

Colin Touchin (Conductor)

Colin Touchin is a British conductor and composer, clarinettist and recorder-player, festival adjudicator and broadcaster. His encouragement of singers and players in choirs, orchestras and bands has inspired ensembles, amateur and professional, in schools, universities and communities in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong and China. He has founded several ensembles, notably Spires Music in Coventry comprising mixed pro/am Philharmonic Orchestra, Chorus and Youth Orchestra, and the National Youth Recorder Orchestras. He is Guest Conductor of Essex Chamber Orchestra, Associate Conductor of London Charity Orchestra, Tak-Ming Philharmonic Winds (Hong Kong) and was recently appointed Guest Conductor of the Lufthansa Orchestra.

Colin's distinguished record of conducting and composing includes fifteen years as Director of Music at University of Warwick, and conductor of award-winning ensembles at county and national level (University of Warwick Chamber Choir, Warwickshire County Youth Orchestra, Birmingham Schools' Wind Orchestra); he has composed for and conducted National Youth Wind Orchestras of Great Britain, Wales, Luxembourg and Hong Kong.

His current work includes composing commissions for bands, choirs, orchestras and schools, and conducting City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong with Hayley Westenra, and Hong Kong Police Band in the annual Christmas Concert in the Park televised over half of Asia. Recently his *Hallasan Concerto* was premiered by Steven Mead (euphonium) and Tak-Ming Philharmonic Winds in the Jeju International Festival in South Korea and repeated in Hong Kong, and *Winslow Tableaux* was premiered by the Winslow Concert Band, UK and repeated in Hong Kong.

Colin is also a busy international adjudicator, but still finds about an hour each year to play recorder and clarinet. His compositions have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and local TV and radio; he has recorded several series of radio talks for RTHK (Hong Kong). One windband composition, *Eclipse*, was a set-piece in the Hong Kong Music Festival 2014. Colin writes to commission, leads workshops in conducting, clarinet, recorder, teaching and adjudication, and acts as music education consultant (to schools in the UK, USA and the Far East).

University of Warwick Chamber Choir and he gained gold/silver awards at all but one of the international festivals entered, including televised semi-finals of *Sainsbury's Choir of the Year 2000*; they performed several times with Matthias Bamert/London Mozart Players, and Vernon Handley/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; he trained the large unauditioned 200+ Chorus in Mahler *Resurrection Symphony* with Gilbert Kaplan/RPO, and Warwick Phoenix Singers accompanied Dame Kiri Te Kanawa in a gala concert.

With wind ensembles from University of Warwick Colin commissioned new works and gained many awards in the National Concert Band Festival, including Gold-Open Class Final 2002; this award and the Chamber Choir's competition record are unique for any British university. University of Warwick Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Tippett *A Child of Our Time* were described as "surpassing any recording we have heard", and their *Messiah* was "the finest I have heard in 47 years"; the orchestra's Shostakovich *Leningrad Symphony* was "the most exhilarating concert, including professional, I have attended at the Arts Centre in 20 years". A recent Spires performance of Tchaikovsky *Fifth Symphony* was described as the "best music-making heard here since 1959!"

He has founded several ensembles: Midlands Wind Orchestra (now Warwick Orchestral Winds), British Universities Honours Band, and National Youth Recorder Orchestras. Five years as Conductor of Warwickshire County Youth Orchestra were rewarded in July 2011 with a *Special Performance Award* in the National Festival of Music for Youth Finals leading to an invitation performance at the Royal Albert Hall in the Schools Proms.

Colin has been Composer-in-Residence at Warwick School and King Henry VIII School, Coventry. Other posts have included Conductor of Nottingham University Chorus, Musical Director of City of Coventry Brass Band, Conductor of Derbyshire City and County Youth Wind Band and guest conductor with Watford Philharmonic Society Chorus and Orchestra. For 9 years he conducted wind band, wind ensembles, orchestra and chorus at Dartington International Summer School; he has conducted and led workshops for students and teachers in 20 countries, including National School Band Association Suffolk & Carlisle Festivals, wind bands in Bristol, Cambridge and Canterbury, National Youth Recorder Orchestra in Holland, Australia and UK, the first two Switzerland Recorder Orchestra courses, the first Recorder Orchestra masterclasses in conducting in Taiwan, Hong Kong Youth Orchestra and Shenzhen Arts School.

His compositions have been broadcast on national/local radio/television. His output includes *St. George of Coventry*, *Applaud and Celebrate!* (90th Anniversary - British & International Federation of Festivals), *Brief Intervals* (saxophone 4tet), *Fanfare Orsi d'Ottone* (Warwick School Brass Ensemble), *Ros-Tor-Mol Festival* (4 choirs/wind band), *Idyllwild Suite* and *Three Suffolk Pictures* (wind band), *The Setting Sun Rises* (bass clarinet/wind band), *Lambs & Tygers* (choir/orchestra); *Sound & Silence* (choir/strings/recorders), *Dance Rituals* (Chamber Recorder Orchestra), *The Amber Road* (two Recorder Orchestras and four soloists), *A Beade of Amber* (National Youth Wind Orchestra of Wales), *Little Red Riding Hood* (ballet, youth orchestra).

He has been External Examiner for Colchester Institute of Music and the University of Malta. He has served on national/regional committees of BASBWE (British Association of Symphonic Bands & Wind Ensembles - Chairman), ISM (Incorporated Society of Musicians - local Chairman), SRP (Society of Recorder Players - Musical Adviser) and BIFF (British and International Federation of Festivals - Vice-Chairman).