

British Viola Society November newsletter:

For the past few weeks the RAM has been a busy place. Several orchestral projects have taken place this term. We were all auditioned in the first week of term to allocate our seating and whilst this can be a little daunting – it provides essential orchestral audition experience. So far this term the orchestral projects have been nicely varied. The repertoire has included pieces such as 'Ein Heldenleben' by Strauss and Bruckner's 4th Symphony. Next week the final project of term will be Michael Tippett's 'The Rose Lake'.

In early November we were visited by the fantastic violist Lawrence Power. During his visit he adjudicated the 'Wilfred Parry Brahms Prize.' This is a prize given to the best performance of a Brahms string sonata and is open to the whole string faculty. I'm delighted to say that Alinka Rowe, a second-year undergraduate violist, was awarded first place following her wonderful performance of the Viola Sonata in F minor.

Following the competition, Lawrence Power gave a masterclass on the works. Here are the thoughts of Alinka following her class:

"I really enjoyed taking part in the Wilfred Parry prize, and found the masterclass and feedback that Lawrence Power gave really useful. He focused on being aware of the context in which Brahms wrote his sonatas and encouraged everyone to read his correspondence with Joseph Joachim, the great violinist of the 19th century and close friend of Brahms. Lawrence Power also encouraged us to listen to recordings of Joachim and his students in order to be informed of the sound world Brahms was composing for, focusing particularly on the importance of portamento as an essential part of expression."

Edward Keenan
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