

For their finale, the National Youth Wind Orchestra of Great Britain performed Marco Putz's tour de force "Derivations". Written originally for the Dutch Fanfare Band "Kunst en Vriendschap, Partij-Written" in 2003 it was reworked for symphonic wind band in 2006, and has been selected as the test piece at the 6th Biennial Internationale Musiktage Voecklabruck in Austria.

The composer has used a very short motif, which he then manipulates in various ways, and Glenn Price pointed out that there are numerous changes of time signature in the opening bars, although these seemed to hold no fear for either conductor or players. Much of the music is quite cinematic, with some passages reminiscent of the Roman war epics scored by Miklos Rozsa, with rich textures and driving rhythms.

Many soloists were featured, including fine work on oboe, clarinet and trumpet, with particular mention for Amy Smith on euphonium, who impressed with her calm control, and the way in which she dominated the ensemble in both her solo and the ensuing duet with Beth Schofield on clarinet. The horn section played their "pavilions en l'air" passage with confidence and panache, and all in all it was a splendid performance of a piece that seems destined to become one of the classics for wind.

Various thanks were given during the evening, particularly to the back-room staff who are essential to the smooth running of such courses, and to the parents ♦ or chauffeurs, as Glenn Price referred to them! ♦ whose support and encouragement are so important. On the evidence of this performance, the future of wind music in this country is in good hands, and the National Youth Wind Orchestra can justly take its place alongside the other similar groups for Orchestra, Brass Band and Jazz Orchestra.

Peter Bale