

## A double win for Andrew March

by George Derbyshire, Quincentenary Festival Organiser.

An almost full house in the Barbican Hall on the evening of Tuesday 7th April saw Mrs Cherie Blair present Andrew March of the UK with the first prize in the international competition for composers – Masterprize.

On stage to represent the Company as a Partner in Masterprize and to present the Company's associated Quincentenary Prize Commission worth £10,000, was the Master, Frank Fowler. Andrew March also won this prize as the highest placed finalist under the age of 30.

Under its terms, Andrew is required to deliver to the Company a new piece for orchestra of 8 to 10 minutes duration by 30th September 1999. The intention is that the work will receive its first public performance during the year 2000 as part of the Company's 500th anniversary celebrations.

Andrew, who studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Dale Roberts, graduated in 1996. He was a winner of The Constant and Kit Lambert Prize administered by the Musicians' Company and stressed how it had enabled him to concentrate on his composing after graduation. Without it, he said, he would not have been able to devote the time he needed to complete his Masterprize winning composition.

Although the first Masterprize competition did not produce a new work of obvious outstanding quality, it must nevertheless be judged a success. It drew entries from all over the world and raised great interest amongst music lovers and music critics alike. Radio stations worldwide broadcast the Final concert as well as BBC Radio and BBC World Service. Young composers for the symphony orchestra need encouragement and opportunities for their music to be played. Masterprize is currently the only international competition providing this.

Sir Alan Traill, Junior Warden of the Company and the inspiration behind the Company's involvement in the competition said: "It is to Britain's credit that John McLaren, the founder of Masterprize and the partner organisations, including the Musicians' Company, have established this international event on the world's musical stage".

Andrew March has been very busy since his Masterprize success in April. On 1st June he attended a reception at Buckingham Palace for young people of outstanding achievement. Then he went to Sweden at the invitation of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Masterprize to attend the rehearsals and performance of *Marine* by the EUYO conducted by Vkadimir Ashkenazy on 23rd August in the Konserthus Gävle. This performance was part of the EUYO summer tour during which they included *Marine* in their programmes. They performed it in Dusseldorf on 31st August, in Lisbon on 2nd September and in a BBC Prom concert in the Albert Hall, London on 5th September as the final concert of their summer tour.

Andrew March is following in the footsteps of some of the most illustrious of British composers from whom the Musicians' Company has commissioned works over the years. The Quincentenary Prize Commission sustains this important and long tradition.



Assistant Nigel Tully, a member of the Jazz Committee, with the Clerk presenting the Silver Medal awarded to the late Ronnie Scott to Peter King, his business partner. It is now on display in the club.

Photo: David Sinclair

## "MASTER ELECT"

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gunshots were heard during Malcolm's performance of Beethoven's Emperor Concerto. Happily for us, the protesters were not out to shoot the pianist but the German conductor!

In due course, the strenuous demands of leading the roving life of an international virtuoso abated somewhat in favour of various academic recognitions and appointments. These have included that of Director of Music at the Guildhall School, his creation of the Music Degree Course at City University together with the first Fellowships in Music Therapy and in Jewish Music, the last established by the generosity of the family of the late Joe Loss, a member of this Livery Company. Amongst other numerous noteworthy activities are his Chairmanship of the European Piano Teachers' Association and the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe. Nevertheless, he has never abandoned the concert platform and, apart from his many B.B.C. broadcasts, has consistently championed the cause of British composers at home and abroad.

On his official retirement from City University in 1995, the award of an Honorary D.Mus with the title of Professor Emeritus was appropriate recognition of his almost fifty years in the profession.

The wealth of experience and many-sided talents of the Master Elect especially in the training of Young musicians, will surely bring an added dimension to the Company's Quincentennial Celebrations in the Millennium Year, combined as these are with the creation of our Young Musicians Foundation.