

Bournemouth Chamber Music Society Newsletter

Autumn 2011



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

It is with much pleasure that I contribute a brief introduction to the latest Newsletter. We are now well into our second full season in Bournemouth University and we have come to appreciate the range of facilities available to us, especially to have the opportunity to enjoy the excellent acoustics system and air conditioning. The season has so far comprised two highly enjoyable concerts. Cristina Ortiz proved as energetic and entertaining as ever: she

surmounted the challenges involved in playing the new Brodmann piano at short notice, when problems were encountered with the other piano, and gave us a sensitive, often moving interpretation. Cristina met those attending the reception afterwards and talked to many of those present, confirmed by the photographs kindly taken by Ros Horsfall-Turner. Cristina also played again for us in the foyer. Cristina told me that she had enjoyed visiting us (despite the difficulties) and that she thought highly of BCMS.

Our second concert was presented by the Piatti String Quartet and was an admirable combination of works by Mozart, Smetana and Schubert, performed with delicacy and precision. A number of our members and others attending

told me, as they came out of Kimmeridge Hall, how much they had enjoyed the concert. We intend to invite the Quartet to visit us again when we can arrange a suitable date. I am sure that the remaining concerts this season will provide a stimulating and varied range of interpretations and I hope that as many of you as possible will attend.

As I have said before, we need to attract recruits so as to strengthen our base and ensure a solid foundation on which to plan for the future. Please encourage relatives and friends to sample one or two of our concerts:- we offer excellent value to all! I look forward to meeting you again and I send all good wishes for Christmas and New Year.

Peter Lowe
Chairman

Flowers

Our thanks go to one of our Members, **Susan Gilchrist**, who arranges a pedestal of flowers for our Concerts, which really enhances the Hall. Susan and Euan live at Witchampton, a village famous for its lovely gardens, and Susan arranges the flowers in the village church. We are grateful to her for her time and artistry and particularly for providing the flowers FREE from her garden.

Ros Horsfall-Turner

On other pages

Plans for next season

A report on our post-concert reception in September

Annual Collection for Benevolent Funds

As you know, once a year we take a collection at the end of one of our concerts, usually in December, for two musical benevolent funds.

Last year, due to an early heavy fall of snow, we had to cancel our December concert and postpone it until this summer. The collection was consequently not made until March. This year we have decided to hold the collection after the **February** concert.

The generosity of our members and guests each year is greatly appreciated by our own Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra benevolent fund and by the other recipient, the national Musicians' Benevolent Fund, so we hope to be able to send another record donation this season with your help.

Reserved Seating

We want to make sure we have plenty of space in the front row of our concert hall for wheelchair users and their companions, and anyone else with a mobility problem. So, if you would like us to reserve you a seat, please let **David Middleton** know well before the concert on **01202 721297**

The way forward for BCMS



This season, 2011-12, has seen a large drop in the number of subscribing members. So far we have 17 fewer members than last season. While this is alarming, the attendance at concerts has remained fairly buoyant, with the two concerts that have taken place so far attracting average audiences. However, we cannot be complacent, and the Committee has been examining how we can maintain and increase support for our concerts in the future.

Moving to the University was a step which might have been expected to attract a considerable hitherto untapped source of members. An excellent new hall, good transport connections, larger capacity, better publicity – all

good signs. As yet, however, these assets have not brought in many new members. This is disappointing, so we have been discussing how we can improve this situation.

The University has been very supportive of our organisation, and we are now considered to be “Cultural Partners”. The need now is to try to engage with the large body of people who inhabit the campus, and get them to share the joys of the excellent concerts which we promote. However, there are clearly barriers which must be removed before this can happen. The main one is the fact that our concerts take place on Saturday afternoons. While this suits many of our much valued existing members, it is indisputable that this is an extremely inconvenient time for both students and people under 50. Students frequently have Saturday jobs; parents often have demands made on them from their children and families. So we need to examine alternative times for BCMS concerts.

Holding concerts on an evening has been considered. During the week, however, our hall is used

for university activities, usually until 8 pm, and so this is not a practical proposition. Saturday evening is more promising, but there are so many other events taking place at that time – many of which involve our members: choral performances, BSO concerts at the Pavilion, opera relays from the Met in New York to name but three. So: what about Sunday afternoons? This is a more traditional time for concert giving, successfully used by many societies like ourselves, not to mention the Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Opera Covent Garden.

Next season, we have an opportunity to try an occasional break from Saturday afternoons. Nothing has yet been set in stone, as we are taking time to assess the possible effect of these changes. But we do think they can make a positive difference. Attracting bigger audiences is important for our future, and we don't think we will do this on Saturday afternoons. What do *you* think?

Sandrey Date

Hon.Sec.

Young Musicians Annual Workshop

Our next Young Musicians' Workshop will be held on the weekend after our February concert, on the afternoon of Saturday 11th and all day on Sunday 12th in the Music Department of Bournemouth University.

The first session will be for past students who are now at college or just graduated. They will be coached by Aleks and Caroline Szram, giving them an opportunity either to learn new repertoire or study their existing repertoire in

more depth. On Sunday they will add to their skills by acting as tutors themselves.

Members of BCMS will be welcome to attend any of the sessions, but in particular the Sunday evening concert when all the students will come together to perform the music studied over the weekend.

Please contact me for further details on 01202 658921 or by email at:
rose.allen@btinternet.com

Rosemary Allen



Tutor Hetti Price (a former BCMS Young Musician) of the Hepplewhite Trio in full flow

Planning next season's concerts

The Committee always experiences a bit of a conflict when trying to draw up a programme of concerts for a season, which is between what we would like to promote, and what we can afford. And always it is an act of faith, because we can never be certain that there is going to be enough income from membership to cover the costs. That is why it is essential to have a reserve fund, to prevent any possibility of embarrassment! Fortunately we have never been in a situation like that, but the Committee, being trustees of the Society, are aware of their responsibilities, and so do not knowingly place ourselves in a position where expenditure is going to exceed income by too much.

The choice of programme is governed, as always, by the desire to have a varied

programme of concerts. This follows a fairly typical pattern, with (usually) a string quartet, an ensemble with piano, a solo string recital, a piano soloist – and two others. Unusually this year, we already have a good idea of every artist we hope to be having next season, but there are still a number of bridges to be crossed before we can announce the full details. Suffice it to say that, at the moment, the programme provisionally opens with a pianist, new to us but very familiar to Bournemouth music-lovers – **Peter Donohoe**, no less. He is being followed by the **Salomon String Quartet**, who have an international reputation with local connections. In December, the brilliant young violinist **Tamsin Waley-Cohen** appears with pianist **Huw Watkin**. February sees the

Benyounes String Quartet, who are bringing a second cellist to perform the great Schubert String Quintet. In March, we at last welcome the **Schubert Ensemble** with pianist William Howard, who bring us a programme of piano quartets, including the wonderful but rarely heard Piano Quartet no.1 by Georges Enescu. May's concert is not yet fixed, but we are talking to the BSO who hope to bring an ensemble to play Octets by Schubert and Howard Ferguson. As you will see in due course, programmes will have a good mix of familiar masterpieces with a leavening of enjoyable but less frequently heard works. We hope you will come and enjoy another great series of concerts.

Sandrey Date

Hon.Sec

The Best Seat in the House

Where do you choose to sit at a chamber music concert? Most people seem to gravitate to the left hand side of the concert hall – especially if there is a pianist performing. Sitting in the centre is all right provided there is not a tall person sitting immediately in front of you; sight lines are better at an angle.

Is it better then to sit in the front rows? This can have its drawbacks. Once, in the Pittville Pump Room at the Cheltenham Festival, I found myself in the middle of the front row for a piano recital by Paul Lewis. The piano was on the platform and I was almost under the piano. He

played Beethoven's 'Hammerklavier' Sonata; I was deafened, but greatly admired his pedalling technique!

Over the years I have tended to sit about half way back, to the right of centre or even beyond the right hand gangway. True, I cannot see the pianist's hands, but I can see the pianist's face which can be most expressive as he or she gets beyond the notes and creates a performance. It was fascinating watching Cristina Ortiz concentrating on Chopin at the same time as coming to terms with the brand new Brodmann piano after only a very short

practice session. When a string quartet is involved I can enjoy the eye contact between the first violin and the other members as they react to each other in contrapuntal passages. This is even more interesting when a piano joins the ensemble.

So, if you have always sat on the left, why not try the other side for a change.

You want the best seat in the house? Sorry, I shall be sitting in it – but I will let you sit next to me!

Donald Sheppard

BCMS Patrons Reception

One of the advantages of having our concerts at the University is being able to stage supplementary events. Keen to thank our advertisers and our patrons for their continued support, we decided to hold a reception after one of our concerts, with a chance for them to meet the artist(s) in an informal atmosphere.

We are also keen to strengthen our links with other organisations, and we were pleased to invite Heather Duncan from the BSO.

Casting our minds back to the enjoyable "Meet the Artist" session after Cristina Ortiz's last visit, in which she instantly had us eating out of her hand, as anecdote followed question followed anecdote, we knew that Cristina's recent recital would be the perfect opportunity for the first BCMS post-concert reception, and so it proved.

Despite a fraught day, in which a fault with the hired piano meant that she had to perform her concert on the University's unused brand-new Brodmann, with only a few minutes rehearsal time, Cristina chatted happily to everyone. Then, to the delight and surprise of all, and despite having had to nurse an injured finger all day, she rounded off the event by performing a short impromptu recital in the foyer of the hall, playing pieces by her Brazilian compatriot, composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, as patrons clustered around the piano!

Terry Ricketts, Publicity Officer

Photos: Ros Horsfall-Turner



Chris Clifford (Director) and Margaret Lloyds (Probate Manager) of Druitts Solicitors, regular advertisers with BCMS



The photo above shows Cristina Ortiz (left) greeting Bournemouth Chamber Music member Helen Senior (right).

Smiling on is fellow member Laura Ballantyne, who also represented one of BCMS' advertisers, investment advisors Charles Stanley.

Helen's late husband, Rodney, was principal trumpet of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for many years, and once recorded a concerto for trumpet and piano with Cristina.



Two concerts for the price of one! Cristina loves to break down the formal barriers between artists and audiences, and it does not get much more up close and personal than this.