

Celebration for Britten

Gresham's hosted a formal black-tie dinner to celebrate the centenary of one of its greatest Old-Boys – the composer Benjamin Britten.

The dinner formed one of the final events under the umbrella of the Britten Arts Festival which had celebrated the life and music of the composer who attended the school from 1928 to 1930. Over the past year, the festival had hosted a number of musical events celebrating Britten's life including performances of Britten's War Requiem and Noye's Fludde, and seen performers such as James Gilchrist, Iain Burnside, Freddie Kempf and the Britten Sinfonia perform at the school, alongside a number of



community based projects which included a one-off performance with six local



primary schools at the Auden Theatre, called Friday Afternoons.

The dinner was attended by staff, former staff and headmasters, parents, Old Greshamians and governors, along with representatives from Classic FM, Capriol Films (who have recently released the drama/documentary Benjamin Britten; Peace and Conflict which was filmed at Gresham's), local heads of music and other representatives of the arts.

During the evening, two guest

speakers, who had enjoyed strong working relationships with Britten, spoke of their memories – Professor Robert Saxton (now Professor of Composition at Oxford University) and Nigel Douglas (tenor, and leading role in first productions of Owen Wingrave and Death in Venice).

The dinner was rounded off by a performance of Britten songs by Tom Appleton (Director of Music Outreach) accompanied by Mark Jones (Director of Music at the Senior School).

PICTURES: PHOTOGRAPHERS' GALLERY



Youngsters from the school also performed in the Forum in Norwich as part of the Familiar Fields exhibition to mark the composer's life.



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