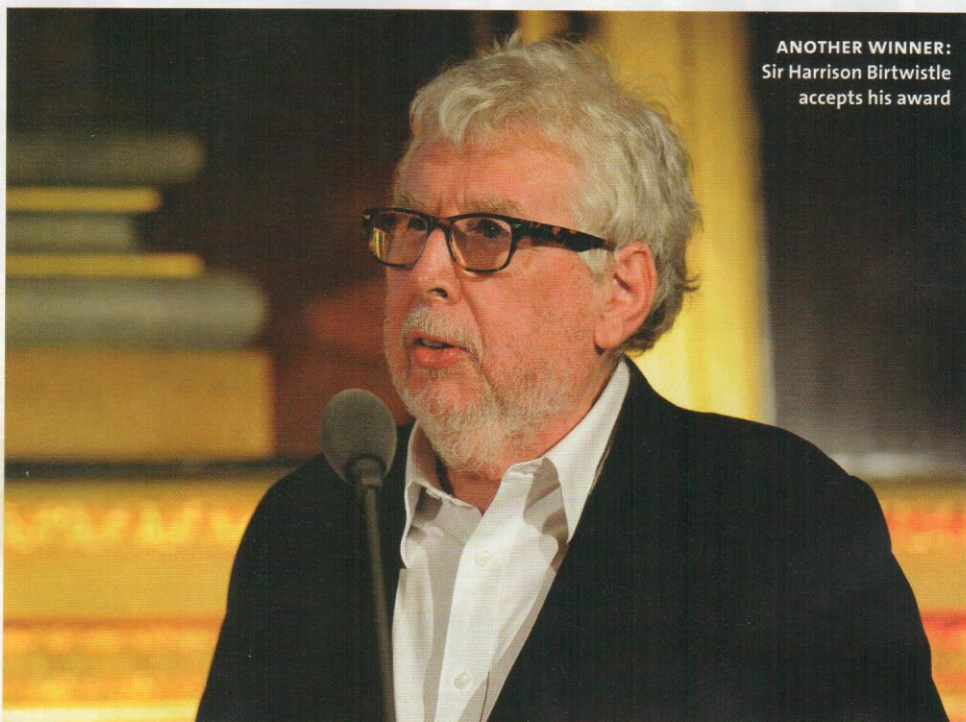


# The Full Score

OUR PICK OF THE MONTH'S NEWS, VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS

## Brilliant Birtwistle strikes again

*Sir Harrison wins his fourth British Composer Award with 'heartfelt' Violin Concerto*



ANOTHER WINNER:  
Sir Harrison Birtwistle  
accepts his award

winning feeling before – the others were Thomas Adès and Jocelyn Pook, who each won their second awards for *The Four Quartets* (Chamber category) and *DESH* (Stage work category) respectively, and Gabriel Jackson, whose award for his *Airplane Cantata* (Choral category), was his third. Jackson's work was for the rare combination of chorus and pianola, and the composer was quick to share the credit with one his performers: 'This piece couldn't have been written, never mind performed, without the incredible Rex Harrison, who is like the Horowitz of the pianola. Rex's hands and feet are able to do the most extraordinary things that I never thought were possible.'

First-time winners included Christine Tobin for her *Sailing to Byzantium* in the Jazz category and Emily Howard for her *Mesmerism for Piano and Chamber Orchestra* in the Making Music award.

### The major winners

**Orchestral:** Sir Harrison Birtwistle's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra  
**Instrumental Solo or Duo:**

Christian Mason's *Learning Self-Modulation*

**Choral:** Gabriel Jackson's *Airplane Cantata*

**Contemporary Jazz:** Christine Tobin's (below) *Sailing to Byzantium*

**Chamber:** Thomas Adès's *The Four Quartets*

**Vocal:** Colin Matthews's *No Man's Land*

**Liturgical:** Francis Grier's *Missa Brevis*

**Stage Works:** Jocelyn Pook's *DESH*

Sir Harrison Birtwistle has topped the list of winners at the British Composer Awards 2012. At a ceremony at London's Goldsmiths Hall, attended by many of the leading names in British composing, Sir Harrison, 78, took the Orchestral category award for his Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. The work was praised by the jury for 'the power and heartfelt lyricism of this highly communicative work' which, it said, showed how the composer 'is alive to continuing development to the extent of opening a new area of language'.

'The violin was something I avoided for many years, because I was a clarinettist,'

admitted Sir Harrison in accepting his award, for which Rebecca Saunders's *Still* and Julian Anderson's *The Discovery of Heaven* were also shortlisted. 'And also I think the violin has a lot of problems for modern music because the technique in which it's played and taught is really from the 19th century. But anyway, I wrote a Violin Concerto, and it's not bad for a clarinettist!'

Birtwistle, who was picking up his fourth British Composer Award since they were founded in 2004, was one of four composers on the night who have enjoyed that

