



THE RPS CONVERSATION – COMPOSERS

with

Hannah Conway

Daniel Kidane

Sir James MacMillan

Roxanna Panufnik

and **James Murphy** Chief Executive, Royal Philharmonic Society

transcribed by Lois Heslop

James Murphy: Welcome to the RPS Conversation. I'm James Murphy, Chief Executive of the Royal Philharmonic Society. This is the second of our conversations that we're presenting especially for classical music lovers, aiming to cut through some of the noise and the stress and the uncertainty of the pandemic, and give you a candid and human impression of how music makers are faring through all this. Today we're talking to four composers about writing music in these times. The story of classical music is a story of constant invention, of composers continually creating new sounds that both speak to the world's concerns and also lift us above them. Where does that story go now?

I'm delighted to be joined by the composers Roxanna Panufnik, Daniel Kidane, Hannah Conway and Sir James MacMillan. We'll be talking about how lockdown has impacted what they are writing, what challenges are composers sure to face in the months ahead, how might the extraordinary music-making we've seen at home and online in lockdown affect what composers write in future, and how indeed might the changing sound of the world now change the sound of music.

A warm welcome to you all. There's a likely very outmoded impression of a composer spending all their days in isolation, in a garret, all alone, scribbling away with their quill. If that's true, then maybe of all the professions you were the most ready for self-isolating. Tell us, maybe Roxanna first, how sudden lockdown affected you, and what you were working on as it began...

Roxanna: Well I was working on two things, I was writing a piece for Salisbury Cathedral's girl choristers who are having their 30th anniversary next year. I was writing them an anthem and had luckily just about managed to get in and see them and meet them before lockdown happened. Also I had a big premiere for ten choirs and symphony orchestra on 1st May scheduled in Berlin, and I was very much involved in rehearsing and talking to the choir directors, so of course all that went.

It's been a complete rollercoaster. The highs and the lows... the highs of amazingly not having to go anywhere have been fantastic, and it has been a much more creative time, but the lows of having those concerts cancelled, also of having close friends and colleagues who are performers... I think it's probably been much more of a struggle for them than it has initially been for us.

Hannah: When lockdown happened I was due to start making a piece of work, an opera about permanent voice loss, with people who are affected by motor neurone disease, Parkinson's, and people who have had laryngectomies, and we were just about to start all the devising workshops for that. And so that all totally stopped. So we've had to totally restructure that project, and are working now entirely online – so it's now a project called 'Sound Voice' that's just been totally reshaped and reimaged. Then other work that I was involved in, for example, conducting our show at Streetwise Opera, we had a big production with baritone Roderick Williams and pianist Chris Glynn and the Brodsky Quartet and that was all cancelled this year.

James Murphy: To explain to people at home, Streetwise Opera creates opera with homeless people and makes them part of the creative engine of opera-making

Hannah: That's right, so one hat I wear is being Creative Director of that organisation. It's an amazing organisation that works with people affected by homelessness, people who work in opera, and world-class artists, and we throw those three things together and see what comes out in the mix. So yes, it was our big production this year.

Daniel: Similar to the others, I was supposed to be out in America working with Seattle Symphony Orchestra for a premiere and doing a bit of teaching out there, so that was cancelled. Seattle was definitely a hotspot in the States earlier on so that was definitely off the cards. I'm still waiting for my flights to be refunded. There were a few other concerts. Luckily I wasn't writing anything specifically for that period, but for me it has been interesting to see and to deal with how things have been shifting very rapidly: say, first of all it was a live concert and now it's all going online, and how are we doing that. I suppose as a composer I like a challenge. Composing in itself is challenging. It's been an interesting time and over the summer I was supposed to be at the Cheltenham Music Festival, teaching and heading up its Composers Academy, and working with Chineke! Orchestra, but Cheltenham's been cancelled until next year, so yes a lot of cancellations and trying to rebook things. So yes, interesting times.

James MacMillan: I was writing two pieces like Roxanna, one was for a choir and orchestra and soloists on the west coast of America for next year, that piece is now complete, and the other piece was for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and conductor Manfred Honeck, who is a great musician, and they're a wonderful orchestra. That piece is now complete too, so I've got through work very quickly, which on one level has been marvellous. I echo what's already been said that, in some ways, lockdown for composers is life as normal. We're used to the solitude and silence, it's a necessary solitude and silence, it's where we find our souls in order to compose music, so in some ways perhaps we composers may be better placed, psychologically and spiritually, for what's happened compared to others.

But as Roxanna says, we are musicians, we have a sense of outreach in many, many different things that we do. We're obviously writing music for the public. We hope that that music will be performed but we know that there's going to be a delay. Perhaps we're used to that delay anyway: I tend to be writing music for performances a year away and it might be more than that this time, and it's just making that psychological step to get used to it. It's possible to embrace it but I know it can feel like a moment of existential angst for many musicians and people involved in the arts, and a lot of my friends and colleagues who are singers and performers are having a very, very hard time. In our very different ways we have that interface with the public one way or another and all that has gone of course, all the concerts, all the teaching all the seminars and so on, the talks and the lectures. That's all gone and that's been a huge loss, because we really miss people, we miss talking about things that we love, we miss sharing our love of music with as many different kinds of people as possible, but we live in the hope that some kind of normality will return and that day will not be too far away.

James Murphy: Have any of you been inspired to write other things? Amidst all of this, as well as your compositions, it seems you've had a lot of bureaucratic stuff to deal with and to wade through. But beyond that, has the muse flickered at all, have you found yourself writing anything you didn't expect?

Roxanna: Yes, there have been some fantastic virtual music-making projects, and I think a trend we're going to see from now on is that what you see is going to be as important as what you hear. I did something which I hugely enjoyed which I'd never really done before: Principal Trumpet for the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Alan Thomas sent me a picture of Broadway Tower in the Cotswolds and asked me to write a fanfare for him to perform outside the tower, that people in the surrounding area could hear. That was really interesting because I was having to think about the tower and its atmosphere – never having been there but what I could glean from its picture – and also what people would be able to hear and how the wind might affect the sound. It was a very new experience and it was great fun: I really enjoyed it.

Daniel: Similarly, making the most of the moment, I hooked up with the guitarist Sean Shibe and wrote a mini piece for him. There are four electric guitar parts but he's playing each of them. The wonders of modern technology, that you can do that. And off the back of that, we decided to collaborate again and I'm currently writing a him a piece for electric guitar and eight tape-recorders. I don't usually use tape recorders or more avant-garde techniques, if you want to call it that, but it's a result of people having to self-isolate. As musicians, you can't just get a chamber group together to record something. So instead of going with the Zoom and video call method, I decided to go 'old school' and get some cassette tapes and sent them individually to different players and they will all be sent back to Sean for him to play against. As I said before, it's trying to get something positive out of a negative situation, if you want to call it that: switching it around into a creative outlet.

James Murphy: It seems that it's obviously in your DNA as composers to respond to the very moment. Hannah, you said that the work you've been doing on voice loss, you're reconfiguring that in the moment. Is this what you always do as composers or

are you usually set on a path with a very clear goal and you don't want things to disrupt it? Or are you used to disruption?

Hannah: I can immediately say that I'm very, very used to disruption, in fact my whole career has thrived upon disruption and collaboration with diverse communities. I would never be writing what I write unless I'd had incredibly rich collaboration and co-creation with ultimately the people who are going to be performing the work, whether they be the professional ensemble that I'm working with or, like I say, the incredibly diverse types of communities of all ages and backgrounds. That for me definitely is absolutely at the heart of everything I do.

For example with the pandemic, there's been a real opportunity. At the moment we're trialling throat mics with people who have had laryngectomies because with physical distancing they're not able to project their voices: the a-laryngeal voices can't travel as far so we're testing new throat mics to enable that across physical distancing and I've been developing a chorus for a laryngectomy choir run by an organisation called 'Shout at Cancer' to trial that throat mic technology. That's an example of disruption, and I'll be writing that music with them to really understand what can work and what can't work within a) that technology, b) that social situation and c) with that group and their musical ability, in terms of what they want to be communicating and how they want to communicate it.

James Murphy: Given what you've both just said there, it seems we could be on the brink of a really exciting creative moment, a creative outpouring, if of course we can all find the funds to do it, because of course you don't just do it for fun, this is a living for all of you.

I wanted to come back to something James said about the audience: evidently you all cherish your audience and indeed they're part of the making of what you do, but does it feel weird therefore as a composer that the audience is not so immediate, you can't go to a concert hall and feed off their energy, or meet them so regularly, or can you? Are you feeling that loss to an extent?

James MacMillan: Well, one has to project into the future all the time when you're writing music, and the music wouldn't be the way it is if it wasn't for this silent time, this lonely time if you like: it's where it all happens in the silence of our hearts. So that's an unbroken connection, a relationship, from the silence of your own thoughts and feelings through the performing musicians to the people will eventually share the experience in a very public way. A lot of my enthusiasms and my activities and nowadays, before the lockdown and after, have been channelled into a new festival, it's called The Cumnock Tryst and I set it up about seven years ago, and a lot of my thoughts about that are about how we can develop new audiences in an area not normally associated with classical music. It's the area I grew up in, East Ayrshire. It's a demographic sometimes not associated with classical music for one social or political reason or another, and I think we've all had experience working with new communities and trying to bring new listeners to our art form to enthuse them and to show people who would not normally get the introduction to classical music or new music just how wonderful this culture is. So in a sense our organisation has always been geared to that. Before lockdown there was a new school being built in the town but of course around the country all construction has had to shut down and stop.

That school is going to have a brand new auditorium seating 600 and I can't wait till we get the use of that, it's going to be an amazing thing for the west of Scotland: a new hall where orchestras can come and large ensembles. But the construction of the school has shown us that there are different spaces within the building that we can use for music-making which may in fact suit this social distanced situation. We're speaking to the likes of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra about how they might present their gala performance to open this new school but use open galleries in the place and areas that haven't been associated with music in the minds of the builders, but we're now thinking we can do a concert there, we could get a brass group up into that gallery and the sound can travel right through the whole school, and people can walk around and hear new music. We'll get youngsters at school and at college to make that music from scratch and we'll give opportunities to new composers from the area and throughout Scotland and beyond to make music for that community.

James Murphy: With the slow return to live performance that we all see as inevitable, do we think it will lead composers to seek and make work in different ways and, say you're saying, find different places for music to thrive? We cherish our lovely concert halls with their wonderful acoustics and can't wait to get back to them, but is this a moment for us to doubly seize upon to show that music's place can be everywhere?

Roxanna: Absolutely, we've got our cathedrals and churches that are sort of built for social distancing with their enormous roofs and balconies, and also the acoustic in these places is fantastic – that you get sound carrying and mixing, you could experiment with all sorts of positions in that way. I think we will inevitably at the moment be looking at writing for smaller ensembles. In the States, they're looking at bringing back string orchestras before they bring in wind instruments and brass and maybe they can bring in percussion as well, but I think that's a very exciting area. Going back to your question about audiences as well, I think there's nothing like being with a live audience and communicating with them, but with social media and performances online you've got the opportunity to reach a far higher number of listeners than you would in a one-off concert in a concert hall.

James Murphy: If I may ask you each briefly, what might be your biggest concern for new music at this moment?

Daniel: I think everything is interconnected so obviously the issues that are being had with aspects of social distancing, it all falls back on everybody within the industry. The fear in the back of my head is when will it go back to normal? Will it ever go back to normal? Will new music be put on the back foot because first of all you have to have orchestras, ensembles, concert halls back in place before you can start thinking about commissioning or planning a festival or planning a new commission. So it's that process of thinking where are you in that great, grand scheme of things, and hopefully the gatekeepers, the people who hold the power to make things happen, have not forgotten entirely about new music in that sense, and obviously higher up the chain, the government. That's my fear.

Roxanna: I'm really worried that people won't programme new music so much simply because in order to recoup what they've lost financially, programmers will go for 'safe' options and programme better known pieces. So much good stuff has been

done with programming new music and diverse music in recent years, and I would hate to see that lost.

James MacMillan: I get the impression that those organisations that have commissioned work now on hold are the kind of organisations that have an integrity about them in their commitment to the living composer. The indications I'm getting from various people is that their priority is to get the new work done, to get the new commissioned work heard for the first time. They've put a lot of store, and energy, and indeed money into the commissioning of the work in the first place so it's important to get it onto the stage and let the audience hear it. Beyond that, there are obviously going to be a lot of anxieties from composers about how that can be sustained in financially difficult territory in the years ahead.

My immediate worries have been in connection with choral music – some of us have mentioned that we work with singers a lot, whether they're solo singers or choral singers, and it looks as if musicians who work with their mouths, whether it be singers or wind players, will be the last back to work. Now the dangers that that faces for the world of choirs is immense, and I think it's been important especially in the last week or so for those of us involved in music to bring these anxieties to the fore: what can be done to help choirs? What can be done to sustain and maintain our wonderful choral culture in this country? What can make that world stay alive in this difficult time? There's a lot of anecdotal evidence out there that singing is dangerous. Well we want to test that and we want to find out what the researchers say: the science is not settled. I think it needs to be settled in order for everyone to be safe, but also to indicate to government and everyone else that singing especially is really a fundamental centre of human activity and human culture and, if we lose it, it would be a huge loss to our culture, our civilisation, and to make that advocacy and to make the case for singing and for music and culture generally when there's so much focus on economic matters and of course health matters as well. Singing brings about a lot for individuals, it's been shown to be of great help to the mental health of individuals and communities and we should never lose that in the middle of this particularly health crisis.

Hannah: I would hate for this to be a missed opportunity for everybody, for audiences, the way in which people are interacting with each other through this pandemic, the way that technology is playing a part: everybody has 'up-teched' as a result, everybody is wanting to play a part in things more. I think audiences have so much to contribute to new work full-stop, both as it's being written, as it's being performed, and after it's been performed. I think we'd be missing something if we were looking at returning to the way things were. As a creative body of professionals, we have to keep evolving. Culture and music are in everybody's DNA and have an innate value to every aspect of society and industries, cross-sector. I feel that new music can't just stand alone, it has to be woven within the fabric of society and cross-sector for it to really survive.

James Murphy: I love this notion that it should fall to composers to move us forward, as composers always have done.

I mentioned the cliché of the composer writing alone in their garret but I know of course that for each of you, you've strived in your music to involve everyday people

or speak to their concerns. Picking up on what Hannah said about opportunity, might there be a chance in all of this, the way that suddenly we're seeing inside musician's houses, their bedrooms their living rooms – I'm enjoying looking at all your décor right now – that we could bring the composer more to the limelight? In all of your work you've done that to some extent, but should perhaps the people listening at home seize the moment and find out more about their composers and what's making their composers' hearts beat?

Daniel: I'm going to say yes. I'm not going to say it's a magical thing but we're all in it together, so to speak, so to go back to the idea that composers are always seeking the new and trying to fix problems musically and non-musically... it has been a great opportunity to reach out to people directly and really champion new pieces. The other issue with social distancing funnily enough: I've been approached recently for pieces that have to be written for odd ensemble set-ups or that have a specific purpose, so I think inadvertently you can't run away from employing or using a composer just now. You can't have a massive Mahler symphony but you can have a new piece for ten players who are socially distanced that works without a conductor. So it's the problem-solving aspect that composers can help with. I'm working with a choral group now and unfortunately they were directly affected – two of their members sadly passed away because of Covid-19 – so they wanted to commission a piece that responded to that loss within their own choral community and for them it's a very personal journey. Working with groups on that level is very humbling and you want to do the right thing. It just puts a whole different aspect on a new commission when it has a gravitas like that. I don't know if that answers your question but it adds to it perhaps.

James MacMillan: I think it's brought to the fore in my mind just how important a composer's commitment to his community is. There's something about the British composer that has always valued his or her own community and whatever that community may be. I'm thinking in particular of the composer-led festivals set up by Peter Maxwell Davies in Orkney and Benjamin Britten of course in Aldeburgh, and composers in those situations have always wanted to put the local community at the heart of the music-making, be it writing music for the local school or the local brass band, the local choir or local choral society, and that's something that has marked the British musical scene in a very particular way.

It's not to say that it doesn't happen in other countries, but those composers and many of us still see that as a very important aspect of what we do. Writing a children's opera is just as important in my mind as writing a symphony for the great orchestras of the world, and listening to some of Benjamin Britten's children's operas like *Noye's Fludde* for example, I think that's one of his greatest pieces and obviously he gave everything of himself to a project that might have seemed to other musicians at the time as a side-alley or distraction from their main work. Britten never saw it that way and I don't think we should either. We should see our commitment to the kind of communities we work with as absolutely essential. Obviously with my little festival it has had to be cancelled of course, we've had to postpone things and reshape things, but we are keeping in touch with various constituent groups in the community through electronic means and we want to build that sense of community through music. We imagine that there might be scope to make a series of community operas or music dramas involving different groups.

Some of those groups will be musical, like the local 'am dram' choir but some of them won't be musical at all, like mothers and toddlers groups. We've targeted a dementia choir in the area that we're now working with, and if they can actually make their own material and bring something of their own experiences of life to the stage, maybe even to the extent of writing their own text, or in some cases writing their own music, making their own music in conjunction with composers, being useful in that sense, we're beginning to see how a whole range of different levels in the world of composition and music can actually work together and revivify communal life in a musical way.

James Murphy: Revivify, that's a beautiful word for the moment. It does seem to me that every piece ever written relies on a pact between composer, performers and audience and it relies on all of you, it's a group effort to get that thing heard and valued and heard again. Hannah, in your work you almost tilt the scales a little bit so the requirement of the audience and of the community is greater. You almost make it harder for yourself by surrendering such a big portion of your creativity and handing it over to them. What led you to do that in the first place? Why do you do that and what's valuable about that?

Hannah: It's really interesting you use the word 'surrender' because I don't feel that in any which way. I think it's about the sum of the parts being richer than any one individual. I don't think about it as me surrendering creativity, quite the opposite. I feel that right from the start when I first began this work in Palestinian refugee camps in 1997 – which is one of the core reasons I do what I am doing now rather than following the path that I was on as a classical flautist – I learned immediately how enriching musically it was to be working alongside people who had absolutely zero musical experience at all. And what those people teach me, and continue to teach me, what communities continue to teach about life, and how music resonates with the human being, is so important in everything that I do and make and the music that I write. I hope that translates immediately to the listener because that's a core part of how the seeds are grown. So I think composers have always been knitted within society on a load of different levels, and I think what James said about this levelling of people not seeing community work or community opera of being any less or on a different hierarchical scale than a symphony written for the London Symphony Orchestra or one of the world's best ensembles: I think there needs to be a levelling of that.

James Murphy: It's a limited parallel to an extent, but I keep thinking about the flowering of art at the end of the Second World War and how important art and music were to the nation in bringing back its spirit. Of course this has been a very different experience for the nation from that but there may be some parallels to be drawn. Great things happened. We saw what was to become BBC Radio 3 being born and I was reading the other day about the London Philharmonic Orchestra going on a tour of music halls, a three month 'blitz tour', and it was a real moment to remind the public what music is here for and what role music can play in all of our lives. I wanted to ask each of you what hopes might you therefore have, however ambitious, however fanciful, for new music?

Roxanna: I think that we have to be optimistic. I think the next year is going to be hard, it's going to be upside down, it's going to be confusing, it's going to be a

challenge, but most things that were planned for this year will hopefully be rescheduled for the next year and what I'm hoping is that if we just keep working away and keep getting involved with things, that we will all suddenly have a doubly busy 2021-22, and the world really will blossom and explode creatively. I think you have to have that in your sight and just keep reminding yourself, as bits of bad news arise... like recently St Margaret's Church, the local parish of the Houses of Parliament, having to let their professional choir go... things like that. They'll come back. It will come back but it will be back with more inspiration and more creativity and things we have learned about how to communicate with people in these challenging times.

James MacMillan: I think that's absolutely right and it's forcing us to wipe the slate clean and, if not begin again, certainly begin with a renewed sense of purpose. Maybe it gives us all an opportunity – not just us four but the whole musical world – an opportunity to rethink, a *raison d'être* – what are we here for? Who are we communicating with? Have we let down our powers of communication before all this? Does this give us an opportunity to look closely at who we are as musicians and what our world of music is all about in order to make it better? Some things will be the same, some things will come back, but some things might not, and into that vacuum might come new things, and indeed new opportunities. Artists are meant to be creative people. I've also certainly been looking back at the Second World War as an example of great hope and I've been watching documentaries about Benjamin Britten in the last few days and seeing how he suddenly came to the fore at that moment in 1945, as the composer of the opera *Peter Grimes*, and there's this amazing sense of excitement in British cultural life about a new voice, a new power, a new sense of reach from within a community that had been so battered by the war but yet was producing work which is now speaking to the whole of the world. And we might see those opportunities arise in many different forms in the next few years.

Daniel: Similarly echoing what's already been said, I hope that we all have this energy to carry on. I suppose there's also a call out to higher powers and I hope that those in power realise the importance, as we've all been discussing, of the arts, of music, and what it can do for our communities and the support network it provides to people... not only to be involved in music but to go to concerts, to be inspired, to be enriched and that goes through literally every level of society from young children to people who are of an older age. I'd like to stay optimistic and positive and hope that it will all be there on the other side.

James Murphy: While we're all dearly missing the live experience that's very much at the centre of everything we care about and love, I think lockdown has been and will continue to be a great opportunity for listening, especially given the technology that we have now. I'm certainly trying to listen to as many things that I don't think I really had the time to listen to before, and making some delightful discoveries. What about each of you: have you had a discovery, musical or perhaps otherwise, in lockdown that you might share with the audience and encourage them to track down too?

Hannah: A couple of nice things that I've really enjoyed: I've really enjoyed 'Music for 300 Strangers' which you'd have to just Google and take a look; I don't want to tell you much about it but it's everybody from people playing their lawnmowers to

incredible sax improv solos. I've been really loving watching things like that, different things which people have produced.

Roxanna: I've always been interested in world music and just before lockdown I subscribed to 'Songlines' magazine and it's been really fantastic while confined to home to be able to listen to sounds from all around the world. It's brought the world into my little composing shed here – it's been great.

James MacMillan: I've been a little bit involved with the Stay At Home Choir which has been working with hundreds of singers all around the world on a number of different projects, bringing them together, giving them online vocal sessions and teaching. The one I was involved with also featured The Sixteen, and we had four singers from The Sixteen giving sectional rehearsals and voice classes to hundreds and hundreds of participants. And preparing them to sing, in my case, a little motet of mine, but in other projects involving the likes of the King's Singers and so on, they've invited hundreds from around the globe who are obviously hungry for what they're missing. They're missing their choirs, they're missing the music-making of course, but they're also missing the social interaction, the personal connection between one singer and another. In a musical way, and perhaps in a psychological and a spiritual way, projects undertaken by the Stay at Home Choir and similar initiatives have been a lifeline for many. And it's amazing what you can do. You can't actually, as far as I can see, get hundreds of people virtually to sing simultaneously, but they managed to get them to record their own contribution to a particular line – soprano, alto, tenor and bass – and then these wonderful producers mix it all together and a few weeks later it all comes out and it's broadcast and the effects are stunning. I see that the videos are achieving a huge reach: thousands and thousands of viewers from many countries are listening in and watching what we've been up to. It's not life as we know it as musicians, but it's an exciting alternative and it's keeping us all in touch with each other.

Daniel: I've been listening to medleys of music but actually recently I've been brushing up on my composers of African descent, if you want to call it that. I've been listening to a lot of stuff like Anthony Braxton, George Lewis, Charles Uzor, Ollie Wilson, TJ Anderson, Julius Eastman, Alvin Singleton... so that back catalogue I wasn't aware of... it's a good time to be sitting down and getting the playlists up and doing a bit of active listening and researching.

James Murphy: We are running out of time, sadly. Is there anything any of you might perhaps want to say to your audience while we have a few of them captive in this moment; is there anything you would share, any sentiments of this moment?

Daniel: Carry on listening!

Roxanna: Carry on listening but also carry on buying please, carry on downloading tracks off iTunes and not just us composers but all our fellow performers, carry on supporting and be excited about what's going to come out of all of this when it ends.

James MacMillan: I'd like just to say 'we'll be back' and we're thinking about you all the time, and all the music we're writing right now is for that audience. Its impact on the audience has been delayed, but we wouldn't be writing this music that's in our

heads and in our hearts just now in the silence and isolation if it wasn't for the hope it will be out there one day, communicating and speaking and spreading its meaning to our audiences who we know are still out there.

James Murphy: I for one am feeling very uplifted by talking to you. My tip for today is go out there and find a composer, talk to a composer, it's a lovely thing indeed.

I regret we're out of time today, with so much yet to say, but I hope you at home have drawn some worthwhile insight into the lives, concerns and hopes of composers, and that your ears might be eager to hear more of our featured composers' music online.

We've more RPS Conversations to come, so hope you'll join us again. You might like to go one step further and consider becoming an RPS Member and join us as we set out to explore and to celebrate what makes Britain 'philharmonic'.

For now, many thanks and much admiration to our composers Roxanna Panufnik, Hannah Conway, Daniel Kidane and Sir James MacMillan.