

Crescendo

The Official Magazine of The Purcell School for Young Musicians

OCTOBER 2020



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH: 'ROOTS' CONCERT

Curated by Zara Williams to
celebrate Black-British and
African-American composers

INSIDE PURCELL: CONCERTS DEPARTMENT

Featuring lunchtime concerts,
evening recitals, online
festivals and more

PURCELL'S FIRST VIRTUAL OPEN MORNING

The School is hosting an
online Virtual Open Morning
on Sunday 15th November

WELCOME TO THIS YEAR'S FIRST EDITION OF CRESCENDO

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

Two Purcell students, present and past, were named winners of this year's BBC Young Composer competition. [Rowena Jones](#) (Year 11) won the Upper Juniors (12-14 years) category with her piece 'Spring2020', and [Jasmine Morris](#) (Alumna) triumphed with 'Sirens for Harp and Orchestra' in the Seniors (17-18 years) category.

Year 9 student and French horn player [Alex](#) became the most recent recipient of the [Worsley Award](#). Administered by Future Talent, the award programme will provide Alex with a scholarship, mentoring and performance opportunities for the next 3 years.

Viola player [Danya Rushton](#) (Year 10) was invited to

participate in the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Junior Artists programme (2020/21). She was made a full member following her 15th birthday earlier this month.

Composer [Jonathan Knight](#) (Year 13) reached the final three of the prestigious international composition competition, the Concorso Internazionale di Composizione Ennio Porrino. Despite narrowly missing out on the First Prize, Jonathan's score for piano entitled 'Vacillations' was performed during the Grand Final in Porto Santo Stefano.

The [Chineke! Junior Orchestra](#), a youth orchestra of Black, Asian and ethnically diverse players aged 11-22, reached

the semi-finals of Britain's Got Talent (BGT) in September. The orchestra's members included Purcell students [Danya Rushton](#), [Elise Furber](#), [Louis Richardson](#) (all Year 10) and [Ella Richardson](#) (Year 12).

Year 7 student and jazz drummer [Jack](#) has been officially endorsed by [Liberty Drums UK](#).

For further updates on student achievements and school news, be sure to check our [Weekly Highlights](#) which are published every Friday to the School's website!



INSIDE PURCELL: CONCERTS DEPARTMENT

Our incredible Concerts Department has been in full swing since the start of term!



This year's concert season began with a recital and lecture from Assistant Head of Strings [Dr Richard Jenkinson](#) on Kodaly's 'Cello Sonata'. Kodaly's music was the subject of Richard's PhD which he completed at the University of Birmingham.

"Zoltan Kodaly's 'Sonata for Solo Cello' represents one of the most astonishing and groundbreaking pieces for the instrument. The sheer inventiveness and genius of the composer is the way he combines Hungarian folk music with instrumental virtuosity in a dazzling display for both performer and public. I researched this piece for five years at the University of Birmingham and it is therefore a privilege to share my first post lockdown recital with a small introductory talk with the students of The Purcell School."

(Dr Richard Jenkinson)

Another treat for staff and students upon returning to school was a wonderful performance of jazz classics by Head of Jazz [Simon Allen](#) who was joined on stage by his fellow Jazz Department teachers [John Turville](#) (jazz piano), [Oli Hayhurst](#) (bass) and [Seb de Krom](#) (drums). Likewise, Head of Woodwind [Joy Farrall](#) formed a sensational wind trio with instrumental teachers [Stephen Williams](#) (clarinet) and [Graham Hobbs](#) (bassoon) to bring us Mozart's 'Divertimento No. 1'.

"What a wonderful moment it was to step on the stage in front of a live audience after 6 months in musical hibernation, even though they were distanced and in masks!!!! Steve and Graham joined me in a Mozart 'Divertimento'. One of five pieces originally for three bassett horns, it is a gloriously joyous yet superbly crafted piece, which gave all three of

us enormous pleasure to share with the students and staff that came. Thank you."
(Joy Farrall)

Head of Strings [Charles Sewart](#) and Purcell Accompanist and Piano Teacher [Deborah Shah](#) performed two sonatas for violin and piano, starting with Respighi and ending with Poulenc. Deborah and Charles have between them a plethora of performing experience, both as soloists and members of chamber ensembles, which has taken them all over the world.

Lunchtime concerts have also been busy this half-term, with pieces learnt over the summer being performed, audition pieces warmed up, and new repertoire tested. We've had performances for solo piano, bassoon, viola, marimba duo, voice and accompaniment and much more.



The Middle and Senior School students have been working together to produce music for the 9th [Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival](#) as part of this year's online Festival in collaboration with Guy Johnston, Musical Director. Each piece will be debuted on [Purcell Online](#), with the full concert being released by Hatfield House.

Seven of our [Senior School Concerto Competition Finalists](#) have captivated

audiences with their concerto performances over the last two weeks of term, accompanied by [Deborah Shah](#) and [Daniel Swain](#). We have heard Dvorak's 'Cello Concerto', Beethoven's 'Fourth Piano Concerto', and Wieniawski's 'First Violin Concerto', amongst others.

Next half term, we are bringing back the [Performance Platforms](#), giving students the opportunity to play solo repertoire in evening concerts, for internal audiences only.

Every Wednesday evening will showcase a different age group of students from across the instrumental departments. We will also be doing a number of [Live Stream](#) lunchtime concerts from our Recital Room, so stay tuned for the live link which will be sent out in due course.



'ROOTS': AN EVENING RECITAL CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Student curated concert to celebrate and recognise some of the forgotten great Black-British and African-American composers



Wednesday 14th October 2020, saw our young musicians, led by [Zara Williams](#) (Year 13) present an evening recital of music by some of the forgotten great Black-British and African-American composers of the 20th and 21st centuries.

“I strongly feel that following a night of inspiring and eye-opening music making, both audience and participants will be motivated to discover more works by BAME artists, both past and present. I believe it is crucial that these composers’ works find their way out of the shadows and into the concert hall.” (Zara Williams)

The programme for the concert featured William Grant Still’s ‘Mother and Child’, ‘Romance’ and ‘I ride an old paint’,

Eleanor Alberga’s ‘Dancing in the Shadow’ and ‘Ride Through’, Errollyn Wallen’s ‘Peace on Earth’, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s ‘Deep River’, Margaret Bonds’ ‘Troubled Water’ and George Gershwin’s ‘Summertime’.

The concert also debuted an original composition from [Reuben Bance](#) (Year 13) titled ‘Prophylaxis’, a traditional African-American spiritual arrangement of ‘Swing Low Sweet Chariot’ by [Gabriel Taylor](#) (Year 13), plus readings of ‘Canary’ by Rita Dove, ‘Nina’s Blues’ by Cornelius Eady and ‘Praise Song for the Day’ by Elizabeth Alexander.

The concert was in aid of the [Chineke! Foundation](#) whose mission is ‘championing

change and celebrating diversity in classical music’. They fulfil this mission through concerts by the Chineke! Orchestra which is Europe’s first professional orchestra comprising a majority of black minority ethnic (BME) musicians; by the creation of the Chineke! Junior Orchestra; and through a Learning and Participation programme.

So far, Zara has raised over £500, further details on how to support the foundation can be found through the GoFundMe campaign <https://gf.me/u/y3zjrn> and on their website <https://www.chineke.org/>

PURCELL'S FIRST VIRTUAL OPEN MORNING

In line with government recommendations, the School is hosting an online Virtual Open Morning on Sunday 15th November



Ordinarily, twice a year The Purcell School opens its doors to prospective students and parents, welcoming them to meet staff and students, take in the campus and facilities, and enjoy the outstanding music-making that characterises the School.

In line with government recommendations, the School is instead hosting an online Virtual Open Morning on Sunday 15th November. There will be opportunities to hear from the Principal, Director of Music, members of each Music Department as well as

academic and boarding staff plus the chance to chat with them each directly in live Q&A Zoom sessions.

For more information and to register interest for our Virtual Open Morning, visit the School's website [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE COMPOSITION ACADEMY

This term we launched The Purcell School's inaugural International Online Composition Academy.

The Composition Academy will deliver a part-time programme of online study for young composers aged 9 to 18 years from the UK and overseas who wish to develop their composition skills and learn to write instrumental pieces and original works for voice. The programme will enable academy students to work with Purcell's composition teachers and instrumentalists on their own music, and explore

aspects of technique, notation, instrumental writing and concept development.

Running virtually for 3 days at 3 times during the academic year (9 days in total), the academy will be overseen by Purcell's Head of Composition and Composition Academy Director Alison Cox OBE. Of the School's new initiative, Alison commented:

"I am delighted to have been able to create The Purcell School's Online Composition Academy! It will enable talented, school-

age composers around the world to work with The Purcell School's outstanding composition and academic music tutors.

Young people will develop their creative musical skills to higher and higher levels, supported by individual and small-group tuition. We extend a warm welcome to all those who have already applied and encourage anyone else who is interested to get in touch with us."

For more information, please visit the School's [website](#).

PURCELL ONLINE

On 7th May, in the midst of lockdown, we launched a brand new area on our YouTube channel called **Purcell Online – space for student sounds** to showcase the work of our incredible students. It has been a great success and has captivated our audience with a host of exciting student performances, debuts of original works and arrangements, and inventive collaborations.

The first student submission was from [Zara Williams](#) (Year 13) in collaboration with 17 other Purcell students with her arrangement of Billie Eilish's 'Lovely/When The Party's Over'. This alone has reached over 9,000 views across the School's social media accounts. Each subsequent student video received similar positive

feedback, taking Purcell Online's total viewing figure to over 20,000.

Purcell Online has received submissions from all over the School, from [Purcell's Jazz Ensemble](#) performing Miles Davis' 'Four' and Duke Ellington's 'Caravan' to instrumental teacher [Jacqui Hicks](#) (Jazz Voice) and her wonderful rendition of 'Master Blaster/Jammin'!

Other great submissions include those from [Ella Richardson](#) (Year 12), [James Sparkes](#) (Alumnus), [Edward Tait](#) (Year 10), [Ashton Hunt](#) (Year 10), [Rowena Jones](#) (Year 11), [Chelsea Becker](#) (Year 13), [Rhys Concessao](#) (Alumnus), [Beste Gurkey](#) (Year 12), [Jasmine Morris](#), (Alumna) [Lewis Isaacs](#) (Year 13), [Eva](#)

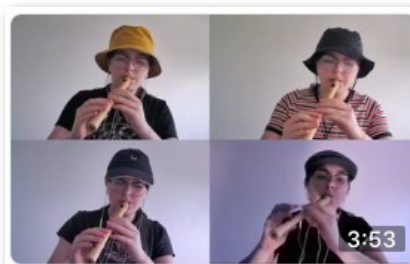
[Serksnaite](#) (Year 13), [Purcell's Improv Group](#), [Chamber Choir](#), and [Woodwind Department](#) plus online masterclasses and seminars with [Jack Liebeck](#), [Richard Wigmore](#), [Charles Sewart](#) and [Edward Longstaff!](#)

Upcoming additions to Purcell Online (which will be live this week) include a special commission for the (online) [Hatfield House Festival](#), plus recordings from some of the lunchtime concerts that have taken place so far this term.

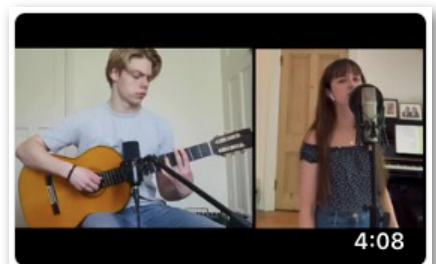
The best way to keep up to date with Purcell Online is to subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#) (and make sure to turn notifications on) as well as following us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).



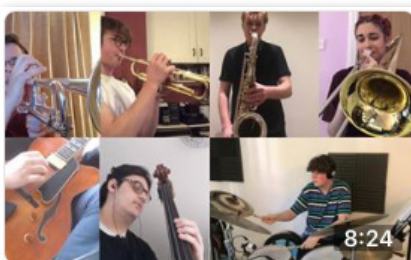
Un Dia De Noviembre - Leo Brouwer
- Performed by Ashton



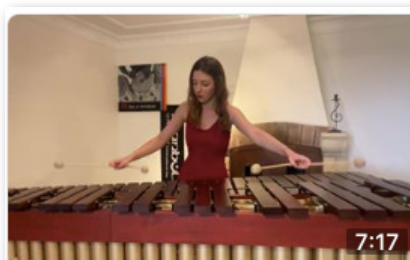
Twitten - Composed by James Sparkes
- Performed by Rowena...



Forever Always - Chelsea Becker



Caravan - by Duke Ellington -
Purcell Jazz Ensemble



Verano Porteno - A. Piazzola (arr.
Pius Cheung) - Performed by Best...



Master Blaster/Jammin' - Jacqui Hicks

LOWER SCHOOL COMPOSITION 'COMP COMP' COMPETITION

Earlier this term, our Composition Department hosted the much-anticipated and appropriately socially-distanced Oscar's Ceremony for the Lower School Composition Competition 2020 (affectionately known as Comp Comp).

Amongst the many awards presented, from 'Most Innovative Locations' to 'Speediest Score', was the highly coveted Gold Trophy for the Overall Winner which went to last year's Year 6 students **Maya, April and Gabriella**, with a special mention for Octavia who has now left the school.

In a change from recent years, the Composition Competition was judged on the excellent work produced and performed online during lockdown.

"Being at home gave us lots of good ideas for compositions and it was fun to see how it would all work during lockdown.

The end piece took a lot of inspiration from being at home and how lockdown affected us.

The best part (aside from winning) was being able to work together even through lockdown and being at home!" (Maya, April and Gabriella)

We also got the chance to catch up with a few of our (then) Year 8 composers to discuss their piece 'Cycle: Seeds of Hope'.

"We chose this title to represent that not all hope was lost during the lockdown and that we could still make music together.

We created our concert through lots of hard work, Zoom calls and our individual roles played a huge part in our success. I [Rebecca] was the score manager, I made sure that mine and everybody's scores were neat and presentable. My own piece was called 'The Beginning',

but we had to make a change to the theme of our concert due to the lockdown. This was a hard decision, as it meant discarding pieces that were already written, but in the end we created a concert that we were all very proud of." (Rebecca)

"The whole class decided on this name because it represents hope when times are hard and it shows that we can still find hope in these crucial times.

We got together as a community and managed to join most of the Zoom meetings. It was very hard work but we got there in the end! My [Melody] own role was the presenter, I was in charge of introducing the concert and ending the concert. It was quite amusing." (Melody)

The full list of winners and prizes can be found on the School's website [here](#).

UNMISSABLE MOMENTS

