

James Toll - Violin

James was born in to a musical family and began playing the violin at the age of six, partly because he was envious of a friend's seemingly prodigious talent on the instrument. He casually "practised" until the age of 16, whereupon his frustration with being less-than-brilliant came became too much to bear. James then auditioned for a place to study at the Purcell School, twice, and eventually the authorities relented and let him attend the school for two sixth form years.

At their peril the Purcell School soon let James loose playing chamber music at the Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall, St John's, The Queen Elizabeth Hall, and once even allowed him to conduct a workshop for two hundred teenagers from South London, which he very much enjoyed.

James recently completed a Bachelor's degree at the Royal Northern College of Music where he had strong guidance from Malcolm Layfield, Levon Chilingirian, Leland Chen and Pauline Nobes. However, the RNCM threw their reputation on the line in a similar way to the Purcell School by letting James play solo Bach on BBC radio, and he even performed a brutal piece about death for Dr. James McMillan CBE on the composer's 50th birthday.

James plays with some of the top ensembles in the UK, and is currently trialing as co-principal second violin with the Scottish Ensemble.

The Countess of Munster Musical Trust recently awarded James a significant grant to support further study at the RNCM, but he's not returning anymore so he couldn't accept their generous award. It's a long story.

Other spectacular near-misses include earning a place on the RNCM University Challenge team, and then failing to qualify for the televised rounds. He also loves cricket, especially after England's recent performance Down Under.

James is extremely grateful for the use of the wonderful violin heard today, and he encourages you to him questions about it. However, please don't expect him to stop talking about the instrument once you have asked a question.

CURRICULUM VITAE:

Orchestra

Scottish Ensemble, regular co-principal 2nd
Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra - tutti trial 2009
Manchester Camerata
Jersey Chamber Orchestra - guest leader

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Experience Scheme participant, 2011
Manchester Camerata Experience scheme participant, 2009 - 2010
RLPO experience scheme - successful applicant, 2009

Chamber

Wigmore Hall, 2004, 2005, 2011
Regular recitals with John Paul Ekins (piano) in UK
Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte di Montepulciano, 2009, 2010
Mendelssohn on Mull festival, 2010
1st violin, Borromini Quartet (classical instruments)

Solo

The Anvil, Basingstoke, 2004
Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester International Festival, 2009
Internationaler Bachseminar, Bach-Kirche, Arnstadt, 2010 (Baroque violin)
Newbury Chamber Orchestra, 2007, 2008, 2009
London Conservatoires Orchestra, 2010

Education

The Purcell School
Royal Northern College of Music 2005-2010 (leader of all senior orchestras and ensembles)

Awards, Scholarships

The Andrew and Matthew Scrivener Bursary, RNCM
South Square Trust Award, RNCM
Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust