

keynotes

The Newsletter of the North East of Scotland Music School

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Romantic CD from former pupil



Former pupil and now tutor, Joseph Long.

A new CD of early 20th Century romantic piano sonatas has just been released by Joseph Long, a previous pupil of the School with a burgeoning international piano recital career.

Joseph's CD, recorded in October of last year at Aberdeen's Cowdray Hall, is titled 'Late Flowering of the Romantic Piano Sonata' and includes work by Scriabin, Sibelius, Ravel and Bax.

"As well as some well known pieces I've also picked some more obscure ones," Joseph told Keynotes. "The main reason for this was that I wanted to give pieces like Bax's Sonata No. 1 and the Three Sonatinas of Op. 67 by Sibelius an opportunity for a wider hearing. Just recording these sorts of pieces on their own doesn't always get them widely heard. Neglected works are often tucked away in specialised collections that the average music-lover wouldn't normally buy. Instead, the idea with this CD is to couple them with

pieces that most people are acquainted with.

"All the pieces on the CD were written between 1904 and 1912, all are sonatas or sonatinas, and all are composed in a romantic style. So that's the underlying theme. I think this approach will put popular pieces like the Ravel Sonatine in an unfamiliar context and hopefully shed new light on them as a result."

Joseph chose the Cowdray

Hall because of the quality of both the piano (a Steinway concert grand) and the acoustic. Recording was by well known local sound engineer, Niall Mathewson from the Mill Recording Studios at Banchory and Joseph says that he's very

he received special prizes in both the Audi Junior Musician Competition and the BBC-TV Young Musician of the Year Competition. He read Music at the University of Cambridge, graduating with First Class honours.

"The pupils here are all so intelligent and motivated that it makes teaching very enjoyable."

pleased indeed with the production quality.

The CD has been partly funded by Joseph himself and partly by the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust. The CD will be available at Joseph's concerts (at £10.99), through local retailers like Bruce Millers and the P&J shop on Union Street or from the School.

Joseph was a pupil at the School from 1982 to 1992 and has now returned as a tutor. "The pupils here are all so intelligent and motivated that it makes teaching very enjoyable," he says.

Generally regarded as one of Scotland's finest pianists, he is much in demand as a solo recitalist and has performed in venues as diverse as the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire, the Cowdray Hall, Aberdeen and St.-Martin-in-the-Fields, London. He has contributed through recordings to the current revival of interest in Balakirev's piano music, and has made acclaimed recordings of some of the mainstream Chopin repertoire.

His successes in competitions began at an early age and

As well as his teaching schedule, Joseph will continue with regular recitals on the Scottish Music Club circuit and lunchtime recitals in the Cowdray Hall. He also has plans for a return date at St.-Martin-in-the-Fields and concerts in Denmark and the United States.

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About the School

Providing the highest standards of advanced tuition for promising musicians

The School provides a centre where young people of outstanding musical promise can obtain tuition which is not available within their existing framework of study. Any musically talented child, student, teacher or lay person living in Scotland may apply for an audition to the School.

TUITION

Internationally acclaimed professors and teachers are brought to Aberdeen on a regular basis from all over the British Isles and Europe.

COURSES

The School offers one-to-one teaching together with occasional workshops and masterclasses. There is a close relationship with the University of Aberdeen, through the Director of Music, and also with the newly formed Aberdeen City Music School in Dyce.

FINANCE

Finance is generously provided by trusts, commercial organisations and individuals. Continued support is essential in order to maintain the high quality of the teaching programme. The Administrator will be pleased to assist with all enquiries about donations, sponsorship or scholarships.

FEES & SCHOLARSHIPS

Students pay their own fees, although scholarships are available and are applied for annually. Any award is made on a balance of musical potential and financial need.

DOROTHY HATELY

Dorothy founded NESMS in 1975 with the support and encouragement of Lady Aberdeen. Thanks to Dorothy's dogged determination over the years, the School has greatly increased its teaching disciplines, tutors and pupils. Sadly, Dorothy died in 1996, before she could see the School in its own premises in Huntly Street. However, we strive to maintain the high standards she set and intend to take the School from strength to strength.

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President: Dr Neil Mackie

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Opera star masterclasses

Back in 1985, Dorothy Hately, a co-founder of the North East of Scotland Music School, telephoned the parents of a 14-year old Aberdeen schoolgirl who had just won a television 'Stars of Tomorrow' competition at His Majesty's Theatre and suggested she come to the school for singing lessons. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today, with leading roles for Glyndebourne, English National Opera and Scottish Opera already under her belt and with debut's scheduled for this year in both France (at the Paris Opera de Chatelet) and the USA (at the Dallas Opera Company), as well as a return to

Glyndebourne in the title role of Carmen, that girl, Lisa Milne, is indeed a star.

And she puts a large part of her success down to the tuition she received at the School in what was a crucially formative part of her education. "I worked with Jean Webster on my singing technique on a weekly basis and with Neil Mackie on interpretive work when he came up from the Royal College of Music," remembers Lisa. "They did a fantastic job – when I went

on to audition at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Pat McMahan commented on how well I had been taught and prepared. Not only had Jean and Neil taught me a wide range of repertoire, it was the right repertoire for my voice. Their efforts were the lynchpin of my whole career."

Lisa went on to study at the RSAMD, became a contract principal at Scottish Opera and then developed her career to include recitals and recording.

"I was infected by the enthusiasm of those

Talented trio

The concert at the School on 17th February will feature the Babington sisters – in age order, Clare, Amanda and Vanessa – all of whom have seen the School play an important part in their musical development.

Cellist Clare has just completed a M.Mus degree at the Royal Northern College of Music and is now busy seeking a playing role with a major orchestra as well setting up a professional piano trio and playing with a contemporary music ensemble. And she has been accepted for further coaching at the famous Juilliard School in New York next year.

Middle sister and violinist, Amanda, completed a B.Mus last year at Manchester University and has returned there to take an M.Mus while



The Babington sisters' trio. Pictured (l-r) Vanessa, Amanda and Clare.

Greece. She is also currently studying the piano at the School with tutor, Nigel Clayton and is striving to gain a music award at Cambridge that will ensure her musicianship continues while she takes her degree.

explains Vanessa. "We all worked towards our music exams and then became involved with the Aberdeen Music Festival and the Music Centre, and it was natural to progress towards the best tuition we could find locally – and that was at the School."

Amanda supports this view and adds: "We had tremendous support from our parents. Not only did they not complain when we were all getting up at 6.00 am to practise, but Mum was – and still is – brilliant at providing a taxi service, a necessity when you have two cellos to move around!"

The sisters' concert in February will feature music by Handel, Beethoven and Glière.

"Like my sisters, my long term aim is to be a professional musician."

the youngest sister, Vanessa, another cellist, has a place at Cambridge where she will read classics. She is spending her gap year learning ancient Greek and put this non-musical interest down to the holidays the family took almost every year in

"Like my sisters, my long term aim is to be a professional musician," she says.

This wealth of talent was nurtured from an early age by the availability of free lessons at primary school. "Playing music simply became a habit,"

She has given acclaimed performances in the title role of Rodelinda for Glyndebourne, as Morgana in Handel's Alcina for ENO and more recently, again for ENO, Anne Truelove in Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress, to name only a few.

"It's vital for any performer to have the right encouragement and advice," says Lisa. "And that's exactly what I had at NESMS; it did amazing things and opened so many doors for me. I was infected by the enthusiasm of those who taught me as well as now being able to appreciate just how high the standard of teaching was."



Lisa Milne

Lisa will be showing that appreciation when she returns to the School in early April to conduct 2 Masterclasses. "I'll be concentrating on stage presentation – it's not my job, in a one off lesson, to teach singing

technique, that's a very personal thing between the student and the teacher – but what I can influence is how the students project their personality. 'How to communicate' will be the theme."

As well as the quality of the teaching she received from the School, another of Lisa's inspirations has been the career of an earlier Aberdonian opera star, Mary Garden. But, unlike Garden, who never performed in her home city, Lisa has regularly sung in both concerts and operas in Aberdeen. Her success was recognised last year by the award of an Honorary Doctorate of Music from the University and this year, on 6th April, Lisa will be giving a concert at the behest of the City Council at His Majesty's Theatre.

... who taught me ..."

Tutor profile: Raimund Herincx

Raimund Herincx is the School's longest serving tutor, having taught as the senior voice coach for 25 years.

Given that his international operatic career as one of the foremost basses of his generation took him all over the world, the School and its pupils count themselves lucky indeed that Raimund, a Londoner by birth, should have a strong interest in and a passion for all things Scottish. He had already developed strong friendships here in the North East, not least with School founder, Dorothy Hatley.

Raimund received his early training in Belgium and Italy and then created over 40 roles for Sadlers Wells Opera, (now English National Opera) before making his debut at Covent Garden in The Midsummer Marriage, the first opera by Sir Michael Tippett.

In the early 1970's, Raimund went on to sing Wotan in Wagner's Der Ring des Niebelungen, a role for which he became celebrated. He also became a regular at the Metropolitan Opera house in New York and associated closely with the North West Pacific

Festival, Seattle and San Francisco opera companies.

Raimund was a friend of David Gordon, Marquis of Aberdeen and it was his wife who originally approached Raimund to become involved with the School. "Dorothy Hatley had pulled together a really good bunch of students," recalls Raimund. Dorothy was also involved with a group of people with throat problems and Raimund is perhaps less well known for his work in helping these people to re-discover their power of speech even though they lack the use of their larynx or vocal chords.

"I became a regular visitor to Aberdeen," says Raimund. "At one point I was commuting from the Met in New York to my home at Bath via Aberdeen!"

Raimund recalls one hugely committed (Raimund described her as 'assiduous') student who would drive from Inverness to Aberdeen, have a lesson and then drive back – all after her day's work as a teacher had finished.

Raimund not only taught students but other teachers. "Over the years I've taught five teachers, three of whom still teach here at the School. That's really important to me as it ensures the continuity of what we do. But I don't intend stopping quite yet."



Raimund Herincx (left) and Roger Williams, Director of the University of Aberdeen's Music department and Council Member of the North East of Scotland Music School, share a joke at the ceremony late last year when Raimund was awarded an honorary doctorate of music by the University for his services to music in the North East, not least his 25 years of tutelage at the School.

Tutors at the School

as at January 2002

STRINGS

Violin Gillian Findlay
Viola Michael Beeston
Cello James Halsey
Double Bass David Inglis

WOODWIND

Flute David Nicholson
Flute Catherine O'Rourke
Oboe Anne Dunbar
Clarinet Alison Waller
Bassoon Lesley Wilson

BRASS

Trumpet John Gracie
Horn Ifor James

PIANO

Nigel Clayton
Joseph Long
Tom Johnston

GUITAR

Gilbert Biberian

SINGING

Raimund Herincx
Ruth Black
Alison McDonald
Jean Webster
Donald Maxwell

Forthcoming events

17th February – 7.30 pm
Concert by the Babington Sisters School

19th February – 1.10 pm
NESMS Quartet Recital
Elphinstone Hall,
University of Aberdeen

14th March – 6.30 pm
Gourmet Fund Raising Evening
by the Friends of NESMS
Tickets from Jenny Shirreffs
on 01224 321998
Aberdeen College
Training Restaurant

16th March – 7.30 pm
Robin Stewart singing
Schubert's Winterreise
School

21st March – 7.00 to 9.00 pm
Open Horn Workshop with
Professor Ifor James
School

8th/11th April
Performance Masterclasses with
Lisa Milne - by invitation only
School

Recent events

GOING DUTCH

A selection of Dutch Harpsichord music was played in the 'Santa Claus' (Sinterklaas) concert at the Royal Northern Club in Aberdeen by Dr. David Smith of Aberdeen University Music Department. The evening raised over £850 for the School.

GUITAR RECITAL

Pupils of guitar tutor Gilbert Biberian gave a recital of Spanish and Turkish pieces at the School on 16th December last year.

Friends of the School

The Friends of the North East of Scotland Music School exists to support the School financially through subscriptions, concerts, special events and the sale of Christmas cards. The Friends contributions usually go into the common fund although occasionally are used for specific projects such as scholarships and the restoration of School instruments.

Members of the Friends also support the School in many other ways, including accommodation for visiting tutors and transport. If you wish to support the School by joining the Friends, please contact Jenny Shirreffs on 01224 321998. The annual subscription is £7.00.

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Oil industry support for school

Three oil industry companies have provided sponsorship support for the School with AMEC taking a silver sponsorship package and ChevronTexaco and CNR International taking bronze packages.

"As a company that has been established in the North East of Scotland for 30 years we like to support local cultural efforts, especially when they relate to young people," comments, Rhonda Murdoch, AMEC's Communications Co-ordinator.

Her views are echoed by ChevronTexaco's Lisa Rattray who says: "We are fully committed to supporting both education and the arts and the North East of Scotland Music School falls into both those categories, in addition to being local."

Brenda Read, Executive Team Co-ordinator for CNR International believes it's important to support local cultural organisations. "We have a relatively small operation

in Aberdeen compared with some other companies but we do think that successful commercial organisations should be supporting local culture – they provide a vital element of life that our staff and suppliers take advantage of."

position on all NESMS literature and programmes for the company's logo and a special recital at Kincardine House for 50 guests of the company. And that's just part of the package," says Nicky.

"We've approached a

... a number of packages that would appeal to those businesses on a more commercial footing.

The welcome support came as a result of an initiative by the Fund Raising and Development Committee chaired by Nicky Bradford. "Rather than just asking local businesses for contributions – patronage if you like – we looked very hard at what the School had to offer in return and put together a number of packages that would appeal to those businesses on a more commercial footing.

"For example, our top package includes a prime

relatively small number of businesses so far and this initial response is very encouraging. I'm confident it will develop as a significant part of the School's funding; every year we need to find over £20,000 from trusts, commercial sponsorship and other sources to make up the shortfall in our income."

If you would like information about the School's sponsorship packages please contact Joan Thomas on 01224 649685.

The School string quartet who will be playing at a recital at Elphinstone Hall on 19th February. Pictured (l-r) are Maryam Sherhan, Victoria Atkinson, Hannah Austin and Rachel Lind.



High standards at auditions

The recent auditions for the School scholarships held at the end of last year revealed just what a wealth of musical talent there is in the areas served by the School.

Just over 50 musicians and singers took part, judged by Tom

Johnson and Jean Ward and by splitting some of the available scholarships into smaller units of three or four lessons, pupils were given awards towards their tuition fees.

"The scholarships are an important way of supporting

individual pupils," says Joan Thomas, School Administrator. "As well as our other fund raising efforts we always welcome donations from either individuals or organisations to be able to award scholarships to our most talented pupils."