

Crescendo

The Official Magazine of The Purcell School for Young Musicians

OCTOBER 2019



HALF TERM HIGHLIGHTS

Looking back on the exciting news from Purcellians both past and present

BEHIND THE MUSIC: WATFORD COLOSSEUM

Insights from the composers of the new works performed by the Symphony Orchestra

ECHO ENSEMBLE RETURNS TO PURCELL

Echo Ensemble: Side by Side with Purcell | 'Memory'!
Thursday 28th November

WELCOME TO THIS YEAR'S FIRST EDITION OF CRESCENDO

The new academic year has got off to a great start! Here are some of the highlights from our first half term...

STUDENT NEWS

Year 8 pianist **Phoebe Papandrea** was awarded First Prize in the 2019 International Music Competition 'Vienna' Grand Prize Virtuoso. She was also the recipient of the First Prize and the Exceptional Young Musician Special Prize in the 2019 Golden Classical Music Awards International Competition.

Year 8 student **Alex Rowsell Ryan** has been awarded the Robinson Award for Future Talent for the French Horn.

Year 12 pianist **Zara Williams** has been invited to take part in the 4th Feuerwerk Einbeck International Winter Piano Academy. Feuerwerk is an invitation-only academy.

Zara has been granted a scholarship, and is one of only eleven pianists selected to attend.

Over the summer, Year 9 student **Ashton Hunt** (pictured below) had a very successful season playing the role of John in the British Youth Music Theatre's production of Peter Pan. Ashton was also awarded a Grade 8 distinction for Musical Theatre Production.

Upper Sixth harpist **Bethany Caswell** participated in the first two rounds of the Nottingham Young Musician of the Year competition. She won her first round, and then competed in a hotly contested Strings final which she subsequently won. Bethany is now through to the overall final.

Year 11 violinist **Yinong Xiao** competed in the 54th Annual Maidenhead festival of Music and Dance over the weekend. Yinong took 2nd place in his category.

Upper Sixth violinist **Iohan Coman** performed the Wieniawski Violin Concerto No.1 with the Welwyn Garden City Orchestra. Of the score, and in praise of the Iohan's performance, the conductor James Ross said 'Even by the standards of many virtuoso concertos, its demands are huge, and you [Iohan] certainly rose to these . . . It was a pleasure to make music with you [Iohan] and to have the opportunity to perform this magnificent work.'





ALUMNI NEWS

Alumna [Mica Levi](#) has received critical acclaim for her hypnotic score of Alejandro Landes' film about Colombia's child soldiers, *Monos*. The New York Times describes the score as 'precision-engineered postmodern discomfort' while the Los Angeles Times praises the skill with which the music 'oscillates between the earthly and the divine'. *Monos* recently won Best Film at the 2019 BFI London Film Festival, and is Colombia's selection for 2020 Oscar contention in the Best Foreign Language Film category. This is Levi's fourth film score to date.

As part of his world tour, Purcell alumnus [Jacob Collier](#) made his spectacular Sydney Opera House debut in September 2019. The Sydney Morning Herald said of the concert 'By about a minute into opener *With The Love In My Heart*, having swooped all over his [Collier's] band's clattering funk track with his supple baritone while propelling it with manic drumming and a lightning-fast

jazz piano line, he [Collier] was already laying claim to being the best musician alive'.

Harpist and Purcell alumna [Catrin Finch](#) and her collaborator Seckou Keita have won Best Duo/Group at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards.

Alumnus [Julius Drake](#) is Artist in Residence at Barcelona's Life Victoria Festival. Drake will be performing with acclaimed singers across multiple dates during the festival. The festival is dedicated to the great Catalan soprano, Victoria de Los Angeles, who Drake performed with in the late 1990s.

Alumnus and violinist virtuoso [Jack Liebeck](#) will join the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra this November to perform the world premiere of Paul Dean's violin concerto *A Brief History of Time*, which was dedicated to the late physicist Professor Stephen Hawking. The concert, hosted by Professor Brian Cox, will feature music from the scientific age, highlighting how great composers

have, throughout the ages, attempted to understand and explain our place in the universe using music.

PATRON NEWS

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra has announced the much anticipated culmination of [Sir Andrew Davis'](#) Mahler symphony cycle, unveiling what will be a massive performance of Mahler's choral Eighth Symphony in the Margaret Court Arena next year. Purcell School patron, Sir Andrew Davis has said of this particular symphony cycle that 'It is a huge cosmic vision and I am counting down the days until I can share this truly transformative experience'.

Auckland's Aotea Centre ASB Theatre will soon be called Kiri Te Kawana Theatre after the world renowned soprano and Purcell patron. The facility's new name will be launched on 20th November with a gala concert featuring [Dame Kiri Te Kawana](#), the Auckland Philharmonia and several rising opera stars.

BEHIND THE MUSIC WITH THE COMPOSERS: WATFORD COLOSSEUM

On Sunday 20th October, our Symphony Orchestra made their 2019/2020 debut at Watford Colosseum featuring two new works by student composers

Alongside *Funeral Music for Queen Mary* (Stucky, Purcell), *Serenade for Strings in C Major* (Tchaikovsky), *Concerto for Flute and Orchestra* (Nielsen) and *Symphony in Three Movements* (Stravinsky), The Purcell School Symphony Orchestra performed two new works by student composers at last week's concert at Watford Colosseum.

The concert opened with *Assemble Ye of Little Faith!*, a new work composed by **Peader Hay (Year 13)**.

Peader is an 18 year-old composer who has been writing music for five years now. He initially started composing as an extension of his song writing, but the more instrumental, contemporary

style allowed for further creative freedom and expression. Peader started studying composition with his local piano teacher in Glasgow and then began lessons with Zakia Fawcett in order to become more familiar with 20th and 21st century styles.

Following these lessons and with an urge to be surrounded with like minded composers, he came to the Purcell School where he now studies with Simon Speare. The Purcell School has offered him with many opportunities including an orchestral commission and a performance of a piece at Westminster Abbey that was broadcast live. He hopes to continue his composition in the future and further develop his individual voice.

When discussing the programme and how *Assemble Ye of Little Faith!* fits in, Peader said “**A fanfare is an announcement, it should gain your attention. And there isn't a better way to gain the attention of someone than with an accusation (you fool!). Anyways, now that I have your attention... My fanfare was written with knowledge of what it was preceding in the concert and therefore it has taken influence from some of the harmonic and rhythmic elements of Purcell's Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary. The Purcell creates a very sombre mood, naturally due to the circumstance surrounding the music, yet it is Purcell's interplay between major and minor chords that is most poignant. I have**



been strongly influenced by this harmony and the chords towards the end of my piece greatly reflect this. As with most of my music there is no particular narrative idea that the piece is based upon, but with the help of a provocative title, there is room for personal interpretation.

At its heart it is simply a piece of music that uses a particular motif slightly too many times and isn't supposed to be listened to more than once."

Opening the second half of the concert following the interval was *Sirens for Harp and Orchestra*; a new work composed by **Jasmine Morris (Year 13)**.

Jasmine has been passionate about music from a young age, learning piano at the age of three and violin at the age of eight. She learnt as a first study pianist with Nadia Lasserson, receiving a distinction in her piano diploma at the age of 12. In 2018, she was made principle second of the LSSO where she toured in Romania, performing in the Colosseum in Bucharest and the Black Church in Brasov. Having attended musical technology courses at the Roundhouse, her passion for composition was fuelled which led her to join The Purcell school where she learns with Brian Elias and Joseph Phibbs on the George Drexler Scholarship. Her experience as a string player has hugely informed her ensemble writing which led her to enter the 'Phillip Bates Prize' with her piece 'Benediction,' which was premiered at Birmingham

Conservatoire and performed by musicians from Purcell. As the leader of a composer's ensemble based in Greenwich, she wrote and performed new music for concerts at LSO St Luke's and the Painted Chapel. She was also commissioned by the Centre of Advanced Training where she had two works premiered to the public for the opening of the Tate Modern's Boiler House. Jasmine has also been awarded two EPTA awards for her piano piece 'Thousandfurs' which won first in her age category as well as the overall winner.

Last summer, one of her arrangements of a piece was performed at a commonwealth concert held at Westminster Abbey which was broadcast by the BBC and sung by the National Youth Children's Choir in front of members of royalty and 2000 people from the public.

Jasmine's thoughts on her piece as part of the programme were as follows; **"Sirens for Harp and Orchestra is inspired by the oil painting 'The Great Sirens' (1947) by Belgian surrealist painter Paul Delvaux. The scene depicts a group of motionless women sitting in the moonlight in front of two Greco-Roman style temples. Surrealism prompted a revolution of the human experience in which one is dislocated from reality where common objects and experiences are presented in an obscure fashion. In Sirens I drew on the concept of the distortion and fluidity of time, in that I created a harmonic stasis over which melodic**

lines are formed and evolve. Through the music, I wanted to convey a sense of stillness which is however imbued with a subtle internal energy. Structurally, the piece could be seen as a simple arch form which expands and contracts and is dictated by the melodic lines in the harp."

We recently sat down for an interview with Jasmine to discuss composing her first piece for a full orchestra and how the process started; "I think the most important part is the narrative, something that we can connect to and relate too. Not matter how abstract art is, there is always going to be a narrative and I think it's always important for the composer to consider that."

When asked how happy she was with the end results she said "I think I'm pleased with the result. What concerned me most was the practicability and how easy it would be for the orchestra to play. I wanted to make sure I had written something that was really nice to perform and really comfortable for each player. That was my biggest concern, especially for something like woodwind and brass, I'm a string player and have always been comfortable writing for strings but I hadn't done much for other instruments before, but I think I handled it well overall."

The full interview with Jasmine '*Sirens for Harp and Orchestra*': *Behind the Music with the Composer* can be found on The Purcell School's YouTube channel.

THE ECHO ENSEMBLE RETURNS TO THE PURECLL SCHOOL

We are extremely proud to be hosting the Echo Ensemble for their upcoming concert *Echo Ensemble: Side by Side with Purcell | 'Memory'*!

The Echo Ensemble is formed of London's finest young musicians. A community which takes joy in making music to the highest level, it is founded on the principle of 'ensemble' - togetherness, in every sense.

Founded at the Purcell School in 2016 by Artistic Director Noah Max, the Echo Ensemble is quickly becoming a key part of London's vibrant music scene; they have already given a number of concerts to critical acclaim (Barry Millington of The Guardian: 'a powerful, imaginative performance showing very promising talent... a remarkable achievement').

The Echo Ensemble gave eight world premieres during

their 2019 Season, alongside neglected works and core repertoire, at venues including the Royal Albert Hall's Elgar Room.

"The concert is on the theme of memory and will be a side-by-side collaboration project between Echo Ensemble, a professional chamber orchestra with a high profile in London and which I set up while at Purcell, and current Purcell instrumentalists and composers." (Noah Max, Artistic Director for The Echo Ensemble)

The theme of *Memory* for the upcoming concert (taking place on Thursday 28th November at 7pm here at the School), is one

close to our hearts as part of the programme will be in dedication to one of Purcell's former students and regular Echo Ensemble performer, Alex Ross, who sadly passed away earlier this year.

"Alex was a committed Echo player and an amazing friend to all those he made music with". (Noah Max)

The concert programme will consist of a new work composed by current Purcell student Philip Theodorou (Year 11), Simon Speare - Lament (in memoriam Alex Ross; world premiere), Edvard Grieg - Aus Holbergs Zeit and rounding off the 'Memory' themed concert; Arvo Pärt - Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten.



LIVE AT LUNCHTIME IS BACK!

Following the launch of our live streamed concerts last year, Live at Lunchtime returned this term on Thursday 10th October



This year's first instalment of *Live at Lunchtime* recently returned to our screens featuring three talented Senior School soloists; **Sofiia Matviienko** (Flute), **Iohan Coman** (Violin) and **Bradley Ng** (Piano).

Bradley joined The Purcell School in September 2013 where he has since been receiving piano lessons from Tessa Nicholson. Since joining the school, Bradley has had a variety of performance opportunities as a soloist and chamber musician. As a soloist, he has been selected to play in both internal and external concerts. He has performed in concert venues in Singapore such as The Arts House and the Esplanade -Theatres by the Bay. Whilst studying in the United

Kingdom, he has performed in concert venues such as the Conway Hall, St Alban's Church and the Penn House in Amersham for an AGM Piano Recital.

In 2016 Sofiia played her first solo concert in Italy. She loves to play at charity events, such as the annual St. Nicolas Concert for Children in Poltava, Ukraine. In 2017 she joined The Purcell School and currently plays in the Symphony Orchestra, where she is thrilled to play the part of first flute. Sofiia also studies voice, piano, and loves to draw.

Iohan (born in France) moved to Birmingham in 2018 and began studying at The Purcell School following success in competitions such as the National Music Theory

Competition in Yasi, Romania, the Whitgift International Music Competition in London, England and more recently, the National Olympiad for Instrumental Interpretation, the 20th National Primavara Artelor competition and the National Contest of Contemporary Violinists.

Each soloist put on a stunning performance for our online viewers with a programme including works by Henri Wieniawski, Richard Wagner, Georg Telemann, Dirko Juchem and Franz Liszt.

The next edition of *Live at Lunchtime* will take place on Thursday 14th November at 1pm so make sure to subscribe to our YouTube channel and turn on notifications to not miss out!

COMING UP

Tuesday 5 November

RUSH HOUR LECTURE

5:00pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

Fact from Fantasy - An analysis of Chopin Fantasia in F Minor Op 49
Edward Longstaff gives his second lecture of the term, this time addressing the questions that face pianists and musicologists when considering a performance of one of Chopin's longest and greatest works. Student pianists will support the lecture by playing musical examples

Wednesday 6 November

MASTERCLASS AND CONCERT:

The Rosamunde Trio

Masterclass: 2:00 - 6:00pm, Concert: 7:00pm

The Purcell School

Free admission

Beethoven Piano Trio in D Op 70 No. 1 (*Ghost*)

Smetana Piano Trio in G Minor Op 15

Three international soloists **Martino Tirimo**, **Ben Sayevich** and **Daniel Veis** formed the Rosamunde Trio in 2002 and have since toured across the UK and performed in festivals and major venues around the world

Saturday 9 November

STANBOROUGH PARK CHURCH RECITAL

7:30pm | Stanborough Park Church, 2 The Conifers, Watford WD25 0JP

Free admission

The programme will include works by Pachelbel, Francaix, Hummel, Mozart, Chopin, Caccini, Handel, Rachmaninoff and Warlock

The recital will feature seven of the School's Year 13 soloists with music for saxophone, viola, violin, piano, voice and tuba

Monday 11 November

PIANO MASTERCLASS WITH MIRJANA RAJIĆ

4:00 - 6:00pm, 6:30 - 7:30pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

The Purcell School masterclasses offer students the chance to play to some of the world's most eminent musicians, performers and teachers.

Since studying piano as a child, **Mirjana Rajić** won first prize at the Munich Piano Competition, Special Prize at the International Piano Competition in Italy and together with clarinetist Andjei Maevski she won the INTRO-Klassisk competition in Norway

Tuesday 12 November

RUSH HOUR RECITAL

5:00pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

Elgar Chanson de Nuit, David Matthews Sonatina for Viola and Piano Brahms Two Songs for Mezzo Soprano, Viola and Piano, Rebecca Clarke Sonata for Viola and Piano

Deborah Shah, piano

Sarah-Jane Bradley, viola

Rozanna Madylus, mezzo-soprano

Another recital featuring a former Purcell student; pianist and accompanist **Deborah Shah** is also on the current teaching staff, as is viola player **Sarah-Jane Bradley**. They are joined by guest singer **Rozanna Madylus** for a superb programme of Romantic and contemporary music.

Thursday 14 November

LIVE AT LUNCHTIME

1:00pm | YouTube (Online) / The Purcell School

Free admission

The second in this term's series of 'Live at Lunchtime' concerts. The performances can be watched live on our YouTube channel (The Purcell School)

Thursday 14 November

LOWER SCHOOL CONCERT

7:00pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

Featuring solo performances from Year 6, 7 and 8 students

For further information on the programme, keep in touch with The Purcell School online through our website and social media

Monday 18 November

EVENING RECITAL: Beethoven Piano Sonatas

7:00pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

Beethoven Piano Sonatas Op 10 No. 1 in C Minor, Op 31 No. 1 in G Major, Op 53 in C Major *Waldstein*, Op 14 No. 2 in G Major
Jianing Kong continues his cycle of Beethoven's piano sonatas

Tuesday 19 November

RUSH HOUR RECITAL: Wigmore Hall Preview

5:00pm | The Purcell School

Free admission

An opportunity for our own students to join the Rush Hour Series: a preview of highlights from the forthcoming Wigmore Hall programme

Monday 25 November

PURCELL SOLOISTS: WIGMORE HALL

7:30pm | Wigmore Hall, London

Tickets: £5-15

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

Programme to include works by Andres, Chausson, Ravel, Mozart and Liszt for violin, piano, cello flute and harp. Featured soloists include Milda, Yumeka, Olwen, Emily, Lina and Bradley.

GET IN TOUCH

General Enquiries - School Office
01923 331 100
schooloffice@purcell-school.org

Concert and Ticket Information
concerts@purcell-school.org

PR & Communications / News
publicity@purcell-school.org

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The Purcell School
Aldenham Road
Bushey, Hertfordshire
WD23 2TS

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