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British Composer Awards Shortlist unveiled for the 12th Year of the Awards



"As Chairman of BASCA, the membership association that organises the British Composer Awards, I am excited by the diversity of works and composers represented in this year's shortlist. The British Composer Awards seek to recognise the creative talent of composers and sound artists working today and it's great to see such a vibrant array of works. On behalf of BASCA, congratulations to everyone shortlisted." Simon Darlow, BASCA Chairman

The British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (BASCA) announce the **35** works shortlisted for the **2014 British Composer Awards**. The winners will be unveiled at a ceremony at Goldsmiths' Hall, London on Tuesday 2 December 2014 and will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3's Hear and Now at 10pm on Saturday 6 December. The keynote speaker for the evening will be **Dame Evelyn Glennie** who will also present the Awards to the winners.

The **British Composer Awards (BCA)** are unique around the world in making contemporary music, jazz and sonic art the focus of their annual celebration. Created by the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors (**BASCA**) in 2003, the Awards seek to promote the art of composition, to recognise the creative talent of composers and sound artists and to bring their music to a wider audience. This year the Awards were selected by 73 panellists, representing the breadth of new music, with over three quarters taking part in the process for the first time.

This year over **300 works** were submitted by over **250 composers**. The shortlist of 35 works – by **32 different composers** – reflects the strength and breadth of modern composition, from those in their twenties all the way up to one centenarian.

<u>Three composers shortlisted twice this year: Kerry Andrew, Harrison Birtwistle and John McCabe</u>

Kerry Andrew has been shortlisted twice for *Woodwose*: *A Community Opera* in the Community or Educational Project category and *Dart's Love* in the Stage Works category. Andrew's *Woodwos*e was commissioned by the Wigmore Hall for the Britten centenary and was performed by 140 diverse members of the Westminster community aged from 8 to over 80 alongside tenor Andrew Kennedy and Wigmore Hall Learning's resident ensemble Ignite. It centres on the mysterious character Woodwose - Wigmore Hall's very own wild man of the woods and was inspired by Britten's well-known love of folk song. Andrew collected traditional folk stories and songs from the community groups and skilfully wove these elements into her finished work. This created a fundamental sense of collective ownership for everyone involved.

The Chamber opera *Dart's Love* was commissioned by Tête à Tête and the initial inspiration came from Andrew's love of wild swimming. The story, with libretto by Tamsin Collison, is inspired by the legend of the River Dart and floods in the South West in 2012/13. Andrew used her often daily visits to the Brockwell Lido for inspiration; working out the time signatures of swimming strokes, listening to the bubbles as she blew out underwater, and imagined the gasps of swimmers as they jumped into the cold water.

Along with Kerry Andrew, both **John McCabe** and **Harrison Birtwistle** have been shortlisted twice - Birtwistle in Vocal (**Songs from the same Earth**) and Choral (**The Moth Requiem**)

and John McCabe in Instrumental Solo or Duo (**Sonata after William Byrd's Haec Dies**) and Orchestral (**Joybox**).

Birtwistle's *Songs from the same Earth* for tenor and piano was given its premiere at Snape Maltings by Mark Padmore and Andrew West. A cycle of ten poems by David Harsent, a poet whose texts particularly resonate with Birtwistle, this is a familiar Birtwistle landscape: a place of shadows, dreams, mirrors and memories. McCabe's *Sonata after William Byrd's Haec Dies* derives its underlying material from William Byrd's motet *Haec Dies* from his 1591 collection of *Cantiones Sacrae* and employs the beautiful flugelhorn for the first two main sections, switching to the brightness of the D trumpet for the final part. An outline of the motet is "hidden" within the texture of the music, but never stated directly.

Nine composers shortlisted for the first time

There are nine composers represented on the shortlist for the first time including Samuel Bordoli for *Live Music Sculpture 3* (Choral), Tom White for *Public Address* (Sonic Art) and Jon Opstad for *IGNIS* (Stage Works). Both Samuel Bordoli (aged 27) and Tom White (aged 28) are the youngest shortlisted composers.

Live Music Sculpture 3 was commissioned by the City of London Festival and written for St Paul's Cathedral for 27 musicians arranged throughout the cathedral space, including the Whispering Gallery. The work explores the unique architectural form and structure of St Paul's Cathedral.

Public Address, is a multi-speaker sound installation of children's recordings on Southampton Way estate. The installation marks the culmination of a series of Play Local workshops in February 2013 that Tom White led, which explored sound on neighbouring estates with local children.

IGNIS is a work for contemporary dance that was commissioned by The Print Room in West London. The work was choreographed by Hubert Essakow, for four performers: three dancers and actor Sara Kestelman, who performed both as dancer and actor/narrator, contributing her own poetry to the work. The music as a whole combines acoustic, electro-acoustic and electronic approaches to create a broad palette.

The other composers to be shortlisted for the first time are **Martin Iddon** with *Danaë* (Chamber), **David Fennessy** for *Hauptstimme* (Chamber), **Christopher Trapani** with *Visions and Revisions* (International Award) as well as **all three composers in the Contemporary Jazz Composition** category: **Julian Argüelles** with *Hocus Pocus*, **John Butcher** with *Tarab Cuts* and **Django Bates** with *The Study of Touch*.

Artistic Directors of the British Composer Awards, Julia Haferkorn and Ed McKeon said:

"This year's Awards show how lively, curious and attuned composers are across the UK's new music scenes. We're particularly pleased at the number of composers represented on the shortlist for the first time. The musical works cover a wide spectrum - there's truly music there for all open-eared listeners. We wouldn't expect people to like and admire everything: that's precisely why we rely on the generosity of so many composers, musicians and promoters from all over the country to come together on panels to make these difficult choices. So whether you're moved or not by any particular work, we hope you will spend time giving all the works a hearing."

Three works premiered at the BBC Proms

Three works in the shortlist were given **world premiere performances at the BBC Proms**: **Mark-Anthony Turnage's** *Frieze* (Orchestral), **Thomas Adès'** *Totentanz* (Vocal) and **John McCabe's** *Joybox* (Orchestral).

Turnage's *Frieze* was a joint commission from BBC Radio 3, the Royal Philharmonic Society and the New York Philharmonic in celebration of the bicentenary of the RPS, the title *Frieze* refers to the *Beethoven Frieze* by the Austrian artist Gustav Klimt and was a 60th birthday present to the composer's teacher and mentor Oliver Knussen.

Thomas Adès' *Totentanz* is dedicated to the memory of Witold Lutosławski and is a setting of the anonymous text that appeared under a fifteenth-century frieze in the Marienkirche, Lübeck, Germany that was destroyed by bombing in World War Two. The premiere was performed by Christianne Stotijin and Simon Keenlyside with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Thomas Adès.

Joybox by John McCabe (the second time he has been shortlisted) is a musical souvenir of a trip to Japan and the sounds of the work are influenced by an 'entertainment centre' in Osaka full of slot machines playing widely different musical jingles, all going simultaneously but independently.

Jeremy Evans, Editor of BBC Radio 3's contemporary music programme Hear and Now said:

"As the home of classical music BBC Radio 3 will once again reflect the British Composer Awards in our new music programme, Hear and Now. We're delighted to do so; new talent along with new music is an important part of BBC Music's commitment to classical. The shortlist demonstrates the sheer wealth and scale of talented British composition there has been this year alone. I wish all the nominees the best of luck for the night."

Elliott Carter's final work shortlisted

Sadly one shortlisted composer's work was **submitted posthumously** - **Elliott Carter's Epigrams** (International Award) a work commissioned by the Aldeburgh Festival and Tanglewood Festival and dedicated to Pierre-Laurent Aimard. *Epigrams* was Elliott Carter's final work and was composed during the spring and summer of 2012 when he was 103. It received its premiere on 22 June 2013 at the Aldeburgh Festival, performed by the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, conducted by Pierre-Laurent Aimard.

Stage Works - two chamber operas and one work for contemporary dance

Perhaps surprisingly, the Stage Works shortlisted category contains no full scale operas but instead two chamber operas (*Captain Blood's Revenge* by Lynne Plowman and *Dart's Love* by Kerry Andrew) and a work for contemporary dance (IGNIS by Jon Opstad). *Captain Blood's Revenge (A Pirate Opera)* by Lynne Plowman was commissioned by Glyndebourne in co-production with Brighton Festival and is notable for being written specifically for children aged 7-9, for performance in studio theatres. The aim of staging a full production for children was to demystify the art form and to introduce young audiences to the thrill of live opera. It was an enormous success and in total nearly 2,000 people saw the work across 10 performances.

Master of the Queen's Music shortlisted

The Wild Reeds for organ by the new Master of the Queen's Music, **Judith Weir** is shortlisted for Instrumental Solo or Duo. It was written for Thomas Trotter in honour of his remarkable thirty years as Birmingham City Organist. It is a partita, made up of an original theme followed by six variations, which are played continuously. The theme was partly inspired by folk music for outdoor wind instruments from eastern Europe, rugged yet delicate at the same time. Another important inspiration was the organ sonorities which result from unusual divisions of the octave, producing strange chords and ghostly harmonisations of melodies.

Onyx Brass to perform winner of the British Composer Awards Student Competition

The winner of the fifth British Composer Awards Student Competition will be announced in November. The winning work will be performed by Onyx Brass during the British Composer Awards ceremony on 2 December 2014.

Guy Fletcher, PRS Chairman, said: "These awards showcase the sheer breadth of contemporary classical and jazz talent in the UK. In this our centenary year, I'm delighted to see a centenarian on the shortlist, alongside talent from every generation."

The British Composer Awards are presented by BASCA and sponsored by PRS for Music. BBC Radio 3 will broadcast the awards on Hear and Now at 10.00pm on Saturday 6 December, with the chance to hear many of the shortlisted pieces from approx. 9.30-10pm, Monday 24 to Friday 28 November.

Shortlist, programme notes and musical extracts available on this link:

http://www.britishcomposerawards.com/shortlist.php
Further musical extracts will be added right up to the ceremony

British Composer Awards website:

www.britishcomposerawards.com

British Composer Awards - Dates

Monday 20 October BBC Radio 3, In Tune, 4.30pm - shortlist

announcement

24 – 28 November BBC Radio 3, Live in Concert Series - preview of

BCA shortlisted works

Tuesday 2 December British Composer Awards, Goldsmiths Hall, 5.30pm

Saturday 6 December BBC Radio 3, Hear and Now, 10pm

For further information please contact:

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2014 British Composer Awards Shortlist

Instrumental Solo or Duo

Solitude by Rebecca Saunders Sonata after William Byrd's Haec Dies by John McCabe The Wild Reeds by Judith Weir

Chamber

Danaë by Martin Iddon Hauptstimme by David Fennessy Renewal by Luke Bedford

Vocal

Flodden by Sally Beamish Songs from the same Earth by Harrison Birtwistle Totentanz by Thomas Adès

Choral

Live Music Sculpture 3 by Samuel Bordoli Night Flight by Cecilia McDowall The Moth Requiem by Harrison Birtwistle

Wind Band or Brass Band

Journey of the Lone Wolf by Simon Dobson Kjeden by Paul McGhee Th'owfen Raconteurs by Lucy Pankhurst

Orchestral

Frieze by Mark-Anthony Turnage Joybox by John McCabe Near Midnight by Helen Grime

Stage Works

Captain Blood's Revenge by Lynne Plowman Dart's Love by Kerry Andrew IGNIS by Jon Opstad

Liturgical

Chaconne for Jonathan Harvey by Ed Hughes Hodie nobis de coelo pax by Paul Ayres The Portsmouth Service by Jonathan Dove

Sonic Art

Chorus by Ray Lee On Air by Caroline Devine Public Address by Tom White

Contemporary Jazz Composition

Hocus Pocus by Julian Argüelles Tarab Cuts by John Butcher The Study of Touch by Django Bates

Community or Educational Project

Dark Clouds are Smouldering into Red by James Redwood Woodwose: A Community Chamber Opera by Kerry Andrew

Making Music Award – to be announced at the ceremony

International Award

Circle Map by Kaija Saariaho Epigrams by Elliott Carter Visions and Revisions by Christopher Trapani

About the British Composer Awards

The BCA celebrate the music of today's composers living and working in the United Kingdom and also UK premieres of work by composers from outside the UK. Qualifying works must have been completed within the five years prior to 31 March 2014 and received a UK premiere performance - either live or broadcast - in the year leading up to 31 March 2014.

With the exception of the International Award, shortlisted composers must have been born in the UK or resident for at least 5 years. Each category is judged by a different jury, with members appointed by BASCA. This year there were 73 judges, 56 of whom were judging the Awards for the first time. The majority of these music professionals are composers working in collaboration with performers, conductors, promoters and festival directors.

About BASCA

BASCA, the British Academy of Songwriters, Composers and Authors, is the professional association for music writers in the UK. It is the single voice for British music creators.

BASCA works to foster a sense of community amongst songwriters, lyricists and composers, and to campaign on their behalf in the domestic, European and international political arenas. As the only association in the country made up entirely of music writers, the organisation has an unparalleled insight into the issues affecting music creators in the UK today. We work closely with our members, keeping them informed in a constantly changing environment via our publications, websites, seminars and professional networking events. BASCA also presents the Ivor Novello Awards, British Composer Awards and Gold Badge Awards annually.

Membership of BASCA is open to working songwriters and composers who are members of a royalty collection society, such as *PRS for Music*, BMI or ASCAP.

BASCA Fellows: John Adams, David Arnold, Malcolm Arnold, John Barry, Don Black, Pierre

Boulez, John Dankworth, David Ferguson, George Fenton, Elton John, Barry Gibb, Maurice Gibb, Robin Gibb, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Paul McCartney, Peter Maxwell Davies and Tim Rice.

www.basca.org.uk

About Our Sponsor - PRS for Music

PRS for Music represents the rights of 100,000 songwriters, composers and music publishers in the UK. As a membership organisation it ensures creators are paid whenever their music is played, performed or reproduced, championing the importance of copyright to protect and support the UK music industry. The UK has a proud tradition of creating wonderful music that is enjoyed the world over and *PRS for Music* has been supporting the creators of that music since 1914.

PRS for Music provides business and community groups with easy access to over 10m songs through its music licences. In an industry worth £3.8bn *PRS for Music* is uniquely placed to be a voice for music and music creators. Collecting £665.7m in 2013, *PRS for Music* is one of the world's most efficient combined rights organisations. With over 100 representation agreements in place globally, *PRS for Music*'s network represents over two million music creators.

www.prsformusic.com / www.m-magazine.co.uk

About BBC Radio 3

Radio 3 broadcasts high-quality, distinctive classical music and cultural programming, alongside regular arts and ideas programmes, jazz and world music.

The station features more live classical music programming than any other and is the home of the BBC Proms - broadcasting every Prom live and more than 600 complete concerts a year - alongside daily speech programming, 90 full-length operas, more than 25 dramas and over 20 new BBC music commissions a year.

Radio 3 is the most significant commissioner of new musical works in the country and is committed to supporting new talent, from composers to writers and new young performers, through schemes such as New Generation Artists and New Generation Thinkers.

www.bbc.co.uk/radio3

