



YLSS:
Yorkshire Late Starters Strings



Orchestra Seeks Composer No.7

Workshop
27 October 2019

Yorkshire Late Starters Strings and friends, with

Howard Skempton
Composer

Stuart Hazelton
Conductor

Shortlisted Composers:

Jasmine Simons
Rob Farnos
Sarah Cattley
Samuel Read

YLSS Composer Workshop

Sunday 27 October 2019

Programme

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|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11.00 | Introduction | |
| 11.15 | Jasmine Simons | Fantasia for string orchestra |
| 12.15 | Break | |
| 12.30 | Rob Farnos | In the Fullness of Time |
| 1.30 | Lunch | |
| 2.15 | Sarah Cattley | Four Seascapes |
| 3.15 | Break | |
| 3.30 | Samuel Read | Preludes for the Earth and Sky |
| 4.30 | Feedback from YLSS to the Panel | |
| 5.00 | Panel meets to select the winner | |

Jasmine Simons

Fantasia for string orchestra

Programme note

Fantasia was initially inspired by my love of folk music. I am fascinated by the juxtaposition between the freedom of the oral folk tradition and the necessity for more precise written notation within orchestral music. There are parts of *Fantasia*, such as the opening, where time signatures have been provided for practical ensemble purposes, but the desired sound is very free (hence the 'quasi improvisation' marking in the first violin part). Texture was also at the forefront of my considerations. I was motivated by using relatively simple and consonant individual lines within the ensemble, which subsequently come together to create something more dramatic, and at times dissonant.

Biography

Jasmine Simons is a composer, clarinettist and educator, originally from Leeds and now based in Greater Manchester. She studied for her MusB and her MusM in Instrumental Composition at the University of Manchester, under the supervision of Dr Richard Whalley and Dr Camden Reeves. She is particularly interested in the application of composition within music education to encourage more young people to make their own music.

Rob Farnos

In the Fullness of Time

Programme note

In the Fullness of Time aims at a musical unpacking of the phrase. The future is here in the present in our aims, dreams, promises, pregnancies (even destinies?) Yet time passes once and uniquely.

The piece is built around four ideas:

A climbing, brimming theme (based on pairs a semitone apart) depicts drive, moving forward, creation. Parts play in unison or octaves so as to impart a unity of purpose. At the same time the chosen intervals convey an air of mystery.

This contrasts with the songlike melody first appearing 'with promise'. This is the dream we wish fulfilled.

The bell-like repeated notes (often occurring with a change of time signature) mark significant points, changes of direction, the milestones we use to define the progress of our project (or life).

Overlapping chords depict the murkiness of the process of creation. We are not fully aware how we achieve creation, the real force behind the unwinding saga.

The piece aims at development but also circularity. Our plans come to fruition but are replaced by new plans. We have a sense of achieving but also repeating.

The promise theme appears at last 'tenderly' - a new-born baby at once an end and a beginning. The mist then envelops this event returning us to the unknown of the future.

The piece is written for string orchestra and is intended to be playable by a group of varied levels of playing experience.

Biography

I am an amateur composer. Some of my works have been workshopped at CoMA Summer Schools or at CoMA Midwinter Composers' Course. I have not had a piece publicly performed.

I played the flute as a child but never studied for any grades and gave up mid-teens. Since then my engagement with music was for a long time listening only. Until a few years ago I decided I wanted to understand better how music worked and I took an Open University course leading to a Diploma in Music. This inspired me to compose pieces of my own.

My paid career has not involved music. I have worked mostly in the fields of housing and regeneration. I currently work for the Whitechapel Centre, a homelessness charity based in Liverpool.

Programme note

The piece paints four different views of boats and the sea – first looking out from the safety of the shore, then watching a sea breeze playing with the rigging of a boat, before being tossed about by choppy waves and finally coming back to the harbour.

There are two viola parts and two cello parts in order to suit players with different levels of technical ability.

1 Shoreline

The piece opens with a series of waves breaking on the shore. A viola melody pierces through the wave texture which continues in the rest of the orchestra.

2 The Wind in the Rigging

This movement is active and quietly expectant. The musical lines swap quickly from section to section. The effect should always be light and playful.

3 Pitch and Roll

The music lurches up and down on choppy seas with sliding glissando effects, jazz scales and changes of time signature.

4 Harbour

The waves which opened the first movement return to close the piece, getting slower and ever more peaceful.

Biography

Sarah Cattley read Music at Cambridge, where her composition tutors included Cheryl Frances-Hoad and Joseph Phibbs. Since graduating, her music has been performed across the UK (including in Ely, Ripon and Truro Cathedrals, and Saffron Hall) and further afield in Ireland, France and Sweden. In 2017 she won Caritas Chamber Choir's inaugural International Young Composer Competition with her piece *The Pardoner's Song*. As Caritas Composer of the Year 2017-18 she received three commissions and had her music included on two CDs.

Choral music is a large branch of Sarah's output. She recently completed a set of Preces and Responses, a commission for the 2019 London Festival of Contemporary Church Music. The première was broadcast live on Radio 3 on 15 May in Choral Evensong from St Pancras. Ripon Cathedral chose Sarah's *Prayer of Richard Rolle* to open their New Music Week in May 2018. Her setting of *Sicut Cervus* was performed by the choir of Buckfast Abbey in the final of their millennium composition competition in April 2018. Her choral music is published by MazeMusic.

Sarah also writes instrumental music, particularly chamber music. When a portrait of Hubert Parry was discovered in Newnham College, Sarah was commissioned to write music celebrating his friendship with Millicent Fawcett and his support for women's suffrage. The piano trio *To See The Light Of Day*, which references Parry's suffragist song *You'll Get There*, has now been performed twice, with Sarah at the piano.

Sarah was a finalist in the National Centre for Early Music's Young Composer Award 2018 with the English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble. This year she was a joint winner of the 2019 award in May for her piece *Dream Fever* for bass viol and electronics. Liam Byrne will perform the winning pieces in Bristol in October, in a concert recorded for BBC Radio 3's Early Music Show.

Programme note

The two preludes I have submitted aim to reflect many of the features which programmatic music reflect. The title, *Two Preludes for the Earth and Sky*, denotes which extramusical narrative the prelude aims to render, not just as a static 'snapshot', but rather the perpetual change that these broad ecosystems undergo as a result of both human and non-human interference. For instance, the first prelude, *Earth*, uses a steady tempo with a constantly shifting tonal centre to represent the constant development of our planet's ecosystems. In addition to this, the prelude makes reference to more traditional and romantic pastoral humanistic views of the earth, with citations towards composers such as Vaughan Williams and Finzi. These elements are then conflicted with the reality of the impact that human interference has on our planet's ecosystems.

The second prelude, *Sky*, also makes use of extramusical writing in order to render features associated with it. Examples of this include the often sporadic use of trills and decoration often associated with the extramusical portrayal of flight and birds. Similar to the first prelude, *Sky* also makes use of the tonal and harmonic conflict in order to portray the turmoil that this area of ecosystem endures both from internal and external conflict.

Biography

I have recently completed my second year as a Music Undergraduate at Durham University. My third and final year at University will focus heavily on composition, with a four piece portfolio to be produced. My music has been workshopped with valuable feedback given by ensembles such as the Brodsky Quartet and the pianist Ben Smith.

At University, I am involved in a variety of extra-curricular musical activities, such as conducting the Durham University Hill Orchestra, Musical Directing theatre productions, and playing in the Durham University Ceilidh Band. I have also performed and written music for my local orchestra (Ludlow Orchestra) and wind quartet (Academia Musica).