

Performing Opportunities

Today's music profession offers a greater variety of opportunities and challenges than ever before. To reflect this diversity, the RCM ensures that students will have experienced a range and quality of training that is second to none. For all musicians, creativity of outlook, a broad and visionary approach to the repertoire, innovation in programming, initiative and independence of musical personality are crucial. No musician anywhere can now exist in a vacuum: collaborative skills and a lively knowledge of styles from Monteverdi to Mark-Anthony Turnage, John Bull to Keith Jarrett have to be part of the deal.

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In an atmosphere of mutual support and encouragement, you will learn from your fellow students as well as from a professorial team of enormous breadth and distinction, representing a wide spectrum of performing traditions: these are musicians who really get out there and perform and who can tell you what it's like to do so.

Communication is the key: the RCM is a place where the academic and theoretical are valued, but where performance is central. Through faculty classes, masterclasses and unrivalled solo, ensemble and concerto opportunities, the concert platform will become a place you inhabit with ease, and from where, having discovered your musical voice, you will learn to touch and move an audience in a diverse range of situations and settings.

The RCM has built dynamic, enduring relationships with many great conductors. Bernard Haitink, Andrew Litton, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Sir Roger Norrington are all regular visitors, coming to the College for a full week to rehearse and perform. Their enthusiasm to return is evidence of the outstanding level of technical and artistic distinction they attain. In November 2009 we look forward to welcoming Vladimir Jurowski for his first visit to the RCM.

Students regularly participate in partnership schemes with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and Florilegium, playing in rehearsals and receiving advice and coaching. Sectional rehearsals for the large ensembles are often directed by specialists from one of the London orchestras, many of whom are members of the professorial staff.

Autumn 2008 also sees the beginning of a major new partnership with English National Opera, with undergraduate students being invited to rehearsals and to take part in masterclasses.

Orchestras and large ensembles

From the first term, undergraduates take part in faculty-based ensembles, such as String Band, Brass and Wind Ensembles, as well as receiving regular orchestral sectional rehearsals. These consolidate the fundamental skills of ensemble playing, and prepare students for participation in orchestral projects, which vary between regular repertoire sessions and more intensively rehearsed concerts. The RCM Symphony Orchestra works regularly on a variety of projects with conductors of international stature. There are opportunities for the best students to perform concertos, and for composers to have works performed. Both performance and composition opportunities at this level are decided by audition.

Other ensembles rehearsing and performing throughout the year include the Baroque Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, two Big Bands, Brass Band, Chamber Choir and the New Perspectives Ensemble, performing contemporary repertoire. These ensembles are conducted by resident RCM professors and students, and by distinguished guests.

2008-2009 Highlights

- » **Symphony Orchestra concerts in London and Cambridge with Sir Roger Norrington, John Wilson, Martin André, Gordan Nikolitch and Bernard Haitink**
- » **A series of concerts by our junior orchestra, the RCM Sinfonietta, conducted by Jacques Cohen, Robin O'Neill and Peter Stark, including music by Haydn, Brahms, Vaughan Williams, Tchaikovsky, Lyadov, Shostakovich, Rachmaninov, Ravel, and world premières of compositions by RCM students**
- » **Fully-staged productions of Mozart's *La finta giardiniera* and Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* conducted by Michael Rosewell in the Britten Theatre**
- » **Performances of Stockhausen as part of the major South Bank Centre festival, *Klang***

- » **Bach *Cantatas*, directed by Ashley Solomon at St. John's, Smith Square**
- » **Rising Stars chamber concerts at Cadogan Hall**
- » **Junior and Senior Big Band concerts directed by Mark Armstrong**
- » ***Spontaneous*, a day of improvisation workshops and performances directed by Mark Armstrong**
- » **A series of five chamber concerts as part of the Philharmonia Orchestra's festival, *Vienna, City of Dreams***
- » **New Perspectives Ensemble in performances of new student compositions and works by Holliger, Grisey and Stockhausen**
- » **RCM Brass Ensemble, conducted by Nigel Black, in works by Richard Strauss**
- » **RCM Wind Ensemble conducted by Janet Hilton in works by Farkas, Mozart and Françaix**
- » **Chamber Choir, directed by Ben Parry in works by Brahms and Schubert**
- » **RCM Percussion Ensemble directed by David Hockings in works by Ligeti and Varèse**
- » **Recitals by the Chilingirian, Sacconi and Bochmann Quartets**
- » **The second RCM International Festival of Viols**
- » ***España* – a festival of guitar music**
- » **Fully-staged production of Handel's *Alessandro* as part of the London Handel Festival**
- » **Haydn Chamber Music Festival including piano trios and string quartets**
- » **Elliott Carter 100th Birthday celebration**



Simon Channing
Head of Performance



Florence Ambrose
Performance Manager

Chamber Music

Chamber music is a vital part of the College's musical life, and all students receive free chamber music tuition from a professor of their choice as well as members of the Chilingirian and Sacconi Quartets. There are many concert opportunities for students, both internally and externally, including at least three lunchtime chamber concerts each week, as well as frequent evening chamber music platforms. Pianists and singers are actively involved in recitals and chamber music. Students are encouraged to put on their own concerts and are given support and advice on practicalities including publicity and advertising, platform presentation, programming and programme notes. There are additional performing opportunities for everyone in weekly faculty classes and frequent masterclasses with distinguished visiting artists.

Jazz

Jazz and improvisation form a growing and highly energised area of the College's contemporary work. Big Band performances, small band coaching and one-to-one lessons in jazz are all available, and regular top-level workshops and performances are held both within the RCM and externally. Visiting directors of the Big Band have included Stan Sulzmann and Eddie Harvey. Courses in jazz history and classes in improvising and ear training are available regardless of your previous experience. Advanced jazz performers may wish to embark on more intensive training with the possibility to specialise in jazz later in your career. There are also opportunities through the Woodhouse Professional Development Centre (see page 40) for paid jazz gigs in a range of professional contexts.

Other avenues

In addition to the regular curriculum, there is plenty of opportunity to get involved in areas of music which may be quite new to you. For example, with the RCM Gamelan you can study traditional techniques and repertoire, or work with composers on new material.