

# Cultural Olympiad will stage two Edinburgh premieres

✘ Two performances at The Queen's Hall and The Usher Hall in Edinburgh will be part of the Cultural Olympiad planned for 2012, it has been announced today.

[The PRS for Music Foundation](#) has told us about the dates for the first set of premieres by New Music 20x12 Cultural Olympiad Composers . This ambitious and wide-ranging project, which is part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, involves some of the UK's leading composers from across a range of music genres. Each composer has been commissioned to capture the spirit of the Olympic and Paralympic Games with a piece of music 12 minutes in length.

Premieres will take place the length and breadth of the UK at concert halls, arts centres, festivals, public spaces and, for one premiere, a prison – culminating in a weekend at Southbank Centre (13-15 July 2012) where all the works will be performed as part of a wider exploration of composing new music.

Performances in Scotland include:-

Gavin Higgins and Rambert Dance Company's commission 'What Wild Ecstasy' is premiering at His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen on 15-17 February, 2012.

Aidan O'Rourke and An Tobar, The Tobermory Arts Centre's composition 'TAT-1' is premiering at the Tobermory Arts Centre, Isle of Mull on the 8 June, 2012.

**Oliver Searle and Drake Music Scotland's composition 'Technophonia' is premiering at the Queen's Hall Edinburgh on 15 June, 2012**

**Richard Causton and European Union Youth Orchestras**

**composition 'Twenty-Seven Heavens' is premiering at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, on 23 August, 2012.**

Leading voices in the field of contemporary classical music, including Mark-Anthony Turnage, Sally Beamish and Howard Skempton, were commissioned as part of New Music 20x12 along with dynamic names from the worlds of Jazz (Jason Yarde and Julian Joseph) and Folk (Aidan O'Rourke, Sheema Mukherjee), to name but a few of the commissioned composers. □□The four Scottish commissions, which will be performed across Britain include:

- a piece by fiddler and composer Aidan O'Rourke who is working with An Tobar, The Tobermory Arts Centre to create 'TAT-1', a piece inspired by the first transatlantic telephone cable which ran from Aidan's hometown;

- a composition by Sally Beamish who is working with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment to create 'Spinal Chords', a piece inspired by Melanie Reid, a columnist for The Times who broke her neck and back following a horse-riding accident.

- Oliver Searle and Drake Music Scotland's piece 'Technophonia' which will challenge how the audience defines musical instruments and performing musicians.

- Finally Anna Meredith and National Youth Orchestra are creating a piece entitled 'HandsFree' which encourages young people to create music through beatboxing and clapping.

All 20 works will each receive at least three performances in 2012. Additionally all the works – from the four corners of the UK – will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and released digitally by NMC recordings.

The most ambitious and wide-ranging partnership programme in PRS for Music Foundation's history, New Music 20x12 showcases a huge variety of new music and performances that provide an

opportunity for all sectors of society to engage with these once-in-a-lifetime commissions. Composer Howard Skempton's work for bells, 'Wild Bells to a Wild Sky', will be the first to premiere on New Year's Eve from All Saints Church in Kingston upon Thames and, following this, most months in 2012 will see different regions hosting a New Music 20x12 premiere.

The premieres include large-scale event pieces premiered in public spaces such as Trafalgar Square (Liz Liew and Andy Leung in partnership with Chinatown Arts Space will perform XX/XY as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations) and Salisbury Cathedral grounds (David Bruce's commission 'Fire', an outdoor spectacle involving voices, horns and a fire artist); a work which brings together musicians and sportspeople (Joe Cutler's 'Ping!' for the Coull String Quartet and 4 table tennis players) and a project that sees Mark-Anthony Turnage, one of the UK's leading composers, premiering his New Music 20x12 commission at HMP Lowdham Grange, Nottinghamshire.

Other premieres will take place as far and wide as Bridport Electric Palace, Dorset; A.E. Harris Factory, Birmingham; The Tobermory Arts Centre, Isle of Mull; Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and Belfast Metropolitan Arts Centre.

Each of the 20 works takes inspiration from the spirit of the Olympic Games but is utterly unique in the story it tells and the way it is realised. Whether a new dance work from the Rambert Dance Company's first Music Fellow Gavin Higgins, a new opera from Northern Irish composer Conor Mitchell, a work by Luke Carver Goss inspired by the relay race with poet Ian McMillan and the Yorkshire Youth Brass Band or Graham Fitkin's piece written for the new Javelin Train which will run between St. Pancras Station and the Olympic site, each project is collaborative and a unique contribution to the Olympic celebrations.

Vanessa Reed, Executive Director of PRS for Music Foundation

says: "New Music 20x12 is a central part of the Olympics celebrations and people all over the country will have the opportunity to attend a special event which celebrates the excellence and imagination of some of the UK's most exciting composers. I am thrilled that each new work will receive three premieres and be accessible to so many people through the stunning array of nationwide performances and BBC Radio 3 broadcasts."

Alan Davey, Chief Executive of Arts Council England, commented: "As a principal funder of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, it's fantastic to see our investment contribute to such a wide-ranging project that will bring extraordinary music to audiences right across the UK. The range of musical talent, not to mention venues, that are coming together like never before to celebrate 2012, will leave a powerful legacy for music long beyond the Games."

Caroline Parkinson, Director of Creative Development, Creative Scotland, said:

"New Music 20x12 brings the richness of composition and musical innovation to the heart of the Cultural Olympiad. It is fantastic news that the compositions will be accessible to audiences from across the country whether that be at one of the concerts or through listening to it being broadcast on BBC 3, and the weekend at the Southbank Centre is a particularly exciting new development. We are delighted to have such a strong Scottish presence within the line-up.'

Jillian Barker, founding patron says: "Two years on from our first discussions about New Music 20x12, it's fantastic that our dream of putting new music centre stage of the Cultural Olympiad is starting to become a reality. We're delighted that such an impressive range of organisations, composers and funding partners are working together to make this happen and I look forward to hearing every piece created for this once in a lifetime celebration."