre, dance and music. In addition to RNCM Outreach, **Carlos del Cueto**, a former Junior Fellow in Conducting, and alumna **Kathryn Rudge** (mezzo-soprano, 2011)



RNCM Youth Perform

have both benefitted individually, with Carlos winning a 2013 BBC Music Fellowship to work as Assistant Conductor with English Touring Opera and Kathryn a 2007 Education Bursary to complete her studies at the RNCM.



Nemtsov Duo

SIBLINGS HEAD HOME FOR CELEBRATORY CONCERT

Russian siblings **Mikhail** and **Elena Nemtsovi** returned to their home city of St Petersburg recently to present a celebratory concert on behalf of the RNCM.

Known collectively as the Nemtsov Duo, postgraduate cellist Mikhail and pianist Elena, who graduated in 2011, performed works by British composer Benjamin Britten and Russia's Dmitri Shostakovich at Sheremetev Palace in March. The special concert was offered as a gift from Manchester to its twin city of St Petersburg, highlighting the official year of UK-Russia Culture; a year when both countries celebrate their diverse and rich heritage and long-standing cultural links.

Tatyana Yekimova, Head of International Relations at the RNCM, said: *'It was an immense pleasure to be part of the UK-Russia Year of Culture's extensive programme of events and we were delighted to offer this celebratory concert as a gift to St Petersburg, the cultural capital of Russia and a twin city of Manchester. We were also grateful to the Sheremetev Palace, and St Petersburg External Relations and Culture Committees for their kind support*

in providing such a stunning venue for the performance.'

The children of concert pianist Lydia Lisovskaya, both Mikhail and Elena studied at the Rimsky-Korsakov Special Music School in St Petersburg before moving to the UK. Returning to their home city was something both looked forward to. As Elena said: *'It was very exciting for us to be able to go home to St Petersburg and perform there again. The last time I played there was in*

2009, so I was really looking forward to the concert and to showing people how good music education at the RNCM is.'

Mikhail, who is supported by the Haworth Trust, added: *'Elena and I have performed together since we were very young and it was great to be able to study together in Russia and the UK. This concert gave us the chance to show the unity of the two countries and of Manchester and St Petersburg in particular.'*

ZOLTAN KISS ANNOUNCED AS NEW INTERNATIONAL TUTOR IN TROMBONE



Zoltan Kiss

The Philip Jones Centre for Brass at the RNCM is delighted to announce the appointment of **Zoltan Kiss** as its International Tutor in Trombone.

Zoltan visited the RNCM at the beginning of March and made an immediate and striking impression with a recital delivered to a capacity audience and two days of teaching. Zoltan, who was born in Hungary, enjoys wide international acclaim for his virtuosic solo playing, commitment to teaching, and membership of Mnozil Brass. His appointment as International Tutor replaces that of **Christopher Houlding**, who taught trombone at the RNCM for almost 30 years.

Talking of Christopher's departure, **John Miller**, Head of the School of Wind, Brass and Percussion, commented: 'Christopher Houlding started teaching at the RNCM in 1986 and did much for almost 30 years to maintain a wonderful standard of brass playing in his many capacities. All the brass tutors at the RNCM wish him well and I personally send immense thanks to Chris and a very enthusiastic welcome to Zoltan.'

ROYAL ALBERT HALL DÉBUT FOR SESSION ORCHESTRA

The **RNCM Session Orchestra** made its Royal Albert Hall début in November, performing as part of the Music for Youth Schools Prom.

Led by **Andy Stott**, Course Director for the College's BA (Hons) Degree in Popular Music Performance, the 35-piece orchestra and vocalists presented Elbow's *One Day Like This*, bringing a touch of Manchester to the world-famous London venue. The students also participated in Karl Jenkins' new massed ensemble piece, *Out of Essex*, for 600 children and young people, funded by the ICAP Charity Day with The Classic FM Foundation.

'It was the experience of a lifetime to perform at the Royal Albert Hall on the world's most famous stage with the RNCM Session Orchestra,' explained Andy. *'The scale and quality of Music for Youth's production is something to behold and to be a part of it was a great honour - topped off by performing the world première of a Karl*



RNCM Session Orchestra

Jenkins piece in the presence of the composer... a beautiful day!'

Supported by the ABRSM alongside Media Partner Classic FM, the Music for Youth Proms was established in 1995 to provide performance opportunities for young musicians across the UK.



Kang Wang

Kang, who joined the College in 2013 to study for an International Artist Diploma and starred as Nemorino in the recent production of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, was one of several young singers chosen from UK conservatoires and music colleges to compete for the annual award.

Singing to a distinguished panel of judges and host Isobel

CLONTER OPERA PRIZE FOR RNCM TENOR

Tenor **Kang Wang** has won the 2013 Clonter Opera Prize.

Flinn, the 25-year-old, who recently completed his Master of Music Studies at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, performed to high praise, securing the £2000 prize and the Audience Prize.

On winning Kang, who is supported by a Zochonis Scholarship, said: *'In competitions like this I only ever seem to win the Audience Prize because the music I choose is often very deep and moving. I'm still really surprised to think I won both at Clonter. Everyone who took part sang so well, and each of*

us received great feedback from the panel. It was a wonderful experience for me, and I feel very honoured to receive the prize as an RNCM student.'

Now in its 40th year, Clonter Opera provides the highest quality training and performance opportunities for young singers with the aim of bridging the gap between conservatoire and professional work. To date, numerous RNCM students and alumni have benefitted from its Opera Studio, established through the Clonter Farm Music Trust (CFMT).

RNCM WELCOMES HENK GUITTART AS NEW INTERNATIONAL TUTOR

The College is pleased to welcome Dutch violist and conductor **Henk Guittart** as its new International Tutor in Strings Performance and Pedagogy, commencing in September.

Founder and former member of the acclaimed Schoenberg Quartet, Henk is recognised worldwide as an exceptional tutor, chamber music coach, and conductor. To date he has held positions at the Royal Conservatory of the Netherlands, Rotterdam Codarts Academy of Music, and Maastricht Academy, in addition to being Guest Conductor and Professor at music academies in Budapest, Princeton, Los Angeles, Dresden, The Hague, Amsterdam, Cologne, Moscow, London and Stanford. Henk worked as a special guest faculty and artistic advisor at the Banff Centre in Canada between

2006 and 2010, and served as Director of Fall and Winter Music Programs from 2010 until 2013.

On being offered the position he said: *'I've enjoyed coming to the RNCM and working with its talented students in the past, and I very much look forward to contributing to the special care offered to them. I'm honoured to be added to the list of wonderful International Tutors the College already boasts.'*

Chris Hoyle, Head of the School of Strings, added: *'I am delighted that Henk will join us*



Henk Guittart

to widen the expertise of our team of International Tutors. In his new role he will work with all our string players on matters of performance and interpretation, drawing on his vast experience of teaching and performing worldwide.'



Emma Stannard

HARWOOD SUCCESS FOR MEZZO EMMA

Postgraduate mezzo-soprano **Emma Stannard** has won the 2014 Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Award for Singers.

Emma, who is studying for an MMus in Solo Performance with Peter Wilson, performed pieces by Handel, Mozart, Dvořák, Donizetti and Elgar to secure the Award, accompanied by Robin Humphreys.

On winning, she said: *'It was an honour to perform in the final alongside so many talented students. To finish my degree having received this award is a dream come true, providing a wonderful platform for me to step from the RNCM into the profession.'*

Talking of the competition, which also awarded a second prize to soprano Meinir Wyn Roberts, **Lynne Dawson**, Head of the School of Vocal Studies and one of the evening's adjudicators alongside Susan Bullock and Isobel Flinn, added:

'This year's Harwood Award included some beautiful expressive singing and playing from all involved. It was clear that a high level of preparation had gone into all performances, and I offer congratulations to both Emma and Meinir on their success.'

'College competitions are very important for young singers and musicians, and the RNCM is extremely grateful to the Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Trust for its generosity and continued support.'

The Award is administered by the Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Trust in accordance with the will of the late Elizabeth Harwood and enables students to continue their studies after leaving the College.

GALA DINNER RAISES FUNDS FOR CONCERT HALL CAMPAIGN

December saw the triumphant return of the **RNCM Gala Dinner**; a spectacular evening of fine dining and music which raised over £20,000 for the Concert Hall campaign.

Taking place on the stage of the RNCM Theatre amid the stunning set of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, the event was compered by Classic FM's Jamie Crick and began with a champagne reception on the concourse and introductory fanfare from our brass students.

From the outset, guests – including representatives from Barclays, Cheetham Hill Construction, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Edmundson Electrical, KPMG and the media – were immersed in a range of performances from members of the College's vibrant opera cast and chorus, the Candela Salsa Band, Project Jam Sandwich and Zelkova Quartet.

Commenting afterwards, journalist and Northern Soul webzine editor Helen Nugent said: *'I had a splendid time, what a wonderful way to showcase the work done by the RNCM and its students.'*

In addition to the entertainment and a three course meal, Key 103 presenter Darren Proctor presented an auction where prizes included a bespoke composition created by the RNCM's Head and Deputy Head of the School of Composition, **Adam Gorb** and **David Horne**, an exclusive singing lesson with soprano **Lynne Dawson**, Head of the School of Vocal Studies, and a behind-the-scenes tour of the Classic FM studios.

JETTE PARKER SUCCESS FOR RNCM JUNIOR FELLOW

NEWS
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Jonathan Santagada has been announced as the new Opera Conductor/Repetiteur on the prestigious Jette Parker Young Artists Programme (JPYAP), based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Jonathan, the RNCM's Sir John Fisher Foundation Junior Fellow (Repetiteur) within the School of Vocal Studies and Opera, was one of 12 from almost 100 candidates selected for the first round of auditions, and one of five for the second and final round.

Presenting to a panel which included the Royal Opera House's Head of Music, David Syrus, and Music Director, Antonio Pappano, candidates were asked to prepare – as conductor and coach – excerpts from four operas and a complete act from an opera of their choice, to sight-read, sing

a recitative, demonstrate their facility with language, and coach a singer on repertory given to them 30 minutes prior to audition.

Talking of the experience, Jonathan said: *'It was a challenging process, but I received a lot of help from the RNCM as I prepared for the audition, which helped enormously. The experience was fantastic, especially as I got to audition for Antonio Pappano in the final round, and I'm thrilled to have been selected.'*

During his time as Junior Fellow (Repetiteur), Jonathan has

worked as a member of the music staff on RNCM Opera productions, including *Paradise Moscow*, *L'elisir d'amore* and the recent Gluck double-bill of *Orfeo ed Euridice* and *The Drunkard Cured*.

Kevin Thraves, Head of Music Staff (School of Vocal Studies and Opera) said of Jonathan's success: *'This is an incredible achievement for Jonathan and he is fully deserving of this fantastic opportunity. It has been invaluable to have had such an exceptional Junior Fellow working alongside the music staff in the*



Jonathan Santagada

School of Vocal Studies and Opera over the last 12 months. He has contributed hugely during his time in Manchester and we all wish him every success at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.'

The JPYAP seeks to find extremely gifted individuals at the start of their professional careers, with a music degree and some experience in performance. Commencing in September, Jonathan now has the opportunity to join the music staff at the Royal Opera House on a two year contract, working on their forthcoming opera productions.

RNCM ANNOUNCES NEW JUNIOR FELLOW IN CONDUCTING



Harish Shankar

The RNCM is delighted to announce that **Harish Shankar** is the new Junior Fellow in Conducting, commencing in September.

Malaysian-born Harish was one of 13 candidates chosen to attend the live auditions in early March, selected from over 100 applications. Two candidates made it through to the final round conducting the RNCM Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Sibelius' Second Symphony, following four rounds featuring chamber ensemble, a concerto, contemporary and chamber orchestra repertoire. Harish will now receive tuition from Sir Mark Elder, Clark

Rundell, Mark Shanahan and visiting conductors, as well as conduct the RNCM Symphony and Chamber Orchestras and benefit from the College's strong links with the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Manchester Camerata.

Harish, who resides in Germany, said: *'The auditions were an adventure! The conducive, comradely and exciting atmosphere made a deep*

impression on me and the feedback the panel offered was invaluable.

'Being elected Junior Fellow is a great honour for me and a thrilling new beginning. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to work with and learn from Sir Mark Elder, Clark Rundell and Mark Shanahan and hope that their guidance will help me develop as a musician and build a bridge to an artistically fulfilling career as a conductor.'

REVIEW

Douglas Jarman reviews *Mixed Doubles*, a collection of Double Concertos by **Gordon Crosse** and **John Manduell**

Gordon Crosse Brief Encounter for oboe d'amore, recorder and strings
Concerto for viola and strings with French horn
Fantasia on 'Ca' the Yowes' for recorder, harp and strings

John Manduell Flutes Concerto for flautist, harp, strings and percussion
Double Concerto for oboe, cor anglais, strings and percussion

It seems to be one of the facts of musical life that many fine composers simply disappear from public consciousness. Sadly, there is a whole group of composers, now in their 70s and 80s, whose work is rarely represented on present day concert programmes.

Gordon Crosse is certainly one such: a composer who, in the 1960s and 1970s, attracted enormous interest with works such as *Meet My Folks* (première at Aldeburgh in 1964), *Purgatory* (Cheltenham, 1968), and *Wild Boy* (1978). The current neglect of Crosse's work is probably due to the fact that, for whatever reason, he simply stopped composing for 18 years. Happily the last few years have seen a sudden outpouring of works, three of which (all dating from 2009) are included on this recording.

The back of the programme booklet advertises a series of 'Modern lyrical music by British composers'. If (remembering Elisabeth Lutyens' dismissive remark about the 'cow pat' school) such an announcement makes one's heart sink, the reaction is, in this case, unjustified.

Less complicated and more direct than his earlier music, the Crosse works are in the best English pastoral tradition (all are distinctly modal) and yet speak with a fresh, vital and totally individual voice.

The most substantial of the three works is the Concerto for viola, strings and horn - a work of real substance and stature which, since viola concertos are thin on the ground and the work requires only modest forces, should be welcomed by all viola players and become a permanent feature of the repertoire.

In the case of Sir John Manduell the neglect of his work as a composer, and the fact that his output is relatively small, is due to the fact that he has devoted much of his life and energies to arts administration - at the BBC, the Cheltenham Festival in its heyday, Lancaster University and, as readers will hardly need reminding, as founding Principal of the RNCM. As a colleague of Sir John's at the College for many years I should, at this point, declare an interest. I trust that the reader will take the following observations as being relatively objective.

The Manduell works, while owing little to the English pastoral tradition, are in many ways no less lyrical than the Crosse: witness, for example, the beautiful slow movement of the Flutes Concerto in which (interrupted by a few slightly jazz inflected episodes) the alto flute meditates lovingly on a single figuration (so lovingly, indeed, that it can't resist returning to it at the end of the finale).

The Manduell concertos also draw on a much more varied orchestral palette than the Crosse (the Crosse eschew percussion while the Manduell require a substantial battery) and one of the most immediately striking features of the two works on this CD is the ear for orchestral colour: the combination of piccolo and rainsticks that starts the finale of the Flutes Concerto, the rustling string harmonics of the slow movement of the Double Concerto, the exploration of the subtle timbral contrast of the oboe and cor anglais set against a background of various drums and temple blocks are only a few of the more immediately striking effects that grab the ear (one would have liked to hear the original version of the Concerto in which the two solo instruments were the Chinese flute and one string violin).

The performances throughout are uniformly excellent (Deain Rowlands, the harpist - and almost a second soloist - in the Manduell Flutes Concerto, deserves especial mention), and the whole is led as skilfully and sympathetically as always by the indefatigable Tim Reynish.

We should be grateful to Metier for bringing these unjustly neglected works to our attention.



Timothy Reynish conductor
Michael Cox flute
Matthew Jones viola
Richard Simpson oboe/oboe d'amore
Alison Teale cor anglais
John Turner recorder
Manchester Sinfonia

Mixed Doubles is released on the Metier label, msv77201

A YEAR TO REMEMBER

Romanian pianist **Alexandra Dariescu** talks to Liz Rowley about an incredible year in music and an RNCM education she'll never forget.

2013 was a momentous year for Alexandra Dariescu. Not only did the 2008 alumna make history as the first female Romanian pianist to perform at the Royal Albert Hall, but she also won the Woman of the Future Award for Arts and Culture and was recognised in Forbes Romania magazine as one of the country's most influential young people.

'It was the most fulfilling year, filled with quite a few extremely special moments that I enjoyed tremendously,' says the 28-year-old who lives in London. *'My début at the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and in the presence of the Romanian Royal Family was probably the best concert night of my life so far. The Hall seemed smaller from the stage but when 7.30pm hit I focussed only on the music, completely forgetting where I was. It was only on my third bow that I took it all in. There were 6000 people there – it was completely sold out and it felt amazing.'*

For many the concert alone - and the momentous statement it evoked to pianists, and in particular aspiring female pianists - would have been enough, but Alexandra's celebrations carried on into the night as she launched her latest album, *Complete Preludes: Chopin and Dutilleux*, described in BBC Music Magazine as *'superb...cushioned, refined and beautifully balanced.'*

'After the concert we had the launch of my second CD – the first volume of my Preludes Trilogy – in the beautiful house of Sir Vernon and Lady Ellis with lots of friends who had travelled from Switzerland, Germany, France, Romania and of course all over the UK,' she continued. *'It was one of the most emotional moments I've ever experienced.'*

Without doubt Alexandra is one of the most dynamic and forward-thinking pianists of her generation, set for success from the moment she touched the keys at the age of seven. She's also one of the most giving, and it's her work with young people through masterclasses and workshops, in addition to her outstanding talent on the concert platform, that earned her the title of 2013 Woman of the Future Award for Arts and Culture, becoming an ambassador for classical music.

Talking of the win she recalled: *'The evening celebrated women, equality between genders and an internationally cherished Romania. It was the hugest of honours to receive the award and to become an ambassador for classical music, and I want to do my best to live up to the title.'*

'I believe in education and I believe in music as a universal language. Wherever I go for a concert I get involved in workshops and masterclasses, and make

sure I chat to pupils because inspiring and motivating the younger generation is one of my main priorities. Over the last few months I've collaborated with Lars Vogt's Rhapsody in School in Germany and conducted a whole day of educational projects in South Africa. It's one of the most rewarding experiences to communicate through music and bring a smile to children's faces.'

That Alexandra is so keen to inspire young people is credit, for a large part, to the education she received at the RNCM and the exceptional tuition provided by the late Mark Ray. But if it wasn't for the generosity of her history teacher at Pocklington School where she was completing a scholarship, she might never have made it to Manchester.

'In 2002 I was studying on a scholarship at Pocklington School after winning a competition,' she said. 'I knew that I had to go back to Romania to finish my studies, but my history teacher – who was also a careers advisor – told me I should go to the RNCM for an audition. He gave me £40 out of his own pocket to get me to Manchester, and that's when I met Mark Ray who was Head of the School of Keyboard Studies.'

Enormously impressed with her initial audition, Mark asked Alexandra to perform a further two times; once for pianist Carole Presland and once for Professor Edward Gregson, the College's then Principal.

'I remember it so clearly. My audition followed an Open Day in May and





I originally only performed for Mark. He then asked if I would mind performing a second time for Carole, and a third time for the Principal. Afterwards I was offered an ABRSM scholarship to study at the RNCM for four years. It was a huge experience for me - really extraordinary and I definitely wouldn't be where I am today without that wonderful support.'

Mark Ray, who was Head of the School of Keyboard Studies from February 2003 until his tragic and untimely death in June 2006, had a phenomenal influence on Alexandra's time at the College and to this day remains a constant inspiration.

She said: 'Mark was my biggest influence and he always told me that it was 1% talent and 99% pure hard work. He really believed in me and that's what I liked about him, but it's been difficult because he passed away while I was in my second year. I always try to think about the positive things, and while there isn't anything positive about his passing, he's always alive in my heart and I know from many other students just how influential he's been. The chance he gave to me at the RNCM was fantastic - it felt like home, so much so that I didn't even apply to anywhere else.'

**"It's been huge I have to admit...
The 2012/13 season was
the most exciting I've ever had."**
Alexandra Dariescu

Alexandra's time at the College was one of award-winning brilliance coupled with endless opportunities, and since graduating in 2008 her success has simply soared. In 2011 she was named BBC Music Magazine's Rising Star and within 12 months was making her debut at Carnegie Hall, New York following an intensive workshop with András Schiff (Alexandra was one of five students selected from all over the world to take part) and releasing her first album.

To date she's performed with all of the UK's major orchestras at venues many only dream of, and is well on her way to becoming one of her country's national treasures with Forbes Romania magazine placing her in its 30 Under 30 list of the country's most influential young people.

'It's been huge I have to admit,' she concluded. 'The 2012/13 season was the most exciting I've ever had. To perform at Carnegie Hall and the Royal Albert Hall in the same year was amazing, and I was fortunate to give two concerts, including my debut, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. I'm lucky because I've never gone to the piano and thought 'this is work.' I go to it with my whole heart and if there wasn't passion there I couldn't do it.'

ALEXANDRA CHAMPIONS YOUR RNCM

Earlier this year Alexandra became a *Your RNCM* Champion, supporting the College's £3 million campaign to transform the Concert Hall into a state-of-the-art venue. Talking of the project she said: *'The Concert Hall holds a unique place in my heart, as this is where I performed on numerous occasions while I was a student... It is where I won the Gold Medal, Chopin Prize, Concerto audition and subsequently performed Chopin's Concerto*

No 2 with the RNCM Symphony Orchestra. The Concert Hall is such a vital place in the life of any student, as final exams take place here and for some, this is the most important concert they've given up to that point.' To learn more about *Your RNCM* and to see how you can get involved, visit www.rncm.ac.uk/yourrncm.





INTRODUCING

PROJECT JAM SANDWICH A QUINTET MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Last summer percussionist **Delia Stevens** and cellist **Abel Selaocoe** wanted to create a group of vibrant musicians whose aim was to embrace music from around the world and take it to as many people as possible. The result was **Project Jam Sandwich**, a unique quintet of undergraduates that combines Delia's award-winning playing and Abel's South African roots with the talents of Scottish violinist **Katie Foster**, guitarist **Henry Alexander**, and double-bassist **Paul Wheatley**. Here's a glimpse at their story so far...

Project Jam Sandwich is an interesting name, what's the story behind it?

Katie: We were actually nameless for quite a while. In the end we decided to go for something that embodied the concept of fusing different styles together, improvising and having a 'jam' combined with folk and jazz tunes from all over the world - sandwiching them together if you like.

Delia: We wanted a fun name that represented our feel-good factor onstage. I also like the word 'project' because it suggests that we are on a mission curating and sourcing our music. The word 'jam' comes from our love of integrating improvisation into our live performance and the word 'sandwich' comes from the fact that we take folk music from all

over the world and sandwich it together with different genres, to form something new with our own stamp on it.

When and why did the band form?

Katie: Delia and Abel had been listening to loads of world music and fancied having a go at presenting something themselves. Knowing our backgrounds in traditional music, jazz and pop, they approached Paul, Henry and myself to see if we wanted to have a provisional rehearsal as a quintet and we've been putting sets together ever since.

Paul: It was in September 2013 to play a one-off Spotlight concert at the RNCM. We received quite a lot of positive feedback from our peers and as a result thought it would be a good project to develop further.

Delia: Abel and I had been to a lot of world music gigs and had been listening to lots of folk music, and we wanted to expand on the skills and opportunities the RNCM offered in these genres. We knew that Katie, a Scottish folk violinist, Paul, an avid jazz bassist, and Henry, a fantastic guitarist and singer-songwriter, were amazing improvisers and had that special something we were looking for.

What kind of music do you play?

Abel: We play music from different parts of the world, including Scotland, Brazil, South Africa

and Bulgaria, and add our own musical and personal flavours. We also include music that members of the band have composed.

Delia: We create our own arrangements and unique stamp on folk music sourced from around the world. A blend of funk grooves sifted by Eastern European melodies mixed by afrobeat and spiced with celtic reels.

There are lots of diverse musicians involved, does this help with the end result?

Henry: Everyone brings something different to the band, both in terms of musical background and in personality, which is reflected in the way we put tunes together and the diversity of the tunes that we choose.

Delia: Yes - quite a lot of our songs take Katie's Scottish background and Abel's South African background as heavy influences and explorations for fusion. It also means that Abel sometimes sings in one of his native languages - Xhosa (with lots of clicks) - which is fantastic! Henry is an avid songwriter and has a beautiful voice, and I study percussion from all over the world with our mentor Dave Hassell, who introduces us to many styles and rhythms from an expert point of view.

Abel: It does indeed. The rehearsal process is never short of innovative ideas that fuse

together and bring something creative and musical. Sometimes our ideas clash but this leads us to discover new ones together.

What's the most interesting thing you've done so far?

Paul: It is generally all interesting to us. We have done quite a few concerts which so far have seemed to go down well. For me the most interesting part of the group is learning new pieces; the most recent we created is a mixture of Celtic and Danish music, which was fun to do! We are also recording some of our pieces for our EP which is out soon.

Delia: Performance highlights include playing live on BBC Radio 3's In Tune and performing at the 2014 Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow, both were an absolute honour. We also do lots of outreach work performing in hospitals with the RNCM Music for Health scheme.

What are your future plans?

Katie: We're currently in the process of recording our debut EP, *Whistle Stop Tour*, to be released before the summer, and we have plans for a video alongside numerous performances lined up both at the RNCM and externally.

Henry: To keep playing music together and to take our sound out to as many people as possible.

To learn more visit www.projectjamsandwich.com

FOCUS ON RESEARCH

RNCM TO HOST 2015 ESCOM CONFERENCE

The Ninth Triennial Conference of ESCOM (the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music) will be held at the RNCM between Monday 17 and Sunday 23 August 2015.

Supported by a £30,000 subvention from Marketing Manchester and sponsorship in kind from SAGE Publishers, the Institute for Musical Research and the Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research, the Conference will be chaired by **Professor Jane Ginsborg**, Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise at the RNCM and current President of ESCOM.

Up to 300 delegates from mainland Europe and further afield, as well as up to 150 UK and local delegates, ranging from distinguished researchers to postgraduate students, are expected to attend. The subvention from Marketing Manchester will pay for a civic reception at Manchester Town Hall, support reduced registration fees for young and early career researchers, and fund student and recently-graduated musicians from the RNCM to perform to an international audience at the conference. Further details of the keynote speakers, call for papers, and conference schedule will be made available over the coming months.

ESCOM is an international non-profit society supporting theoretical, experimental and applied research and encouraging European and international cooperation between researchers

in the cognitive sciences of music. Founded in 1991, it disseminates knowledge of music perception through its triennial conferences and the journal *Musicae Scientiae*, as well as promoting regular seminars, educational programs and summer schools.

Professor Richard Wistreich, Dean of Research and Enterprise at the RNCM, said: *'I am delighted that Marketing Manchester has offered to support this conference, enabling the RNCM to introduce ESCOM delegates to Manchester as a vibrant, dynamic city that is home to music – central to their research – of the highest order in the most attractive of surroundings. A large number of scholars – many of whom hold responsible positions in their own institutions and can urge colleagues and students to travel to Manchester to take part in the conference – will have the opportunity to experience the College and the city as a cultural centre equal to, if not more impressive than, any other in Europe.'*

For more information please contact **Christina Brand**, Research and Knowledge Exchange Manager, at christina.brand@rncm.ac.uk or **0161 907 5386**.



RNCM TO BENEFIT FROM DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

The RNCM is one of seven higher education institutions within the North West Consortium (NWC) to benefit from a £14 million grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to train the next generation of researchers.

Led by The University of Manchester, the NWC includes Keele, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester Metropolitan, and Salford Universities, in addition to the RNCM, and aims to award 200 PhDs over a five year period. It is one of 11 new Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) and seven Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) to deliver postgraduate supervision, training and skills development from 2014.

The DTPs offer postgraduate studentships and training across all AHRC's disciplines, largely through consortia of Higher Education institutions (HEIs). As part of the scheme, the AHRC is also funding placement opportunities and additional skills training, working alongside partner organisations including the BBC, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (FACT), FutureEverything, Home, Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), Opera North, Tate Liverpool, and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archives and Heritage Service.



Professor Richard Wistreich

Professor Richard Wistreich, Dean of Research and Enterprise at the College, commented: *'Our participation in the NWC's Doctoral Training Partnership alongside the six major Universities in the region provides a terrific boost for the RNCM's extraordinarily successful postgraduate research degrees programme, which started in 2009 in collaboration with MMU. We already have 18 students working in the fields of musicology, music-psychology, composition, performance and music education, two of whom have recently completed their degrees. This latest achievement follows our success in securing three AHRC doctoral studentships, and a further six RNCM Research Studentships since 2010. The new DTP will also further strengthen our existing close collaborative ties with neighbouring University music departments in the region and also with our regional and international partners, including Opera North, and other major orchestras and ensembles. The NWC Partnership will provide new opportunities for all our research students to develop relevant expertise, make new contacts, and enhance their future career prospects.'*



Courtney Lewis

COURTNEY'S BITE OF THE BIG APPLE

Big things are on the horizon for Belfast-born **Courtney Lewis**. The 2007 alumnus is set to make an impact on one of the world's most culturally vibrant cities later this year, joining the New York Philharmonic as Assistant Conductor.

'New York is the biggest musical centre in America where everything is more visible and on a larger scale,' says the 29-year-old, who studied for a Postgraduate Diploma in Conducting with Clark Rundell. *'To be offered a job with such a high profile orchestra as the New York Phil is very exciting, and I'm really looking forward to working with them and to taking music to wider audiences.'*

Led by Musical Director Alan Gilbert the New York Philharmonic is recognised as one of America's leading orchestras. For the 2014/15 season Courtney, who has been Assistant Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra for five years, will replace Case Scaglione gaining the opportunity to work with (and learn from) Alan and all of the orchestra's guest conductors.

'I think the whole institution is very impressive,' he admitted. *'The sort of programming Alan is trying to implement is fantastic, and it should be so rewarding to work alongside him and guest conductors including Christoph von Dohnányi and Thomas Adès during the season.'*

Alongside his role at Minnesota, Courtney, who made his American début in 2008 with the St Louis Symphony Orchestra, has worked with the Atlanta Symphony, Washington National Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, Naples Philharmonic and Alabama Symphony Orchestras. It's an impressive list, but one that only covers a fraction of his diverse CV.

A keen advocate of music education, Courtney is proud to be the founder and Music Director of the Discovery Ensemble, a chamber orchestra dedicated to bringing live music to the least privileged parts of Boston.

'I always thought that education should be at the centre of what an orchestra does, especially as there is less music education in schools nowadays. Right from the beginning we spent a lot of time getting the Discovery Ensemble into schools, and quite often it was the first time kids experienced classical music,' he explained.

'It's also amazing that we play a lot of contemporary music too. No one has told them that they shouldn't like new music yet so we are able to play really interesting repertoire and they respond to it very well.'

Referring to his own education, Courtney originally set his sights on composition but it was during his studies at Cambridge University that he discovered a passion for conducting.



Courtney Lewis

'I realised I wanted to spend my life with great music instead of the things I was writing,' he said. *'Composing is a very lonely job and I really enjoyed making music with other people, so I took advantage of the many conducting opportunities that came my way and realised that this was what I wanted to do.'*

Inspired after watching him conduct a BBC Prom, Courtney travelled to Manchester to witness Sir Mark Elder, the RNCM's International Chair in Conducting, in rehearsal with the Hallé. It was during this time that he chatted to students on the RNCM's conducting course as well as Head of Conducting, Clark Rundell. Following auditions Courtney accepted an invitation to study for an RNCM Postgraduate Diploma; a course he describes as one of the best in the UK.

'I loved how much conducting time there was on the course and how it was a very undogmatic way of teaching,' he recalled. *'Some courses in the UK produce conductors who look alike, but the RNCM isn't like that. Clark and the other teachers are wonderful at taking a conductor as they are and trying to improve, rather than impose something. I thought it was a fantastic course that has to be one of the best in the UK, if not Europe.'*

With the excitement of New York on the horizon, Courtney's immediate plans are firmly fixed in the US. But returning to Manchester is certainly on his to-do list.

'There is so much music in Manchester, so much going on all the time that it's a great place for musicians to be,' he concluded. *'The BBC Phil invited me to conduct last year but it wasn't possible. I really hope another opportunity arises because I would love to come back at some point.'*

MEMORIES OF MANDUELL

A recording of **Sir John Manduell's** *Trois Chansons de la Renaissance* featuring RNCM alumnus and Tutor in Vocal Studies **Henry Herford** was recently released on Forsyth's English Heritage label. Here, Henry shares his memories of the recording made with pianist and RNCM Fellow **Renna Kellaway** nearly 15 years ago.

I recorded these songs with Renna Kellaway in November 2000. The composer and I had an interesting correspondence leading up to the recording on matters of pronunciation and underlay. Not having specialist knowledge of Renaissance French, I decided to adopt Pierre Bernac's approach (as in Debussy's *Trois Ballades de Villon*, for example), which was to modernise the language as far as possible, though I made an exception of such salient words as the offensive 'marastre' (stepmother), which gained extra bite with a well-hissed 's'. On this and other matters of underlay, liaison and syllabic stress John was most amenable to my perhaps arbitrary suggestions, some of which I might well have different ideas about now.

The tessitura of the songs is comfortable for a highish baritone (low A to high G), and the tonality is clear, though coloured by typical English quirkiness: Manduell acknowledges his debt to his teacher Lennox Berkeley – a lifelong Francophile himself – and his style also reminds me of the American Lee Hoiby's later group of three Rimbaud settings (1982), both in tonality and rhythm.

A particular challenge was the execution of the apparently florid setting of 'beauté' at the end of No 1: here brilliance seemed inappropriate, so I opted for a dreamy 'cadenza', quasi senza misura, but slower than marked.

A delicious moment in No 2 is the transition from the airless languor of the thresher in the midday heat to the sudden freshening of the breeze – quicker tempo, higher tessitura over open 'oriental' chords – as he offers the flowers, before torpor overtakes him again: he must be almost asleep by the end of the song.

The fast dactylic/anapaestic rhythm of No 3 brings in a welcome blast of humour – affection laced with teasing sarcasm – but it demands a tricky combination of rapid articulation and rhythmic accuracy, while avoiding putting too much weight on the voice. Certainly the athletic piano part held no terrors for Renna, who was throughout a model of deft responsiveness.

These are attractive, colourful and witty settings, grateful for the voice and piano alike, and deserve a wider hearing.

SOUTHBANK SINFONIA POSITIONS FOR ALUMNAE

Cellist **Svetlana Mochalova** and flautist **Holly Melia** are two of 32 young musicians chosen for this year's Southbank Sinfonia.

Described as 'an experience that will change their lives,' the Southbank Sinfonia brings together a different group of musicians each January to work for 10 months on exhilarating projects. Svetlana and Holly, both 2013 graduates, now have the opportunity to gain extensive experience from the Sinfonia's professional partners, including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, and BBC Concert Orchestra, working on orchestral, chamber and outreach projects.



Svetlana Mochalova

NEW YEAR'S HONOURS FOR RNCM ALUMNI

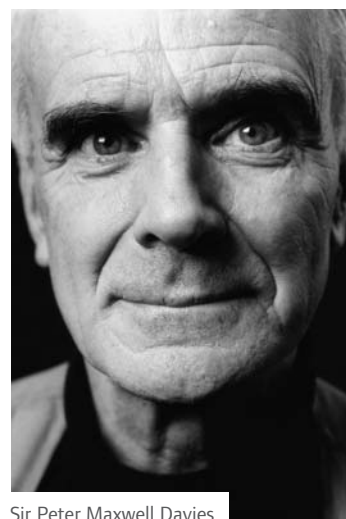


Stephen Hough

RNCM alumni **Stephen Hough** and **Joyce Ellis** have been recognised in The Queen's 2014 New Year's Honours list.

Stephen, who graduated in 1981 and is also the College's International Chair in Piano Studies, has been awarded a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) for services to music, while Joyce, founder and musical director of the Kinder Children's Choirs of the High Peak, received an MBE for services to Music and Young People in Derbyshire.

Both Stephen and Joyce join a selection of prominent musicians, performers, composers and conductors credited in this year's list, including RNCM alumnus **Sir Peter Maxwell Davies**, who becomes a member of the Order of the Companions of Honour.



Sir Peter Maxwell Davies

WESTBOURNE WIN FOR JOSEPH



Steven Joseph

Steven Joseph achieved success in February when he won the Westbourne Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition with a performance of Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

Steven, who studied at both JRNCM and RNCM with Gordon Crosskey and Craig Ogden, graduating in 2011, now has the opportunity to perform the piece with the Orchestra at various venues throughout its summer season.

ALUMNUS WINS ROSL SECTION FINAL



Huw Wiggin

Saxophonist **Huw Wiggin** has won the Wind and Percussion Section Final of the 2014 Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) ARTS competition.

Huw, who graduated in 2008, walked away with the £5000 prize in February and now has the chance to compete for the Gold Medal and First Prize in the ROSL Annual Music Competition held at Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre, on Tuesday 6 May alongside current student **Toby Hughes** who made history by becoming the first double bassist to win the Strings Section Final (see page 3).

CELEBRATING CROSSKEY

RNCM guitarists are uniting this summer to present a celebratory concert in honour of world-renowned tutor and College favourite **Gordon Crosskey**.

Craig Ogden (1991), **Elena Papandreou** (1986), **Tom McKinney** (2002) and the **Aquarelle Guitar Quartet** (comprising 2003 graduates Vasilis Bessas and James Jervis, 2002 alumnus Michael Baker, and Rory Russell, who graduated in 2007), will all perform in the Carole Nash Recital Room on Wednesday 25 June.

Greek guitarist **Nina Valvi**, who is currently in her fourth year studying with Craig, is the driving force behind the concert. She said: *'Gordon Crosskey was the reason I came to study at the RNCM. My tutor in Greece was a pupil of his at the College and he recommended I come to Manchester to continue my studies with him.'*

'I had lessons with him for a year until his retirement and learnt so much. This concert



Gordon Crosskey

was something many of his pupils – especially my teacher, Craig Ogden – had wanted to do for a while and I'm pleased that it's finally happening.'

Talking of the event Gordon added: *'It is a pleasure and privilege to have taught and worked with guitar students at the RNCM for nearly 40 years. The idea of a celebratory concert given by former students is both wonderful and, for me, very touching.'*

To learn more about the event and to book tickets, visit www.rncm.ac.uk.



Craig Ogden



Elena Papandreou



Tom McKinney

POWERFUL PREMIÈRE AT RNCM



Andy Scott

In his role as Composer-in-Residence, 1989 alumnus and Tutor in Saxophone, **Andy Scott** has written a new work for Foden's Band to be premiered at the RNCM in May.

Supported by the PRS for Music Foundations' New Music Biennial, the work, entitled *A Child Like You*, is based on words by writer and broadcaster Lemn

Sissay, whose poetry can be seen on landmarks across the country.

Powerful, thought-provoking and uplifting, this performance of *A Child Like You* precedes those at both the Southbank Centre and Glasgow Royal Concert Hall as part of the Commonwealth Games Celebrations. To book tickets visit www.rncm.ac.uk.

HE COMES OUT ON TOP IN SYDNEY

Alumnus **Yelian He** has won the inaugural Australian Cello Awards (ACA) competition, held in Sydney in March.

Yelian, who graduated in 2011, was one of three cellists aged 18 to 29 to make it through to the final following a preliminary digital round and a live semi-final. Performing to judges John Painter AM, Catherine Hewgill, Susan Blake, Goetz Richter and Nathan Wak at a packed Sydney Conservatorium, Yelian, accompanied by RNCM pianist **Yasmin Rowe**, performed Peter Schulthorpe's *Thrednody*, Mendelssohn's Sonata No 2 in D major, and David Popper's *Elfentanz* during the final, securing a medley of prizes including the \$15,000 Allen-Evans Scholarship, the Audience Prize and the Sydney Symphony Concerto Prize.



Yelian He

Focussing on the careers of young Australian and New Zealand cellists, the ACAs were

established to help recognise and support outstanding talent and potential.

SCOTT BROTHERS PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS



Jonathan Scott

Have you ever wondered how The Bridgewater Hall's famous organ works? Now, thanks to a new project by Staff Pianist Jonathan Scott and his brother Tom, an RNCM Tutor in Electroacoustic Composition, that question is answered.

Jonathan, who graduated in 2000, and Tom, a 2003 alumnus, who perform together as the **Scott Brothers Duo**, were recently asked to work on a film that would explain how the instrument works, how it's tuned, and how it's played. The result, filmed and animated by Tom, includes numerous demonstrations by Jonathan with additional input from organ builder and tuner David Wood. To learn more visit www.scottbrothersduo.com.

ALUMNI NEWS IN BRIEF

Eduardo Portal, the RNCM's Junior Fellow in Conducting between 2008 and 2010 is set to make his Royal Albert Hall debut in October, conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert of Dvořák and Rossini.

Ruth Betteridge (soprano, 2013), performed the title role in Norwich's festive production of *Cinderella* at the Theatre Royal.

The **Gildas Quartet** (violinists Christopher Jones and Sophie Cameron, violist Kay Stephen and cellist Anna Menzies) will be performing the UK première of RNCM postgraduate composer **Emma-Ruth Richards'** *Marinele de predare plange* at The Forge, Camden, in May.

Trombonists **John Barber** (1997), **Beth Calderbank** (2008) and **Carol Jarvis** (2001) took part in the National Trombone Day, held at Chatham's School of Music and Band on the Wall in March. The event also saw 1985 alumnus **Roger Argente** receive the International Trombone Association Award.

Baritone **Daniel Shelvey** (2013) has been appointed a Glyndebourne Jerwood Young Artist. Daniel also recently won the Robin Kay Memorial Award for Opera Singing.

Alumna **Sian Edwards** (1983) was interviewed on Radio 3's In Tune in March for a special feature focussing on the challenges of being a female conductor.

Stuart Orme (baritone, 2013) participated in a composers' weekend with Judith Weir.

MAJOR SUPPORT FOR YOUR RNCM

The College is delighted to report that **Michael Oglesby** CBE, DL, former Chairman of the RNCM, and his wife Jean have extended their support with a major donation towards *Your RNCM*.

In recognition of their generosity through the **Oglesby Charitable Trust** and on the back of 11 years of continued support for students, the Royal Balcony of the new venue will be called the **Oglesby Balcony**.

Each year The Oglesbys award full scholarships for three UK postgraduates, and recently established the RNCM Graduate Instrument Loan Scheme enabling newly graduating students to buy their own instrument with help from an interest free loan.

The College was also extremely pleased to receive two additional significant *Your RNCM* donations recently from the **Garfield Weston Foundation** (GWF) and the **Ida Carroll Trust**.

Established in 1958 by Canadian businessman Willard Garfield Weston (the man behind the Associated British Foods company, famed for creating the Waggon Wheel biscuit), GWF was successfully developed into a major international organisation by his son, Garfield Howard Weston, who fast became one of the UK's most highly regarded philanthropists supporting a huge range of causes including the building of our Oxford Road Wing.

The donation from the Ida Carroll Trust was given in memory of Ida Carroll, Principal of the Northern School of Music before its merger with the RNCM in 1973.

Thanks to the generosity of the Oglesby Charitable Trust, GWF, and Ida Carroll Trust, the private donations mark for *Your RNCM* now exceeds £1.4 million.

TAKE YOUR SEAT

As the exciting transformation of the Concert Hall gets underway, the *Take Your Seat* campaign has become extremely popular with supporters.

There are many reasons for people to name a seat, be it in memory of a loved one, to honour a musician that they particularly admire or to celebrate a special aspect of their lives, and we are incredibly grateful for the support we have received so far. Both long-term and new advocates of the College have chosen to name seats, including international pianist Lang Lang who recently gave a public masterclass to RNCM students.

We would just like to take a moment to thank these donors and share with you some of the stories as to why people are choosing to name a seat.

'I'm really happy to support the RNCM's campaign and to name a seat in the new Hall. I don't often get to sit in the audience so I'm looking forward to seeing who I'll be sitting next to.'

Lang Lang, international pianist and UN Messenger for Peace

'In 2012 my dad sadly passed away after a battle with cancer. When I heard about the Your RNCM campaign and the option to Take Your Seat in the new Concert Hall, it seemed like the perfect way to both celebrate my Dad's generosity and to make sure that he'll never miss another one of my concerts!'

Ben Conway, second year BMus, trumpet

'Rae was old school - insisting on discipline and routine and also encouraging her students to be grateful for the privilege of singing. I guess those have always been qualities I endorse and so I would like her here reminding me of them.'

Lynne Dawson, Head of the School of Vocal Studies, in honour of her former tutor, **Miss Rae Woodland**.

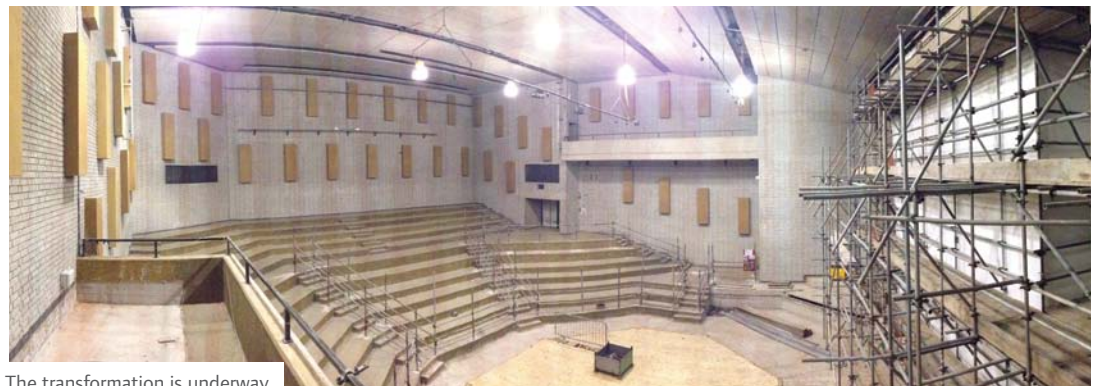
'We have had a long association with the RNCM - many of our members are supporters of the College and RNCM students have, at times, performed for us. Naming a seat in the Concert Hall is our way to show our support of the College and celebrate this fruitful relationship.'

Geoff Scargill, The Elgar Society.

'I chose to name a seat, not only as a memorial to a loved one and fellow concert lover, but also to support an institution that has given us so much pleasure in the past; to help widen its remit and output.'

Kate Whale, long-time supporter of jazz and chamber music at the RNCM.

Whatever the reason may be, naming a seat is both a positive and personal way of supporting the RNCM. If you would like to *Take Your Seat*, please contact **Tom Bevan** on **0161 907 5270** or email tom.bevan@rncm.ac.uk. Alternatively, visit www.rncm.ac.uk/yourrncm/nameaseat/ for more information.



The transformation is underway

RNCM BENEFACTORS' EVENING

Planning is underway for the next **RNCM Benefactors' Evening**, held this year on Thursday 15 May.



RNCM Benefactors' Evening

“...worth it for this evening alone!”

RNCM Silver Friend

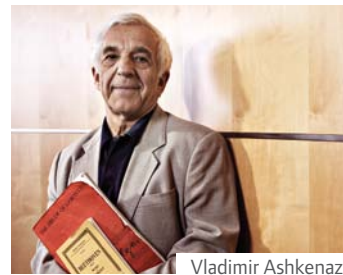
This unique event is by invitation only and brings together our many generous student supporters for an evening of live music, wine and canapés. More than just a chance to hear the performance, Friends and Benefactors have an opportunity to really get to know the students and, in turn, those lucky enough to receive support can thank their sponsors in person.

All Silver and Gold Friends, Benefactors who sponsor individual students, and supporters who are leaving a legacy to the RNCM are invited to enjoy the evening, and will be receiving an invitation very soon. Anyone who upgrades to Silver membership or above before Wednesday 30 April

will also be in time to receive an invitation to this special event. In addition to the Benefactors' Evening, Silver and Gold members enjoy free tickets to the Opera Previews (four for Gold Members, enough to bring friends and family along), and many use these as an excuse to see the production twice, especially when we have two casts.

Silver membership is just £10 a month, or £120 a year, and **Gold** membership is £25 a month or £300 a year. To upgrade your membership or to find out more about the benefits of being an RNCM Friend contact **Kate Findlay**, Friends Administrator, on **0161 907 5338**.

FORTHCOMING FRIENDS EVENTS



Vladimir Ashkenazy

Q&A with Vladimir Ashkenazy Wednesday 30 April 9.30am

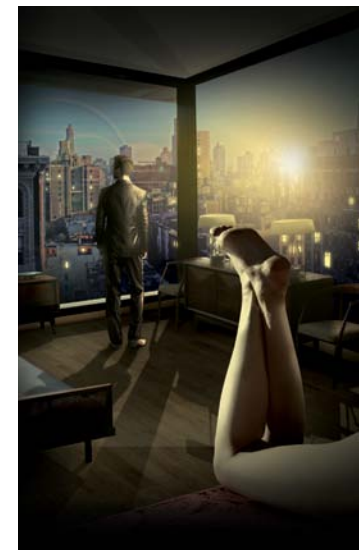
Carole Nash Recital Room
Join RNCM pianists for this exclusive opportunity to meet one of the most renowned pianists and conductors of our time. During this event Ashkenazy will answer questions from students about his life and distinguished performing career. **Free admission, by ticket only (limited availability)**

Behind the Scenes - Lighting Design Thursday 26 June 2.30pm

Capitol Theatre
(meet at RNCM Reception)
RNCM Production Manager Nick Ware and Lighting and Platform Manager Paul Botham take you behind the scenes at the Capitol Theatre, home of our Summer production, *Sondheim's Company*. During the event Nick and Paul will discuss how lighting can transform a stage, with particular focus on the lighting design for this production. The Capitol Theatre is situated on Oxford Road, about 5 minutes' walk from the RNCM. **Tickets £4**

RNCM Opera Preview: *Company*

Tuesday 24 June 7.30pm
Wednesday 25 June 2pm
Capitol Theatre, Oxford Road



Be one of the first to see our new production of Sondheim's ground-breaking musical comedy *Company*. Capturing the neuroticism of 70s New York, *Company* was among the first musicals to deal with adult themes and relationships and was nominated for a record-breaking 14 Tony Awards. **All tickets £7.50**

JOIN THE RNCM FRIENDS

Membership starts at just £2.50 a month and benefits include discounts on tickets, access to exclusive events and RNCM Opera previews. Contact **Kate Findlay**, Friends Administrator, on **0161 907 5338** to find out more.



RNCM

Thursday 3 – Saturday 5 July

Doors 6.30pm for 7pm start, IWM North

AFTER THE SILENCE: Music in the Shadow of War

Tickets £10

 /rncmvoice  /rncmlive

Box Office 0161 907 5555

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