

GSMD Annual Viola Day 25th October 2017 Report

Guildhall School of Music and Drama held its annual Viola Day this year on Wednesday 25th October 2017, in the Silk Street Music Hall. It was a day celebrating all things viola with members of GSMD and a wonderful number of viola enthusiasts of all ages from across the country. As always, the day was packed full of events both familiar and with some new additions!

Masterclasses and workshops

We were delighted to welcome Jade McCarthy, a 16-year old violist originally from Bournemouth, to Guildhall where she played Glazunov's Elogy beautifully in a masterclass with GSMD's Head of Chamber Music **Matthew Jones**. **German Clavijo**, of the LSO and Liceu Opera Barcelona, put Guildhall students through their paces in orchestral excerpts. We were also delighted to welcome back once again **Simon Rowland-Jones** for a masterclass: works by Enescu, Rebecca Clarke and Hindemith were wonderfully explored.

A new addition this year was a sight-reading session for all participants with LSO's **Robert Turner**. Gathered in a circle, a large viola section was treated to en-mass sight-reading, getting a real feel for how it works in an orchestra section. Robert's talk on the history, uses and techniques for sight-reading were a real eye-opener for everyone involved! We especially enjoyed the last excerpt from Star Wars – much harder than it looks on paper!

Chamber music, arrangements and contemporary works

As always, all the Guildhall students got involved performing viola ensemble works and arrangements, receiving coaching from Matthew Jones leading up to the day itself. They very much enjoyed getting to grips with a wide variety of works: Schubert's *Erllkonig* for five violas; Mozart's G Minor String Quintet; String Fellow Diogo Ramos' world premiere of his own cleverly crafted arrangement of the second movement of Schubert's Rosamunde String Quartet for four violas. The much loved works by Frank Bridge and York Bowen were contrasted by three contemporary works by composers Patrick Harrex and John Hawkins (two sextets by each and a duo by John). We were delighted to welcome both to Guildhall to listen! Overall we had a busy day, in which both students and members of the public learnt a huge variety of things about viola and music. A big thank you to everyone who took part and we look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Henrietta Hill, GSMD Viola Strings Fellow.

Schubert's famous Lied *The Erlkönig* performed by GSMD students as a hard to find arrangement for



Viola Quintet by Andrew Levin in the opening Student Concert for Viola Day. All the students took part in various viola ensembles throughout the day. Clockwise: Jeremy Tonelli-Sippel, James Cullen, Agnieszka Zyniewicz, Diogo Ramos, Henrietta Hill

Who wins this argument? Henrietta Hill and Kirsty Clark in John Hawkins wonderful duo *Gestures*.

