

Our New Honorary Freeman

Sir Harrison Birtwistle

Born in Accrington in the north of England in 1934, he studied clarinet and composition at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Manchester College of Music, making contact with a highly talented group of contemporaries including Peter Maxwell Davies, Alexander Goehr, John Ogdon and Elgar Howarth. In 1956 he sold his clarinet to devote all his efforts to composition. This act produced key works such as the opera 'Punch and Judy', 'Verses for Ensembles' and 'The Triumph of Time', which firmly established Birtwistle as a leading voice in British music.

His academic appointments include Visiting Fellow of Princeton University; Harkness Fellow at the University of Colorado, Boulder; Visiting Professor of Music at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania; Visiting Snee Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo; Honorary Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, London; Honorary Doctor of Music at the University of Sussex; Honorary Doctor of Music at the City University, London, Doctor of Letters at Salford University and membership of the Akademie der Kunst, Berlin. He was Associate Director of Music at the National Theatre, London from 1976-88.

The decade from 1973 to 1984 was dominated by his monumental lyric tragedy 'The Mask of Orpheus', staged by English National Opera in 1986, and by the series of remarkable ensemble scores now performed by the world's leading new music groups: 'Secret Theatre', 'Silbury Air' and 'Carmen Arcadiae Mechanicae Perpetuum'. Large scale works from the past decade include the operas 'Gawain' and 'The Second Mrs Kong', the concertos 'Endless Parade' for trumpet and 'Antiphonies' for piano, and the orchestral score 'Earth Dances', which has been toured and recorded by Christoph von Dohnanyi and the



Having been escorted into the chamber by the Wardens, Clerk and Beadle, the Senior Warden, Frank Fowler, makes the formal introduction to the Court. Photo: Peter Holland.

Cleveland Orchestra.

His recent scores include 'The Cry of Anubis', for tuba and orchestra, premiered by the London Philharmonic Orchestra last year, and 'Panic', scored for saxophone, drummer and orchestra, which received a high profile premiere at the Last Night of the 1995 BBC Proms, with an estimated worldwide audience of 100 million. Recent chamber compositions include '9 Settings of Celan for soprano and chamber ensemble' and '9 Movements for String Quartet' written for the Arditti Quartet (the two cycles can be performed together under the title 'Pulse Shadows'), and 'Slow Frieze' for pianist Joanna MacGregor and the London Sinfonietta, due for premiere in April. Future plans include an ensemble score co-commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Sinfonietta and the VARA Matinee series, and a new work for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The music of Birtwistle has attracted international conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez,

Christoph von Dohnanyi, Peter Eötvös, Elgar Howarth, Oliver Knussen and Sir Simon Rattle. He has received commissions from leading performing organisations, and his music has been featured in major festivals and concert series including the BBC Proms, Salzburg Festival, Holland Festival, Stockholm New Music, Wien Modern, Wittern Tage and the South Bank Centre in London.

His many honours include the 1986 Grawemeyer Award, Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres, France 1986, a Knighthood in 1988 and the 1995 Siemens Prize. He is currently the Henry Purcell Professor of Composition at Kings College London, Composer in Residence with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Director of Contemporary Music at the Royal Academy of Music. Recordings of Birtwistle's Music are available on the Collins Classics, Decca, Philips, Deutsche Grammophon, Etcetera, NMS and CPO labels.

City of London School for Girls

Abridged personal report from Katherine Moffatt (aged 15)

I would like to thank you very much for the scholarship you provided for me when I started school at 11. It has enabled my parents to send me to the Junior Department of the RCM on Saturdays. It is very enjoyable, but hard work and I find I have to do all my weekend homework on just one Saturday afternoon.

I love doing the musicals at school, but sometimes, unfortunately, I don't get into them because I have no idea how to dance! Orchestra is fun too. I felt very privileged when one of the sixth formers asked me to accompany them in a Mozart

song solo. I think our conductor may be going to do something with a cor anglais solo. I got a cor anglais for Christmas.

I am doing Music GCSE and the compositions we have to write are quite a challenge. I am looking forward to the performances because they give me something to aim for when practising. There was a period when I had not done my exams on my oboe for three years, so it was almost a relief when I decided to do my Grade 7 and passed with Distinction.

I took my Grade 6 piano exam at the beginning of July. It has been tough, but satisfying.

Thank you once again.

From the Deputy Head Mr W.A. Douglas, B.A.

Katherine Moffatt has thrown herself into the musical life of the school at every opportunity, singing in the Choir and playing in the Orchestra and generally we are very pleased indeed with her progress and contribution to school life. Her academic work has been excellent and we are expecting her to receive the highest grades in the public examinations next year.

I should like to convey to your Company the thanks of the Headmistress and staff for the generous and valuable support which you have given to such an outstanding pupil.