

# The Nash

Newsletter of "The Friends of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales" November 2008  
Registered Charity No. 1,053,788

## NYOW Summer Course 2008

**Matthew Jones, Youth Music Manager**

**T**his year's National Youth Orchestra of Wales Summer course promised to be an exciting one. With 46 new members, a CD recording and a first visit to the newly refurbished Town Hall in Birmingham there was a feeling of a new era starting, and having said goodbye to a large number of our experienced and long standing members in 2007 it was time for the young guns to step up to the plate and ensure the NYOW's reputation for high quality music making was continued - they did not disappoint.

The repertoire (Mathias; Celtic Dances, Britten; Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra and Vaughan Williams; London Symphony) may not have been as demanding as the Walton symphony of 2007, but this only meant that our excellent team of tutors demanded even higher standards of the young musicians and they responded with a fantastic work ethic and rehearsal discipline that would put a number of professional orchestras to shame.

Of course, there was still time for a bit of fun throughout the course with particular social highlights being the traditional getting to know you Twmpath, a London inspired fancy dress evening (winners included a Boris Johnson look-alike and a giant Monopoly Board) and a Cabaret Night where even the Welfare Staff, Alex and I got roped in to doing an item. The annual Tutor's Dinner is always a special occasion where the Nash members sit down to a formal dinner with their sectional tutors and thank them for the help, support and tuition they have provided during the initial rehearsal period. This year's dinner was extra special as we were able to welcome back Tony Moore, who after more than 30 years of involvement has retired from the orchestra - it was a fitting opportunity for staff and students alike to thank Tony for all his years of hard work and dedicated service.



With the rehearsal period over it was time to start the busy concert and recording schedule. The now traditional pre-tour concert at Lampeter University was a fantastic way for the orchestra to get into performance mode and was very well attended. Richard Ellis, an ex National Youth Theatre of Wales member who is probably best remembered for the role of Huw in Eastenders read the narration for Britten's Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra in this concert and for the following concert in St Davids Cathedral before the Orchestra settled down to two days of studio recordings at St David's Hall. Recording a CD is a completely different discipline to performing a concert and demands concentration and patience from all involved. The producers were over the moon with the way the sessions went and felt that the final product would turn out to be a competitive rival to recordings made by professional orchestras.

After the recording was finished it was

time to focus on the remaining concert performances. There was a buzz of excitement throughout the orchestra as Cardiff boy and Hollywood star Matthew Rhys joined us to narrate the first Welsh language performance of Britten's Young Person's Guide at the Eisteddfod Concert in Cardiff. The audience at the Town Hall in Birmingham was small but very appreciative, it's a fabulous hall with a great acoustic and we hope that we'll get the opportunity to return in the near future.

The final concert was held at St Asaph Cathedral with another near capacity audience and yet another fine performance from the Orchestra with the Celtic Dances being especially appreciated by Rhiannon and Yvonne Mathias.

All in all this year's course was a great success with tutors, welfare staff, conductor and members combining effectively to make it so. We can now look forward to next year with a return to the prestigious Three Choirs Festival in Hereford and the hope of a tour to South Africa in 2010

### Contact the Friends of NYOW:

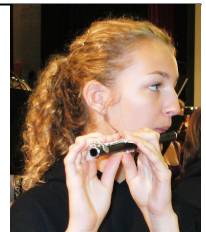
By Post: "Llwynycelyn", Manmoel Crossing, Argoed, Blackwood, Gwent. NP12 0AX  
Telephone: 01495 225019      E-mail: [johnwviolin@btinternet.com](mailto:johnwviolin@btinternet.com)



Members of the bass section, left and flutes and oboes, right

## A Student's view of the NYOW/BBCNOW Collaboration

Cathy Hare, aged 14



I would definitely describe the BBC NOW collaboration with the Nash, which took place in October, as one of the best experiences of my life so far. A number of students from the National Youth Orchestra 2008 were invited to play alongside members of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in the most special concert I have ever performed in. Playing as a part of the Nash is such an amazing experience, it is great to meet other young people who enjoy the same activities and share the same goals. Everyone tackled the exciting repertoire with energy and enthusiasm and we had the opportunity to perform in a prestigious venue.

I was overjoyed when I was selected to play in the collaboration. It was another chance to meet the friends I had made on the summer course, and to play music with the very people everyone in a youth orchestra looks up to – professional musicians!!

Our first rehearsal was extremely nerve wracking - I was really looking forward to meeting the members of the BBC flute section, but terrified of them hearing me make a mistake! In fact, Andy, Tomaka and Eva could not have been nicer to me, they were very encouraging and really inspired me to play my

best. They were brilliant with us, and treated us like equals. They gave me so many helpful tips and helped me to get the best out of the rehearsals. I feel I learned so much from playing alongside them. I was very sad to leave them at the end of the course!

All members of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales are extremely lucky to get the chance to play in a youth orchestra with such high standards, but I don't think any of us were prepared for just how amazing it sounded with the help of the professionals. Even in our first rehearsal the pieces sounded so polished, I couldn't imagine they could sound any better by the concert!

Nothing prepared me for the awesome wall of sound that The collaboration enveloped me the minute our conductor, Paul Daniel, lifted his baton. We are so lucky to be able to play under such a renowned conductor. In a professional orchestra, so much attention is paid to every little detail. Every dynamic or tempo marking is taken into consideration, and it really makes a huge difference to the performance, and the conductor has so much work to do to bring everything together. Paul Daniel worked well with both the BBC and the Nash and got the best out of our

limited rehearsal time.

The concert was in St David's Hall, Cardiff and was broadcast on BBC Radio Wales a few weeks later. The repertoire was varied and challenging. We played Roman Carnival Overture by Berlioz, Capriccio Italien by Tchaikovsky, The Edge of Infinity - a newly commissioned piece from Ben Foster, and finally Respighi's Pines of Rome. I enjoyed all these fantastic pieces, but my favourites had to be the Pines of Rome (It has a brilliant piccolo part!) and The Edge of Infinity. Ben Foster is the composer for Torchwood, and the piece was so atmospheric. We all loved playing it and there was such a buzz in the air. What made it even more special was Ben was in the audience listening.

The collaboration was such a great opportunity for us all, and we really appreciate all the hard work by both the staff at the Nash office and the members of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. I don't know many 14 year olds who have had the chance to go on stage alongside such a brilliant orchestra, and I know that I will never forget what an awe-inspiring experience it was. I hope I get the chance to participate next year!



## BBCNOW and NYOW, St David's Hall, Cardiff

John Roberts

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This year's collaboration between NYOW and BBCNOW was yet another triumph. Those fortunate enough to be part of the large audience at St. David's Hall, Cardiff on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, witnessed some astonishingly assured performances of some very demanding works. The large orchestra, made up from equal numbers of professionals and students, was wonderfully directed by conductor Paul Daniel, famed for his work with Opera North, English National Opera and for conducting the Last Night of the Proms in 2005. The only work where BBCNOW played alone was Tomasi's Trombone Concerto with the amazingly gifted twelve year old, Peter Moore, BBC Young Musician of the Year 2008, as soloist.

The programme opened with a rousing performance of Berlioz's *Roman Carnival Overture*. The tempo at the start was breathtaking, Paul Daniel expecting the highest skill and getting it. Those opening bars, where there was no awareness of there being non-professional players on the stage, set the standard for the rest of the evening. The playing was so crisp and clean. NYOW were given a break for the Tomasi Concerto. In this Peter Moore was given ample opportunity to show how beautifully lyrical the trombone can be. He displayed extraordinary control and stamina for one so young. Before the interval we heard a new commission from Ben Foster, best known as a composer/arranger in film and television. His piece called *The Edge of Infinity* was inspired by witnessing, on a flight from America,

the sun rising over Greenland. The gradual change from darkness into dazzling sunlight was beautifully evoked in this short work for huge orchestra.

At the end of the interval Paul Daniel spoke briefly about the experience of working on this collaboration. He emphasised the uniqueness of the venture, saying that normally students only sat at the back during rehearsals, never performing with the professionals, whereas over the previous two days the members of NYOW had virtually had individual tuition from their professional desk partners over five sessions. He praised the youngsters for their hard work and their talent. He said that because of the short time available he had to work exactly as he does with a purely professional orchestra and NYOW had responded amazingly well.

The second half contained two wonderful orchestral showpieces: Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien* and Respighi's *Pines of Rome*. The Tchaikovsky, from its opening trumpet fanfare to its brilliant tarantella conclusion, was played with such bravura and style, belying the fact that there had only been fifteen hours of rehearsal. The Respighi, a work requiring enormous forces, was so exciting and the last section, with the off stage brass and the entrance of the organ, almost lifted the roof off the building. One left wrapped in the warmth and light of Italy. The only possible conclusion to the evening was a bowl of pasta and a glass or two of Chianti.

## Sponsor a Seat Scheme

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We are always looking for ways in which to increase funding for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales in order for us to continue offering the same high quality experience to students, as well as developing new opportunities for the young musicians of Wales.

In the current financial climate finding this new money is becoming more and more difficult with businesses reluctant to sponsor in large amounts, arts funding continually cut and charitable trusts and foundations overwhelmed with applications.

Because of this we are intending to launch a new initiative in the New Year which would enable businesses or individuals to contribute to the running of the Orchestra in much more manageable amounts. Through the 'Sponsor a Seat Scheme' businesses or individuals could sponsor a tutti orchestral player for £500, the Leader of the Orchestra for £1000 or a full section from £1750, with credits and benefits commensurate to the level of sponsorship.

If any members of the Friends know of anyone who would be interested in sponsoring the 'Nash' in this way, please contact Matthew Jones in the NYOW office on 029 2026 5047.

All the photographs in this edition were taken on the summer course by **Chris Stock** in Lampeter and **Geraint Todd** at St David's Hall

## A Note for Your Diary

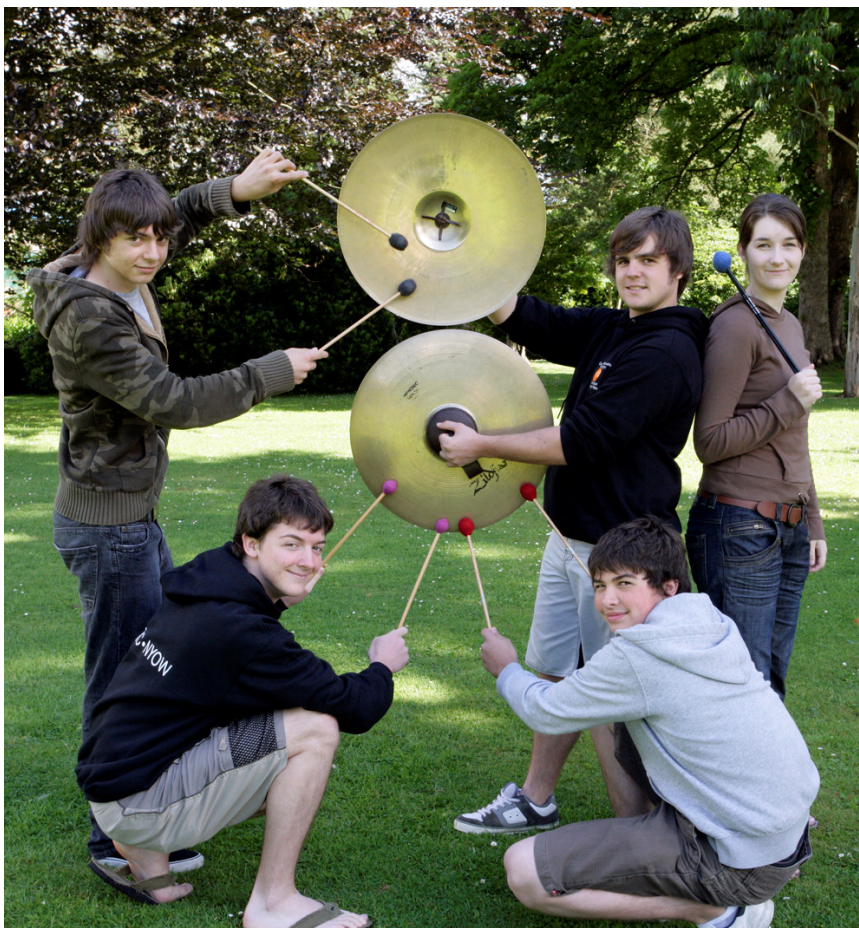
On the 7th of February 2009 there will be a fundraising concert in aid of the Friends of NYOW at Bethany Baptist Church, Rhiwbina in Cardiff. It will be given by the Rhondda Sinfonietta led by George Thomas and conducted by Jeff Lloyd, former leader of NYOW. There are several old Nash members in the orchestra and a cellist who is one of the 2008 NYOW. The programme will include Grieg's *Holberg Suite* and two concertos by J. S. Bach where the soloists will be Elin Adams (oboe) and Jo Parkhurst (violin). The proceeds will be shared with the Bethany Church charity.

Those details again

**7th February**

**Bethany Baptist Church**

126C Heol Uchaf,  
Rhiwbina  
Cardiff. CF14 6SS



The percussion section, above.  
Matthew Rhys and Owain Arwel  
Hughes rehearsing at St David's  
Hall, below

## Corrections

In our last Newsletter there were two errors.

- In our appreciation of Alun Hoddinott we mistakenly said that he lived in Llantrisant whereas as many former Cardiff University students informed us, he used to live in Lisvane.
- Last year's leader was Jonathan Mann, not Gwellian Haf Richards. We offer our sincere apologies to both of them.

## Message from the NYOW Archivist

I have obtained copies of some of the films made about the Nash over the years. They are  
*"Eight days to make an Orchestra"* (1965)  
*"Conducted Tour"* (1973)  
*"Forty years young"* (1985)  
*"It's my life"* (1997)  
*"NYOW 2000"*.

If you would like a copy of any of them on DVD please send a cheque for £12.50 per film (made payable to Kathryn Webber) to 71 West Rd Bridgend CF31 4HQ.

If anyone has a copy of a film made in 1983 for S4C I would be grateful if they would get in touch as this film is missing from our sound archive and I would love to get a copy made.

