

## 5th BRITISH COMPOSER AWARDS Winners Announced

**- Choral Music celebrated in 2007 Awards -**  
**- World premières by John Tavener and Gabriel Jackson featured in Celebration Concert -**  
**- New International Award won by German composer Wolfgang Rihm -**

**6 December 2007**

Choral music was a dominant theme at this year's **British Composer Awards** when both the **BBC Singers** and BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year **Chantage** joined in the celebrations, with the amateur ensemble performing the world premières of 'The Voice of the Bard' by Gabriel Jackson and a new carol by John Tavener, entitled 'Rocking.'

The full list of winners of the 2007 Awards was announced yesterday evening, Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, in a ceremony hosted by the **British Academy of Composers & Songwriters** at Glaziers Hall on London's South Bank. The winning works of the Awards, sponsored annually by the **Performing Right Society** (PRS) and run in association with **BBC Radio 3**, were revealed by Radio 3 presenters Sara Mohr-Pietsch and Andrew McGregor, and the composer **Errollyn Wallen MBE**, winner of the BBC Radio 3 Listeners Award in 2005, was on hand to present the Awards.

The International Award of this year's **British Composer Awards** – a new initiative for 2007 – has been won by the German composer **Wolfgang Rihm**. Rihm, described by Andrew Clements of The Guardian as a composer who "continues to provide an experience quite unlike that of any other composer working today" and one of the most prolific composers writing today, won the Award for his orchestral work '**Verwandlung**' premiered at the 2006 BBC Proms by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Nott.

Sarah Rodgers, Concert Chair of the **British Academy of Composer & Songwriters** said, "The British Composer Awards are unique in their celebration of contemporary composition in the UK. Over the past five years, the Awards have recognised the work of 122 composers, brought about the broadcast of some 200 different performances, and offered, through the generosity of its supporters, 10 new commissions. The introduction of the International Award this year serves to recognise those composers from abroad whose works have been performed here over the past year and whose music does so much to enrich the contemporary music scene in the UK."

The full list of winning works this year reflects the huge diversity of new music being written today. The winner of the Award for a Community or Educational Project, **Stephen Deazley's 'Thrie Heids'**, was written specifically to include the participation of five disabled adults and makes use of bespoke digital instruments, specially created for each performer. **Stephen McNeff's** community opera '**Tarka the Otter**', based on Henry Williamson's nature story and winner of the **Stage Works** Award, is a work for a mixed cast of professional and non-professional musicians, making use of a large and entirely amateur Chorus.

**Edwin Roxburgh's** oboe concerto entitled '**Elegy for Ur**', winner of the Award for Wind Band or Brass Band, mourns the loss of the earliest surviving musical instrument, the Royal Lyre of Ur, destroyed or stolen in the looting of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. **Jem Finer's 'Score for a Hole in the Ground'**, a huge installation in the depths of King's Wood in Kent, which amplifies sounds produced by drips of water falling on percussion instruments, wins this year's New Media Award.

Some of this country's most distinguished composers have won Awards this year. **Oliver Knussen** wins the Vocal Award for '**Requiem – Songs for Sue**', a work written in memory of his former wife; **Harrison Birtwistle** wins the Instrumental Solo and Duo Award for a piece for solo harp, entitled '**Crowd**'; **Thomas Adès** is the winner of this year's Orchestral Award for 'Tevot' and **Julian Anderson** wins the Choral Award for '**Heaven is Shy of Earth**' – both of these works having been premièred at the 2006 BBC Proms.

Further emphasising this year's celebration of choral music, Anderson wins £5,000 funding towards a new commission or project from the **PRS Foundation for New Music** for his Award, while the 29-year old composer, **Tarik O'Regan**, a British Composer Award winner in 2005, wins the Liturgical Award for '**Threshold of Night**' and £1,000 from the **Worshipful Company of Musicians** towards a new commission.

Another young composer very much in the ascendance is the Welsh composer **Guto Puw**, Resident Composer of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales who wins this year's **BBC Radio 3 Listeners Award**, voted for by the listening public, for his **Oboe Concerto**. Taking its inspiration from different qualities of the human voice, such as stutters, the concerto features its own musical interpretation of chatterboxes. In an interview prior to the work's first performance, Puw commented: "The whole concerto is very lively. The second movement is inspired by talkative people who won't let you contribute to a conversation!"

***The British Composer Awards will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm. The Celebration Concert will be broadcast the same evening at 10.15pm. A full list of the winners follows overleaf.***

## **Further Information**

The UK premiere of a work entitled 'I Am A Mistake' by International Award winner **Wolfgang Rihm** takes place at Symphony Hall Birmingham on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm.

The Scottish premiere of **Oliver Knussen's** winning work in the Vocal category, '**Requiem – Songs for Sue**' will take place in Glasgow (City Halls) on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December, and in Edinburgh (Queen's Hall) on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> December, performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

## **Notes to Editors**

- The **British Composer Awards** are run by the **British Academy of Composers & Songwriters** in association with **BBC Radio 3** and are sponsored by the **Performing Right Society (PRS)**.
- The **British Academy of Composers & Songwriters** is the single voice for all music writers. With over 2,000 members, it is the recognised independent trade association for UK music creators.

The **British Composer Awards** is the only Awards event designed to celebrate contemporary classical composers in the UK. One of the Awards' key objectives is to promote the commissioning and performance of contemporary music. They command equal respect alongside the Academy's Ivor Novello and Gold Badge Awards.

**Academy Fellows:** John Adams, David Arnold, Sir Malcolm Arnold, John Barry, Pierre Boulez, Sir John Dankworth, George Fenton, Sir Elton John, Barry Gibb, Maurice Gibb, Robin Gibb, Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies.

- **PRS, The Performing Right Society**, licenses the public performance of music on behalf of its 44,000 composer, songwriter and music publisher members and pays royalties to them according to the usage of their works. PRS works in an operational alliance with MCPS - the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (the MCPS-PRS Alliance) - creating a future for music [www.mcps-prs-alliance.co.uk](http://www.mcps-prs-alliance.co.uk)

## 2007 British Composer Awards: winners

CATEGORY	WINNERS	SHORTLISTED
<b>Chamber</b>	<b>Brian Ferneyhough: String Quartet No. 5</b> First UK performance: 11 June 2006 Arditti Quartet Aldeburgh Parish Church, Aldeburgh Festival	Simon Holt: 4 Quarters Patrick Nunn: Escape Velocity
<b>Community or Educational Project</b>	<b>Stephen Deazley: Thrie Heids</b> First UK performance: 8 November 2006 Five young disabled adults from Braidburn Special School (Edinburgh), and the 'Music at the Brewhouse' ensemble Glasgow City Hall (Old Fruit Market)	Jonathan Dove and Matthew King: Hear our Voice Edward McGuire: Ring of Strings
<b>Vocal</b>	<b>Oliver Knussen: Requiem – Songs for Sue</b> For soprano and 15 players First UK performance: 21 October 2006 Claire Booth (soprano), Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Oliver Knussen (conductor) - CBSO Centre, Birmingham	David Horne: Life's Splinters David Matthews: Terrible Beauty
<b>New Media</b>	<b>Jem Finer: Score for a Hole in the Ground</b> Sound installation Built and completed September 2006 King's Wood, Challock, Kent (hosted by Stour Valley Arts)	Janek Schaefer: Vacant Space
<b>Instrumental Solo and Duo</b>	<b>Harrison Birtwistle: Crowd</b> For solo harp First performance: 6 July 2006 Helen Radice (harp) – St Swithun's Church, Quenington, Cheltenham Music Festival	George Benjamin: Piano Figures Jonathan Harvey: Run Before Lightning
<b>Wind Band or Brass Band</b>	<b>Edwin Roxburgh: An Elegy for Ur</b> Oboe concerto First UK performance: 27 June 2006 Melinda Maxwell (oboe), RNCM Wind Orchestra, Timothy Reynish (conductor) - Royal Northern College of Music	David Horne: Waves and Refrains Gwilym Simcock: Lichfield Suite
<b>Liturgical*</b>	<b>Tarik O'Regan: Threshold of Night</b> First UK performance: 25 November 2006 Choir of St John's College, Cambridge	Richard Causton: Jesu, sweete sone dear Gabriel Jackson: Orbis patrator optime
<b>Stage Works</b>	<b>Stephen McNeff: Tarka the Otter</b> Opera for mixed cast of professionals and non-professionals First UK performance: 20 October 2006 Nicholas Cleobury (conductor) - Two Moors Festival, Torrington	Jonathan Dove: The Enchanted Pig Lynne Plowman: House of the Gods

<b>Choral**</b>	<b>Julian Anderson: Heaven is Shy of Earth</b> For mezzo-soprano, chorus & orchestra First UK performance: 6 August 2006 Angelika Kirchschrager (mezzo-soprano), BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Sir Andrew Davis (conductor) BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall	Francis Grier: The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth Mark-Anthony Turnage: A Relic of Memory
<b>Making Music Award</b>	<b>Howard Jones: The Illusion of Progress</b> First UK performance: 17 June 2006 COMA (Contemporary Music Making For Amateurs) Christ Church, Spitalfields	Joanna Lee: whippoorwill Martin Suckling: Mosaic
<b>Orchestral</b>	<b>Thomas Adès: Tevot</b> First UK performance: 7 March 2007 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Simon Rattle (conductor) Barbican Hall	James Dillon: Piano Concerto Andromeda Jonathan Harvey: Body Mandala
<b>BBC Radio 3 Listeners' Award</b>	<b>Guto Puw: Oboe Concerto</b> First UK performance: 27 April 2006 David Cowley (oboe), BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Garry Walker (conductor) Theatr Brycheiniog, Brecon	Michael Nyman: A Handshake in the Dark Param Vir: Between Earth and Sky
<b>International Award</b>	<b>Wolfgang Rihm: Verwandlung</b> First UK performance: 27 July 2006 Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Jonathan Nott (conductor) BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall	Derek Bermel: Soul Garden Brett Dean: Wolf-Lieder

\* The winner of the Liturgical Award will receive £1,000 from the **Worshipful Company of Musicians** towards a new commission.

\*\* The winner of the Choral Award will receive £5,000 from the **PRS Foundation for New Music** towards a new commission, or towards a project which contributes to the furtherance of the composer's career.

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