

International Debussy Symposium / Symposium international Debussy

“DEBUSSY TEXT AND IDEA” / “DEBUSSY : LE TEXTE ET L’IDÉE”

Thursday 12th – Friday 13th April 2012

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Claude Debussy (1862–1918) Gresham College and the Institute of Musical Research of the University of London (IMR), The Royal College of Music and the School of Modern Languages at Bangor University present an international symposium centred on the links between Claude Debussy and the literary and visual arts. Other collaborators in this initiative are the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies of the University of London (IGRS) and the Literature and Music Research Group of the Open University Faculty of Arts.

The Symposium will run over two days and take place in Central London at Gresham College, Barnard's Inn Hall, Holborn, London EC1N 2HH.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Presentations centred on the music of Debussy with textual associations are warmly invited from scholars worldwide as are papers concerned with his associations with the visual arts and the contextual ideas surrounding the composer's work. The symposium aims to bring together musical and literary scholars as well as those in the visual arts. Presentations in these fields do not need specifically to enter into detail of musical analysis; papers essentially on the literature rather than the music are particularly welcome. Papers should be presented in English, and should last no longer than 20 minutes (inclusive of musical excerpts and/or performance, where relevant). The symposium will encourage extended discussions surrounding each of the presentations. Audio and video equipment will be on hand as well as a grand piano.

Six sessions will focus on the following themes:

‘Text without text’ (pieces which are closely linked with literary texts and visual imagery but do not present them: e.g. certain of the Piano Préludes; the *Prélude à L’après-midi d’un faune*, the *Images*)

‘From Text to Stage’ (issues involving Debussy's stage works from all points of view including visual and production aspects)

‘Text into Song’ (Debussy's *Méodies*)

‘From Text to Performance’ (issues of Performance Practice in works of Debussy with textual associations)

‘Discarded Text’ (presentations concerned with the many unfinished projects of the composer)

‘Beyond Text’ (presentations concerned with wider contexts, ideas and particularly the visual arts).

The symposium will focus on the works of Debussy and his texts and the ideas behind them. Papers on the more general literary and artistic movements are also welcome. Presentations on Debussy's influence on, or associations with, other composers are beyond the remit of this symposium as are analytical and theoretical papers which are not in some way centred on literary texts or visual comparisons.

Proposals following the above guidelines should be submitted in English in a font size no smaller than 10 point with a separate cover-page including the name, contact details and institutional affiliation (where relevant) of the proposer. (Papers will be assessed anonymously so names and affiliations should be restricted to the cover page). This should be followed by a brief abstract of the proposed paper (300-400 words), and a shortlist of previous publications. A concise bibliography should be appended, ignoring the principal general works on Debussy, and the whole (excluding cover page) should not exceed 2 pages of A4 paper. Deadline for receipt of submissions 15 June 2011.

Please submit proposals by email, in an attachment including your full name and contact details, to Mrs Valerie James: valerie.james@sas.ac.uk.

Further information

Gresham College

For over 400 years Gresham College has provided free public lectures in the City of London. Named after Sir Thomas Gresham, who built the Royal Exchange, it is modelled on the Antwerp Bourse. Sir Thomas (1519–1579) traded cloth between England and the Low Countries.

Sir Thomas bequeathed money to his College, and today holders of the original Chairs in Astronomy, Divinity, Geometry, Law, Music, Physic and Rhetoric continue to deliver the Gresham Lectures. Sir Thomas had required the lectures to be not only in Latin but also in English and he used his will to crack the Oxbridge oligopoly by bribing seven professors to give lectures to the public, in English. The first holder of the Gresham Chair of Music, John Bull, was appointed by Queen Elizabeth I in 1596, and has been more recently succeeded by a series of eminent Professors including John Taverner, Walford Davies, Iannis Xenakis and John Dankworth. The current Gresham Professor of Music is Christopher Hogwood.

Gresham College was founded shortly after the Collège de France in Paris, the *Grand établissement* created in 1530 as an alternative to the Sorbonne. Neither institution awards degrees. Rather is Gresham College about ‘new learning’. Sir Thomas felt strongly that this ‘new learning’ should be available to those who worked – merchants, tradesmen and ships’ navigators – instead of solely to gentlemen scholars.

Each year over 20,000 people come to the College’s 150 lectures and over a million Gresham lectures are downloaded via the Internet. In an age concerned with making money from intellectual property, Gresham College’s ‘impact’ agenda encourages the free exchange of ideas and is one of the most potent intellectual houses on the internet. Recently described as “The Modern Tudor Open University”, its emphasis is on sharing knowledge, exchanging ideas, fusing old views and generating new insights. The College receives no government funding and it has no conscripts: it is a community of people who come because they want to, because they find the lectures and seminars topical, informative and enjoyable.

All Gresham lectures and performances are video-recorded. The lectures and/or the recordings are later made available to the public as free downloads on the Gresham College website and other sites. By accepting an invitation to speak and/or perform, and in return for being appropriately acknowledged on the website, lecturers and performers permit Gresham College to make copies and/or recordings of their lectures and performances available to the public, and to retain such copies and/or recordings for archival purposes, in perpetuity. Lecturers and performers are responsible for

ensuring that their lecture or performance contains nothing unlawful and that no third party rights will be infringed either by their presentation at Gresham College or by their being recorded and made available to the public on the Gresham College website or other sites.

For further information visit Gresham.ac.uk

University of London: School of Advanced Study

The Institute of Musical Research is one of the ten institutes within the School of Advanced Study, University of London. Its broad remit is to promote and facilitate musical research of all kinds within and beyond the Higher Education sector and to establish relationships with other disciplines across the humanities and social sciences, both in the UK and beyond. It does this by promoting collaboration between researchers within the University of London, throughout the UK and internationally, and to address the needs of those engaged in musical research, whether independent scholars, performers or composers, or affiliated members of universities, conservatoires, colleges and other music-related establishments.

The IMR plays a national and international role in collating and disseminating information relevant to advanced musical studies, events and research in the UK; provides a focus for collaborative postgraduate training; provides a base for visiting scholars; offers a broad range of events, including conferences, study days and research-based workshops and performances, where possible in collaboration with other institutions; maintains a programme of lectures and seminars to complement those already offered within the University of London and elsewhere; builds links with the music industry and professions and with the wider public (increasingly in the field of performance practice research); and works closely with Senate House Libraries to develop the existing Senate House collection into a national Music Research Library and to enhance its research facilitation role.

For further information visit sas.ac.uk

Organising committee:

Professor Richard Langham Smith (RCM)

Dr Helen Abbott (Head of French, School of Modern Languages, Bangor University, Wales)

Director of the Institute of Musical Research

Co-ordinator to organising committee Mrs. Valerie James (IMR)

Reading committee

Richard Langham Smith (as above)

Helen Abbott (as above)

Mylène Dubiau-Feuillerac (Université de Toulouse II)

François de Medicis (Université de Montréal)

HA/RLS April 2011