

ORCHESTRA SEEKS COMPOSER No.7

YORKSHIRE LATE STARTERS STRINGS New Music Commission 2019-20

Inspired by the success of YLSS's previous commissions*, we are now inviting entries for our 2019-20 New Music Commission. Four of the submitted pieces will be chosen for a Workshop with award-winning composer Howard Skempton, and YLSS players, and from these one piece will be selected for performance in 2020. In addition, each shortlisted entrant will be offered a one-to-one tutorial with Howard Skempton.

Our aims for the commission are to:

- Create an original piece of music of high quality, which is inspiring, challenging yet technically accessible for YLSS. This will add to the very limited repertoire specifically written for similar orchestras of adult learners.
- 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.

* 2007-8 Winner - Paul Burnell *3 Pieces for Strings*, premiered at CoMA Contemporary Music Festival July 2008 and featured on BBC Radio 3 'Play to the Nation' October 2008. Guest composer: Philip Cashian.

2009-10 Winner - Laurence Rose *a theory of nothing*, première at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival November 2010. Guest composer: Joe Cutler.

2011-12 Winner - Alison Wrenn *Battle of the Winwaed*, première at Headingley Music Festival June 2012. Guest composer: Sally Beamish.

2013-14 Winner - Elaine Levene *Five Snatched Sonnets*, première at CoMA Leeds Concert at Heart June 2014. Guest composer: Emily Howard.

2015-16 Winner - Phil Taylor *I See Faces in Everything*, première at CoMA Leeds Concert at Heart June 2016. Guest composer: Michael Finnissy.

2017-18 Winner - Mark Browse *Five Variations on Pange Lingua*, première at St Barnabas, Weeton July 2018. Guest composer: Judith Weir.

How we plan to achieve this:

- Stage 1
An open invitation to established or emerging composers to submit a 10-15 minute composition. All entries will be considered anonymously by the Selection Panel and four will be shortlisted for a Workshop.
- Stage 2
A Workshop for four shortlisted composers. Howard Skempton will give feedback and coaching on each piece as it is rehearsed with YLSS and its conductor Stuart Hazelton. Howard will also offer an individual tutorial with each shortlisted composer. The Workshop and tutorials will be held in Leeds and we will meet travel expenses up to £50 each for shortlisted composers. One composition will be selected for the commission.
- Stage 3
A commission worth £500 (plus contribution towards expenses) to the selected composer to work with YLSS to develop and rehearse their piece for a performance in 2020.

Timetable:

Stage 1	Call for entries	April 2019
	Closing date	31 July 2019
	Shortlisting	August 2019
Stage 2	Selection Weekend in Leeds with 4 shortlisted entrants	
	Tutorials	Saturday 26 October 2019
	Workshop and selection	Sunday 27 October 2019
Stage 3	Rehearsals with commissioned composer	Jan-June 2020
	First performance	Summer 2020, 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.
- There is no geographical limit however **please note** that shortlisted composers must be able to attend the Workshop in Leeds and be able to work with YLSS to rehearse their piece if selected as winner (see timetable above).
- The score and parts must be easily legible, computer typeset is preferred.
- The winning composition will be premièred 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. In addition YLSS will pay towards expenses incurred (travel to rehearsals, copying, etc) up to a max of £200.
- The commissioned composer will be expected to attend two rehearsals to work with YLSS.

- Entries should include:
 - Application Form
 - 4 anonymous copies of the Score and Programme Note
 - Biography
- We do not accept entries on-line.
- Compositions will be returned if a suitable pre-paid addressed envelope is provided.
- If possible please send a sound file (eg MP3) or CD of your entry
 - this would be helpful but is not compulsory.

Entries should arrive at the address below by **31 July 2019**. Entries received after that date will not be considered. All entries will be acknowledged. We look forward to receiving your entry. Please send to:

YLSS New Music
c/o 1 Meeting House Lane
Acomb
York YO26 5FD

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, with a typical total of 30-35 players, well spread across the parts. The mix of instruments/ability can vary from week to week so a piece that is flexible enough to cope with this is essential.

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 Pärt, 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 to learn and for enjoyment and most players feel more comfortable with notes!

What we do want, however, is music that will be inspiring, expressive, adventurous, 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. While the first violin and first cello parts can be more technically challenging, the piece must not depend on solo players. If the piece is as good, original and exciting as we hope for, there will be opportunities for further performance by similar groups with which we have links.

The winner will be chosen by the Selection Panel including composer Howard Skempton, conductor Stuart Hazelton and two members of YLSS, after consultation with the orchestra.

If you have any queries about the competition please contact ylss.secretary@gmail.com

YORKSHIRE LATE STARTERS STRINGS
New Music Commission 2019-20
Application Form

Composer's name: _____

Address: _____

Phone no: _____

Email: _____

Title of
piece: _____

Instrumentation: _____

Approximate
duration: _____

Any additional
information: _____

I agree to the requirements of the commission set out in the brief.

I confirm that, if shortlisted, I am willing and able to take part in the Workshop on 27 October 2019 in Leeds.

I certify that the attached piece is all my own work.

Signed: _____

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