

Alec Roth – CONCERTINO PICCOLO

concerto grosso for two groups of young violinists and string orchestra

commissioned by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

first performed by local young violinists with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields conducted by the composer, at the Theatre by the Lake, Keswick, 30 April, and at Holy Trinity Church, Oswestry, 14 May 2006

1. Toad in the Hole
2. Yorkshire Pudding
3. Bubble and Squeak.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

Concertino Piccolo was commissioned by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields as a result of some workshops for young violinists given by members of the orchestra at the Harlem Centre for Strings during one of the Academy's regular visits to New York. I was fortunate to participate in some of these sessions and was particularly struck by the enthusiasm and panache of the beginners' groups.

From this arose the idea of a new work which would enable young violinists and orchestral musicians to perform together – a kind of *concerto grosso*, but with two groups of children up front as the soloists and the professionals accompanying them.

Teachers insisted that I must not write anything which might cause problems with the children's technical development and, to make absolutely sure, gave me a very limited list of exactly which notes I was allowed to use. This proved challenging but also stimulating – for example, the second movement grew out of the fact that one group's notes included C sharp, the other's C natural.

Concertino Piccolo lasts about ten minutes and is in three movements called 1, 2 and 3, or, for those who prefer more picturesque titles, *Toad in the Hole*, *Yorkshire Pudding* and *Bubble and Squeak*.

DURATION

ca. 10 minutes

FORCES REQUIRED

Two Groups of young violinists and accompanying String Orchestra (minimum 33221).

The technical standard for both children's groups is aimed at beginners (AB Grade 1/2; Suzuki Book 1), with Group 2 being slightly more advanced than Group 1. The music is constructed so that it is quite easy to learn. Ideally, the children's parts should be played from memory and performed with much soloistic panache, swaying around and grand gestures.

PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Full Score

Orchestral Parts (including the two Concertante parts)

Short Score (a keyboard reduction for rehearsal purposes)

SCORE SAMPLE

Click here to see sample pages of the [Full Score](#)

REVIEWS

. . . [Concertino Piccolo] was inspired by an educational outreach programme in Harlem and provides a marvellous opportunity for young string players to perform alongside the professionals. The three movements were skilfully contrived to bring out the best in the youngsters, with cunning support from the adult players.

Cumberland News 5 May 2006

. . . Following the interval came a concerto for young violinists and orchestra. The composer Alec Roth himself conducted this highlight of the evening, his 'Concertino Piccolo'. Seventeen young violinists – all members of the North West Shropshire Schools String Orchestra – gave a simply wonderful performance of this enchanting small concerto. With its bouncy rhythms and catchy tunes, plus a liberal pinch of humour, the work had obviously fired up the children, and their first-rate teacher, Huw Lloyd, and as they and the Academy performed it, there was real excitement in the air. What an opportunity for these young, local children – and how they grabbed it!

Oswestry Advertiser 17 May 2006