

COMPOSITION AT CHETHAM'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Composition students follow an exciting and diverse programme led by Dr Jeremy Pike. Students study composition as per a principal instrumental study with 1.5 hours individual tuition per week, joint study with 1 hour each week or subsidiary study (usually 0.5 hours per week). Whilst the core training is in mostly classical our composers work in a broad range of styles, including jazz and popular idioms. The department usually has around six to ten first study and a similar number of subsidiary study composers. Whilst the majority are in the older age groups some do start individual lessons from a younger age. Composition also forms a major part of the work of academic music class lessons throughout the school, and from this students often develop an interest to take up composition lessons formally.

Individual tuition is accompanied by weekly classes which cover repertoire knowledge, techniques of composition including harmony and counterpoint, orchestration, music technology and conducting. Students who are interested in composition but not yet formally studying it are encouraged to join the lunchtime classes wherever possible. There are many opportunities for student works to be performed, notably three major Composers' Concerts each year and termly lunchtime concerts, all of which are open to the public. Students are encouraged to write for a wide range of ensembles, with two concerts each year dedicated to chamber music and one to works for larger ensembles. The lunchtime concerts are student organised, with the department prefects given the task of managing and presenting the programmes. Our end of year Composers' Concerts have included works for full orchestra and chorus, concertos, music for Big Band, chamber orchestra and electronics as well as a complete staged musical. Students are given the opportunity to conduct their own or other students' works.

The department also takes part in other events in the city of Manchester, including concerts of new music given as part of the biennial New Music North West Festival. The Chetham's Contemporary Music Ensemble, which performs in all the department's concerts, was directed by one of our composition students in a performance of Mark-Anthony Turnage's "No Let Up" earlier this year as part of this festival. One of our students composed a work that was performed by the Manchester Camerata during a recent tour of China, whilst another is currently working at arrangements for a forthcoming tour in which members of the school will perform alongside several celebrated popular singer songwriters.

The department benefits from masterclasses and workshops by visiting composers. Recently we have had a workshop in writing music for film given by Neil Brand, which culminated in a public performance of film score extracts completed under his guidance. Last year Colin Riley visited

Chetham's for masterclasses leading up to our involvement in the New Music North West Festival, and during this academic year we will welcome Laura Rossi and Sally Beamish for a day of masterclasses and discussions in the department.

All students study Music to GCSE and A level. Some of our students also study Music Technology at A level, but all have access to excellent facilities including Logic software, ProTools recording systems and a wide range of hardware and software synthesisers, samplers and effect processors.

The success of the composition programme is evidenced by our students' successes in competitions and in higher education. Composers from Chetham's have won scholarships to study at conservatoires in the UK and abroad as well as gaining places at top universities. Chetham's students have been among the winners of the BBC Proms Inspire Young Composers' competition on many occasions; in 2016, students also won the Royal Opera House Fanfare Competition and the National Centre for Early Music Composers' Award, gaining them performances on BBC radio and at prestigious national venues. Chetham's composer alumni include Huw Watkins, Gwilym Simcock, Gavin Higgins, Andrew Hamilton and Lloyd Coleman.

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