



NEWS RELEASE

KING JAMES BIBLE COMPOSITION AWARDS – WINNERS

The Finals of the King James Bible Composition Awards took place at the Temple Church, London yesterday. The winning works are being featured on **Aled Jones' programme *The Choir on BBC Radio 3*** on Sunday 19th June.

The Chairman and Committee are delighted to announce the following winners:

The winner of **Category A** (a composition for non-professional choirs) is **CHRISTOPHER TOTNEY**; Chris is Assistant Director of Music at Dauntsey's School and Organist and Choirmaster at St John's Church, Devizes. His composition *The Mystery of Christ* sets texts from the books of Isaiah, Revelation and Colossians.

The anthem will be published by the Royal School of Church Music.

Chris said on winning the prize: "The King James Bible is an iconic publication and I love the fact that something so ancient can still speak to people and be so relevant in our lives today. Just to get to the finals and have my piece performed was something special, but to win was something I would never have dreamed of! I would like to thank every single person who has made this competition possible, but also pray that every single piece that was entered does not get lost. It is through opportunities like this that we, as musicians, can make our mark on the choral repertoire – by focussing in on words as powerful as those in the King James Version – and, in so doing, give future generations of composers a foundation for their own compositional styles."

Bob Chilcott, the final adjudicator said that he was looking for a concise shape in the winning composition that sounded attractive and which he could see being sung by all sorts of different choirs. He said that the evening "shows that church music is alive and well and moving forward".

The winner of **Category B** (for an experienced choir) is an American prizewinning composer **ZACHARY WADSWORTH**. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and Yale University, he is currently pursuing a DMA in music composition at Cornell University. A native of Richmond Virginia, he currently lives in Calgary, Alberta. His anthem *Out of the South Cometh the Whirlwind* sets a number of verses from the Book of Job.

This anthem will be sung during the service to celebrate the King James Bible at Westminster Abbey on 16 November 2011 and will be published by Novello.

Of winning the prize, Zach said: "I am deeply honoured to have been awarded first prize in this wonderful competition. Good language and literature are worth celebrating, and this was a delightful evening."

James MacMillan, the final adjudicator said that he was amazed at the choice of texts the composers had used – they were profound and inspired and were appropriate in the liturgy; composing for a church setting was very different to composing for a concert platform and all the composers had recognised this. The winning anthem stood out because of its clear word setting, and he had been struck by hearing again how the words communicated. He said: "it was quite clear that all the composers tonight have a real sense of what liturgy means, which is important, and has to be a vehicle for the prayers of ordinary people."

The identities of the composers were not known to the Judges until after the adjudication.

The competition was the idea of the King James Bible Trust and has been made possible by the generous support of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey. The Royal College of Music and the Royal School of Church Music have collaborated with the organisers to ensure a competition of the highest possible standard.

The Chairman of the organising committee, the Dean of Chichester, the Very Reverend Nicholas Frayling, said: "We are so grateful to all those who have made this competition possible, especially the colleges and the Abbey, but most of all to the gifted young composers who have taken part and submitted some very imaginative work. We are sure that many of these pieces, whether they have won prizes or not, will enter the mainstream of worship in the churches, and contribute to wider knowledge of the riches of the King James Bible."

Ends
18 May 2011

Further information from Caroline Watts Mob: 07718 752705

Photographs are available on request from Heather Bamber, Royal School of Church Music, tel: 01722 424847, email: hbamber@rscm.com, or can be downloaded from the RSCM website at http://www.rscm.com/info_resources/media/index.php