

MICHAEL SMALL • COMPOSER

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EDUCATION

- 2014-2017 **Cornell University:** Doctor of the Musical Arts
- 2011-2014 **Cornell University:** Master of the Musical Arts
- 2007–2011 **Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM):** First class BMus (Hons) in Composition

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- 2020 **Winner of the 2020 Royal Over Seas League Composition Award.** Commissioned to compose a new work for the *London Sinfonietta*. *For Years Now* for six instruments was premiered July 24th 2021.
- 2018 **Full fellowship** to attend *Bowdoin International Music Festival* as Composition Fellow.
- 2016 **Full fellowship** to attend the *Copland House's Cultivate Residency*. Press release picked up by NewMusicBox on May 27th 2016.
- 2016 **Orchestral work *Eastern Point* performed at *American Composers' Orchestra 2016 Underwood New Music Readings*.** Press release also covered by NewMusicBox on June 8th 2016.
- 2015 ***Cornell University's Blackmore Scholarship*** for “outstanding work in music.” Professor *Emeritus Steven Stucky* referred to recital in writing as “one of the finest in living memory.”
- 2015 **Fellowship** to the *Aspen Music Festival and School* as a Fellow of the Susan and Ford Schumann Center for Composition Studies
- 2014 Recipient of the ***Royal Philharmonic Society's Alan Horne Memorial Award for Young Composers***. Commissioned to write a solo violin work for *Fenella Humphreys* to be premiered at the 2015 *Presteigne Festival*.
- 2011 Awarded the **Sage Fellowship** to study at *Cornell University*.

COMMISSIONS & RECENT PERFORMANCES

- 2021 Premiere of *For Years Now* with the *London Sinfonietta*, a commission resulting from winning the **2020 Royal Over Seas League Composition Award**.
- 2020 Workshop of two movements for six players with the *London Sinfonietta* as a finalist for the **2020 Royal Over Seas League Composition Award**.
- 2020 Premiere of *Prism* for solo violin, given by *Fenella Humphreys* during one of her livestreamed lockdown “Homemade Concerts”, May 2020.

MICHAEL SMALL • COMPOSER

- 2018-20 Nine performances of *Debussy Window* for solo piano with Grammy and Emmy winner **Gloria Cheng** in support of her album release *Garlands for Steven Stucky* on Bridge Records. *Debussy Window* is one of thirty-two short tributes to Stucky, alongside works by Esa-Pekka Salonen, Julian Anderson, Magnus Lindberg, Anders Hillborg, Christopher Rouse, Joseph Phibbs and many others.
- 2020-21 Commission for a new work for **Ensemble HereNowHear**, piano duo.
- 2018 Performances at the **Bowdoin International Music Festival**, including *Antiphon* for two violins, *Shadowplay* for solo horn, *How fair, How Strange* for solo violin, *Debussy Window* and *Étude: Shattered Hands*.
- 2017 New York Premiere of *White Space* with Emilie-Anne Gendron as part of the 3rd **Momenta Festival**, October 2017.
- 2017 Broadcast of *Memory Palace* for String Quartet on **WFMT's Relevant Tones** radio program.
- 2016 London and Scotland premieres of *White Space* with **Fenella Humphreys**. The Edinburgh performance was in the **National Galleries of Scotland** in front of the painting which inspired the work.
- 2010 Premiere of *Alacrity*, a commission from the **RLPO's Ensemble 10/10**, a chamber ensemble - concert included a retrospective of Mark-Anthony Turnage's works: "[*Alacrity*] was a brief but exhilarating ride" Alfred Hickling, *The Guardian*, 20/5/2010.

CONDUCTING EXPERIENCE

- 2021-22 Assistant Conductor of the Wirral Symphony Orchestra, taking several rehearsals, and conducting Walton's *Crown Imperial* in concert on June 4th 2022. Engaged to conduct six items in Summer concert on July 16th, including Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, Copland's *Hoe Down*, Saint-Saens *Danse Macabre*, and a new work by Isabelle Ryder.
- 2019 Conducted the UK Premiere of my work *Jali* with the **Liverpool Oboe Quintet**, at Liverpool University's Lunchtime Concert Series, March 27th.
- 2018 Conducted the World Premiere of *Jali* for Oboe Quintet at **International Double Reed Society 2018** in Granada, Spain.
- 2018 Participated in a conducting masterclass focused on performing new music with Angel Gil-Ordóñez at **Bowdoin International Music Festival**.
- 2011 Received a high mark in undergraduate Conducting elective course at RNCM, conducting a movement from Brahms *Variations on a Theme of Haydn*. Tutored by **Mark Heron** and **Clark Rundell**.

WORK & TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2021 Freelance typesetting and piano reduction work for **Schott Music**
- 2019-2020 **Music Teacher Basis International School Shenzhen, China**
- Taught self designed high school elective on Advanced Music and Composition
 - Students advanced in a single year from beginners writing very short piano miniatures to composing short pieces for violin – performed in a workshop with **Fenella Humphreys**.
- 2018 **Composition Fellow Bowdoin International Music Festival**

MICHAEL SMALL • COMPOSER

- Tutored 9 undergraduate and graduate level composition students, delivered several short lectures on various topics, and coordinated players for the students' performances in an event at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art
- 2016-2018 **Music Theory Tutor *Johns Hopkins University's Center for Talented Youth***
 - Tutored "Mastering the Fundamentals of Music"
 - Responsible for all grading, tutoring and musicianship training
- 2018 **Digital Program Notist *National Orchestral Institute***
 - Prepared program notes for multiple concerts of the 2018 season
- 2017 **Composition Fellow *Weekend of Chamber Music festival, Monticello, NY***
 - Projects included workshops on my recently composed Oboe Quintet, and a short piano étude with *Gloria Cheng*
- 2017 **Marketing Fellow *The Washington Chorus***
 - Produced promotional videos, educational material, printed brochure material, and branding material for the 2017-2018 season
 - Collaborated with the Marketing Team on social media and messaging strategy
- 2015 **Guest Lecturer *Cornell University, History of Western Music Course***
 - Lectured on compositional developments in Europe and America since 1945: focused particularly on integral serialism, electronics, and the intersection of national politics on music in the post-war period
- 2013-2015 **Teaching Assistant *Cornell University Glee Club and Chorus***
 - Assisted in management of the ensembles, rehearsal management and piano assistance, and grading
 - Gained experience in directing rehearsals and conducting
 - Assisted in preparation for a concert at *Carnegie Hall*, April 2015
- 2013-2014 **Teaching Assistant *Cornell University Wind Ensemble***
 - Directed occasional full rehearsals and sectionals
 - Lead an online discussion forum on www.lore.com
 - Delivered classroom lecture on multimedia works
- 2012 **Teaching Assistant *Cornell University, Music Theory I Course***
 - Led musicianship section drilling ear-training, dictation, explaining theory concepts from the piano; elaborated on course materials both in group and individual tutoring, and administered regular quizzes

ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2016-2018 **Personal Podcast "*Composers' Notes*"**
 - Founded podcast featuring interviews with composers aimed at general audiences and musicians alike
 - Wrote, presented, recorded, edited, and produced six episodes
 - Contacted, scheduled, and managed timing with all guests
- 2012-2013 **Director *Cornell University Contemporary Music Series***
 - Wrote grant proposals for funding, invited artists to perform, arranged lodging and travel, booked venues, wrote program notes, and introduced the concerts to the public
 - Organized three events. The first, in the *Cornell Johnson Museum of Art* involved significant logistical challenges and close collaboration with the Museum's Events team. Supervised by *Kevin Ernste*.
- 2009 **Assistant Composer to Peter Wiegold, *RNCM's Production of "End of the Line"***

MICHAEL SMALL • COMPOSER

- Orchestrated and prepared all parts and scores for a large scale site-specific opera featuring over 150 musicians, staged in Manchester's Piccadilly Railway Station
- Supervised by **Toby Smith**, then Programming Director of RNCM

SOFTWARE AND SKILLS

Software: Proficient in editing suites *Logic Pro* and *iMovie*. Extensive experience with music notation in *Sibelius*, animation and design in *Photoshop*.

Website Design using Squarespace: Including sound editing, text, and photography. For examples see:

- Personal Composition Site: michaelsmallcomposer.com
- Musician Site for British oboist Jonathan Small: www.jonathansmalloboe.com

Languages: Studied German for British A-Level, receiving a high A grade.

COMPOSITION STUDY & MASTERCLASSES

Steven Stucky (2011-2016)

Chaya Czernowin (2012 Masterclass at Cornell)

Kevin Ernste (2011-Present)

Simon Bainbridge (2011 Masterclass at RNCM)

David Horne (2007-2011)

H.K. Gruber (2010 Masterclass at RNCM)

Walter Zimmerman (2013 Masterclass at Cornell)

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (2009 Masterclass at RNCM)

REFERENCES

David Horne, *Head of Graduate School, RNCM*

Undergraduate Composition Tutor
david.horne@rncm.ac.uk

Derek Bermel, *Composer, Clarinetist, Conductor, Artistic Director of the American Composers Orchestra*

Composition Tutor at Bowdoin International Music Festival
dbermel@gmail.com

Kevin Ernste, *Associate Professor of Music, Cornell University*

kevinernste@gmail.com

Clark Rundell, *Conductor of Ensemble 10/10, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra*

clark.rundell@rncm.ac.uk

Toby Smith, *Associate Director, Festival.org*

Supervisor on *End of the Line*
tobiasresmith@gmail.com

George Vass, *Conductor and Artistic Director, Presteigne Festival*

georgevass@presteignefestival.com

Robert Isaacs, *Director of Choral Programs, Cornell University*

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MICHAEL SMALL • COMPOSER

BIOGRAPHY

Michael Small's music is bright, full of vivid colors, and explores themes of memory and narrative. His works have been performed by some of the finest soloists and ensembles in the world, including the London Sinfonietta and Grammy Award winning pianist Gloria Cheng. In 2020, Michael won the inaugural Royal Over Seas League Composition Award, which resulted in a commission for the London Sinfonietta. *For Years Now* was inspired by the work of the German writer W.G. Sebald, and premiered in July 2021. In 2014, he won a Royal Philharmonic Society Young Composer Award, which resulted in a piece for solo violin called *White Space* for UK violinist Fenella Humphreys and premiered at the Presteigne Festival in August 2015. It has since received performances in Bristol, Oxford, Liverpool, London and at the National Galleries of Art in Edinburgh, before a painting by the artist who inspired the work. Michael's piece for the Momenta Quartet, *Memory Palace* received its New York premiere in October 2015 as part of the Momenta Festival.

Michael's work has been featured at the Aspen Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, the Presteigne Festival, Three Choirs Festival, performed by Music from Copland House, the American Composers Orchestra, the Momenta Quartet, and broadcast on WFMT's *Relevant Tones*.

Michael studied composition with David Horne as an undergraduate at the Royal Northern College of Music between 2007 and 2011, where he received a First Class BMus Hons. During his time there he wrote for several festivals and participated in masterclasses with Rolf Hind, Simon Bainbridge, Graham Fitkin, Christopher Rouse, H.K. Gruber and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. Michael's work *Alacrity* [for Sinfonietta] was premiered in May 2010 by Ensemble 10/10, was described as "*a brief but exhilarating ride*" by The Guardian. In 2011, Michael was awarded the Sage Fellowship to study composition at Cornell University on the D.M.A. program. He studied there under the tutelage of Steven Stucky and Kevin Ernste. Michael received his doctorate from Cornell University in 2017, after successfully defending his thesis on Julian Anderson's seminal work *Symphony*.