

BEST IN ST PAUL'S

The Company's WT Best Memorial Scholarship, one of the country's most valuable prizes for young organists, has in the past forty years assisted promising post graduate musicians such as Susan Landale, Stephen Cleobury, John Scott, Jane Watts, Andrew Lucas, Stephen Farr and David Liddle.

It is therefore appropriate that the Company should have decided to mark the centenary of the death of the organist WT Best (1826-97) by supporting a special WT Best Memorial Organ Recital in St Paul's Cathedral by a former scholar and now their Director of Music, Liveryman John Scott.

The recital, which will include music by Best, Bach, Brahms, Eben and Vierne, will begin at 6.30pm on Thursday 7th August. It will be followed by a reception for Liverymen and their guests in the Chapter House. Since this is an addition to the list of events already announced, you are asked to make a note of it, and plan to support it if you are able.

THE GEMINI FELLOWSHIP

Composer Michael Zev Gordon has been awarded the Gemini Fellowship for 1996. Launched in 1987, it is the most prestigious award for composers of new music – previous Fellowship holders include Simon Bainbridge and James Wood. The judging panel, with Stephen Plaistow as Chairman, included Susan Bradshaw, Anthony Payne, Ivan Hewett, Pastmaster Tony Pool, Brian Elias, Duncan Druce and Andrew Kurowski.

The Fellowship lasts for two years and carries a £10,000 award to enable the recipient to compose a Gemini work of their choice.

Michael Zev Gordon's works have been performed by the Britten Quartet, Gemini, Orkest de Volharding and James Wood's Critical Band. Jane Manning and Jane's Minstrels recently performed his 'no time ago' for BBC Radio 3.

Michael regularly broadcasts on 'New Music' and has taught at Cambridge and London Universities. His work for the Gemini Fellowship is for choir and wind ensemble, using the same instrumentation as Stravinsky's Mass. The text, which will explore the ideas of exile and return, will include biblical passages, including Psalm 137 and poetry by Jewish and Arab writers. He intends to draw on the ornamental nature of Near Eastern music, which is a particular interest; the working title is "Red Sea".

SCHOOL MUSIC –

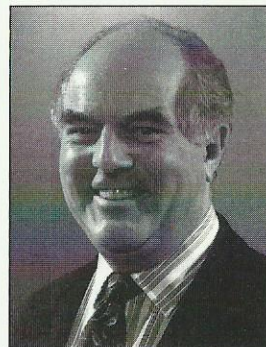
By Liveryman Peter Fowler, Principal, The Arts Educational London Schools.

Ideally, music education should provide the best possible opportunities and aesthetic experiences for pupils of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, having spent twelve years as a local authority inspector of schools in both a rural and urban setting and eleven years as Principal of a school for the performing arts, I have to be realistic and admit that this dream is, sadly, an unattainable goal!

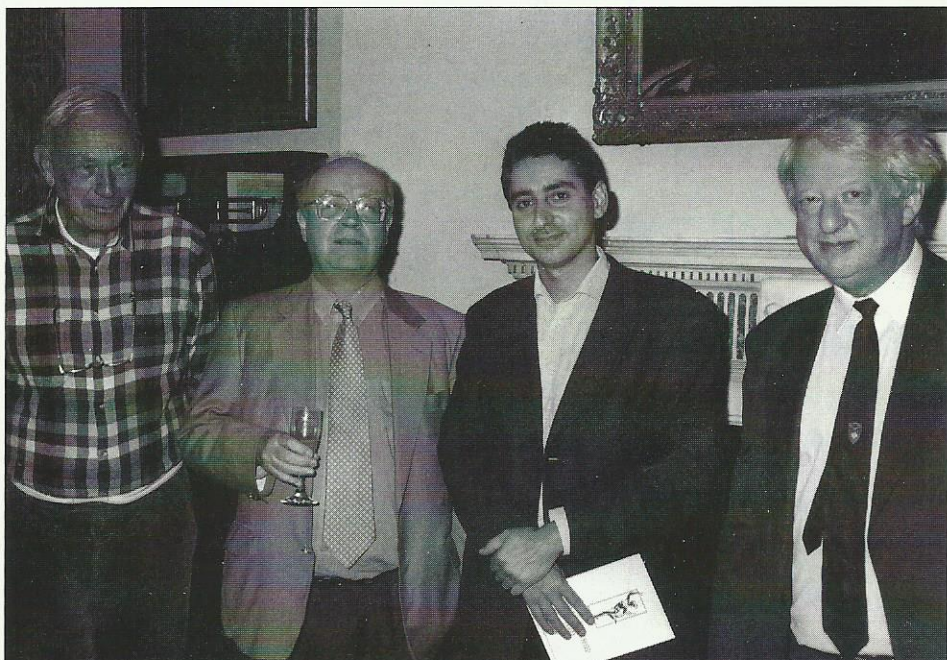
Music of one kind or another attracts the attention of virtually the whole population during their daily lives. One has only to sit on a bus or tube to note the number of Walkmans in use or listen to the blare of car radios or the thud of rock music pounding out from houses as one passes by to deduce that music holds a significant place in peoples' lives alongside the spoken word, the physical need for food, rest and affection. Emotionally too, music has a strong effect from the early tribal chanting to the not too different modern day disco. This zest for involvement in music has hardly entered the school arena. Music inside and outside school are light years apart. Teachers are living in an 'industrial world', whilst pupils have moved into an instantaneous 'electronic world', a world of communications in which they can

press a button and up pops the answer. It is difficult for the classroom to compete. Indeed, in an Arts Council survey in 1970, music was found to be the least popular subject on the curriculum in secondary school; quite extraordinary when one considers the power of music in most youngsters' lives.

An interesting phenomenon of our 20th century education system was that no statutory obligation existed to include music in the curriculum. This has changed with the introduction of the National Curriculum with its legal requirement to include music for all children aged five to fourteen in maintained schools and has done much to improve the status of music in schools. Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study are now an integral part of music teaching and staff have to report to parents at the end of each Key Stage. Even so, a healthy musical life in a school depends on two main factors: a gifted head of music with vision and the ability to be a pied piper, together with the strong support of the head and governors of schools; and in maintained schools, the effectiveness of local authorities in providing



Liveryman Peter Fowler.



From left: Richard Croucher, The Gemini Foundation; Stephen Plaistow, Chairman of the selection panel; Michael Zev Gordon, Gemini Fellow, Pastmaster Tony Pool, for the Company on the judging panel. Photo: Michael Walton.