

DON'T LOSE THE THREAD

No 42

The Newsletter of The Cobweb Orchestra Autumn 2008

Widening Participation

The Cobweb Orchestra is now an all year round organisation and the summer has seen some great events (rain can't dampen our spirits). However the time has arrived for the regular groups to start the new season of meetings. Last autumn there were three groups and Middlesbrough were starting out with experimental monthly meetings. This year we have six regular groups which all meet weekly (except for Dalston who meet on 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month).

These groups act as a solid foundation for the Cobwebs network. There are lots of positives about these groups and they give players the opportunity to play regularly and build up their skills. They are also great fun. The expansion of the groups was developed so that more players could access them and this has been successful. But the fact is that all groups barely cover their costs. There is one simple solution to this – we need more people to attend more often.

This also applies to events. Most events cover costs and break even but this means that each additional player we can encourage to come along provides a profit which we can use to cover any shortfall in regular group running costs.

The trustees continue to work on promoting the orchestra to encourage new players and members but we need your help. Word of mouth and personal recommendation are often the most effective method. Spread the word about Cobwebs, pass on details about our website and encourage anyone you know with an interest in playing to come along and give it a try. And most importantly come along yourself whenever you can.

Howard Roche - Chair of Trustees

Why and how the programme happens.

People sometimes ask "Why are we playing in the pouring rain to a small family and their dog?" or "How did we get this gig? Durham Cathedral - for free?"

Programming for the rich and varied abilities and aspirations of Cobweb players is a bit like playing chess (at least, the way I play it): an alchemy of serendipity, strategy, tradition and opportunism guided by aesthetics and underpinned by unreasonable optimism.

So, this is how some of the Autumn programme has come about:

Trip to Dachau (serendipity): Violinist Antje Roser-Huckle joined us for a one-off event in Ripon several years ago, then brought her family to Tuscany last year and, in a unguarded moment said "When is Cobwebs coming to Germany....?"

Wind and brass study day (pure opportunism): The wonderful Aurora Wind Quintet just happen to be in the North East giving a concert for Bishop Auckland Music Society on the Friday night and we've managed to persuade some of them to stay on and do some tutoring the next day.

Baroque Ensemble Concert (strategy): If the wind and brass have their own event, it needs to be balanced by something for the strings, and baroque music is very stringy as a rule.

Min-Jin Kym (more opportunism). Andrew Forsyth's article (below) explains how this came about.

Mahler 1 Study Day (strategy): The long-term study of a major work really paid off with Franck's D minor symphony - we've delivered two fantastic performances already - and now we're gradually getting to grips with Mahler.

Bishop Auckland Town Hall concert (tradition). Well, we just do a concert there every Autumn. We have done for the last 14 years but always try something different. Recently, we've been experimenting with early starts aimed at the family audience, and they seem to work well in the dark, damp months. Overtures from opera, concert platform and film is a new idea too.

The People's Choice (unreasonable optimism): We'll just have to hope that the programme which gets voted for is one that the assembled band can actually play. We've always managed in the past, but we usually have a bit more warning about the programme. Whilst on the subject of this event, please encourage everyone you know to vote and make it a huge success.

The DIY residential (more tradition). Those who have come in past years will recommend the mix of orchestral and ensemble playing along with guest tutors offering all manner of unusual sessions.

And the aesthetics? If the programme didn't include opportunities to play music from the whole orchestral repertoire, I'd have tweaked it a bit.

Andy Jackson - Creative Director

Composers And Arrangers On the Move

The C&A Group would like first to say a big thankyou to all instrumentalists who have given their time and boundless enthusiasm in test-driving both arrangements and original compositions.

Over the last year our activities have included: a string writing session with Andy, taking our samples of music along to the Baroque group to try out, a Baroque Project whereby we each took a piece of Baroque music to arrange specifically with Cobwebs in mind, (watch out for this one appearing on your music stands), and our current project is producing pieces featuring soloists with Cobweb-style accompaniments. The latter are original compositions very much reflecting our individual compositional styles. Our next project is to focus on writing for brass instruments, both as a brass ensemble and in the context of the orchestra, and we are looking forward to some collaboration with the new brass group.

Not all people who attend the C&A group choose to contribute to the current project. We have enjoyed playing various pieces over the last year that are the efforts of composers/arrangers simply looking for a platform to discuss and try out their efforts. This is more than welcome, and brings even more variety to our gatherings. We are also beginning to attract players of non-orchestral instruments to the group who are appreciating the opportunity of writing for orchestra, and voicing their enjoyment of the Cobweb experience. We have also had people participate from a distance, joining in our email chatter, and sending their scores along for us to try out.

Having initially met on a fairly regular basis at Stanhope, and occasionally at the Sage, we are now expanding our horizons and travelling further afield. We have recently met at Barbon near Kirkby Lonsdale, and at Mickleton near Middleton-in-Teesdale in August. We hope this will make the C&A activities more accessible for people to participate, whether as a composer/arranger, or as a member of the guinea-pig orchestra.

If any of our activities appeal to you, and you would like to participate, or simply be kept up to date with what we are doing, you can check out the C&A forum on the website, or contact me at lizelleclarinet@dial.pipex.com

Lizelle Kirby

Calling all clarinets!

After many years of hoping someone else would organise a day for clarinets, John Harling and I have finally taken the bit between our teeth and decided to hold one this year. Our first go at a

clarinet choir will take place on Sunday 28th September from 10.30 till 5.00. Our venue is still to be fixed but we expect it to be on the A69 (not in a layby!) west of Newcastle, having mapped our target market and gone for a central location. Cost is £6 to Cobweb members and £8 to non-members. Repertoire will be varied, lunch will be shared and a carsharing plan will be put into operation. If anyone else is interested, please email me at lwearmouth@hotmail.com and I'll get back to you.

Lesley Wearmouth

Brahms Violin Concerto at Tebay & Harelaw

I met Min-Jin Kym at a subscription concert in Kendal early this year. She had just delivered a phenomenal performance of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto and brought the house down having wowed the audience with her lithe and spirited technique.

Andrew had floated the idea of her playing with the Cobweb Orchestra when she had some space in her concert diary and / or was somewhere vaguely in the north of England. She had a poke around the Cobweb website and said she'd love to and now, with a lunchtime concert booked in Kendal Town Hall at 1:00pm on Wednesday 15th October (which you may also like to put in your diaries) offered us the Tuesday and / or Thursday either side of this fixture.

We've said "yes please" to both dates to allow Cobwebbers on both sides of the Pennines to have a chance to play with this quite delightful, engaging and very talented violinist. She is under contract to Sony with whom she has already recorded the Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major op. 61 and his Sonata no 7 in C minor with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Sir Andrew Davis and with Ian Brown on the piano. (recording reference 8697144422). Next on her list is the Brahms Violin Concerto, which is what gives us this splendid opportunity to run through the work and allow her to hone her own interpretation.

You can see her in action and read all about her journey to international fame and acclaim on her website <http://www.min-jin.com/>

This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us but, as space in both venues is limited, it is vital that we know who is coming and so please fill in the application form early to book your place. There will be no extra charge for this rehearsal, just the standard weekly rehearsal charge but, if you have a fantastic time, an extra donation towards the additional costs involved will certainly be welcome!

Andrew Forsyth - (Flute, Tebay & Harelaw)

CONTACTS

www.cobweborchestra.org.uk For information and access to the e-mail group.

General enquiries to:

Liz Carlile,

48 South Road, Norton TS20 2SZ.

Phone 01642 873973

E-mail: liz.carlile@ntlworld.com

Mobile: 07914 956786

Specific enquiries about regional events to:

Andy Jackson, 13 West Road, Bishop Auckland DL14 7PP.

Phone/fax: 01388 602436.

E-mail: andy.jackson0@talk21.com

Other useful contacts:

David Hutton (Northumberland Co-ordinator) 0191 3344235 david.hutton@cem.dur.ac.uk

Ian Potts (Tebay Co-ordinator) 01768 351934 musicianpotts@aol.com

Rebecca Pedlow (Middlesbrough Co-ordinator) Rebecca.pedlow@gmail.com

Catherine Holbrook (York Co-ordinator) 07811 772 332 catherineholbrook@yahoo.co.uk

Peter Wood (Dalston Co-ordinator) 07720783225 peter@peterwood01.wanadoo.co.uk

Lee Fairlie (Cobfriends Chair) 0191 3847464 Leefairlie@aol.com

Howard Roche (Chair of the Trustees) 01207 570003 rocke5@rock.com

Trustees

If you have ideas or concerns about The Orchestra, please contact one of the Trustees, whose main areas of interest are listed below.

Howard Roche, Chair, rocke@beeb.net ; overall ethos and direction

Sue Baker, Vice-chair, suebaker@ktdbroadband.com ; overall ethos and direction

Jean Ord, Treasurer, ord.j@sky.com ; finance

Lesley Wearmouth, Secretary, lwearmouth@hotmail.com ; membership

Anita Arris, anita@aarris.freeseerve.co.uk ; liaison with other bodies

Caroline Dunn, caroline@carolinedunn.com ; fundraising

Andrew Forsyth, andrew@weasdale.com ; overseas trips, overall ethos and direction

Peter Fuller, peterfuller8@btinternet.com ; finance, human resources, programming

Toby Lipman, tobylipman@btinternet.com ; programming

Shirley Ross, hartside@clara.co.uk ; funding applications

Richard Stamp, richard.stamp@btopenworld.com ; library

David Wood, dave@davewood.clara.co.uk ; marketing, concert promotion, archives

Cobfriends committee members are:

Northumberland - Sandy Alden, Christine Oakes, Sheila Ryan

Cumbria – Sue Baker, Terry Mullett, Julie Ratcliffe, Ruth Wood

Durham – Pauline Holbrook, Lee Fairlie, Howard Roche

Cleveland – John Carter

Others – Edinburgh, Alison Cairns

THE COBWEB ORCHESTRA

Diary Autumn 2008(as at 31.08.08 - look out for other events arranged at short notice)

September

Thursday-Sunday 11th-14th Trip to Bavaria

Saturday 20th Wind and brass study day - Sedgefield Parish Hall 10.30am - 3.30pm £12/9

Saturday 20th Baroque group concert - Sedgefield Church. Rehearsal 12.00-4.00pm (Baroque group) 4.00-6.00pm (all strings). £6/4.50. Concert 7.30pm. Tickets £5/4

Saturday 27th Leader training (10.30am - 4.30pm) and GPO (1.30-4.00pm). Bedlington Community Centre. Free

Sunday 28th Clarinet study day. Venue TBA. 10.30am-5.00pm. £8/6

Tuesday 30th Anthony Sargent conducts Schubert's 5th Symphony at Newbiggin Sports and Leisure Centre. 7.30-9.30pm. £4/3

October

Thursday 2nd Anthony Sargent conducts Schubert's 5th Symphony at Annfield Plain Community Centre. 7pm-9pm. £4/3

October 11th Tebay group 10th birthday party. Appleby Public Hall. 3.00-8.00pm. Cost TBC.

Tuesday 14th Brahms Violin Concerto with international soloist Min-Jin Kym at Tebay. 7.30-9.30pm. £4/3

Thursday 16th Brahms Violin Concerto with Min-Jin Kym at Annfield Plain. 7.00-9.00pm. £4/3

Sunday 19th Mahler symphony No. 1 study day. Wylam Institute. 11am - 5pm. £10/7.50

November

Saturday 1st Autumn music day at The Sage Gateshead. Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 3 with Stephanie Cant. 1.30-8.00pm. £26.45/20.45

Sunday 2nd Afternoon concert at Bishop Auckland Town Hall. Rehearsal 12.00-3.00pm. £6/4.50. Concert 4.00pm. Tickets £5/4

Sunday 9th Beginners' Day at Earswick Village Hall. 11.00am- 4pm. £8/6

Sunday 16th Baroque Group/Composers and Arrangers in Stanhope Church Hall 10am – 1pm Baroque Group rehearsal. £4/3. Composers and Arrangers meeting. £10. 2pm-5pm GPO (GPO free)

Tuesday 18th Anthony Sargent conducts Schubert's 5th Symphony at Tebay Methodist Church Hall. 7.30pm-9.30pm. £4/3

Saturday 22nd "People's Choice" concert at Consett Empire. Rehearsal 2.00-6.00pm. £6/4.50. Concert 7.00pm. Tickets £7/6

Saturday-Sunday 29th – 30th DIY residential. Ridley Hall. 10.00am Sat - 4.00pm Sun. £25 - £95

December

Saturday 6th Leader training. Venue TBA. 10.30pm - 4.30 am. Free.

Advance notice of 2009 dates

February Saturday 7th Spring music day at The Sage

Saturday 28th. Frank Robson's 85th Birthday Party. Heighington

March Saturday 7th. Mahler's 2nd Symphony study day with Cleveland Philharmonic Choir. Middlesborough.

March Saturday 21st. Concert. Wansbeck Finale Celebration.

April Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th Sedbergh Residential.

April Sunday 19th. Concert. Franck's symphony in D minor. Middlesborough.

Please enrol for events in good time. It makes Andy's life so much easier.

Please remember to check the website (www.cobweborchestra.org.uk) for any late changes to events.

The higher price is for non-members of The Cobweb Orchestra; the second, reduced, price is for members of The Cobweb Orchestra.

THE COBWEB ORCHESTRA
Autumn Term 2008
Dates for the regular groups

Newbiggin, Northumberland

Tuesdays at 7.30pm in Newbiggin Sports and Leisure Centre, Woodhorn Road, Newbiggin, NE64 6HG

First meeting	September 16 th
Half term	October 28 th
Last meeting	November 25 th

Harelaw, Co, Durham

Please note the new venue.

Thursdays at 7pm in Annfield Plain Community Centre, Greencroft, Stanley, DH9 8PP

First meeting	September 4 th
Half term	October 30 th
Last meeting	December 18 th

Middlesbrough, Teesside

Mondays at 7.30pm in the Crypt of Middlesbrough Town Hall, Middlesbrough

First meeting	September 15 th
Half term	October 27 th
Last meeting	December 15 th

York, Yorkshire

Thursdays at 7.30pm in Earswick Village Hall, Earswick Chase, Earswick, YO32 9FY

First meeting	September 4 th
Half term	October 30 th
Last meeting	December 18 th

Dalston, Cumbria

Usually 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 7.30pm in Dalston Victory Hall, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria

First meeting	September 8 th
Then	September 22 nd
	September 29 th
	October 13 th
	October 27 th
	November 10 th
	November 24 th
Last meeting	December 8 th

Tebay, Cumbria

Tuesdays at 7.30pm in Tebay Methodist Church Hall, Tebay

First meeting	September 16 th
Half term	October 28 th
Last meeting	December 2 nd

