

# ORCHESTRA SEEKS COMPOSER...again

## YORKSHIRE LATE STARTERS STRINGS New Music Commission 2009-10

Inspired by the success of YLSS's first commission in 2007-8 (Paul Burnell's '3 Pieces for Strings', premiered at COMA Contemporary Music Festival July 2008 and featured on BBC Radio 3 'Play to the Nation' October 2008), we are now inviting entries for our 2009-10 New Music Commission. Four of the submitted pieces will be chosen for a workshop with award-winning composer **Joe Cutler** and YLSS players and from these one piece will be selected for performance in 2010.

### Our aims for the commission are to:

- Create an original piece of music of high quality, which is enjoyable, challenging and technically accessible for YLSS. This will add to the very limited repertoire specifically written for similar orchestras of adult learners, including members of the Federation of Late Starters Strings.
- Give YLSS the experience of being part of the creative process and of working with a composer. The process of selecting the composer and working on the piece will be designed to involve all YLSS members who wish to take part. Entrants will be encouraged to share with YLSS the inspiration for their piece and discuss the process of composition, to enhance players' understanding and performance of the music.
- Broaden YLSS's musical horizons, giving an impetus to developing more adventurous playing and more confident performance.
- Enable an established or emerging composer to work with YLSS in creating a new piece for performance.



## How we plan to achieve this:

- Stage 1  
An open invitation to established or emerging composers to submit a 10-15 minute composition for a Workshop with composer Joe Cutler, Head of Composition at Birmingham Conservatoire and winner of the chamber music award at the 2008 British Composer Awards.
- Stage 2  
A Workshop for four shortlisted composers. Joe Cutler will give feedback and coaching on each piece as it is rehearsed with YLSS and its principal conductor George Kennaway, Researcher at University of Leeds Music Department and previously cellist with Opera North. The Workshop will be held in Leeds and we can meet travel expenses up to £50 each for shortlisted composers. One composition will be selected for the commission.
- Stage 3  
A commission worth £500 (including expenses) to the selected composer to work with YLSS to develop and rehearse their piece for a performance in 2010.

## Timetable:

Stage 1	Invite compositions for the Workshop	April 2009
	Closing date	31 August 2009
	Shortlisting	September 2009
Stage 2	Workshop Day in Leeds	Sunday 22 November 2009
Stage 3	Rehearsals with commissioned composer	First half of 2010
	First performance	Date to be finalised

## Requirements:

- Compositions should be appropriate for YLSS (see below).
- Compositions must not have been previously performed or published.
- Compositions should be free of any copyright restrictions that may prevent public performance and copy of parts for use.
- Compositions should last between 10 and 15 minutes.
- Entrants should provide 4 copies of their score for selection and be prepared to provide at least one full set of parts on request.
- Entrants should provide a brief programme note (100-200 words) and a short biography.
- There is no age limit or geographical limit.
- The score and parts must be easily legible, computer typeset is preferred.
- The winning composition will be premiered by YLSS at a performance of their choosing.
- The four composers shortlisted for the Workshop will be paid actual travel expenses incurred of up to £50 each.
- The prize for the composition which YLSS chooses to commission will be £500. This includes any travel and copying costs.
- The commissioned composer will be expected to attend at least two rehearsals to work with YLSS.
- Entries should include:
  - Application Form
  - 4 anonymous copies of the Score
  - Programme Note
  - Biography
- Compositions will be returned if a suitable pre-paid addressed envelope is provided.

Pieces should arrive at the address below by **31 August 2009**. Entries received after that date will not be considered. All entries will be acknowledged.

Please send entries to:

**YLSS New Music**  
**c/o 22 New Walk Terrace**  
**YORK YO10 4BG**

## **Some information about YLSS that may be helpful:**

Yorkshire Late Starters Strings is a non-professional string orchestra based in Leeds but with players from as far away as Hull, Manchester and Nottingham. The orchestra takes players of any standard without audition so players cover a wide range of abilities from about Grade 2 upwards to Grade 8. The majority of players are in the middle range. The range of instruments covers violin, viola, cello and double bass but there are more bass instruments than usual (3 double basses and often 12 or more cellos to about 5/6 violas and 12/14 violins).

Although, as late starters, some people have not yet reached a high standard technically, players are enthusiastic and committed (see travelling distance above) and willing to tackle a wide variety of music. In the past we have played music from Lawes and Corelli to Hindemith and Part, and have held new music workshops. Despite this it would be unwise to depend too much on unusual notations, improvisations, etc - this is a non-professional orchestra playing for fun and most players feel more comfortable with notes!

What we do want, however, is music that will be enjoyable, stimulating, expressive and yet playable for the wide range of abilities that we encompass. This is where the challenge lies for the composer - to produce a piece that all players can fully participate in and rehearse to a standard fit for performance. It would be worth thinking about different standard parts not only for first and second violin but also for first and second cello. If the piece is as good, original and exciting as we hope for, there will be opportunities for further performance by similar groups in the UK and USA with which we have links.

The winner will be selected by a panel including composer Joe Cutler, conductor George Kennaway and two members of YLSS, after consultation with the orchestra.

If you have any queries about the competition please contact [yorks.lss@virgin.net](mailto:yorks.lss@virgin.net).

**YORKSHIRE LATE STARTERS STRINGS**  
**New Music Commission 2009-10**  
**Application Form**

Composer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of piece: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrumentation: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate duration: \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the attached piece is all my own work

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Please do not put any identifying marks on your submitted scores