



News from the Royal School of Church Music

Winning anthem of RSCM composition competition to be premiered at Salisbury Cathedral

A choral conductor from Ohio USA is travelling to England to hear his anthem *Harvest Hymn* performed at Salisbury Cathedral on Wednesday 11 November 2009. The piece by Jon Simsic won the 2008 Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) annual composition contest, and will be sung by Salisbury Cathedral Choir at its concert for Remembrance Day.

The candlelit concert is being given to support the Salisbury Cathedral Choral Foundation, and also includes Frank Martin's *Mass for Double Choir* and Allegri's *Misere*. It is a rare opportunity to hear the entire choir – boys, girls and men – in concert in the Cathedral. Tickets for the concert, which begins at 7.30pm, cost £12.50 or £10.00, and can be obtained from Salisbury Playhouse on telephone 01722 320333.

The text of Jon Simsic's *Harvest Hymn* was adapted from a poem by Sarojini Naidu, and includes Hindu deity references which Simsic adapted to the Holy Trinity. The adjudicators of the competition, David Halls, Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral, and Tim Ruffer, the RSCM's Head of Publishing, said that Simsic's work "shows a sophistication rarely seen previously in this competition. This is a challenging piece, even by Cathedral standards, not least because of the organ part that requires both an excellent organist and an instrument capable of the varied textures. The vocal writing, despite the modern idiom, is exemplary, never straying beyond comfort zones, apart maybe from the final chord of exuberance."

Commenting on his award, Jon Simsic said he was honoured to receive recognition from the adjudicators. "It's humbling to say the least," he said. "When I received the congratulatory letter in the mail, I figured it was just another letter of rejection! To have one's work recognized by the RSCM and the prestigious adjudicators as well as the performance opportunity at Salisbury Cathedral is indeed thrilling!"

The Harold Smart Competition next year will be run by the RSCM in collaboration with The 2011 Trust as part of its commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible in 2011. More details will be available from the RSCM in spring 2010.

Ends

15 October 2009

Notes for Editors

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is an educational charity that promotes the best use of music in worship, church life, and the wider community. The RSCM also publishes music and training resources, and organises courses, short workshops and activities. With over 8,000 affiliates, members and friends in over 40 countries it is an international network, supported by over 750 volunteers and a small team of staff based throughout the UK. More at www.rscm.com

Harvest Hymn by Jon Simsic is published by the RSCM, and can be purchased from RSCM Music Direct:

Online: www.rscm.com/shop

Email: musicdirect@rscm.com

Tel: 0845 021 7726

Order number: A2338

Price: £2.50 (25% discount to RSCM members)

More information about Salisbury Cathedral and the concert on 11 November 2009 can be found on their website at <http://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk>

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