

The Musicians Union

It is inevitable that AIC must have some kind of alliance with the fledgling Musicians Union of Ireland. Recently John McLachlan met Greg Boland, president of the Union, and a possible way of creating a useful working alliance was decided (more details at

the AGM). Meanwhile, members of AIC can decide for themselves if and when they want to become ordinary members of the MUI. The contact for that is John Swift, Musicians Union of Ireland, SIPTU, Liberty Hall, 8586404 or email musicians@siptu.ie

CMC Web site

While it is hardly 'breaking news', it is worth reminding composers of the re-launch of CMC's web site which took place last April. It is now hugely improved, with an array of new features to showcase Irish contemporary music. By upgrading the facilities and the interactivity of the site, it demonstrates to Irish web browsers and the world that Irish artists excel not just in rock and pop! The major areas of improvement are:

- Greatly improved searching of the score collection
- News updates/calendar of events

- Video and audio interviews clips
 - Faster updates of composer info
 - Secure shopping facilities for online purchase of CDs / publications.
 - An 'Education and Outreach' section for school use
- The site is worth regular revisits and exploration, for content ranging from opinion to news to information, and must surely rank as one of the best Music Information Centre sites in the world, if not *the* best. At the time of writing, the opportunities page contains details of two very generous 'per cent for art' schemes in Sligo and Mayo.

Opportunities

Please note that two competitions follow with many similar details, therefore please mark clearly which competition you are entering.

Mostly Modern/IMRO Young Irish Composers' Competition 2004

Prize: €400

Deadline: Scores to be sent to the Association of Irish Composers not later than December 5th 2003

Age limit: The composer must be Irish born or resident, and under 30 by the deadline date

CONDITIONS

Instrumentation: Flute (may double piccolo/alto fl) and tape

Duration: Not more than five minutes

Entry fee: €10, payable to the Association of Irish Composers

Other conditions

The piece must be previously unperformed and unrecorded. Scores to be under pseudonym, with a sealed envelope containing the composer's real name, address and date of birth. Year of composition must be marked on the score. Midi realisations of scores may be included with materials. Scores and other materials will not be returned.

Other details

The winning work will receive a performance by Susan Doyle in the Mostly Modern Series on Thursday January 22nd, at the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, Dublin. The judges reserve the right to make no award if the entries are deemed to be of insufficient standard.

AIC/Mostly Modern International Composition Competition 2004

Prize: €650

Deadline: Scores to be sent to the Association of Irish Composers not later than December 5th 2003

CONDITIONS

Instrumentation: Flute (may double piccolo/alto fl) with or without tape

Duration: Not more than six minutes

Entry fee: €10, payable to the Association of Irish Composers

Age limit: No age or nationality restrictions

Other conditions and details: see young Irish composers' competition

Address for entries/information: Association of Irish Composers, C/O IMRO, Copyright House, Pembroke Row, Dublin 2, Ireland. E-mail info@composers.ie Web www.composers.ie

Other competitions

2004 edition of the Luxembourg Sinfonietta composition competition: **Deadline:** 15 Jan 2004

10-15 minute piece for 14-20 piece ensemble for details see www.luxembourg-sinfonietta.lu

International Wind Ensemble/Concert Band Composition Contest- Harelbeke - Belgium 2004

Details on <http://www.ccharelbeke.com>,

Studio for new music (NY) composition competition

Details on www.studiofornewmusic.com/EcardOffer.htm



aic news
association of irish composers

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AIC AGM notice

Please make a note in your diary: the next AIC AGM will be held in CMC, 19 Fishamble St, Temple Bar, Dublin on Wed Oct 15th at 3pm. The agenda will include:

- AIC's relationship with the Musician's Union
- Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts
- Strategy for 2004

If you have a topic you wish to see discussed please email it or post it, ahead of the meeting, to AIC.

New commissioning rates

The AIC and CMC have updated the commissioning rates for 2003-4, it may be useful to keep this edition of the newsletter as a guide to any forthcoming negotiations readers may be enjoying(!) For 2004-5 simply adjust upwards by whatever the inflation rate is (probably around 4%). The fees and categories given below should be regarded as a useful indicator rather than a prescribed structure. The lower end of each band is intended for less established composers; senior composers will command a higher fee and, in such cases, the upper figure should be taken as a median rather than a maximum.

Category of work	fee per minute (Euro)
Solo works <i>(excluding works for piano, harp and keyboard)</i>	€215-€300
Keyboard: piano, organ, harpsichord, etc; harp	€230-€365
Chamber works; à capella choral works <i>(2-9 players, SATB and choral works accompanied by a solo instrument)</i>	€230-€455
Large chamber ensemble <i>(10-20 players)</i>	€325-€510
Chamber orchestra; brass band	€450-€700
Symphony orchestra; symphonic wind ensemble	€630-€885
Orchestral works with soloist(s) and/or chorus	€725-€990
Electronic music <i>(compositional element only)</i>	€310-€460
Instrumental/vocal works with tape <i>(fees as for the appropriate category of instrumental work with a further 50% for preparation of the tape.)</i>	
Opera, music theatre or dance <i>(fees as for the instrumental forces employed with an additional appropriate amount for production of a piano score.)</i>	

There are other important guidelines concerning the terms under which commissions should be agreed and it is advisable to read these closely when a commission is coming up. They can be found on the AIC and CMC web sites.

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Reflections on the Irish Composition Summer School

This July saw the 21st Irish Composition Summer School take place in the Irish World Music Centre and Centre for Informatics and Electronics, University of Limerick. I attended the school three years running ('00-'02) and at risk of preaching to the converted, would like to extol its virtues.

The School always attracts a small but diverse group of composers, ranging from secondary school pupils and postgrads to those returning to composition after many years. In recent years the number of younger composers attending has been increasing and this can only be a good thing. The original attraction to the School for me was the chance to be immersed in composition for a fortnight. Of course as Feldman observed, composition cannot really be taught, but it can be demonstrated; and the Summer School functions in just this way. The taught element focuses on general questions of aesthetics and practicalities of notation and presentation, while alongside this there is an attempt to introduce students to elements they may not have had the opportunity to study before, such as acoustics and electronics. The classes are broad yet concise overviews, but the real learning for me is in the apprenticeship element, where students have the chance to take their work to a variety of tutors. This is the element most encouraged by the



Paul Roe, Annette Cleary and others at the Irish Composition Summer School



Participating at the Summer School, left to right: Paul Roe, John Prendergast, Nicola LeFanu, Annette Cleary, Martin O'Leary and Garrett Sholdice.

directors. Take full advantage of the lecturers and guest composers and revel in the conflicting opinions and solutions you will reap, because no-one will have the same answer to your questions—I'd go as far as to suggest that the more there is composerly consensus on an issue, the less it is interesting! But these questions always need to be asked, and personally speaking I prefer to have a variety of opinions to play with before generating my own.

Besides the professionals, the other source of knowledge and wisdom is a little more insidious, but ultimately easier to assimilate: some of the best arguments and moments of clarity were the conversations with other students in the café or pub, sometimes just lying on the grass ranting about old Karlheinz. Don't be fooled by that idyllic picture though; moments such as those were snatched from hours spent wrestling with the eraser; although students are advised to have their piece well begun before commencing the course, few do, and two weeks is a tight deadline on top of lectures. Do as I say, not as I did. Students quickly become comfortable with the lecturers and no one is left feeling that silly questions will be shot down. The learning curve can be steep but only as steep as the student wants and there's always a helping hand. The performers are generally the source of greatest anxiety for students as there is generally little opportunity for young composers to interact with professional players: this is the other gap that the Summer School bridges. Each year the course focuses on a small vocal/instrumental group (occasionally a

single performer). The performers in the first week give invaluable masterclasses on writing for their instrument—typically a Q&A session with plenty of interaction—in the second they return for the performance/recording of the pieces. The hardest and best lessons are learned in this last part, where the pieces first come under the eye of the performers; notation that made perfect sense to the composer is shown up for all its ambiguities and double meanings. But mistakes are the best teachers, and this is the place where they can be



Summer School students Maja Mitrovic and David Coonan

Autumn series 2003

This year AIC's Autumn Series will feature among its attractions the major new music specialists Ian Pace and Alistair Bamford. Also creating excitement will be the new music collective EAR (that is, Electro Acoustic Revue), and a trio consisting of three very established

safely made: there is too much in modern musical culture that demonises mistakes to the point where some would rather not attempt than risk erring—by this is born an inwardly spiralling conservatism. The recording sessions also give valuable insight into the working practices of the performers, who are always quick with advice on how to write more practically while not sacrificing the original idea.

I was drawn back to the Summer School each year because I believed it still had something to teach me. In many cases it was to have the chance of working with a particular performer or composer, but underscoring that is that the Summer School is fun—good stress—and a place to meet other composers in a country where concert intervals form our only socialising nexus. The music I wrote on these occasions has been of variable quality; and although that seemed important at the time, the positive changes to my writing in the wake of each course are the true end-products.

Scott McLaughlin

The ICSS is funded by IMRO and The Arts Council. The next summer school will take place in Maynooth University in August 2004.

soloists: Riona O Duinnín, Geraldine O'Doherty and Nancy Johnson. A great line-up, but what of the composers and the pieces? Well, here's a list of highlights (each programme contains additional items):

Alistair Bamford (baritone), Nora Mulder (pf)
2nd November

Harrison Birtwistle - *Prologue to Punch and Judy*

Wolfgang Rihm - *Apokryph*

Luigi Dallapiccola - *Rencesvals*

Jennifer Walshe - *Moving in/Love song/City front garden with old men*

EAR

9th November

Interactive live and tape music from Victor Lazzarini (world premiere), Brian Carty (world premiere), David Stalling (world premiere) and Fergal Dowling, among others.

Riona O Duinnín (fl), Geraldine O'Doherty (hp), Nancy Johnson (va)

16th November

Toru Takemitsu - *And then I knew 'twas Wind*

Eric Sweeney - *Walk/Don't Walk (a.o.)*

Ian Pace (solo pf)

23rd November

Raymond Deane - *Rahu's Rounds*

Michael Finnissy - *Alkan/Paganini*

Karlheinz Stockhausen - *Klavierstück XII (a.o.)*