

RNCM

ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC



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Research Forum 2013-2014

Wednesdays

5.15pm – 6.45pm *Lecture Theatre* (2013)

5.15pm – 6.45pm *Conference Room* (2014)

Open to all, free admission

research@rncm.ac.uk | www.rncm.ac.uk/research

Wednesday 2 October

Dr David Horne
(RNCM)

Virtuosic Instruments

Performers often discover that even challenging pieces may be idiomatically written for the instrument or voice. But equally, does the nature of the medium inspire musical ideas? And if so, can investigation inform performance? This presentation considers a number of works from various historical periods, with performed illustrations.

Wednesday 9 October

Dr Laura Tunbridge
(University of Manchester)

Electric Schubert, 1928

The celebrations surrounding the 1928 centenary of Schubert's death were a significant turning point for the composer's reputation and for the performance and interpretation of classical song. Countless articles were written and dozens of recordings produced, encouraging new, more attentive modes of listening as well as a gradual change in performance styles.

Wednesday 16 October

Professor Justin London
(Carleton College, Minnesota)

Really bad music: musical and moral mistakes

There are perhaps three kinds of bad music: music that makes you cringe, music that makes you laugh, and music that makes you angry. This talk will sort out the differences between these musical vices, and thus the reasons for our various reactions.

Friday 18 October

10.00am – 1.00pm *Carole Nash Recital Room*

Daryl Buckley
(Director, *Elision* contemporary music ensemble);
Prof. Richard Wistreich; RNCM MMus students

Doing music research: why, what, how

A study morning for all students taking the MMus course 'Music Research in Practice', and for any member of academic staff interested in getting started in research related to their practice. There will be a series of presentations, including some by former RNCM MMus students, and time for discussion.

Wednesday 23 October

Professor Ross Duffin
(Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland)

How equal temperament ruined harmony (and why you should care)

Intonation has a default system, equal temperament, which is thought to have a kind of Darwinian authority. This has made it easy to ignore historical and musical evidence that equal temperament is not what composers from Bach to Debussy used, either for keyboards, other instruments or voices.

Wednesday 30 October **2.30pm**

Stephen Preston
(RNCM)

Sounding Aporia: navigating via historical impossibility to a new sonic world

It is impossible to play historical music as it was played at the time of its composition two or three hundred years ago, to know about the 'authenticity' of historically-informed period instrument performance or that it fulfils composers' 'original intentions' - yet these impossibilities create richly fertile possibilities for both performer and composer.

Wednesday 13 November

Dr Freya Bailes
(University of Hull)

Perceptions of leadership in duo keyboard improvisations

In this study, keyboard improvisers performed a series of duo improvisations and then individually listened back to their performances; they rated which of the two improvisers they felt was most influencing the musical progression. These ratings are compared with an analysis of the music, and measures of physiological and perceived emotion.

Wednesday 20 November

Dr Lois Fitch
(RNCM)

Brian Ferneyhough at 70

To coincide with the year of Brian Ferneyhough's 70th birthday, Lois Fitch has written the first monograph in English on the composer, his life and music. In this brief presentation, Lois introduces the book, in particular the subject of Ferneyhough's unpublished juvenilia, which are discussed in the book for the first time.

Richie Craig will perform Ferneyhough's *Cassandra's Dream Song* (flute solo) and Fabrice Fitch's *Agricola IXd: Je Nay Dueil*.

Wednesday 27 November

Dr Martin Suckling
(University of York)

Travels in a quartertonal country: composition, research, and the magic of microtones

A discussion of research processes in composition focusing on the challenges and opportunities offered by landscapes outside the 12-tone grid. On idealism and pragmatism, theory and practice, old ideas and new technologies.

Wednesday 4 December

Cheryll Duncan
(RNCM)

Women on top: Geminiani v. Mrs Frederica and the case for legal documents in musicology

Legal records have been almost totally neglected by musicologists, yet offer a rich and unique source of new material once the formidable obstacles to their use have been overcome. Documents generated by a recently discovered lawsuit involving the celebrated violinist and composer Francesco Geminiani provide a context for demonstrating how to access and interpret the material.

Wednesday 11 December

Dr Ben Winters
(Open University)

Hearing film: reflexive concert scenes and the classical Hollywood score

This paper examines a number of scenes in Hollywood films of the 1940s—including *Double Indemnity* (Billy Wilder, 1944) and *Deception* (Irving Rapper, 1946)—that, in featuring performed concert music, reflexively reveal aspects of musical underscore's function in film narrative. A new music-centred ontology of film is proposed.

Wednesday 26 February 2014

Dr Christopher Mark
(University of Surrey)

Roger Smalley as compositional migrant

Born in Salford in 1943, Roger Smalley migrated to Australia in the mid 1970s. His geographical relocation prompted a parallel compositional migration, a reconnection with the different country of the past. This talk traces the steps involved, and asks to what extent his essential identity changed in the process.

This talk will be followed by an hour of Roger Smalley's works and pieces that inspired some of them, performed by Stephen Savage.

Wednesday 5 March

Philippa Bunting
(RNCM)

The legacy of Tower Hamlets

In the 1980s and 1990s an innovative whole-class music education initiative flourished in London's East End: the Tower Hamlets String Teaching Project. Led by UK violin teacher Sheila Nelson, the Project drew on the ideas of American pedagogue Paul Rolland to deliver a powerful blend of musicianship and physically-free instrumental playing.

Wednesday 12 March

Dr Larry Goves
(RNCM)

Compositional protocols, natural laws and social interactions: *The Rules*

Examining Larry's recent work, *The Rules*, commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, this presentation explores how compositional processes are developed through playful engagement with ideas relating to physical and social code. This compositional 'play' is intended as interaction with malleable concepts (including the tradition of the orchestra and the NYO itself) distinct from the implied act of adherence.

Wednesday 19 March

Tim Garland
(RNCM)

I want to feel good!

A look at some seminal (and not so) classical compositions that have strong influences from jazz, and vice versa: 100 years of cross-fertilisation has produced a stunning array of hybrids, curiosities, classics and misfits. What is at the heart of jazz and when does it become parody?

Wednesday 23 April

Dr Nicholas Baragwanath
(University of Nottingham)

Solfeggio and the art of melody in 18th-century music

Solfeggi, or studies in melody, were central to European music c.1670-1850. They originated in Italian conservatoires for disadvantaged children. Despite their historical significance, solfeggi have scarcely featured in modern scholarship. This talk explores the tradition, and how it challenges modern notions of 'common practice' music by identifying the main compositional determinant not in the bass, but in the melody.

Wednesday 30 April

Dr Andrew Wise
(Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp)

'Elizabeth & Albert': Albert Huybrechts and the Coolidge prize

The Belgian composer Albert Huybrechts (1899-1937) wrote his magnificent violin sonata in 1925, and with it won the 1926 edition of the famous Coolidge Prize. Huybrechts was 27 when he won. It ought to have been a splendid feather in his cap and a passport to fame and fortune. But this was not how things turned out...

Wednesday 7 May

Research Students' Symposium I

RNCM Doctoral students present aspects of their work-in-progress

Wednesday 14 May

Research Students' Symposium II

RNCM Doctoral students present aspects of their work-in-progress