



## Innovation Chamber Ensemble

The Innovation Chamber Ensemble was formed in 2002 by the principal string players of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The ensemble's first concerts were at their home of the C.B.S.O. Centre in Birmingham and at London's Wigmore Hall. The Independent newspaper commented at the time that this was one of the most exciting top ten events to happening in the U.K (second only to a new production of Siegfried!). The concert in Birmingham also created major press and radio coverage and prompted Blue Rhythm Records to approach the group about recording the event live. This recording, entitled '*ICE on Fire*' was distributed to all major outlets and shops through Nova via Pinnacle, through the Britannia Music magazine and online at [www.bluerhythm.co.uk](http://www.bluerhythm.co.uk)

The profile of the Ensemble was also raised by significant coverage by both of the nation's classical radio channels. Classic F.M. featured '*ICE on Fire*' as CD of the week and also previewed many of the group's concerts with interviews and features. The Innovation Chamber Ensemble has also played 'Live' on B.B.C. Radio 3. '*ICE on Fire*' has also received regular air time on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 2, Saga and many regional radio stations. The group has also appeared on BBC 4 and the Creative Channel Network television. Articles about I.C.E. have appeared in the Strad, Musical Opinion and Classical Music magazines and Independent, Daily Mirror, Birmingham Post, Evening Mail and many other local newspapers.

The group's repertoire is hugely diverse from baroque repertoire to contemporary works. I.C.E. is also firmly committed to promoting and recording new pieces by living composers. The two launch concerts

featured works by Paul da Vinci alongside music by the late Robert Farnon (who after hearing the I.C.E. recording of *Song of Scandia* penned Richard a lovely arrangement of *Pictures in the Fire*). Further premieres have included Colin Twig's *Echoes of Eternity* (for cello & strings) premiered in Birmingham and subsequently performed in Suffolk and the 2007 Deal Festival and Ivor McGregor's Septet.

The ensemble has also made several recordings for Somm Records which have also been featured on BBC Radio 3, Radio 4 and Classic FM. Recently recordings include the first recording of Elgar's *Powick Asylum Music*, Wassanaer *Six Concerti Armonici* and most recently a disc of piano concertos by Gordon Jacob, Malcom Williamson and Doreen Carwithen with the pianist Mark Bebbington. In its larger formation with winds and brass, ICE has recently made a project of performing works written for Arnold Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances (Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen). They have performed Mahler Symphony no.4 and *Das Lied von der Erde*, Bruckner 7 and commissioned new arrangements of Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition and Wagner Wesendonck Lieder and Siegfried Idyll for performances at the Buxton, Deal, Fishguard, Newbury, Petworth and Sounds New (Canterbury Cathedral) Festivals.

*'Amazingly rich and well-articulated sound quality is a significant feature of the Innovation Chamber Ensemble... The superb interaction between the Ice players in general is admirable making it possible for them to capture and convey every mood they might choose...'* **Birmingham Post**

The screenshot shows the Classic FM website interface. At the top, the 'CLASSIC FM' logo is visible next to a digital display showing '7909'. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links such as 'Home', 'About Us', 'Contact Us', 'Programmes', 'CD of the Week', 'Request a CD', 'Classical Chart', 'Presenters', 'Most Wanted', 'Contact Us', 'Classical Events', 'Classic FM Consumer Panel', '10th Birthday', and 'Studio Cam'. The main content area is titled 'on-air: programmes' and features 'Henry Kelly's CD of the Week' for 3-7 February 2003. The text describes the CD as a fantastic new release from top-notch CBSO players. A link is provided to win one of ten copies of the CD. Below this, there is a section for 'ICE on Fire' featuring the Innovation Chamber Ensemble's new CD, which includes a live performance at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham. The CD features music by Elgar, Barber, and two contemporary composers: Paul da Vinci (whose work 'Hope' is featured) and Robert Farnon. The CD also includes a world premiere of Paul da Vinci's 'Hope - Concerto for Cello and Solo Strings'.

CLASSIC FM 7909

on-air: programmes

Henry Kelly's CD of the Week

3-7 February 2003

Every weekday at 10.40am, Henry Kelly showcases his CD of the Week. This week - a fantastic new CD from some top-notch CBSO players.

[Click here to win one of ten copies of this CD.](#)

The Innovation Chamber Ensemble was formed last year by the principal string players of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Their idea was to bring performances of the highest quality, by players who regularly work with the likes of Simon Rattle and Sakari Oramo, to venues too small to host an entire symphony orchestra.

The group began in September 2002 with highly-acclaimed performances in and around its home in Birmingham. Since then, the Innovation Chamber Ensemble has brought its pit-sized virtuosic performances to venues across the UK, including the Wigmore Hall in London, and has appeared frequently on national radio.

The Ensemble's brand new CD - ICE on Fire - shows them off at their best, in a live performance at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham. The music demonstrates the group's incredible versatility - there's everything from Mozart and Beethoven to Elgar, Barber and two contemporary composers: Paul da Vinci, whose work 'Hope' is featured here in its world premiere recording, and Robert Farnon, whose music you might have heard on the odd Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett record!

ICE on Fire  
Innovation Chamber Ensemble - strings from CBSO  
Richard Jenkinson - cello  
Blue Rhythm Records BR104

Mozart: Divertimento no.2 in B flat  
Elgar: Serenade for Strings  
Bocherini: Cello Concerto  
Farnon: Song of Scandia - UK premiere  
Barber: Adagio  
Paul da Vinci: Hope - Concerto for Cello and Solo Strings - world premiere

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## News reviews

# ICE CD is hot stuff

**I.C.E. .... on fire:  
Innovation Chamber  
Ensemble**

AT a time of war and death in the Iraq conflict, what should come along but a recording of Samuel Barber's Adagio, the national music of mourning in America.

The work is startlingly moving, whatever the context.

Here it is played by the Innovation Chamber Ensemble, formed from the Strings of the City of

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and you would be hard pressed to find a finer recording.

Led by the flamboyant cellist Richard Jenkinson, and recorded live at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham, ICE bring to this CD a vitality which brims with excitement and impeccable playing.

From the opening bars of Mozart's Divertimento No 2, this is a disc that demands to be heard.

From there we move to

Elgar's Serenade, then Boccherini's wonderful Cello Concerto No 3 before moving into the modern era with the UK premiere recording of Robert Farnon's Song of Scandia.

Barber's Adagio follows before we finish with the world premiere of Paul da Vinci's Concerto for Cello and Strings, Hope.

Inspired by the Irish peace process it, too, can apply to the present conflict. Inspiring indeed. **RC**