



BBC
RADIO



Press Release

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WANTED:

Hidden contemporary gems of British choral music

Royal Philharmonic Society and BBC Radio 3 launch *ENCORE Choral*

Submissions now open!

Too often newly commissioned works receive only one or two premiere performances and are not given the opportunity to establish a place in the repertoire. Over the past decade, the Royal Philharmonic Society and BBC Radio 3's *ENCORE* project has brought to light little known orchestral and chamber works by living British composers through nationwide performances, learning events and broadcasts*. Now, *ENCORE* is turning its attention to choral music, identifying exceptional contemporary choral works that deserve to be better known and heard more often.

Choral music is enjoying a renaissance in the UK; we boast some of the world's finest professional choirs. There is also a huge interest in amateur music making, with an estimated 25,000 choirs all over the country - in schools, in the community - who draw on centuries old choral traditions for inspiration. Many choirs embrace contemporary repertoire, enjoying the dynamism of performing music that can be both unfamiliar and challenging. However, traditional choral repertoire dominates, and practical issues of scale and musical complexity mean that many thought-provoking contemporary works fade from view.

The call for *ENCORE Choral* is now out. The RPS and BBC Radio 3 are asking music publishers, agents, artists, music industry and choral experts to nominate 'lost' outstanding works, for performances beginning in 2015/2016. Pieces by living British composers can be for any size of choir, with or without piano / organ accompaniment, but must not have been performed in the UK in the past five years.

An expert panel will select a minimum of six *ENCORE Choral* works from nominations received. Selected works will be performed nationwide by professional choirs and outstanding amateur choral groups and broadcast on BBC Radio 3, with special *ENCORE* features and interviews on *The Choir*, BBC Radio 3's Sunday afternoon programme exploring all things choral. Integral to *Encore* is a programme of creative development work, which brings the composer, the music and the audiences together to share and explore the chosen works more fully. Full details of the nomination process can be found at www.philharmonicsociety.uk

Rosemary Johnson, Executive Director of the RPS comments:

*"We want **ENCORE Choral** to create a buzz about living choral music and to celebrate the depth of talent in the UK choral world and vivacity of contemporary choral writing. The quality of choral singing in the UK has never been higher, so it's a fitting time to rediscover fine works that have unjustly dipped below the radar. There should be much to sing about!"*

Alan Davey, Controller, BBC Radio 3 comments:

*"I am delighted that BBC Radio 3 is working with the Royal Philharmonic Society to champion the UK's fantastic contemporary choral music scene. **ENCORE Choral** aims to put a spotlight on the many 'lost' gems, giving great contemporary choral works the attention they deserve. I am thrilled that through *The Choir's* special complementary programming, Radio 3's over 2 million listeners will also be able to discover these hidden treasures."*

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FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION FROM:

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Notes to editors:

Since 2005, *ENCORE Orchestral* and *ENCORE Chamber* have presented 'lost' orchestral and chamber works by some of the UK's most distinguished composers, including **Simon Bainbridge, Judith Bingham, Diana Burrell, Gary Carpenter, Philip Cashian, John Casken, James Dillon, Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy, Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Alexander Goehr, Jonathan Lloyd, Steve Martland, Colin Matthews, David Matthews, George Newson, Nigel Osborne, Anthony Payne, Robert Saxton, Giles Swayne and Hugh Wood.**

About the Royal Philharmonic Society

The Royal Philharmonic Society unites the music profession and its audiences to create a vibrant future for music: supporting and working creatively with talented young performers and composers, championing excellence, and encouraging audiences to listen to, and talk about, great music. The Society has been at the heart of music for over 200 years, with direct links to Beethoven (it commissioned the composer's Ninth Symphony), Mendelssohn, Wagner and many of the iconic figures of classical music.

CHAMPIONS OF EXCELLENCE: The Society sets the standard and lets the world know about the finest classical music making. From its historic Gold Medal to the annual RPS Music Awards for live music, recognition by the RPS is a guarantee of outstanding music achievement.

YOUNG MUSICIANS: The RPS invests in talented young performers at the start of their careers, offering much needed funding to buy instruments, teaching tailored to their individual needs, or the chance to be mentored by an experienced, established performer.

COMPOSERS: The Society supports new music through commissioning new work, repeat performances, workshops, residency schemes and encouraging interaction between composers and audiences.

AUDIENCES: The RPS is a voice for music, putting music at the centre of cultural life. Whether a regular listener or just beginning to explore classical music, the RPS encourages people to listen and talk about music through a series of events, talks and debates.

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, over 25 drama commissions 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