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In this issue of IAM

This issue of IAM spreads its net very wide. In a couple of features we look at how two artforms that can sometimes be difficult to sell - dance and contemporary music - can be made the subject of successful, innovative festivals. What comes through is that with enough ingenuity and application there is no need for either discipline to be perceived as esoteric or isolated.

Both can be the focus for concentrated series of performances that can attract not only professionals in the field but also an interested, enthusiastic public. Both can do so in locations that may be far from fashionable, a claim that could never be made for the UK town of Huddersfield that is home to a festival of contemporary music of worldwide repute, or even astonishingly remote, as is the case with the Gobi Desert that now has its own similar festival though with a few nods to local, traditional culture.

Elsewhere we look at another way of breaking down barriers and taking art to people irrespective of their location. This time, however, the method is the exploitation of modern, communications technology - specifically the internet. The example in this case is an old church rescued from dereliction by the London Symphony Orchestra and turned into a performance and education centre wired up so that professional musicians, students or school age children can engage in interactive sessions with each other without any need for them to be together in the same place. This is a heady prospect and one that opens up genuinely exciting new opportunities for stimulating interest in music through participation rather than passive listening.

But, of course, by itself no technology can ever be a substitute for imagination and invention. Whatever art communicates the medium is never the message.

Contents

Regulars

- 4 News
- 10 People
- 39 Calendar

Features

- 12 **More than skin deep**
A strong corporate identity is a valuable marketing and promotional tool
- 15 **Fashion sense**
What musicians wear on stage makes a difference
- 17 **Strained relationships**
Arts managers and their boards of directors are still struggling to find ways of working together
- 25 **Texan symphony**
The Dallas Symphony Orchestra is positioning itself to join the US orchestral elite
- 27 **Man with a mission**
John Axelrod is a conductor with definite ideas about how orchestras can find audiences
- 29 **Martha's legacy**
The Martha Graham Dance Company is returning to the stage after sorting out its problems

Cover: Christine Dakin in Martha Graham's *Phaedra*.

Photo: Jack Mitchell

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