Press Release
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Royal Philharmonic Society Events October 2014

Discussion

- TRUST ME, I'M A MUSIC CRITIC
  RPS Debate at the Battle of Ideas
  Saturday 18 October at 4pm, Barbican

- BEYOND BEETHOVEN
  Is music history dominated unjustly by a few select composers?
  Wednesday 22 October at 5.45pm, Royal Festival Hall, London

New commissions

- *SPEAR* BY DANIEL KIDANE, RPS COMPOSITION PRIZE-WINNER 2013
  Presteigne Festival on tour, Newport, Bristol and Birmingham
  Wednesday 22, Thursday 23 & Friday 24 October

Cultural collaborations – music and dance

- RPS DRUMMOND FUND: NOTES, STEPS, TIMELINES AND COLLABORATIONS
  Composer and Choreographer Exchange
  Sundays, Rambert Dance Studio (not open to the public)

The RPS aims to encourage a greater understanding of music. The Society explores different aspects of our musical life in bold, often controversial talks, debates and discussions, commissions new music for performance nationwide and creates opportunities for both young and distinguished professional musicians, and practitioners from other artistic disciplines, to meet and exchange ideas.

This October, the RPS serves up a double-dose of debate, putting music criticism under the microscope at the Battle of Ideas at the Barbican, and discussing why some composers, popular in their day, have long since vanished from the concert stage, in a pre-concert talk at the Royal Festival Hall. The RPS's professional development work continues with a three-day composer and choreographer exchange, funded by the RPS Drummond Fund, offering young composers and choreographers the chance to meet and talk with some of the best in the business. There's also a chance to hear the latest work to join the RPS's extensive commissioning output: *Spear* by young 2013 RPS Composition Prize winner, **Daniel Kidane**, takes to the road, with performances in Newport, Bristol and Birmingham as part of the Presteigne Festival on tour.

Full details at royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk

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Royal Philharmonic Society Events – October 2014

DISCUSSION

Trust me, I'm a music critic

Saturday 18 October at 4pm, **Free Stage, Barbican**

This summer, some music critics found themselves in the midst of a twitter-storm after making disparaging comments about an opera singer's weight. The ensuing argument seemed to reflect many of the uncertainties around the role of critics today. There is anxiety from some quarters that professional arts critics are being pushed out of the cultural mainstream and being replaced by amateur bloggers; serious criticism is no longer valued. Others counter, however, that social media has rejuvenated the discipline, offering a greater platform for informed opinion and debate than ever before. And for others still, the debate is less about platforms than the role of a critic as arbiter of artistic value.

So, what role do critics play today? Is their job to act more as informed reviewers and guides to the cultural landscape or do they have a greater role to play in shaping taste? Is serious criticism in seemingly terminal decline or are critics simply being held to stricter account in the digital age? On what criteria should critics base their judgements?

Speakers including **Christopher Gillett**, tenor and columnist for Sinfini Music and Opernwelt; **Cathy Graham**, Director of Music at the British Council; **Ivan Hewett**, chief music critic, Daily Telegraph, broadcaster and author of *Music: Healing the rift*; **Amanda Holloway**, commissioning editor, Sinfini Music; **Simon Millward**, director of Albion Media and former London art critic of Wall Street Journal, give their views in a discussion chaired by sociologist and cultural commentator, **Dr Tiffany Jenkins.** The debate is the sixth that the RPS has staged at the Institute of Idea's annual flagship weekend of debate, the Battle of Ideas).

Day tickets are available at barbican.org.uk
Full information about the Battle of Ideas at battleofideas.co.uk
If you would like a press ticket for this event, please contact me direct.

Beyond Beethoven

Is music history dominated unjustly by a few select composers?
Wednesday 22 October at 5.45pm, Royal Festival Hall (free)

Social and cultural historian, **Leanne Langley**, pianist, writer and broadcaster **David Owen Norris**, and BBC Radio 3 presenter **Christopher Cook** join the RPS's **Tom Hutchinson** to explore classical composers who were popular in their day but have long since vanished from the concert stage.

Nicknamed 'The French Beethoven', George Onslow (1784-1853), was a huge figure in his own lifetime and was made an Honorary Member of the Philharmonic Society of London in 1829 (one of the earliest recipients of the award). Now rarely performed, his work is discussed in this talk, and features in an OAE concert that follows, which sets his First Symphony alongside the enduringly popular Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony and the overture to Berlioz's *Beatrice and Benedict*. Frances Xavier-Roth conducts.

Full details at http://www.oae.co.uk/event/flying-flag-french-beethoven-2/

PERFORMANCE: RPS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAMME

Spear by Daniel Kidane, winner of RPS Composition Prize 2013
22 October at 1pm, The Riverside, Newport
23 October at 1pm, St George's Hall, Bristol
24 October at 1.10pm, Barber Institute, Birmingham

Clarinettist **Kate Romano** and pianist **Richard Uttley** perform the RPS's latest commission, *Spear* by Daniel Kidane, alongside works by **John McCabe, Matthew Taylor, Brahms** and **Lutoslawski.**

Daniel Kidane (b.1986) was a winner of the 2013 RPS Composition Prize, which gives the chance for young composers (aged 28 or under) to write a work for a prestigious professional performance. He also received the Presteigne Festival Alan Horne memorial commission for this new chamber work. Pianist **Richard Uttley** is also a member of the RPS Young Musicians Programme; he is supported by the RPS/YCAT Philip Langridge Mentoring Scheme, through which he has been working with mentor **Rolf Hind**.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RPS Drummond Fund: Composers and Choreographers Exchange
Notes, Steps, Timelines, Collaborations
5,12, 19 October, Rambert Dance Studios

The **RPS Drummond Fund** encourages partnerships between composers and choreographers and helps support the creation of new music for dance. The fund was set up in memory of writer, broadcaster and impresario Sir John Drummond CBE and his friend, the English born Diaghilev dancer, Lydia Sokolova.

'Notes, Steps, Timelines and Collaborations' brings together the worlds of dance and music in a short course funded by the RPS Drummond Fund.

Over three Sundays in October, eight young composers and choreographers from around the UK will meet to explore the process of creating new work and learn about each other's disciplines. The group will hear from leading practitioners including **Richard Alston, Julian Anderson, Christopher Barron, Mark Baldwin, Jonathan Burrows, Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Sally Groves, Zoe Martlew, Judith Mackrell, Kevin O'Hare, David Sawer and Kenneth Tharp.**

These sessions, which are not open to the public, are part of the RPS's extensive professional development work and the RPS Young Musicians programme, which gives opportunities for young artists to create work, and exchange ideas with distinguished practitioners.

Full details about all RPS events, and the work of the Royal Philharmonic Society can be found at royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk