

Allegro.



PHIL

PHIL by Anna Best

Saturday 27th July 2002

Performances at 6 & 9 pm

**The Beaufoy Insitute
Vauxhall, London, SE11**

what's PHIL got to do with it?

what's love got to do with it?

PHILharmonic, PHILanthropic, PHILosophic...

did you know that PHIL means love?

PHIL investigates the relationship between urban regeneration, arts funding and the philanthropic attitude.

By searching for Phillips, Philomenas and Philippos, Anna Best turns on its side any notion of a geographically defined community. PHIL is offered to the residents of Vauxhall and the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the spirit of celebratory collaboration and critical provocation. The London Philharmonic Orchestra Musicians play their part of a Mozart Serenade in a PHIL's home and this is filmed on video.

These separate performances are then reunited for one evening only in the form of an orchestra of televisions in the Beaufoy Institute. PHIL expands traditional relationships between artist, audiences, host and performer.

PHIL: filming schedule

Co-ordinated by Amy Plant and Richard Mallett,
Community Production at The London Philharmonic Orchestra

wednesday 10th july

Phil Scott hosts *Mila Mustakova*, second violin

Phil Colley hosts *Amanda Smith*, first violin

friday 12th July

Louise Philpot hosts *George Peniston*, double bass

monday 15th july

Philippa Underwood hosts *Sioni Williams*, second violin

Phil hogg hosts *Jo St. Leon*, viola

Phil hosts *William Routledge*, cello

thursday 18th july

Phil Seager hosts *Dominic Moore*, second violin

sunday 21st july

Philip Nipah hosts *Geoffrey Lynn*, first violin

monday 22nd july

Philippa Bessant hosts *Rachel Ives*, first violin

Phillip Johnson hosts *Martin Fenn*, viola

tuesday 23th july

Phil Norman hosts *Dan Cornford*, viola

Phil Rigby hosts *Rebecca Shorrock*, second violin

wednesday 24th july

Philippa Crerar hosts *Emily Isaac*, cello

Simon Phillips hosts *Frances Bucknall*, cello

friday 26th july

Philippe Ciompi hosts *Robert Pool*, first violin

PHIL: Recording Notes

by Stefan Szczelkun

What follows is an account of two of the PHIL recordings in people's homes during July 2002.

The first visit was to a ground floor flat in Chester Way in one of the posher areas of Kennington. The flat was part of a block that had originally been built by the Duchy of Cornwall to house royal servants. The flats have a pseudo Georgian façade and are small but tastefully finished.

I was the first to arrive. Philippa greeted me and showed me her living room in which the fragment of Mozart's classic was to be played. The walls and ceiling were painted lime yellow with a white coving. The room, about ten foot by twelve, was practically filled by two sofas, an armchair and a square pouffe, all covered with matching pale covers with a restrained blue floral motif. The other furniture consisted of several small polished brown wood tables. One of these carried the large 21 inch television.

On the mantle-piece there were a row of postcards, two small pottery pigs and a miniature brass carriage clock. Another little table had two modest silver bowls and a little framed portrait of a loved one. The bookshelves sported a couple of Ian Rankin novels alongside books by Jilly Cooper, Isabel Allende and Pat Barker.

Soon the performance crew arrived. The performer was a violinist. A slim and nervous young woman dressed in the usual black orchestral garb. Anna Best, and her assistant Amy Plant, each had video cameras on tripods and there was the Philharmonic manager Richard Mallett. Apart from myself there was also Philippa's boyfriend David. We all crammed into the little room and had to hug the walls to avoid the site lines of the cameras.

The musician was set up facing Philippa's television set which was showing a video of the Orchestra's conductor Rupert Bond, and the usual music stand supporting the sheets of notation. After a longish period of camera adjustments to avoid the extraneous head reflected in mirror, or knee in corner of frame, the signal was given to Richard Mallett who pressed the VCR play button. As the conductor on the television raised his baton he said "Rolling", as a signal to the

camerawomen, and removed himself from the cameras' cones of vision. But all was not well. The problem was that, without the sound of the whole piece, the musician sometimes found it very difficult to play her part in time. She found this most disturbing - the silent signals from the conductor were simply not enough. Anna had to use all her negotiating powers to reassure her that what she was doing was good enough. In the end she got through the piece, after many trials, with the help of the Philharmonic's manager who made the orchestral sound audible at the points at which she got lost.

Philippa sat watching the performance in the arms of her boyfriend. She was dressed in a loose floral shift in purple and blue with light blue leather moccasins. Philippa had been a PA with Andrew Lloyd Webber for two years so she was not new to the stresses of show business. But even so, after the last take she professed in a high voice to never having felt so tense in all her life. When the burst of sympathetic laughter from the rest of the room had died down, she turned to the performer and said; "I think that was wonderful!"

The musician left still somewhat distraught. At one point Anna Best turned to me and said; "I must be evil!", followed by her easy chuckle. She wasn't being cruel, of course, she was just being firm. PHIL is inherently a disconcerting experience.

The second venue was a three storey house further down Kennington Lane on the corner beside the entrance to Tesco's new super market. The view from the back windows looks over Tesco's car park to the dramatic industrial landscape of the massive Oval Gasometers. To the left is what remains of the old Beefeater Gin works. A scene from Cronenberg's latest film, 'Spider' had just been played out on the street leading up to the gasometers. The location manager had gleefully described the area as one of the 'dark corners of London'.

The room chosen for the performance was the upstairs bedroom of this rented house. Facing the house on the other side of the road are tall blocks of council flats. The bedroom was papered in wood chip. One wall was painted dark red, the others were a pale lemon yellow. The fireplace, which would have been in the video frame, had been plastered over. The brown curtains were hung on just two hooks. Plastic bags and cardboard boxes served as temporary furniture. The doors of the wardrobe were open and draped with clothes and a colourful towel. In the corner was a very small old triangular sink with a minute electric water heater.

The tenant, Phil, was a lanky and amiable young musician who was unshaven and relaxed in cream slacks, a washed out Tee shirt and black socks. His diverse musical influences seemed to range from Sly and the Family Stone ('Life') through Laurie Anderson ('Big Science') to the score for five of Igor Stravinsky's 'easy' piano duets. Going on the mass of travel guides, a book on Sanjit Ray on the stairs and the ethnic designs on his bedspread and Tee shirt, his influences extended beyond Europe.

By chance it was Phil's birthday and he was convinced the whole event was destined to make his special day remarkable. He had invited three friends to join him to witness the performance. There was a woman, with a newborn baby, and an older male friend. They sat across the top of his double bed. The baby lay back relaxed across its mother's lap having its feet stroked. The performer, a viola player, was a relaxed and humorous woman with red hair, who clearly intended to give her very best for her domestic audience. In contrast to the previous performer, she seemed to accept the limitations imposed by the silently flailing conductor. After a couple of quick trials she confidently launched into a full take with barely a glance at her sheet music. The sounds launched from the friction between horsehair and gut were accompanied by the occasional gurgle, and a sneeze, from the newborn, and the rhythmic grunts and sighs of the traffic below. Those well-known melodic phrases, were absorbed back into the aural landscape, from which they arose all those years ago. Visually the scene is tranquil and Amy whispers that it looks like a religious tableau.

When the musician completed her task the applause was enthusiastic. She looked satisfied but commented that it was certainly the oddest performance she had ever done and that "It was definitely Not normal". In spite of her black uniform I noticed that her skirt was cut in a somewhat gypsy style with horizontal panels of different materials. Then, unbeknownst even to Anna, Richard produced a chocolate birthday cake for the beaming Philip. A birthday that will indeed not easily be forgotten.

I had another engagement but the crew were continuing on to one of the rather grand five storey houses on Kennington Park Road. Here the performance was recorded in the elegant and spacious back garden. In the days to come before the performance Anna and Amy would visit another ten or so local homes of those whose names include 'phil'.

Stefan Szczelkun July 2002

The Beaufoy Arts Project

The Beaufoy Institute was left in trust to the local community in the Lambeth Riverside area by the Beaufoy family. The trust deeds state that the building should be used for educational purposes. The building has been unoccupied for several years and the current responsibility for the building rests with Lambeth Education. The building is listed and it has been the subject of speculation and debate within the local community for some time. At present the building is used intermittently by film crews to store equipment and the revenue is paid to Lambeth Council.

The Lambeth Riverside Partnership* is in the process of setting up a community managed organisation the Riverside Community Development Trust. They have provided funding for The Beaufoy Arts Project which is managed as a partnership between Vauxhall St. Peters Heritage Centre, Danielle Arnaud Contemporary Art, Gasworks Gallery and Lambeth Arts. They have commissioned three temporary art projects for 2002, of which PHIL is the first. The next projects are by architectural group MUF in October and a series of projections by glass artist Helen Maurer.

The Beaufoy Arts Project aims to initiate the process of consultation within the community, exploring what people would like to see happening at the Beaufoy and what can realistically happen in and around the building. The three commissions will be a starting point for the local community to realise the possible uses as well as the limitations of the space. The organisation will integrate and influence local planning including Lambeth Riverside's Planning for Real exercise, the Unitary Development Plan and Lambeth Arts Cultural Plan.

*Lambeth Riverside Partnership is a partnership of local businesses, community organisations and London Borough of Lambeth and is in receipt of single regeneration budget (SRB) funding from the London Development Agency.

For further information about the Beaufoy Art Projects contact Julie Lomax at VStPHC@aol.com, Danielle Arnaud at danielle@daniellearnaud.com or Fiona Boundy at gallery@gasbag.org

For further information about The Beaufoy Institute contact Paul Green or Julie Lomax at Lambeth Arts, a department of Lambeth Council on tel 020 7926 1000.

Project Partners Links

Danielle Arnaud

www.daniellearnaud.com

Gasworks Gallery

www.gasworksgallery.org

Lambeth Riverside

www.outsidedge.co.uk

Lambeth Arts

www.lambeth.gov.uk/arts/

London Philharmonic Orchestra

www.lpo.co.uk/

Riverside Community Development Trust

www.rcdt.org

Vauxhall St. Peter's Heritage Centre

www.vauxhallheritagecentre.co.uk/new/aboutus.htm

Anna Best Selected Links

Festival Of Lying, Grizedale Arts

www.grizedale.org/lying

Mecca, Camden Arts Centre

www.eyes-down.com

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www.e-2.org

Related Links

www.vision4vauxhall.org.uk/

www.lambeth.gov.uk/education/default.htm

www.lambeth.gov.uk/opengov/open_default.html

www.vision4vauxhall.org.uk/Draftactionplan.html

www.lambeth.gov.uk

www.lambethonline.co.uk/

www.crossriverpartnership.org/

www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1990/Uksi_19900124_en_2.htm

www.artquest.org.uk/createfinance.htm

www.geocities.com/rbeaufoy/hbhb.html

www.ensemble.demon.co.uk/orchest/olondon.htm

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VstPHC

Danielle Arnaud
contemporary art

GASWORKS
GALLERY



London
Philharmonic
Orchestra




Lambeth Arts