

Press release
31 January, 2013

Free concert series showcases musical starlets

A free concert series has been launched in Bristol, bringing contemporary music to the public and showcasing the musical stars of the future.

Students from the University of Bristol are hoping to fill the void left by the cancellation of the popular Elektrostatic Festival at Colston Hall and reignite the public's interest in contemporary music.

The Contemporary Music Venture (CMV) is a series of four concerts which promise to combine exciting premieres from some of the country's top music students with some well-known contemporary classics.

The first concert in the series is being held at 8pm on Wednesday, 13 February, and features music for soprano, clarinet and piano players, including a tribute to Jonathan Harvey - one of the foremost British contemporary composers, who was working at the cutting edge of electronic and instrumental music until he died last month.

All the student pieces have been specially commissioned for the series, giving composers an insight into how the professional world of music operates and the chance to work in collaboration with fellow students.

CMV is the brainchild of PhD students Arthur Keegan-Bole and David Fay, who wanted to share contemporary music with a wide audience outside the University. They started the project in 2011 as a stand-alone series of four concerts but, thanks to its success, the concert series has now become an annual event.

David, 24, who is studying a PhD in Musicology (the study of music and its history), said: "I feel that contemporary music isn't presented as well as it should be. We want this series to change that – we want people to be engaged with the performance, hopefully reaching an audience who wouldn't normally attend concerts like this.

"This will be the first time in many years that the Elektrostatic Festival hasn't been held which means that there will be a lack of contemporary music on offer to the public in Bristol. We've really put the audience at the heart of each performance and hope they'll enjoy it."

Arthur, who studies Composition, was frustrated that the music he was composing as part of his studies was rarely performed, let alone in a professional environment.

The 26-year-old, who came to Bristol as an undergraduate before also completing a master's degree, said: "Normally to get pieces played you have to ask friends to do it as a favour, taking up as little of their time as possible. There aren't many opportunities for work to be practiced and performed at a well-attended concert.

“The ethos of the Contemporary Music Venture is to provide this professional context for fledgling composers and performers with the final result being a more exciting and higher quality concert of contemporary music than is on offer elsewhere in Bristol. The concerts are free and last an hour to make them as inclusive as possible.

“The concerts contribute in a big way to students’ portfolios as we create professional standard recordings helping those involved apply for other opportunities.”

The following CMV concerts are free and take place between 8pm and 9pm, on the following dates:

- Wednesday, 13 February, St Paul’s Church, St Paul’s Road, Bristol, BS8 1LR (behind the Victoria Rooms)
- Tuesday, 19 March, Victoria Rooms, Queen’s Road, Bristol, BS8 1SA
- Wednesday, 1 May, Victoria Rooms, Queen’s Road, Bristol, BS8 1SA

A fourth concert, affiliated with CMV, is taking place at in Colston Hall 2 on Sunday, 19 May and will feature student compositions alongside work from British composer, pianist and conductor Graham Fitkin and John Pickard, Professor of Composition and Applied Musicology at the University of Bristol.

For further information, please see: <http://cmvconcerts.weebly.com/>

-ENDS-

Notes to the editor:

David and Arthur are available for interview. David’s mobile number is 07851 351473 and Arthur’s on 07927 090568.

A photo of David Fay and Arthur Keegan-Bole is available to download from here:

https://fluff.bris.ac.uk/fluff/u1/inpaw/TiBO5I0jlwj_UD6vsPfE9QD0i/

A photo of David and Arthur with the three students who are performing in the first concert is available to download from here:

https://fluff.bris.ac.uk/fluff/u2/inpaw/zb9OFXhi6cF9_laii5xQswD0X/

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