



Brass: Pitch

Commission for *Brass: Durham International Festival*, in 2012

Brass: Durham International Festival returns in July for another fortnight of events celebrating the rich traditions and exciting diversity of contemporary brass music.

This year, you too can be part of *BRASS* and have your work showcased at the festival in a programme of new commissions.

This briefing document gives you all the information you need to apply for your idea to be commissioned. For further inspiration please visit www.brassfestival.co.uk

About Brass: Durham International Festival

Brass: Durham International Festival takes place annually and is a key event in County Durham's cultural calendar. The festival has a strong focus on new commissions and collaborative work and is establishing national and international profile. Our commissioning programme challenges accepted musical boundaries through counter pointing brass with musical styles from across the spectrum; as well as mixing brass with other art forms. From 1 April 2012 *BRASS* will be supported by Arts Council England's National Portfolio funding through the Gala Durham arts festivals hub.

BRASS aims to:

- Engage with international, national and regional expertise to support original interdisciplinary commissions which respond imaginatively to the brass theme
- Support projects which challenge commonly-held perceptions of brass music
- Support work which is innovative and takes risks, creatively
- Create opportunities to make innovative use of new technology and new media
- Nurture and support bands, artists and companies that display talent and artistic excellence
- Create opportunities for collaboration and where possible encourage creative development relating to brass playing and culture
- Create unique experiences for audiences and capture the public's imagination.

About Brass: Pitch

Advertised through an open call process we are offering a number of new commission opportunities, prioritising emerging and mid-career artists.

We are looking for fresh and innovative ideas from creative practitioners that make a unique and individual response to *BRASS* and help achieve one or more of the festival's key aims.



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Eligibility

This opportunity is open to any professional creative practitioner, individual or group/collective based in England. The commissioned work can be in any art form, including new technology and new media, or interdisciplinary practice.

Artist's agreement:

- The first performance/showing of the commissioned work must be exclusively available in County Durham during the period of *Brass: Durham International Festival* (6 – 22 July 2012)
- Proposals must provide evidence that the work is deliverable within the parameters of the project and the budget available
- The applicant must agree to attend production meetings where reasonably required and to be available to give interviews to the press and media to assist with the promotion of the project.

If you are unsure as to the eligibility of your idea, please contact brassfestival@durham.gov.uk .

Funding available

A maximum of £20,000 is available to support the commissions.

The number of commissions to be awarded is not fixed. We anticipate supporting between four and six commissions. Awards will be based on the quality of the proposal, the strength of the idea and the ability to realise the idea in line with the budget taking into consideration any technical implications.

In the event that it proves necessary to secure additional external funding to realise the commission idea we can offer you advice and guidance once we have shortlisted proposals.

Commissioning Process

The process of awarding the project funding is split into the following stages:

For Stage One, applicants are invited to submit their idea on no more than three sides of A4. We do not expect a full detailed breakdown of project costs at this stage, just a brief proposal - it's the idea and the concept behind it that we are most interested in at this stage! These proposals will then be shortlisted and successful applicants will be contacted and invited to submit a comprehensive proposal of the processes involved in creating the work with a detailed cost breakdown before attending interview.

Detailed proposals should evidence that the idea is fully achievable within the production period and budget, and show consideration of the practical issues and costs involved in presenting work. More details of requirements will be sent to those successful in Stage One.

Applicants will be invited for interview to discuss their proposal in greater detail with a selection panel. You may need to undertake a site visit to any proposed location with the BRASS team before the final selection is made.

Practical Support from us:

We will provide the following to all commissioned ideas:

- Production advice and practical support, including brokerage with potential collaborators and venues/locations where appropriate
- Regular meetings with the *BRASS* team to discuss the progression of the work
- Support with securing relevant permissions and licences for the use of a location/venue
- Health and Safety management
- Project PR and marketing support as part of the *BRASS* umbrella marketing.

Stage One Submissions

What you should consider:

- The commission is not limited to music but can be in any medium including dance, performance, visual art, installation, spoken word, new media etc. so long as it relates to the brass theme
- The commissioned artists will be required to work closely with the *BRASS* team to realise the piece
- In addition to direct production costs the budget should include fees, accommodation and travel. We can signpost you to low cost accommodation at Durham University.
- We are happy to help you with any enquiries. If there is anything in this brief which is unclear, or which you have no experience of, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

What you should include:

In order for your submission to be considered you must be able to present the following details on no more than three sides of A4, minimum point size Arial 11:

- The idea – what you would like to create/present including an outline of how you see its relevance to *BRASS*
- An outline of the processes you will employ in order to realise the idea
- An approximate budget for realising the idea including details of any funding you would aim to secure
- The significance and relevance of the chosen location to the idea you are submitting if appropriate
- The relationship of the idea to the wider public; how will the public experience the work?
- A proposed timeline of how you imagine the idea will be realised.

Please also enclose the following supporting information (this is in addition to the information required above):

- Examples of previous relevant work (if applicable). This should not exceed one side of A4.
- A biography of no more than 200 words.
- Full contact details including postal address, telephone number and email address: If you are applying as part of a collective, please give the name and contact details of the lead contact for your group.

Timeframe

Deadline for all Stage One submissions is: 5pm on Wednesday 7 December 2011. Submissions should be emailed to brassfestival@durham.gov.uk or posted to: Colin Robson, Arts Officer, Durham County Council, The Rivergreen Centre, Durham, DH1 5TS no later than the deadline date and time. All candidates will be notified by Tuesday 20 December 2011 to confirm whether or not they have been selected for the shortlist.

Interviews and site visits will take place between Monday 9 and Friday 13 January 2012.
The final awards will be announced week commencing 23 January.

Further information and links

Gala Arts Festivals Hub

Gala Durham (www.galadurham.co.uk) has recently secured Arts Council England's National Portfolio funding to support the key arts festivals in County Durham – including *BRASS* and Durham Book Festival (www.durhambookfestival.com).

Gala Hub aims:

To deliver our vision of Durham as a world-class centre of excellence for arts festivals, we will:

1. Work closely with the County Durham Cultural Partnership (CDCP) to produce and present a world class festivals programme, actively seeking out local, regional, UK and international artists who display excellence in all its forms.
2. Sustain and extend the provision of artistic experiences of the highest quality for people who live and work in County Durham, with a particular focus on deepening levels of engagement in areas where arts engagement is currently low.
3. Use the festival programme as a tool to attract visitors to the county, developing Durham as a cultural destination of global significance.
4. Meaningfully engage children, young people and communities in our outreach programmes, building capacity and a sense of local ownership and pride, with a focus on social outcomes.

5. Contribute significantly to the development of the arts infrastructure through building the capacity of CDCP bodies and offering a programme of development opportunities for the arts festivals sector.
6. Develop our level of organisational resilience, identifying a sustainable growth model for the Hub and maximising inward investment from public and private sources of funding in pursuit of our aims.

About County Durham

Durham County Council is one of the largest unitary councils in the country, serving a population of approximately 500,000 people.

Located on the River Wear Durham is one of the most beautiful cities in England well known for its Norman Cathedral and 11th-century castle; both designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986. Though it has city status Durham has a population of just 30,000 people, with a fairly compact city centre, which is designated a conservation area. It is also home to one of the oldest Universities in England.

Though the city of Durham remained largely untouched by the industrial revolution, at its height the coal mining industry employed almost the whole of the non-agricultural population of County Durham.

The culture of coal mining found expression in the Durham Miners' Gala, which was first held in 1871 developed around the culture of trade unionism. Despite the closure of the last deep-coal mines in the early 1990's the Miners' Gala still continues to take place on the second Saturday in July falling during the period of the *BRASS* festival.

County Durham's rich coal mining heritage also continues to survive through its traditional brass bands of which 22 are still in existence.

***BRASS* Commissions: Case Studies**

Below are examples of some of the new commissions premiered at *Brass: Durham International Festival* in 2010 and 2011, which we hope will give some flavour of the quality and innovation we are looking for from this open call.

Forma – The Miners Hymns

Commissioned by *BRASS* and developed in partnership with Forma Arts and Media 'The Miners' Hymns' premiered and played to full houses in the spectacular setting of Durham Cathedral during the 2010 festival.

The Miners' Hymns was a new collaboration between renowned American filmmaker Bill Morrison and acclaimed Icelandic musician and composer Jóhann Jóhannsson. The piece weaved together news, documentary and industry footage of brass and mining heritage in the North East region. Jóhannsson's original score for The Miners' Hymns draws upon the

region's rich brass music culture; and was performed live by a specially selected ensemble of players from the Chester-le-Street NASUWT Riverside Band and classically trained brass musicians, with organist Robert Houssart, led by Icelandic conductor Gudni Franzson.

Film clip:

Performance <http://vimeo.com/21589720>

Promo <http://youtu.be/zfWs5xxlJqI>

Scanner – Floral Dearrangement

Created by sound artist Scanner, Floral Dearrangement was a site specific sound installation created specifically for *BRASS 2011*. Taking a recording of the popular piece of music, 'The Floral Dance' recorded by Brighthouse and Rastrick Band in 1977, Scanner processed and stretched the recording to 130 times its original length. The result literally stretched the original piece of music beyond recognisable comprehension, creating a new ethereal effect that transformed not just our experience of the original recording, but also people's perceptions of the location in which they encountered the sound installation.

The site for the work was Kingsgate Bridge, a Modernist design concrete footbridge stretching over the River Wear in Durham City. Sound emanated from speakers hanging beneath the bridge out of site of pedestrians crossing the bridge creating a sense of surprise and wonderment. An apparently simple idea and set up leading to an extraordinary experience.

Film clip: <http://youtu.be/hPRdsdUY7pE>

Dora Frankel Dance Company – One Small Step/One More Step

Responding to Victor Pasmore's controversial brutalist artwork the Apollo Pavilion in Peterlee, contemporary dance choreographer Dora Frankel collaborated with composer and musician Peter Coyte and visual artist Sam Goodlet to create a new site specific performance piece premiered during *BRASS 2011*.

Performed on and around the Pavilion using the physical environment almost as a fourth collaborator, One Small Step/One More Step constructed a narrative tracing the complex and troubled history of the site, recently restored after suffering several decades of abuse and neglect. The musical score combined pre-recorded elements with live accompaniment by Peterlee GT Group Brass Band and local professional violinist Emma Frisk. To quote one audience member, "Peterlee has seen nothing like this before, amazing".

Film clip: <http://youtu.be/1iQrW4C9D9M>

Winter North Atlantic

Working collaboratively with leading brass musicians from County Durham and folk songstress Emily Portman, Winter North Atlantic premiered new compositions and specially

written brass arrangements at Durham Town Hall as part of *BRASS 2011*. The collaboration drew heavily on a range of traditional and contemporary influences and gave local brass players the opportunity to spend time in the studio alongside WNA, exploring the possibilities of their instruments and witnessing first hand the technical processes involved in creating and recording electronic music. The performance at Durham Town Hall also featured specially commissioned visuals created by Supanaught.

Film clip:

Recording session <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snAOggTyPRM>

Pontop Pike <http://vimeo.com/29280090>

The Maid <http://vimeo.com/30129269>