



Newsletter 2017



Music Director
Damian Iorio

Another great year of NYSO has passed and it is the moment for me to try and give an idea of what we have been doing and, more importantly, what we have achieved. I would like to start as I ended last year's newsletter – every year it seems that the level of the orchestra improves, and this year the level was, once again, fantastic! We had a core group of players who have been with us for a period of time. This really helped guide the new members, making them feel at home and creating a sense of unity both in and out of rehearsals. This sense of unity really shows itself in the way they play and it is something that sets NYSO apart.

We spent Easter at a new venue, Felsted School in Essex and ended a demanding week of rehearsals with the usual open workshop, allowing parents and friends to see what we do, how we work, and listen to some of the repertoire we are preparing for the summer concerts. This time I decided to do something a little different: that I would give a lecture about one of the works on our programme, Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony (an orchestration of his 8th string quartet). It is a very personal work for Shostakovich and I felt it important that the players understood the piece deeply and had the opportunity to listen to the original versions of the many quotes Shostakovich has written into the music. I also felt that the parents should also be involved in this too. So I spent an hour explaining and analysing the piece in detail, playing recordings of the quotes of his own music

that Shostakovich intersperses in the music, and generally opening everyone's eyes as to the underlying meanings and signs written into the music. I think that this was quite an eye-opener for the orchestra and the performance of a part of the piece we did immediately after the lecture was played with a much deeper emotion.

Fast forward on to summer and we headed west to Warminster School in Wiltshire, spending another 6 days preparing one of the most demanding programmes I have ever chosen for NYSO, a sign of the faith I had in their talent and ability. Accompanying the Shostakovich in the second half was Mahler's arrangement of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 95 (Serioso), and the first half consisted of Mozart's Adagio and Fugue and Stravinsky's ballet Apollon Musagète, a piece rarely performed by youth orchestras. The Stravinsky has a very particular musical language, and not a style which young musicians are often exposed to, so a lot of time was spent finding the right style and colours, and also watching the ballet so they could really understand how the music is expressed on stage by the dancers. This made a real difference to their approach, and helped them achieve a better understanding of what is a complicated and subtle piece of music. As two of the works were originally composed as quartets, the players rehearsed them both as an orchestra and separately as quartets, something which gave them a particular insight into the importance of each line.

Joining our pastoral staff at the summer course was a NYSO alumna, Lara Agar, who played violin in the orchestra for a number of years. Lara is studying composition at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and asked if we could workshop a string piece she had written. It was a great opportunity to expose our players to new music, and also to get both intermediate and senior orchestras playing together, so we got everyone together one evening, mixed them up and placed senior and intermediate players next to each other. We had a very interesting session working through her piece, giving Lara the opportunity to experiment with some places, showing the players how a composer works and how a piece develops and exposing them to a different musical style. It was a fascinating session and everyone enjoyed it very much. We all wish Lara the very best for her continuing studies.

We had three concerts: one at Warminster which we shared with the intermediate orchestra, then at the lovely hall at Bradford upon Avon where we had a very attentive audience. Our final concert was at Kings Place in London, which has an amazing acoustic and is a fantastic venue for NYSO. It is a great experience for the orchestra to perform in such a prestigious and beautiful hall, and to such an enthusiastic audience. The emotions at the end of the concert were intense and I am sure everyone in the orchestra will have great memories of their time together!

This year marks the end of an era. Judy Anderson, who has been Head of Pastoral for many years, decided to retire after the summer course. Judy has been fundamental to the success of NYSO, in fact I don't think it would have been possible without her! I would like to thank Judy personally for all of her support and help, and to thank her also on behalf of everyone at NYSO for everything she has done. We will all miss her a great deal and wish her the best for her future. In honour of Judy, the coaching staff put on a surprise chamber music concert on the final evening of the Easter course. It was a privilege to hear these outstanding experienced musicians playing to such a rapt and attentive young audience. No pressure! We are happy to announce that Vaughn Williams, who has been on the pastoral team for a few years now, will take over Judy's position. Judy herself recommended Vaughn as her successor and we all look forward to working more closely with him. Who else could boast of a staff member with such an important musical name!

Aishwarya Saravanan

It's an amazing thing. That a 2 week long course never fails to surprise year upon year. This being my fourth NYSO course, I was excited as ever to be seeing my friends, making new ones and of course, learning the repertoire. I was very pleasantly surprised to be placed in the first violin section for the first time. Excited to finally be graduating from accompaniment to melody and ready to tackle the challenges that the pieces brought, we then spent a good 20 minutes ensuring that we could feel our sitting bones and that we were grounded, both physically and mentally. Focusing on one miniscule detail with such great intensity was a new experience but I found that one could extend this method of practice to the whole piece and that Diana's suggestions, which seemed somewhat strange when she first articulated them to us, actually helped with learning the piece faster!

The repertoire this year included Stravinsky's Apollon Musagete and Shostakovich's 8th string quartet. For me, more than the complex rhythmic figures or the raw passion that came with playing both of these pieces, I found the background far more interesting. For the first time, there was context to the music we played, not just a simple sonata form going through various key changes and then resolving. Following an excellent lecture style workshop given by Damian on the Shostakovich at the end of the Easter course, I found that the context behind the piece enabled me to further emphasise the intense emotions behind what the composer felt. Furthermore, watching the ballet of Apollon Musagete crowded round a single iPhone screen with no speaker system helped match the music with the mythological stories associated with it.

As ever, the concerts this year were of an extremely high standard and thanks must be given to the coaching staff and Damian who so skilfully brought out the best in us and to all the other lovely musicians on the course without whom, it could never be possible.

Many people devote their time and energy to making our courses run smoothly and successfully, from the coaching staff to the pastoral team, to the board and our tireless behind-the-scenes staff. A big thank you to everyone involved.

See you in 2018!

Nicola Howdle (mum)

I just wanted to say a huge thank you on behalf of myself and Charlotte for a fantastic Easter course in preparation for the summer. Charlotte so enjoyed having those few days with NYSO, prior to what is now full-on revision for her exams. Once again, she loved the opportunity of working with Diana and really feels that she learns so much from her. Damian is also inspirational, not only in the music he chooses which is often so different to the repertoire that Charlotte usually has the chance to play but in the education and background he provides to Charlotte and the other members surrounding the history of the piece and the understanding of it contextually. I can honestly say Charlotte does not get the experience she gets at NYSO from anywhere else-I think it is quite unique. I also cannot tell you how impressive the presentation was that Damian gave to us all when we attended the workshop-it was second to none and so unbelievably interesting. The orchestra members genuinely looked amazed as Damian uncovered the extracts of pieces found in other works and signature themes etc...Fabulous!

Charlotte cannot wait to be back with you all in the summer.



Rachel Erdos - Intermediate Music Director

Following the very high standard of our auditions in October 2016, I was already feeling excited and ambitious for NYSO intermediates in 2017. However, it was not long after that I discovered that I was expecting my son, Isaac and realised that his arrival and the NYSO summer course would likely coincide! I asked my friend and colleague, Brian Lloyd-Wilson if he would take on the direction of the summer course and was thrilled when he accepted. We carefully discussed the repertoire, choosing works with which we were both familiar and preparing scores so that we could work 'as one'.

At Easter, we began work on the pieces with a wonderful team: Mark Butler (Academy of St Martin's) and John Crawford (ex BBC Symphony Orchestra, professor at Trinity) for the violins, Louise Lansdown (head of strings at Birmingham

Gillian Thoday Cello Coach, Senior Orchestra

As always the Easter course was taken up mainly with some serious note learning and my cellists worked with enthusiasm and good humour to cover some really difficult repertoire. It was great to hear them gelling as a section over the course of the week, quickly achieving a rich and blended sound together. They also clearly enjoyed socialising together in their down time which was nice to see. The coaches had the added pleasure of giving a farewell concert for our Pastoral Director, Judy Anderson, which involved some fairly hectic rehearsing fitted in around an already tight schedule. Much fun was had by all! The summer course started already at a very different level with very little ground having been lost since Easter and as always it was enormously satisfying to see these young people reach such a high level of precision and commitment in their playing. The King's Place concert was hugely impressive, the Shostakovich bringing the evening to a close with a performance of such excellence and depth of emotional communication that it was difficult to believe this was not a professional orchestra. NYSO goes from strength to strength!



Kings Place July 2017

Conservatoire) for the violas, Matthew Sharp (solo cellist and all-round renaissance man) for the cello and Daisy Vatalaro (Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) also covering cello and Dalcroze. After a very intense week, we were ready to perform quite a large chunk of the programme at the workshop as well as showing some material from Dalcroze and Kodaly sessions. The standard was so high that I left the course with great hopes for the summer, but wasn't sure that I would manage to hear the finished article in the flesh.

Yet, on July 27th, I did make it to Warminster; baby in tow. It was a real pleasure to sit and listen to such a wonderful concert. The maturity of the sound throughout was striking and the playing was in turns stylish in the Mozart, exuberant in the Warlock and sensitive in the Ireland. Many thanks indeed to all the team on the summer course and in particular, to Brian, who did such a fantastic job with the orchestra.

We are looking forward to the autumn auditions and receiving acceptances from our existing members. I feel sure that we will, once again, have a superb group of players in order to build on this success for Intermediate NYSO 2018!



Brian Lloyd-Wilson

It was with great joy that I participated as Conductor of the NYSO Intermediate summer course. It was an honour to be giving the most substantial concert that they have performed alongside the Senior Orchestra. This was my first experience of the wonderful NYSO organisation apart from the delight of my daughter's enthusiasm when she participated as a student a while back, and I hope not the last! So what made it SO special? Well, great master works of music, the outstanding quality of the staff that Rachel Erdos brought together, the high teacher pupil ratio, and the amazing pastoral support which enabled us to proceed seemingly effortlessly!

Rachel and I had worked on detailed preparation of scores back in the new year so that handing over the baton would be as smooth as possible. The repertoire was challenging by any standard: Mozart's String Quintet in c minor, originally a

wind serenade, Warlock Capriol Suite (without movements 3 and 4 - due to time constraints), and Ireland Concertino Pastorale. The Mozart gave us the opportunity to study as four independent chamber ensembles. This encouraged personal responsibility towards the music making, and we then enjoyed this wonderful work as a string orchestra. Warlock offered some light relief of a neo-Tudor kind and the Ireland stretched our technical and emotional resources.

John Crawford gave both second violin coaching and Alexander Technique group sessions. The AT gives an opportunity for the body to understand and appreciate a natural, balanced state and allows for the possibility of freedom of movement so crucial to such a complex activity as music making and to everyday life. I was delighted to witness some spontaneous floor work after his departure before our afternoon sessions and prior to the concert. John was most ably supported by Celia Waterhouse (of BBC Symphony) for the first violins, Gwendolyn Fisher (of Liverpool Phil) for the violas, Leon Bosch (ex Academy of St Martin) on the bass and Matthew Sharp (solo cellist/singer/actor) and Daisy Vatalaro (Orchestra of Age of Enlightenment) in relay for the cello. Matthew gave some entertaining

'Wake, Shake and Make' wake up sessions on the first two days and Daisy inspired us with her Dalcroze 'musicianship through movement' sessions. With this multi-faceted team, it was possible to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the students' progress with everyone contributing to a truly synergistic outcome.

By the final day I was on my own with all the groundwork having been achieved by teamwork and was able to enjoy encouraging some flexible and responsive music making from the orchestra. We worked and played hard right up to the last moment with a real sense of accomplishment and excitement. We left knowing that we had all changed for the better in the process. A great thank you to all concerned and especially to Damian Iorio for making it all happen and for his quiet vision, experience and support.

John Crawford

This was my third time as a violin coach/ Alexander Technique teacher, primarily with the Intermediate group. I had some reservations when I saw a 45 minute Alexander slot every day, wondering how the younger ones would react. In the event my ambivalence was blown away; the response was very positive and I hope gave everyone who took part a small window of quietness in an otherwise hectic schedule. There is so much positive energy on the course, with all character types, from the very quiet to the zany, contributing to a glorious mix of colour (and sound!). I was particularly touched by the response to the Mozart quintet which Rachel and Brian had arranged for string orchestra. This is very sophisticated music, with a language not perhaps as immediately accessible as more overtly tuneful and rhythmic works, but the musicians' response was immediate and wonderful. A heartwarming experience all round!



Judy Anderson Pastoral Director

In Autumn 2002 I had a phone call asking if I would be interested in heading NYSO's Pastoral team for the following year. My experience that year meant I had no hesitation in taking on the position on a permanent basis in 2007.

During my time with the orchestra, courses and concerts have been spread widely across England and Scotland, and we have been to Italy twice and to Denmark. Each of these has brought its own memories. On my first course we arrived to find that the right number of beds had been provided, but without taking gender into account. Strenuous furniture moving meant we could separate boys and girls, but I will not forget the very lively room of seven 12- and 13-year-old girls which resulted. As I remind them regularly about concert dress, the members are used to hearing me recall the Sunday evening in Italy scouring the town pre-concert for black socks for more than one boy who had forgotten his. Then, in Denmark, there was my midnight visit to

Jude Chandler

"In July, I attended the 2017 Summer NYSO course, this being my 5th year in the Intermediate Orchestra.

There were a couple of changes to the course this time, most notably the lack of Rachel Erdos, our great and indefatigable conductor (who has now had a sweet baby boy!). She was temporarily replaced by Brian Lloyd-Wilson who was definitely up to the challenge, and he directed us up to a very high standard. He worked us hard with a rehearsal in the evening after dinner, but no-one minded! The other big change was the addition of Alexander Technique, involving a posture and general body well-being session each day. We took time after lunch to work on relaxing our bodies before playing, which was a big success, even with the really energetic people, and very useful. I hope that this is kept for the other courses.

The music that we played included a wonderful work by John Ireland called Concertino Pastorale. It was quite a contrasting piece with a lamenting slow 2nd movement and a devilishly fast finale. It is a very beautiful and exciting piece of music and I really enjoyed playing it.

Everyone made new friends on the course and some of us met up with old ones again. As always the rooms were sorted out quickly and everyone ended up sharing a room with someone that they wanted to be with. I want to say a big thank you to Judy too, this was her last course. She's always worked very hard to make everything go smoothly.

I found the course hugely enjoyable, and I am sure that everyone on it would agree with me. Even though I have been in the Orchestra for such a long time I am still learning many new things and only wish that the courses were longer so we could learn more and have more fun."

McDonald's in search of the handbag (containing passport and bank card) which one of the girls had left there.

The members expect to work hard, and this they certainly do. Performance at this level demands real commitment and everyone gives their best in every rehearsal, from the private practice which starts the day through all the sectional and full rehearsals which continue well into the evening. It is always interesting to listen to the orchestra read through the repertoire at the beginning of the Easter course and then hear the playing develop both technically and musically right through to the concerts in the summer.

The standard of performance achieved by the orchestra is astonishingly high, and it is impossible to single out any one concert which stands out from the rest. Particularly moving was an evening in the open-air auditorium at La Mortella, former home of Sir William Walton on Ischia, looking out over the Bay of Naples and listening to the orchestra playing works by Walton himself. It was also fascinating to meet Lady Walton, widow of the composer.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to be associated with the orchestra, working first with Viviane and then Damian. The music tutors are, of course, exceptional, and I have been supported by very dedicated pastoral staff. But it is the members who make the orchestra, and I have looked after some exceptionally talented young musicians, always in an atmosphere of co-operation and mutual support as everyone strives for the very best the orchestra can achieve. I look back with many happy memories, and look forward to seeing NYSO go from strength to strength in the years to come.

Charles Clark – Chairman, NYSO

Yet again, we reached new heights of musical and educational achievement and the Shostakovich Chamber Symphony at Kings Place will be etched in many memories (it was recorded – see back page to purchase).

I would like to thank Damian and Rachel, together with the dedication of the coaches, pastoral staff, support team and board members within the organisation. A special word of thanks is due to Judy and I can only second Damian's comments. I make a point of visiting NYSO courses each year so that I can see them in action (and enjoy hearing the music being put together). Apart from the great music making, a large element of the success is due to Judy, Vaughn and their team

and how they interact with the students and with Damian. I have really valued Judy's advice in developing and keeping our policies and processes up to date as well as her attitude and professionalism on the courses. None of NYSO's work would however be possible without the players, their talent, hard work and supportive families and teachers.

We are very proud to be one of the nationally important orchestras training young musicians, whether they go on to be professional musicians or use the skills they learn with us in other areas of activity. This is made possible by the generosity of those who have supported us not only in this year but, in many cases, for a number of years. This helps us not only with our running expenses but also in providing bursaries to allow students to take part regardless of background or means. This is fundamental to our ethos and something we are determined to maintain. Many thanks to all of you.

In 2016 we set out to raise £21,000 (the number chosen to commemorate our then age). I am delighted at the very generous response, both from existing long-term supporters such as the John Lewis Partnership and from foundations and individuals. We are very grateful to them all. I would particularly like to thank the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, Four Hills Music, Garfield Weston Foundation and The Goldsmiths Company for their generosity in contributing to this appeal. The appeal continued throughout 2016 with a shift in focus to individuals (where we were helped by a pledge of up to £5,000 matched funding of £1 for every £2 raised). I am delighted that we reached our target by the end of December. This does not mean we can sit back as future years are likely to see an increase in the need for bursary funding.

We have also started planning for the creation in 2019 of NYSO Junior, a new orchestra to complement our two existing orchestras. With the same ethos and approach as the existing orchestras, we plan to create a string chamber orchestra for talented players who have reached grade 5 – 6 standard and are keen to progress. This will enable us to benefit more young players, particularly at a stage when without the right encouragement it is too easy to stop playing. It will also provide a natural progression through to NYSO Intermediate and to the main NYSO. More on this next year!



Many Congratulations to Greg and Rachel Erdos on the arrival of their beautiful baby boy Isaac.

Music Director

Damian Iorio

Founder

Ms Viviane Ronchetti with David Woodhead

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Leon Bosch, Diana Cummings
Cathy Elliott, Ian Jewel
Simon Smith, Gillian Thoday

Intermediate Orchestra 2017

Leon Bosch, Mark Butler, John Crawford
Rachel Erdos (Kodaly and Intermediate Music Director), Gwendolyn Fisher,
Louise Lansdown, Brian Lloyd-Wilson
(Intermediate Music Director summer),
Matthew Sharp, Anita Strevens (Dalcroze),
Daisy Vatalaro (Dalcroze),
Celia Waterhouse

Pastoral Team

Lara Agar, Judy Anderson (Pastoral Director)
Jenny Begley, Karen Butler
Christopher Green, Vaughn Williams

Course Venues 2017

Felsted School
Felsted, Dunmow CM6 3LL

Warminster School
40 Church St, Warminster BA12 8PQ

Support Team

Carol Parker - Administrator
Jane MacArthur - Accountant
Anne-Marie Norman - Co-ordinator of external engagements

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NYSO would like to thank the following for their generous support of NYSO's work in 2017:

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David Takeno

NYSO is also pleased to acknowledge the generosity of a number of individual donors who have requested anonymity.

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Mr & Mrs Tyson, Mrs Jemima Waller
Ms R Willis, Mrs Wiseman
Chi Yeung Wong, Mrs Kate Wong
Mr Ian Woodbridge, Mr David Woodhead

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2018

Easter Courses 2018

Senior Course 3 - 8 April, St John's School, Leatherhead KT22 8SP
Intermediate Course 3 - 8 April, St John's School, Leatherhead KT22 8SP

Summer Courses 2018

Senior Course 3 - 12 August 2018. Venue tbc
Intermediate Course 3 - 9 August 2018. Venue tbc

Recordings of NYSO's senior orchestra concert 30 July 2017 Kings Place, London are available by contacting Carol at admin@nyso.uk
MP3 download recording £4 or cd excluding the Mozart £11 including p & p.

Contacting NYSO

07902 223019

admin@nyso.uk

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