

Thursday 2 December 2010, Watershed Media Centre 18.00-19.00:

“Strange Meetings: The Poets of the Great War” - Harry Ricketts presents his unusual approach to the Poets of the Grt War, charting encounters between them and demonstrating the mesh of influence between figures such as Wilfrid Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg and Vera Brittain. One potent strand, for example, is the profound influence of Rupert Brooke, both as a model to follow and a burden to reject. Harry Ricketts will be in discussion with Paul Gough, whose recent book, ‘A Terrible Beauty’: War, Art and Imagination 1914-1918 covered the visual arts and the war.

Monday Morning Music, Mondays 10am – 12noon:

Join Chas and Dave for this magical mystery tour of classical music for your Monday morning. There are rumours that the special guest this week is a scorcher... tune in to find out at burstradio.org.uk

Tuesday 7 december 2010 Reception Room Wills Memorial Building, 6pm:

Archeologist Professor Mark Horton, made famous through the landmark series ‘Coast’*Pardon the pun (and infamous for the less than landmark ‘Bonediggers’) gives an open lecture entitled “Towards an Archeology of Globalisation”. The enigmatic professor will expound the need for a retrospective view on globalisation to understand the phenomenon as experienced in the 21st century. Mark Horton is an excellent speaker, and anything with a title starting with “Toward an...” gets the thumbs up from us; be sure not to miss!

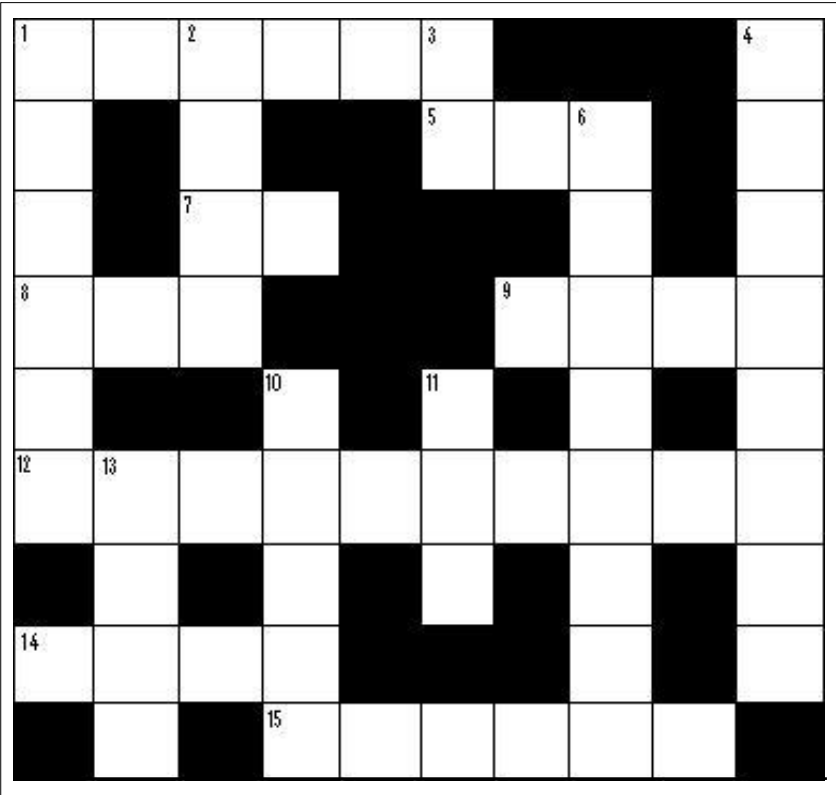
A big thank you to composer Mark Lawrence and librettist Claire Williamson for giving a fascinating talk explaining two community operas they have written together. This event was arranged as part of the ongoing series of research seminars given every Tuesday afternoon in Victorias Room in the Victoria Rooms(!). It really was a rare treat to have both librettist and composer present to give their unique perspective on the writing process; and the tea and cakes were particularly delicious.

Across:

- 1) Don't forget to press _____ / Ancient device made of vinyl. (6)
- 5) Tie a pretty knot in a string player's hair. (3)
- 7) A long long way to go... (2)
- 8) A well dressed man is never without his join between two notes. (3)
- 9) How to play two consecutive notes when pissed. (4)
- 12) A genre of music that, contrary to its name's implication, goes on for ages. (Think Steve Reich) (10)
- 14) A small group of singers mixing up soil. (4)
- 15) “Oh! Mr. Mussorgsky, please don't be so...” (6)

Down:

- 1) “I Got _____”, Gershwin song (6)
- 2) Penguin _____ Orchestra/a place to socialise with poets. (4)
- 3) Decibel (2)
- 4) Lev invented this spooky electronic instrument, much to the delight of Lenin. (8)
- 6) A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away this composer wrote like Holst. (8)
- 10) Half-note that sounds the same backwards as forwards. (5)



Submit solutions to ak6750@bristol.ac.uk. First correct response in this week wins a

Lion Bar

The lucky winner last time was:

Dr. Emma Cornby

Congratulations to you and Cliff Richard

We welcome submissions of review from all; to submit a review, to write regularly, to receive this publication by e-mail or fro any other query please contact: ak6750@bristol.ac.uk



ctogenarian

Bem-vindo! Bem-vindo! Bem-vindo,

Bem-vindo to this, the ninth edition of Octogenarian, your friendly reviewer and lobbyist for Bristol's music scene. In this fortnight's pamphlet we have for your perusal some tasty little literary nuggets detailing two Bristol concerts: one a child-like triumph at St. George's that sets reviewer Gillian Gilder-Bush into a historic haze of histrionics concerning the horrible haughtiness that holds onto the hirsute and hungry child prodigy, the other a concerning concert of contemporary cock-ups at Colston Hall. We have the Rant of the Fortnight, co-concocted by both Atilla and Hun and we're delighted that Leader of the Bristol University Symphony Orchestra Jenny Lee has answered our Eight Questions... innate seconds – Boom Boom!

The big Octo-centric news of the fortnight is that Dr. Emma Cornby has downed tools as an academic and has decided that her path lies in professional crossword completion... very worrying for the department, but at least it means that the dark chocolate Bounty on offer last week for the fastest completed crossword found a home... congratulations to Emma who insisted on the use of the font parchment to put her name in the relative lights of this dingy little beacon of ignorance. We hope that Emma's new-found prowess in the crossword department will not put you off and that multitudes will rise to the challenge and attempt to take this weeks trophy of a Lion bar back to your lair.

More than all of this rather exciting news we have included something new: a very special guest review! After months of scouring we have found a like-minded publication operating out of Hatfield Polytechnic and have persuaded them to partake in an “exchange”. The remit of said ‘like-minded’ publication is somewhat different to our own little writings in that it expounds opinion on London-centric events and takes a wider berth around the obstacle of genre. Thus, we have a review from the extravagantly named (even by our standards) J. P. H. R. J. Grimes of Rufus Wainright's recent concert at the Albert Hall – mind opening stuff for the average Octo reader we think. We hope this kind of cultural exchange is pleasing to you and that it may continue to enlighten those in the big smoke of our parochial City's musical exploits, as well as showing to us what can be achieved with a wig and some anti-clapping gall. To quote Ronald Blythe as we are rather apt to do “Everything that can be learnt from an Octogenarian neighbour is of interest.” Thank you.

Upcoming Concerts:

When?	Where?	Who?	What?	How Much?
1pm Thursday 2 December	St. George's	Libor Novacek (piano)	Haydn/Mussorsky Pictures at an Exhibition	£5 BUMS
7.30pm Saturday 4 December	St. George's	Bristol Concert Orchestra/Alexandra Wood (violin)	Smetana/Prokofiev/Tchaikovsky	£6 student
3pm Sunday 5 December	St. George's	Jack Gibbons (piano)	Smetana/Prokofiev/Tchaikovsky	£5 BUMS
7pm Friday 10 December	St. George's	Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/Choir of the Enlightenment	Bach Christmas Oratorio	SOLD OUT (but go anyway to get cancellations!)
7.30pm Tuesday 14 December	St. George's	Brodsky Quartet/Diana Baroni (flute/voice)	Tavener/Golijov/Gandini	£9 or £5 BUMS

Pick of the nose

7.30pm Saturday 4 December	Colston Hall	University of Bristol Symphony Orchestra, John Pickard	Mahler Symphony no.2 'Resurrection'	£7 cheapest student price
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Rufus Wainwright, plus very special guest Martha Wainwright
, 7:15pm, Monday 22nd November, Royal Albert Hall,
London (baby!)



The Rufus Wainwright music embraces styles as diverse as classical, folk, music theatre and blues. He has grown in popularity over the past couple of years with ambitious projects like recreating Judy Garland's 1951 Carnegie Hall concert. After Martha had warmed up the crowd with a few of her own songs armed just with an acoustic guitar she handed over to big brother Rufus who opened with his song-cycle All Days are Nights. Before he came on stage an announcer announced that for the first half the audience must not clap whilst he is on the stage. His entrance and exits are part of the piece we were informed. The virtuosic piano parts to The Dream and Give me what I want and give it to me now! were far more successful than when he played at our very own Colston Hall in April, and his voice more secure. The cycle includes the aria Les feux d'artifice from his opera 'Prima Donna', premiered in Manchester last year.

In true flamboyance, he came out for the first half wearing a feathery black wedding dress with a massive trail and white face paint. The second half of the concert was much more relaxed, we saw the make-up removed and Rufus donning Terry Riley-esque green trousers complete with blazer and a characteristic sparkly brooch collection. Staying with the solo piano and voice combo that worked so well in the first half, we heard a collection of classic Rufus with a touch of Gershwin for good measure. He laughed off unsuccessful high notes (which to be fair were painfully high) and prompted a Royal Albert packed out with teenagers and hippy grannies to stand and ovate afterwards.

J P H R J Grimes

Elektrostatic
Colston Hall, 8pm, 17 November £7



Do you remember when Wispa came back? Everyone made such a fuss, there were stampedes of 19-year-olds champing at the bit to experience that taste – their first nostalgia product. In the same way that Power Rangers, Inspector Gadget or The Fresh Prince sum up 90's childhood TV culture, the Wispa bar was eponymous as the chocolate bar your older brother bought for you on the way to your first day at big school. Such overblown, romanticised feelings I have toward Elektrostatic, the series of contemporary music that has entered its fourth year with something of a limp. At this concert I felt exactly how those confectionery enthusiasts did after trying the failed re-invent of Wispa - disappointed. Two concerts in, I felt that Elektrostatic had – slightly – lost its way; gone were the big second half pieces that made the concert feel like a unique event not to be missed. In the organisers' defence the absence of such a piece was not their fault; it was, believe it or not, Frank Zappa's(!) for charging an incredible premium on his string quartets (\$500 each... they're three minutes long!) and by the time the curators had found this out, details were in print – a real booboo considering these were the flagship pieces. The whole thing was just a little flabby it lacked the substance of previous triumphs. There were notable exceptions, Blue Gunk (for piano, electronics and percussion) Vyvian Hope-Scott's homage to Thelonius Monk was a fascinating piece, the imprint of Monk's original sitting just out of reach in the tape part. Enjoyably the performance was imbued with a real sense of theatre, the unassuming percussionist taking centre stage and dabbling with some of the smallest cymbals known to man.

The other success was the second (definitely not the first) of Turnage's Two Memorials, clarinettist David Pagett giving this haunting performance of such delicate and sad music. This celebration of Turnage suffered from low turn-out (particularly disappointing after the continued growth of attendance over the course of the series last year) and some rather school-boy errors – who leaves the microphone on after the first piece? This left the piano amplified whenever it played and incredibly irritating speaker hiss when it did not for the rest of the first half... did not one of the organisers notice?! Apart from some exciting drumming (and stick-entangling-in-clothes japery) from Mark Whitlam the music was not great, performances were by-and-large apologetic, a word which tragically seemed to sum up this concert. It does not need to be so! Apart from programming problems and technical mistakes, the introductions really let this series down; I don't know if it's trying to be cool or what, but a hunched announcer explaining, quietly, incredibly slowly, in monotone, into a mic that gives the odd squeek of feedback, to an empty room, with a look of genuine I-don't-think-you'll-like-this-music terror does not inspire an audience to enjoy the concert or to return... EVER AGAIN. I apologise that this has turned into a rant, but I want to tell someone off! Elektrostatic was, and could again be, a flagship series that delivers contemporary music in a neat, exciting package to lots and lots of people... it is such a crying, tragic shame that it seems to be losing its way.

M. Thunk

8 Questions innate seconds:

We asked Jenny Lee, leader of the University of Bristol Symphony Orchestra eight questions. Here are her answers.

1. Sleepy, heading for a food-coma after a big eat.
2. Pringles sour cream and chive.
3. None! Mainly use Spotify.
4. Royal York Crescent-beautiful views of Bristol especially lit up at night.
5. The Aladin soundtrack.
6. 80's classics...
7. 2nd movement, the opening reminds me of pottering and bumbling along
8. Bubbles all the way, hours of fun to be had!

Questions: 1. How are you? 2. What is your favourite flavour of crisps? 3. What is the CD/Tape in your music-playing device right now? 4. Which is your favourite street in Bristol? 5. What was the first CD/tape/record you ever bought? 6. What do you sing, hum or whistle to yourself whilst waiting for a bus or a train? 7. Which movement of Mahler's 2nd symphony best suits your personality? 8. If you had a choice between a party-bag containing cake and bubble-

*Pré it ain't so **Easy prey *** Préjudice **** Prélude & fugue ***** Jacqueline Du Pré

Julia Hwang (violin)/Christopher Northam (piano)
St. George's, 1pm 25th November 2010



FREE

Julia Hwang looks about 14, and she is. Not your average 14-year-old though. Granted, she probably enjoys doing 14-year-old stuff like MSN chat and watching The Simpsons and going to the orthodontist. However, I doubt she gets much time to do this kind of thing, because going by what I heard and saw at this concert, she must practise her 325-year-old violin for about 12 and a half hours a day. I'd heard of Hwang before this concert; indeed, she has played rather a lot in Bristol recently, probably because of her Clifton College connection – she holds both musical and academic scholarships there. Still, it was not until she walked on stage at St. George's that I realised with a sudden jolt exactly how young is 14, and just how amazing a phenomenon is juvenile virtuosity. The concert began with a piece tailored to show off the extent of that virtuosity, Wienawski's Polonaise de Concert in D, and that it certainly did. I'm not sure that the music managed much else, but Hwang handled the technical challenges as one might expect: without batting an eyelid. The first movement of Schumann's Violin Sonata in A Minor provided some more 'musical' music, and very welcome and lovely it was. I felt a little disappointed that we were robbed of the rest of it, but I reminded myself that the programme was doubtlessly designed to show off Hwang's extraordinary aptitude at handling diverse virtuosic repertoire, and so I let her – or rather, her teacher

off. However, the same problem arose twice more; first, the end of the Rhapsodie from Bloch's Suite Hebraique, which positively dripped with Jewish passion and suffering. Incidentally, I was apprehensive that a 14-year-old from Clifton could manage to engage herself emotionally with this heart-on-sleeve stuff, but thought she did quite well actually. The last 'clipped' movement was, I think, the best work in the programme – the first movement of Brahms's Violin Sonata in G – and thus I was somewhat more reticent that applause followed the final cadence rather than more beautiful Brahmsian piano and violin writing. This was also the finest performed work in the concert, where the young violinist seemed to relish the expressive, though not breathtakingly virtuosic, violin line, and Christopher Northam took a more prominent role at the piano. Finally, we were treated to the humorous, slightly depraved and sparkingly played Tzigane by Ravel, which once again illustrated Julia Hwang's prodigious talent. Everyone seemed very content with that, but the obligatory encore, the name of which I didn't catch, was all schmaltz and not much else, and reminded me strongly of Chanson Française, except with out the redemptive quality of the words. Nevertheless, it was a crowd-pleasing end to a very enjoyable concert, which was free, technically highly accomplished, and overall very impressive indeed.

Gillian Gilder-Bush

Rant of the Bi-Week:

The acerbic attitudes of Messrs. Attila & Hun

“ENCORE! ENCORE!” The mindless idiots that scream this ridiculous request at fatigued performers following their evening's work piss me off. It is the equivalent of the past-squiffy old boy sat at the bar once 'time' has been called, repeatedly requesting “Just one more, go on, go on... just one more... for the road... I'll take take-out”. These requests for more music than you paid for annoy me, not so much in themselves, but because occasionally their request is actually heeded and the performing idiot announces (entirely inaudibly of course) that they will play a little encore, just to finish the concert ... and we hear Brahms's Hungarian Rhapsody: leave us on a little titter eh, eh, eh? This has ruined so many concerts, that I've been turned off encores all together. I'm cynical enough to take the fabulously well-placed, tastefully chosen and audibly announced encore (of Hindemith) by the Brodowski ensemble at last week's lunchtime concert (didn't go? Oh, there's a surprise. Well, you missed a cracker) as the exception that proves the rule (I've never understood that phrase – please write in if you know what it actually means... though I suspect that no-one in the world does). Allow me to relay an anecdote that may explain my particular venom on this subject: I ADORE Shostakovich's eleventh symphony, it's one of those pieces that I really can't help being incredibly precious about and last year I heard it performed at the Proms by the LSO and Semyon Bychkov. Do you know the piece? It's sad: it's terrifically sad. It leaves the listener drained and spent. Whenever I've heard it in a concert it has taken up my whole being: it has an aftertaste, takes time to 'get over'... a little musical gift that keeps on giving. This makes it incredibly hard to build a programme around, and I remember being pleased, in this instance, with how sensitively the concert had been put together – a little baroque starter that was neither trivial, nor

took up too much of your concentrating juice, that kind of thing. Anyway... following the final cresc. there was silence, fabulous, long silence, a small communal intake of breath and a very tasteful round of applause that had gravity to it. The conductor bowed, the orchestra bowed, the audience called for them to return again and again... and then, the conductor, in a moment of what I can only call FIMIS (Fatigue-Induced Musical Insanity Syndrome), conducted the happy Brahms ditty with a bounce and a nod to the audience, it was though he was saying “Ha, ha, this is silly isn't it, I love smashing your entire night to tiny pieces.” I wish I could end this story with “needless to say... I had the last laugh”, but I can't. I slinked out, very irritable indeed with a stupid peasant song in my head, my entire evening destroyed. Bugger. It's a question of choice really - when you buy a box of chocolates, you do know exactly what you're going to get – we can all recognise a penny chew and a coconut éclair from forty yards. More generally we know it has to be Black Magic for Mum, & Quality Street for Dad... when I buy a ticket for a concert I choose... I choose. Don't surprise me with your mindless nonsense that you think I want to hear in order to be left with a merry little taste on my walk home. Stop asking for encores, you never know what you're going to get... and it will probably be marvellously-played bollocks.