

Update.

It now seems clear that Masterprize will be the definitive competition for composers in the world. Over 1,300 registered entries from 60 countries were received with strong interest from Western Europe – UK 300, Germany 92 & France 66 – USA 230, Russia and the former Soviet Union 170, China 45, Japan 40, and Brazil 25. A table with the full breakdown, country by country, is available on request from the organisers.

A distinguished international panel was assembled and met in August to produce the shortlist of 15 works which will be recorded and subsequently broadcast. Of particular interest to the Company, three pieces were selected whose composers are under the age of thirty. They are:

Andrew March, born 14 November 1973, British.

Daniele Gasparini, born 6 December 1975, Italian.

Victoria Bortsova, born 21 December 1969, Swedish.

The Company's prize, a commission worth £10,000 to be performed in the year 2000 – our Quincentenary – will be awarded to the young composer with the highest final ranking.

To choose the six finalists, an extended jury will be formed. This will comprise all the members of the initial panel plus other professionals from the radio, concert programming and music world on an international basis. This winter, the BBC Orchestras' recordings will be distributed to the jurors who will rank the pieces as they see appropriate.

It is anticipated that the names of the final jury for the selection of the winner will be announced shortly and all will culminate on 7 April 1998 at the Barbican. This will be followed by a dinner at which the Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, has agreed to play a formal role.

In addition to BBC Radio 3 and the World Service, a network of over 40 radio stations will participate in the broadcasts from October this year. Radio 3's first broadcast will be on October 21. National Public Radio in the US and State Radio in China are the most recent to join.

In terms of print media, The Sunday Times has also become a partner and will assist with the distribution of the CD with major editorial promotion. Discussions with other newspapers and magazines abroad continue.

Links with a wide range of music organisations are being explored to secure an afterlife for Masterprize pieces. Already, the European Union Youth Orchestra will include one of the Masterprize finalists' works in their next summer programme under Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Walter Willson Cobbett Medal

This year's medal was presented to Miss Amelia Freedman MBE FRAM, Director and Founder of the Nash Ensemble which was formed in 1964.

She studied clarinet and piano at the Royal Academy of Music, where she gained her Certificate of Merit Division V clarinet. She was awarded her fellowship in 1986. In 1961 she was appointed music teacher at King's School, Cambridge and also taught at the Royal Academy of Music. Subsequent teaching posts were at the Perse School for Girls, Cambridge, Chorleywood College for the Blind and Sir Philip Magnus School, London.

From 1983 to 1993 she was Artistic Director of the Bath International Festival, Music Advisor to the Israel Festival from 1990 to 1992 and currently holds the post of Programme Advisor to the Philharmonic Orchestra. Her honours include that of Chevalier, L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, awarded in 1984 and the Czech Government Medal for services to Czech music in the United Kingdom.



Amelia Freedman with the Beadle, David Barnes.
Photo: Peter Holland.

Foundation for Young Musicians

We have been asked by Assistant Sir Alan Traill as Chairman of the Quincentennial Committee to acknowledge with thanks the support received to date from nearly 20% of the Livery. His letter of 7 February explained the purpose for this appeal.

We aim to create 'a springboard for a much needed initiative which will help the musical world in perpetuity' – to help young musicians, particularly in the 'Wilderness Years'.

We have made an encouraging start and contributions which are still being received have recently passed £20,000. Further support is invited and we hope to publish a list of donors with our next issue.



Assistant Sir Alan Traill with new Liverymen, Geoffrey de Keyzer and his wife Dr. Fanny Waterman who have done so much for young artists. Photo: Peter Holland.