Young Artist Focus

Autumn – 2009

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From 2007-09 Kenneth Hesketh returned to Liverpool, the city where he was born, as RPS/PRSF Composer in the House.

Watching the RLPO and Ensemble 10/10 win not one, but two RPS Music Awards this year I could look back and feel relaxed about my stint 'in the house'. Time hasn't always allowed such moments of calm reflection but the last two years have proved to be incredibly rewarding and precious.

While Composer in the House, I took part in programming, educating and (vicariously) the performances of a major symphony orchestra; I've composed, listened, spoken to and learned from the people 'front and centre', as well as those behind the scenes - the heads of departments, people on the reception desk, technical crews and box office workers. All were helpful and amazingly resourceful, even when time was at a premium.

The residency put a mirror to my own strengths and weaknesses, and I am, of course, still digesting the impact of it all. It was not without a moment or two of frustration, but needless to say, the experience has been a far cry from the 'ivory tower' image usually associated with the role of a composer.

The RPS/PRS Foundation scheme was devised to facilitate this situation, and whilst there are other schemes connecting composer with performer with audience, this is certainly one of the most rewarding.



It has amazed me how much gets accomplished, day in day out, in the relatively little time available and the standard at which it is achieved. I'm also cheered by the surprising open-mindedness of a large part of the audiences, not only in their response to my new works over the last two years, but to all work that was new, unfamiliar or just straight demanding. The RLPO and Ensemble 10/10 are masters at eking out every minute of rehearsal time to ensure performances are of a consistently high artistic level, and that each new work is a welcome addition to a programme - not just an unwanted guest (the concern of many a composer!)

I believe the players would also agree with me on the subject of time - they're busier now than ever, thanks to their own success (both live and recorded), the guiding hands of conductors Vasily Petrenko and Clark Rundell (just two of the conductors I have worked with during this time) and the artistic vision of Executive Director Andrew Cornall. I do wish there had been more time to get to know the players better. That they are first-rate musicians I learned in the first week, however.

Lest this report seem merely a list of frantic goings-on, I should say that there HAS been time to chat to and hear feed-back from audience members (who come from far and wide to the Phil these days), as well as youth, amateur and community performers, and visiting international musicians all taking part in the City of Culture celebrations.

Writing a total of twelve new works for the various instrumental and vocal combinations the Phil had to offer made sure I crammed as much in to every minute of the residency as possible. There were also pre-concert talks, programming meetings, panels and lectures at the RNCM and Liverpool University (where I'm now an honorary professor) making this an incredibly rich and varied time. The new University appointment is an exciting extra benefit and will allow, I hope, my connection with my native stomping ground to deepen further.

Time ebbs and flows ("like the sea, like time" to quote Pablo Neruda, and the title of my own chorus and orchestra work for many of the varied forces at the RLPS). My time as Composer in the House made me revisit much of my own past; there have been many 'Madeleine' moments which impacted upon my work much more consciously as a result. Being at the centre of the city's musical life has deepened my compositional and emotional connection to Liverpool and the North-west, and encouraged me to find time to allow a stay 'in port' (if not a ferry across the Mersey).

I wish the next incumbent (and the next orchestra) as much time as possible to accomplish all the goals they set themselves and enjoy the many challenges of Composer in the House.

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Look out for a new Composer in the House later this year!

Young Artist Diary Dates:

Chilcott Scholarship Auditions: 4 October 2009

Chilcott Scholarship Applications: Closing date 30 June 2010

RPS Composition Prize: Closing date 31 March 2010

Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Foundation: Nominations from College Principals by 31 May 2010

Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Foundation

15 music college students have been awarded grants totalling over £20K from the **Barbirolli Foundation** towards the purchase of much needed new instruments. This fund is always hugely oversubscribe so we are particularly grateful to the RPS members whose donations have enabled first year Trinity College orchestral percussion and drum student **Fred Beer** to purchase a drum-kit.

"I've bought my new kit – it's just fantastic and I'm so grateful – I never would have been able to do this without the support of the RPS."

Thank you:
Barbara Van Doren, Zena Tibbenham, Lillian Tertis, Janis Susskind, Monsignor Anthony Stark, Julian Rushton, Lindsay Pell, Lady Panufnik, Jean Nicholson, Janet Lowy, Rosalind Leney, Dr Margaret Leigh, Jill Hopkins, Darren Henley, Jonathan Groves, Moira Gray, Marion Friend, Trevor Fenemore-Jones, John Crisp, Janet Cobley, Sir Alan Bowness, Hilary Bartlett, Dame Janet Baker CH DBE

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Elizabeth Goble	BC	Violin
Flavia Hirte	GSMD	Flute headjoint
Amy Morrow	GSMD	Clarinet in A
Victoria Rule	GSMD	Natural Trumpet
Rachel Hall	LCM	Bassoon
Marie Langrishe	RAM	Violin
Helen Fraser	RCM	Oboe
Sam Healey	RNCM	Baritone Saxophone
Lewis Musson	RNCM	Euphonium
Rachel Muir	RSAMD	French Horn
Max Goldberg	RWCMD	Baritone Saxophone
Rebecca Hanke	RWCMD	Guitar
Fred Beer *	TCM	Drum Kit
Kathryn Brown	TCM	French Horn
Lenia Christodoulou	TCM	Oboe

* supported by donations from RPS members

Emily Anderson Prize



Congratulations to Dutch violinist **Mathieu van Bellen** winner of the RPS Emily Anderson Prize for young violinists.

Mathieu, born 1988, studied at Chethams and the Royal College of Music where his teacher was Itzhak Rashkovsky. He has already won numerous international prizes and made his solo debuts at the Royal Festival Hall and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. Look out for him this January at the Purcell Room when he appears with the Wu Quartet in a programme of contemporary British Music.



Widening Horizons

This year's **RPS Julius Isserlis Scholarship** saw the scholarship open to all classical instrumentalists between the ages of 15 and 25 for the first time. This prestigious £30,000 scholarship provides very substantial funding for players wanting to continue their studies outside the UK. After a tough day of auditions the jury finally decided to divide the scholarship jointly between 22 year old Irish flautist **Fiona Kelly** (Trinity College) who will study at the Juilliard School in New York, and 24 year old violinist **Zara Benyounes** (RNCM) who will embark on a chamber music postgraduate course with her quartet, the Benyounes Quartet, at the Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva. Both will receive £15,000 towards their first year of study.

"Zara and Fiona were both outstanding in audition– I am sure they will challenge themselves with the new experiences a different culture brings. We wish them well."
Chairman of the Jury, Edward Blakeman (BBC Radio3)

New Composers' Academy

The RPS has enjoyed a long association with the Philharmonia's Music of Today series and in a new development to this relationship the orchestra is setting up a Young Composers Academy for three of this year's RPS Composition Prize-winners. **Dimitris Economou** and **Christian Mason** (both 25 years old) and 22 year old **Shiva Feshareki** each receive £3,000 and will benefit from regular seminars with Music of Today artistic director Julian Anderson, mentoring, instrument writing and extended technique workshops with Philharmonia musicians, the chance to meet and hear from composers and conductors, rehearsal workshops, regular feedback and the performance of their composition prize commissions as part of the Music of Today series.

A further £3,000 RPS Composition Prize, supported by the Susan Bradshaw Composers' Fund, goes to 26 year old Russian-born composer **Michael Langemann**, who will write a chamber piece for performance at the 2010 Cheltenham Festival. The fund was set up in memory of the widely respected pianist, teacher and writer, Susan Bradshaw, who died in January 2005.

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