

COUNTERPOINT

July 2011



Welcome to Counterpoint

As we near the end of another academic year, we can look back on another year rich with musical opportunity and achievement. September seems a long time ago and, since then, we have staged over 20 events, including lunchtime and evening recitals in the Ivy Coleman Recital Hall, the wonderfully eclectic Summer Serenade in the School Hall and, of course, the memorable Gala Concert in the inspiring surroundings of Canterbury Cathedral.

We welcomed the Astrum Guitar Duo, featuring former music scholar Amy Perry, for a wonderful recital in January, as well as Keith Harris, former assistant to Stevie Wonder and General Manager of the Motown label, for a fascinating talk in February. Recitalists have included AS and A2 pupils, Lower and Middle Fifth Music Scholars, as well as music staff Ian Swatman (clarinet), Will Bersey ('cello) and Spencer Payne (piano).

In an exciting new collaboration, we invited the Concert Band and the Big Band from the University of Kent to join forces with our own Big Band in March, in a concert entitled *Big Bands Cubed*. This collaboration brought together a great many like-minded wind and brass players from these neighbouring communities in an explosion of sound, raising the roof of the School Hall.

The pinnacle of the Lent term came in the form of 'Gloria!', our Gala Orchestral and Choral Concert, held in a full Canterbury Cathedral. This year's programme included a host of English favourites, aired in good time for the Royal Wedding, including Walton's *Crown Imperial* and Parry's *I was glad*, as well as the featured orchestral work, Liszt's *Hamlet* and the main choral undertaking, Rutter's *Gloria*. Pupils Timothy Edlin and Thomas Vafidis also took on concerto movements, in what was a fine display of instrumental skills present in our pupil body.

The Summer term understandably featured less in the way of performances, yet the return of exam candidates for an intensive three-day rehearsal period at the end of June culminated in a Summer Serenade featuring the St Edmund's Symphony Orchestra (bursting at the seams), the Chamber, Chapel and Fifth Form Girls' Choirs, as well as *The Ex-Choristers* and, of course, the Big Band.

Five separate sessions of practical exam entries across the last two terms have, again, produced excellent results, including Grade 8s achieved by Timothy Edlin (piano with distinction), Guy Steed (piano with distinction), Thomas Vafidis (singing with distinction), Frederick White ('cello with merit) and Rachel Crocker (voice). Congratulations to those pupils, and all who entered practical exams over the course of the year.

Michaelmas Term 2011 Music Calendar

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 7th, 4.30pm:

Friday 9th, 4.20pm:

Monday 12th:

Wednesday 14th, 4pm:

Friday 16th (all day):

Thursday 22nd, 1.45pm:

Saturday 24th, 8pm:

Instrumental Trial Workshop (Music School)

First St Edmund's Symphony Orchestra rehearsal (RH)

All music lessons and ensemble rehearsals begin

First East Kent Children's Orchestra rehearsal (RH)

Prep Schools' Wind & Brass Day (Music School) *

Lunchtime Concert by 6th form Music Scholars (RH)

Ex-Choristers perform at CCOCA re-union (Cathedral)

OCTOBER

Thursday 13th, 1.15pm:

Friday 14th, 2pm:

Friday 14th, 2.30pm

Junior School Lunchtime Concert (RH)

Junior School House Singing Competition (Hall)

SESO workshop with English Chamber Orchestra (RH) *

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 2nd, 5pm:

Tuesday 8th, depart 4.30pm:

Wednesday 9th, 7.30pm

Thursday 10th, 7.30pm

Saturday 12th (all day):

Thursday 17th, 1.15pm:

Wednesday 23rd, 7pm:

Thursday 24th, 1.45pm:

ABRSM Theory Examination (Music School)

Music Scholars' Trip to Royal Festival Hall

Recital by Andrew Haigh (piano) (RH) *

Michaelmas Concert (Hall) *

Kent Festival Junior & Senior Piano Classes *

Junior School Lunchtime Concert (RH)

Junior School Advent Concert (Hall) *

Lunchtime Concert by 5th Form pupils (RH)

DECEMBER

Thursday 8th, 7.30pm:

Friday 9th, 7.30pm:

Saturday 10th, 7.30pm:

Tuesday 13th, 7.30pm:

A Chorus Line (Hall) *

A Chorus Line (Hall) *

A Chorus Line (Hall) *

Carol Service (Cathedral) *

Events marked * require tickets or booking. Please contact the Music School for details

THREE-COUNTRY TOUR OF NORTHERN EUROPE

As an action packed Lent term drew to a close, thirty-two members of the Chapel Choir and Big Band met at 6am on the last Friday to set off on a three-country tour of Northern Europe; stage one of a busy holiday. The trip was to take us through Belgium, Holland and Germany, and our first day alone saw a Choir recital in Brussels Cathedral before transferring to Valkenburg, Holland, our base for the tour. Once settled, our second concert was in the Valkenburg's town band stand, featuring the Big Band, before our final full day, took us into Germany for a day at Phantasieland, a huge theme park just outside the town of Bruehl, and an evening concert in St Margareta's church, in the town's centre.



TOP CHOIR KENT

Just a week later, members of the Chamber Choir returned to Canterbury to participate in the final of Top Choir Kent, a competition for non-professional choirs of any age, from the County of Kent, an event which was also broadcast on Radio Kent on Easter Sunday. Alas, we were not crowned winners on this occasion but, needless to say, the choir sang with great accuracy and musicality, receiving particular commendation from the panel of judges for such a high standard achieved by such young performers; we were, indeed, the only school choir to progress to the final.



LAUNCHED: Close Encounters with the English Chamber Orchestra

Following our announcement, in December, of the exciting partnership between St Edmund's School and the **English Chamber Orchestra**, the project commenced in March with a workshop for the **East Kent Children's' Orchestra**. ECO members, John Mills (violin), Bozidar Vukotik (cello) and John Thurgood (horn) coached the orchestra during a morning of rehearsals before taking part in a question-and-answer session, when pupils' questions ranged from "should we finish that piece on

an up-bow?" to "how much do you get paid?" The orchestra then performed three pieces to an audience of parents, teachers and visitors (including local musicians and ECO Charitable Trust members). The project continued in May with the return of John Mills for violin masterclasses and we look forward to a coaching session for the **St Edmund's Symphony Orchestra** in October.



WHO'S WHO ...?

Will Bersey

Director of Music

Spencer Payne

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