



Welcome to the Winter Newsletter!

Season's Greetings from all at the ESO! It has been an excellent autumn season for us, with four sell-out concerts, two excellent children's orchestra courses and the re-commencement of our Homes and Hospices concert series.



A highlight of the season saw the Chamber Orchestra taking part in a special performance of the War Requiem at Coventry Cathedral. The Cathedral had originally commissioned the work to mark the opening of the new building following the destruction of the old in November 1940.

Everything about the concert was infused with depth and wonder for both players and audience. This is the sort of opportunity that emerges when you have a true partnership, as we have with Saint Michael's Singers, one of the choirs taking part and also the overall organiser of the event. The concert (well, most of it!) was broadcast by Classic FM the following night. Also taking part was the Parliament Choir and we repeated the concert at Westminster Cathedral the following week.

We had another good day at

Malvern St James - excellent hospitality, great acoustic, appreciative audience - for a Mendelssohn-based programme featuring Janine Smith on piano. Unlike the rest of the season, however, this concert failed to attract a good audience. It is such a shame because it is such a pleasant place to play and hear music.

We have a full Christmas programme to come and some very interesting engagements in 2011. Amongst these are the Cambridge International Music Series and the English Music Festival, both real signs of the progress we are making.

You may remember that our performance of *The Dream of Gerontius* in Worcester Cathedral earlier this year was recorded. The final mix has now been approved by conductor Donald Hunt and we are hoping that it will be available early in the New Year.

The last four years have seen ESO emerge from truly dark days into what now feels like the light. Throughout that time, finance has been the over-riding criterion by which potential projects have been judged. Many things which we would

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like to have done have been put on hold. We are now in a position where some of them can be re-appraised.

This is because support from the local private sector has increased recently. The funding cuts announced by the Government in September will have no (direct) impact on ESO because we do not currently apply for any public sector funding.

Looking much further ahead, it is an over-riding priority for ESO to find a home base for practice and performance and some very interesting

possibilities have emerged recently. Discussions are at a very early stage but there is at least a glimmer of possibility.

In a linked development, we are beginning to talk to other organisations - so far a sixth form college, a music school, an arts centre, local businesses, and a charitable trust - who share an interest in a more holistic approach to creative activity in our area.

In short, it is time to look beyond mere survival and consider ESO's position in, and contribution to, the wider world.

ESO at Christmas

12th December	Berkeley Castle	<i>10th Anniversary Concert</i>
20th December	Ledbury Church	<i>Messiah</i>
21st December	Pershore Number 8	<i>Christmas Concert</i> SOLD OUT
22nd December	Artrix, Bromsgrove	<i>Christmas Concert</i> Not sold out yet

Please call **ESO Box Office 01386 791044** or **Artrix on 01527 57330** for tickets.

ESO Concert Programme Spring / Summer 2011

January 31st	Cambridge Corn Exchange	<i>Schumann, Mozart, Weber, Spohr with Raphael Wallfisch cello</i>
March 19th	Worcester Cathedral	<i>St Matthew Passion</i>
March 23rd	Hallow Church	<i>Michael Bochmann</i>
April 9th	Worcester Cathedral	<i>Mozart, Elgar</i>
April 16th	Cirencester Parish Church	<i>The Grand Tour</i>
April 22nd	Coventry Cathedral	<i>St John Passion</i>
May 2nd	St Chad's Shrewsbury	<i>Messiah</i>
May 7th	Pershore Abbey	<i>Schubert, Mozart</i>
May 14th	Bromsgrove Festival	<i>Prom concert</i>
May 28th	English Music Festival	<i>Sullivan, Britten, Delius, Pickard</i>
June 18th	Springhill Barn, Nr Pershore	<i>Baroque for Harpsichord, Flute & da Gamba.</i>
June 26th	Ludlow Festival	<i>The Grand Tour</i>
July 1st	Leominster	<i>Janine Smith, Corinne Frost</i>
July 9th	Malvern Priory	<i>Part, Bach, Vivaldi</i>

Full details of all of these concerts will be included in the next edition of our brochure, which will be sent out in January. They are also on our website **www.eso.co.uk**

The Friends hope to arrange an event, in early summer at the Beauchamp Community, Newlands, Malvern. Watch this space!





ESO Concerts in Care Homes and Hospices

The care home concerts have re-started and there will be a further series before Christmas. These really are wonderful occasions and one can but imagine the feelings of the lady quoted in the feedback that we received in the wake of the most recent series in November:



“On behalf of the residents and staff here at St. Stephens, I would like to say a huge big thank you for a truly wonderful evening. We would so love to hear you play again in the near future, thank you too for finding time to have a natter afterwards with us.

One of our resident’s sister, whose last evening it was with her before returning to Australia the next day, said: ‘It has been a beautiful evening; to see my sister so enjoying herself. The smile on her face and the twinkle in her eyes has touched my heart... a very special last evening it has been, I won’t ever forget it... thank you so, so much’. Many, many thanks”.

Sue Turner Daily Events Co-ordinator
St- Stephens care home

ESO Orchestra Courses

February 19, 20

The Downs, Colwall

Beginners Course

February 26, 27

The Downs, Colwall

Intermediate Course



ESO Intermediate Orchestra Course, October 30, 31 2010

The October courses were of a terrific standard. It really is a treat to see the same faces returning, half-term after half-term, having developed both physically and in their playing. The ESO greatly appreciates the support and help provided by the Downs School staff over what is for them nominally a holiday period; these courses are about far more than playing instruments and the school is the perfect setting for them.

Some of the strings from the Intermediate Orchestra will be accompanying the English String Orchestra in the Schubert *Andante Festivo* at our Christmas Concert at Pershore Number 8.

ESO Friends

Support from the Friends is crucial to the success of our Orchestra courses. It enables us to keep the prices down and provide bursary places where there is a need. The Friends also support our concert in care homes programme and individual elements of the concerts proper - for example, extra rehearsal time for the English Music Festival concert, which features some rarely-performed works and a new commission by the Festival.

Thus the Friends are crucial to the overall business of the ESO.

We are extremely grateful to the stalwart members of the Friends Committee and have sadly accepted the resignation of Peter Sutton, who has been working abroad. We need new members to help administer this separate Registered Charity - for many years the largest single financial contributor to ESO. If you would be interested in becoming a trustee and committee member of the Friends of the ESO please call Alison King **01386 791044**.



Orchestra News

Christine Predota, co-principal bassoon alongside Keith Rubach for many years, announced after the recent concert at Worcester Cathedral that she would be retiring from ESO. Chris has played a full part in ESO activities over the years - not just in our concerts, but also in our

educations schemes and as part of the Wind Quartet for the Care Home concerts. She was also a regular attendee at our Artistic Group meetings and indeed one of her suggested programmes, which became "Mozart - A Life in Letters", is proving to be one of the Group's most popular and lasting ideas.

Thanks for everything, Chris, from everyone that has worked with you and enjoy your retirement.

Natural Progression

In recent times, it has been heartening to see ex-members of the ESO Side-by-Side courses of ten or so years ago becoming members of ESO - among them Amelia Jones, Noriko Tsuzaki, Kevin Webber and Clare Fox. Indeed, one of the players at Gloucester Cathedral last month, Elin White, had featured in the mega-side by side Fantasia concert in the same building in 2008.

It is inevitable that sooner or later one of our ex-Beginners Orchestra members graduate via the Intermediate Orchestra and Side-by-Side to eventually become a regular with ESO, and what a great story that would be - all the way from "aiming for grade 1"....

ESO Marketing Assistant

We are hoping to take on a part-time (16 hours per week) Marketing Assistant in the early New Year. We are presuming nothing - the ideal candidate might be either a recent performing arts graduate looking for paid work experience or an experienced promoter who wishes to work in the world of music.

The thinking is that this will plug what has been a yawning gap in our organisation and also support our PR work. We believe that the right person will grow with the job and perhaps grow out of it.

If you know someone who might be interested then fuller details are available from Peter or Alison on request.

And finally....

First things first - I am sure that everyone involved with ESO would like to wish George Ewart's finger a most speedy and complete recovery! This unfortunate accident means that George will not be with us for any of our December concerts and he will be greatly missed.

Overall, this has been a very positive season for ESO - thanks for sticking with us! The future looks even more interesting.

Have a great Christmas; our very best wishes for the New Year to everyone!

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