

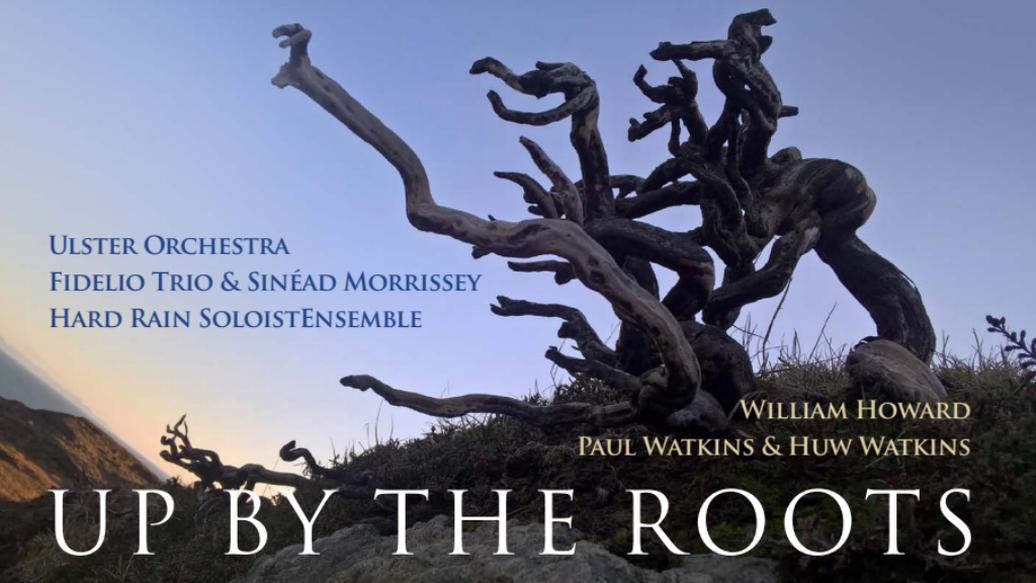
DELPHIAN

PIERS HELLAWELL

ULSTER ORCHESTRA
FIDELIO TRIO & SINÉAD MORRISSEY
HARD RAIN SOLOIST ENSEMBLE

WILLIAM HOWARD
PAUL WATKINS & HUW WATKINS

UP BY THE ROOTS



PIERS HELLAWELL (b. 1956) UP BY THE ROOTS

Fidelio Trio & Sinéad Morrissey ^a

Darragh Morgan *violin*

Adi Tal *cello*

Mary Dullea *piano*

Sinéad Morrissey *poet/narrator*

Paul Watkins *cello*, Huw Watkins *piano* ^b

Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble ^c

Aisling Agnew *flute/piccolo/melodica*

Sarah Watts *clarinet/bass clarinet*

Joanne Quigley McParland *violin*

David McCann *cello*

Daniel Browell *piano*

Sinead Hayes *conductor*

William Howard *piano* ^d

Ulster Orchestra, Paul Watkins *conductor* ^e

Piers Hellawell and Delphian Records gratefully acknowledge the support of the School of Arts, English and Languages in Queen's University Belfast, and of the Douglas C. Harrison Fund within Music at Queen's.

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Up by the Roots for piano trio and narrator (texts: Sinéad Morrissey) ^a

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 I. 'After the bombed-out town' | [3:34] |
| 2 II. 'Listen – Breaking & entering' | [4:50] |
| 3 III–IIIa. 'What's this muttering' | [8:45] |

atria for cello and piano ^b

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| 4 I. Leggierissimo, flessibile | [1:22] |
| 5 II. Interlude | [0:51] |
| 6 III. Pesante | [3:00] |
| 7 IV. Interlude | [1:11] |
| 8 V. Misterioso | [5:09] |

Ground Truthing for flutes, clarinets, violin, cello and piano ^c

- | | |
|----------------|--------|
| 9 I. Veloce | [1:50] |
| 10 II. Vivo | [5:30] |
| 11 III. Ruvido | [7:30] |

Piani, Latebre for piano ^d

- | | |
|-----------------|--------|
| 12 Introduction | [0:26] |
| 13 Étude | [2:39] |
| 14 Impromptu | [4:51] |
| 15 Ballade | [6:03] |

Wild Flow for orchestra ^e

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 16 I. Pesante – Vivo, molto animato | [2:06] |
| 17 II. Ritmico, meccanico | [5:02] |
| 18 III. Largamente | [7:14] |
| 19 IV. Molto veloce, leggierissimo | [1:57] |
| 20 V. Animato, vivace | [3:15] |
| Total playing time | [77:14] |

All tracks are premiere recordings

Notes on the music

Through a now long and distinguished career, Piers Hellawell has produced a body of work characterised by boundless invention, discovery and deep integrity. He has continually refreshed his musical language and materials in a way that shows no sign of diminishing as he approaches 40 years of composing. Above all, his music combines arresting surface gestures and sounds with intellectual heft, resulting in pieces that reward return visits. 'The goal of art', he has written, 'is not to mystify in itself, but to intrigue, and work that gives up all its secrets in one go is quickly discarded.' His own work is not easily discarded.

Hellawell has always operated on the periphery of the British musical establishment, both physically and psychologically, and this is reflected in some of his musical structures, in which 'offshore' island movements float around a 'mainland'. He was born in 1956 in the Peak District, attending boarding school in the south of England and then university in Oxford. His main home is in Belfast, where he has lived since 1981, working throughout that time at Queen's University, where he is now Professor of Composition. Although he has always found Belfast very welcoming, even through some of the worst years of the paramilitary troubles, Hellawell has said that he doesn't truly feel at home there – the 'gravitational pull' is to his spiritual home in the Western Isles of Scotland, to which he retreats whenever he can; yet even here,

what he calls his 'passion [for] place' is offset by his sense of having had 'a life of not belonging'.

Hellawell's music, he says, springs from 'a reaction against European modernism' which was at the heart of a compositional crisis in the mid 1980s, when he wrote nothing for a year. The crisis arose from an uncertainty about where he fitted in stylistically compared with other composers, and was resolved by striking out in his own direction (perhaps aided by being away from Britain's main cultural centres). 'I have always prized individuality pretty highly,' he comments, even while acknowledging that the idea is a relatively new one in the broad sweep of music history. 'I guess it's all the fault of Beethoven and Wagner really ... I'm puzzled by it but I am also very much a product of it.'

The immediate route out of his impasse in the 1980s was through an engagement with Balinese gamelan and traditional Irish music, although neither is really audible in Hellawell's own work. But from one he took the use of restricted pitch collections, endlessly rotated and varied (as in *Piani, Latebre*), and from the other the excitement of unusual – and often spur-of-the-moment – combinations of instruments in live performance, present in the aleatoric spontaneity of *Up by the Roots*.

Hellawell's pieces are often made up of multiple movements, either large or small: the

'offshore islands' and 'mainland' mentioned earlier. This structural principle is present in both *atria* and *Wild Flow*. In *atria* the three 'chambers' of the title are separated by interludes using unusual cello sounds – what he calls 'timbre as a formal thing'. (Hellawell uses a number of striking effects in the works on this recording, include playing the cello's strings with chopsticks and, in *Up by the Roots*, dropping marbles onto the piano's strings.) In *Wild Flow* the outer movements circle around the sometimes brooding, sometimes lyrical central panel.

A preoccupation with the relationship between these different islands is a result of Hellawell's mistrust of 'the tendency to return to material later in a piece'. He instead prefers 'the "progressive" idea of a work's argument being a journey, i.e. 1–2–3 rather than 1–2–1(a)'. Nonetheless he is 'very concerned with flow, [with] how a piece unfolds rhetorically', and his music has an undeniable rhetorical power. But there is an abiding anxiety about the temporal proportions: 'I'm worried, has this gone on long enough, or is it too long?'

Another recurring technique in Hellawell's music is his self-named 'escalator series', a repeating chaconne figure, usually in the bass, that constantly rises, like an Escher staircase. It first appeared in 2003, in the scintillating concertante *Cors de Chasse*. His use of the device in *Piani, Latebre* is its first occurrence in a piano work, where he faced 'the technical

problem of stating it while the other fingers did other stuff'. Latterly he has developed the technique by fragmenting the series into smaller shards which are themselves rotated. But if this description sounds mechanistic and impersonal, the music that results is anything but. The sparkling textures of *Piani, Latebre* are essentially pianistic and yet unbeholden to clichés of piano writing.

Over the years Hellawell has forged a number of enduring creative partnerships, as the present album attests. He has worked extensively with the pianist William Howard (and with Howard's Schubert Ensemble), with the Fidelio Trio, with cellist and conductor Paul Watkins and with the Ulster Orchestra, for whom he wrote *Wild Flow* at a time when the orchestra's very existence was under threat. A more recent connection is with Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble: a Belfast-based new music group, founded as recently as 2013, which has already performed a number of Hellawell's earlier pieces in addition to commissioning **Ground Truthing**, the most recent work in this collection. Hellawell has said that 'the springboard for any and every new project is collaboration with an artist', and his scores are rich in details that help bring the music alive for the performer (and show that Hellawell has always given practical consideration to the realisation of even his most outlandish effects).

The vast majority of Hellawell's works are instrumental, although there have been

Notes on the music

important vocal pieces such as *The Hilliard Songbook* and *Isabella's Banquet*. Even in this context **Up by the Roots** is exceptional: Sinéad Morrissey's text is not sung but recited, initially between passages of music, but gradually overlapping with them. Thus what is perceived initially as the musical mainland is over time revealed to be the offshore islets. Hellawell continues to play with his own structural ideas – developing, honing and exploring his musical ingredients. Similarly, the second movement of *Wild Flow* takes Hellawell's distinctive twitchiness to new extremes of disjunction, opening up a new direction for his orchestral writing.

Hellawell has not consciously attempted to create an *oeuvre*, instead seeing his career as the repeated attempt 'to write a good work'. He conceded in a 2013 interview that 'decades have tended to delineate evolutions' throughout his composing career, the 'exploratory' 1980s yielding to the 'mellow' 1990s and the 'more astringent' 2000s.

It was then too early to assign an adjective to the 2010s, and so this 2020 release offers the perfect opportunity to assess what it might be. I can think of several possible answers. Perhaps 'synthesising', as Hellawell's technical skill has come fully into alignment with his aesthetic concerns. Perhaps 'vital', as all the music here has an essential energy, whether fast and hyperactive or slow but simmering. But maybe I'd settle for 'questing', in recognition of a musical mind which is always restless, always pursuing the new idea, not following either the familiar route or the 'road less travelled', but rather making its own path, freshly trampled through the undergrowth.

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Bernard Hughes is a composer and writer. He is Composer-in-Residence of St Paul's Girls' School in London and his music has been widely performed in Britain and the US. He writes on contemporary music in print and online.

Notes by the composer



The five works recorded on this disc are among my major outputs from the decade 2009–19. They were selected both for their feature of recurrent themes that are important to me and because they represent some of my most treasured collaborations with outstanding musicians; all the works are recorded by the artists who premiered them, with the exception of one switch of conductor.

For **Up by the Roots** (2016), the poet Sinéad Morrissey and I wanted to create a work on the theme of migration, one that not only 'expressed' spoken text in the traditional way but whose form actively reflected it; accordingly, the poet's words begin as separate tableaux between the musical episodes but then gradually interweave, the bounds between them first blurring before music and text finally overrun one another. The narrative describes the migrants' arrival but soon becomes symbolic, as the newcomers get a chilly reception in the forest from previous arrivals. In 2016 I wrote about the process: 'As our separate compositions of music and words unfolded, it became harder to compose without first knowing the latest turn of the poetry; what began as a distant civility to the poetry, as I composed the opening piece with an image of beached landings in my mind, became positively claustrophobic in the later stages as music and poetry converged. Finally I found my head full of the expletives of Baba Yaga as I feverishly

furnished them with their musical surround.' *Up By The Roots* is dedicated to Patricia Martin.

atria was written in 2012. Its design, of three movements (i, iii, v) that expand in expression, has distant echoes of my trio *Truth Or Consequences* (1992) – while the presence of two interludes between these (ii and iv) is, equally, rooted in *Sound Carvings from the Ice Wall* (1994) and many scores since. The *atria* of the title are thus three musical chambers: the first is a small anterior space (i), from which we progress into the expanded middle movement and, finally, through to the inner chamber that is the final movement. On this journey, the two interludes (like those in *Sound Carvings from the Ice Wall*) are 'coloured in' by using experimental sounds for cello – sounds not found in the main pieces. *atria* is dedicated to Huw and Paul Watkins.

In offering an expansion of scope over three movements **Ground Truthing** (2018) picks up tangibly from *atria*, but goes much further. A 2016 work, *Russian Doll* for trumpet and piano, had exposed the idea of presenting successive expansions of the same music, on growing (or shrinking) scales; this is extended in other works of 2018 but *Ground Truthing* is its fullest expression to date. Where *Russian Doll* went from 'smaller' to 'larger' musical versions, the three statements here go further by confronting the effect of proximity: just as an object in view, such as a wall, is redefined from its distant surface-appearance when we observe

Notes by the composer

it minutely from inches away, so these pieces present their shared harmonic ground – my ‘Escalator Series’ – in growing magnifications. In each case this harmonic basis is presented several times, under varied textures, before a coda; however, the presentation of surface detail increases, along with slowing of harmonic speed, in each movement, as we get ‘nearer’. *Ground Truthing* is dedicated to Greg Caffrey – ‘the bringer of Hard Rain’.

Piani, Latebre was written in 2009; like others of my works it presents three pieces, and, as in some others, the choice of order for the three is the performer’s to make. Whatever the order, they are prefaced by a short introduction. This fragment presents three pianistic ideas, of which two are present in each of the three pieces: tremolos, fluid scalic runs and the two-part ‘tenor-and-bass’ idea of my Escalator Series. Each of the three pieces has a suffix-title taken from the great Romantic repertoire: ‘Etude’, ‘Impromptu’ and ‘Ballade’. These are not of great individual significance, but serve to remind that traditional pianistic textures were consciously evoked here. The title means ‘layers, hiding-places’ – layers being involved in pianistic terms, and hiding-places reflecting the composer’s goal in seeking to find corners of piano writing free of well-worn pianistic formulae. *Piani, Latebre* is dedicated to Neil and Matilda King.

With my first Proms piece (*Inside Story*, 1999) I had pushed back against the trend for new works to arrive laden with programmatic associations about belief, politics or anything extra-musical; in **Wild Flow**, a BBC Proms commission written in 2015 to receive its premiere the following year, I resumed this challenge, for the five pieces are only ‘about’ their interrelationships, their contrasts, their progression. The central, third piece is the work’s expressive core: the first and last pieces are respectively curtain-raiser and finale, with the fourth as a shorter interlude. Movement 2 is a radical structure for me – an exercise in discontinuity. I had in mind a child’s clockwork toy that, encountering obstacles, resets its path and takes a new direction. In this way it is a study of controlled indecision, the intention being to observe an artistic purpose in the act of changing its mind ... The commission offered a chance to write for the resurgent Ulster Orchestra, then emerging strengthened from serious financial problems thanks to the help of many non-musical friends whose contribution is little known; therefore **Wild Flow** is dedicated to The Ulster Orchestra and its Champions.

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Texts

1 Poem 1

After the bombed-out town, after the low-slung crossing, the ones who landed alive stood up and started walking into the tufted foreheads of the dunes, into the marram starred in its spiky islands as the shingle behind them sougled less and less loudly and the sea hushed up its voice and grew smooth again and scenic and innocuous. They came to wire, at the spongy crest of a headland, barbed with shards of wool, and the children cut their hands as their mothers or fathers tried to coax them through, cutting themselves. The sky was a flipped-over bowl of blue, perceptibly darkening, and no one had noticed them yet, no one had witnessed them stumble across the wet trough of a bog awash with stagnant turf-black ponds and sink holes, just about upright in everything they owned: tracksuits, anoraks, sweatshirts, in trainers with missing tongues, clutching photographs of the missing, clutching suddenly useless phones, babies asleep inside slings if their parents were lucky, bigger kids slung across shoulders, higgledy-piggledly, as yet no one had caught them out on their stop-start transit, the day going down like a ship and the moon’s rise imminent, the first already the last and the last becoming the first as they slowed to a halt at the hemline of a forest.

2 Poem 2

Listen—

Breaking & entering—
some looper barging in
at the edge of our kingdom—

Some do-gooder, yet another
no-hoper

Texts

trailing her face—
They-done-this-to-me-Miss—

Come back like a virus

*

Leaf-litter Undergrowth Wayside-Dross

A raindrop
abandons a branch
out by the thinning

fringes
of the forest
& we hear it
here in the heart

Every tell-tale snapping trespass

*

One-become-Four-become-Five-become-Seven—

They must be leaving
the evening behind
to gradually

darken—
exchanging dayligone
for the preternatural black
of our cloistered waystation—

Become-an-army-advancing—

*

We shan't be having them—

Been here for years,
here since the last
cataclysm—

tarpaulin roofs,
tea-kettles, sticks,
boots
that never last long enough—

Dig us up by our roots & we'll scream—

*

And now into our pallid circle of fire

steps a boy
with a suitcase a man
with his jaw

in a handkerchief three
women with such throughother
hair the wind
reminded itself they existed

& then blew them here.

3 Poem 3

What's this muttering
Woken up after five hundred years
by pheromones of alarm
Not since those orphans broke open my feasthouse

What's this keruffle
dragged out of my sleep
by a sharp salt smell

Texts

cuffs at the elbows hands like a washerwoman's
 have I peeked at the moon from between my long fingers
 Huge balloon snagged on a fistful of branches
 Spectacular trespass My foregarden's lit up like Christmas
 The clearing is seething Shouting Gesticulating
 If they'd fur they'd bristle If they'd antlers they'd wrangle their enemies
 to their knees A din like Armageddon I was dreaming
 of undisturbed water in a dishpan I was dreaming of Baikal
 Not this snattery line of exhausted kids washed up on my doorstep
 Mothers Uncles Grandfathers Sisters lynchgang facing them down
 The moon undoes its tethers rises I wish them dumb and gone
 I watch them become dumb and brown and freaked by their altered
 shadows by their headgear by their delicate, too-thin legs by their fur and but for
 the sudden flash of their backs the sudden rush of their skitter
 as they reel off into the trees
 isolate and undone to disappear
 it's quiet here
 once more a shuttered shop a lake with no one on it
 and sweet sleep takes me in its mouth and lets me drop

Biographies



Eoin Schmidt-Martin

Shortlisted for the 2016 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, the 'virtuosic' (*Sunday Times*) **Fidelio Trio** are enthusiastic champions of the piano trio genre. Their release of French piano trios was a *Gramophone* Critic's Choice and they are broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3, RTÉ Lyric FM, WQXR, and featured on a Sky Arts documentary.

Since their debut at London's Southbank Centre, they have appeared at the Wigmore Hall and Kings Place, and at festivals including Spitalfields, Cheltenham and Huddersfield. They regularly perform at National Concert Hall, Dublin as well in Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Porto, Paris, Venice, Florence, Johannesburg, New York, San Francisco and Boston. Their extensive discography includes repertoire from Ravel/Saint-Saëns and Chausson/Fauré/Satie to Philip Glass and Michael Nyman; for Delphian they have recorded music by Hafliði Halgrímsson (DCD34059) and Piers Hellawell (DCD34114) as well as *The Piano Tuner* (DCD34084) featuring trios by Sally Beamish, Nigel Osborne and Judith Weir.

The Trio have given masterclasses at Peabody Conservatory and Curtis Institute and often perform Beethoven's Triple Concerto, most recently with KZN Philharmonic Orchestra and RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland. They have premiered music by Toshio

Hosokawa, Charles Wuorinen, Johannes Maria Staud, Gerald Barry, Donnacha Dennehy, Piers Hellawell, Judith Weir, Ann Cleare and Kevin Volans. They are Artistic Directors of their Winter Chamber Music Festival at Dublin City University.



Florian Braakman

Sinéad Morrissey was born in Northern Ireland in 1972 and grew up in Belfast. She is the author of six poetry collections: *There was Fire in Vancouver* (1996), *Between Here and There* (2002), *The State of the Prisons* (2005), *Through the Square Window* (2009), *Parallax* (2013) and *On Balance* (2017). Her awards include first prize in the UK National Poetry Competition, a Lannan Literary Fellowship and the EM Forster Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Both *Through the Square Window* and *Parallax* received the Irish Times Poetry Prize. She was the winner of the TS Eliot Prize in 2013 and of The Forward Prize for Best Collection in 2017. In 2013, she was appointed Belfast's inaugural Poet Laureate, and in 2019 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. She is currently Professor of Creative Writing and Director of the Newcastle Centre for the Literary Arts at Newcastle University.

Biographies



Piers Hellowell

Acclaimed for his inspirational performances and eloquent musicianship, **Paul Watkins** enjoys a distinguished career as concerto soloist, chamber musician, and conductor. He performs regularly with the major British orchestras and has made eight concerto

appearances at the BBC Proms, most recently in the world premiere of the cello concerto composed for him by his brother Huw Watkins. He has performed with prestigious orchestras worldwide including the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Netherlands Philharmonic, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, Konzerthausorchester Berlin and the Orchestra Nazionale Sinfonica della RAI Torino. The 2018–19 season featured the release of Gerald Finzi's Cello Concerto with Sir Andrew Davis and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and a return to the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival. A dedicated chamber musician, he was a member of the Nash Ensemble from 1997 until 2013, when he joined the Emerson String Quartet. Since 2014 he has been artistic director of the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in Detroit. He also maintains a busy career as a conductor, with recent and future highlights including appearances with the Detroit Symphony, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Kristiansand Symphony and Minnesota

Orchestra, and has held the positions of music director of the English Chamber Orchestra and principal guest conductor of the Ulster Orchestra. Paul Watkins plays a cello made by Domenico Montagnana and Matteo Goffriller in Venice, c.1730.



Piers Hellowell

Huw Watkins, born in Wales, is one of Britain's foremost composers. As a pianist he performs with orchestras, in chamber collaborations and in festivals around the globe. He is deeply committed to the performance of new music and has had

piano concertos written for him. His own compositions have been commissioned and performed by the Nash Ensemble, the Belcea and Elias quartets, the London Symphony Orchestra and Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra among others. He won the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's 2016 Elise L. Stoeger Prize in recognition of his significant contributions to the field of chamber music composition. He is regularly featured on BBC Radio 3, both as performer and composer. He has made several chamber recordings, and a disc of his work, *In My Craft or Sullen Art*, was released by NMC Records. He teaches at the Royal Academy of Music and is Composer-in-Association with BBC NOW.



Stuart Calvin

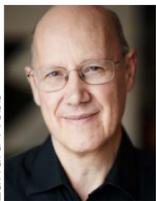
Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble are dynamic newcomers to the Irish and UK new music scene, having performed music by over 100 composers in the five years of their existence. Their repertoire has included important titans of modern and contemporary music such as Schoenberg, Takemitsu, Carter, Boulez, Reich, Bartok, Sciarrino, Berg, Donatoni, Ligeti, Xenakis, Henze, Gubaidulina, Feldman and Webern to name a few, as well as featuring a wide range of composers from these islands. Their concerts have also frequently given a platform to young composers and they supplement their concert

season with a programme of educational workshops, much of which takes place as part of their current residency programme at Queen's University Belfast. In addition, the ensemble offers composers early-career opportunities through their annual Peter Rosser Composition Award.

The ensemble was founded by the composer Greg Caffrey, who remains their Artistic Director. The core ensemble is frequently joined by many other leading performers from the UK and Ireland's new music scene.

Biographies

Edward Webb



William Howard, described in *The Independent* as 'a pianist of quite special lustrousness and versatility', is established as one of Britain's leading pianists, enjoying a career that has taken him to over 40 different countries. In 1983 he founded the Schubert

Ensemble, with which he performed for the full 35 years of the Ensemble's existence. As soloist and chamber musician William has performed regularly at major venues and festivals in the UK and has made over 40 CD recordings. These include *Sixteen Contemporary Love Songs* (2018), the culmination of a project to commission love songs for solo piano from leading composers from the UK and abroad. He has premiered several dozen new works in the course of his career and has enjoyed long-standing collaborations with many composers, including Piers Hellawell, David Matthews, Pavel Zemek Novák, Howard Skempton and Judith Weir. He is passionate about nineteenth-century piano repertoire, especially Schubert, Chopin, Schumann and Fauré. He also has a strong interest in Czech piano music, and has been particularly acclaimed for his performance of Janáček, for which he received a medal from the Czech Minister of Culture in 1986.

Founded in 1966, the **Ulster Orchestra** has been at the forefront of musical life in Northern Ireland ever since; in 2019–20, Daniele Rustioni becomes its Chief Conductor. The orchestra performs around 40 concerts a year in its home, the Ulster Hall, and the Waterfront Hall, Belfast.

With a mission to enrich the lives of people living in Northern Ireland, those visiting, and those who encounter it through international touring and regular radio and TV broadcasts with the BBC, the orchestra strives for excellence in all it undertakes, be it concert performances, learning and community engagement programmes, or creative collaborations across the arts. An important aspect of the Ulster Orchestra's work across Northern Ireland is its annual touring programme of concerts, which brings live orchestral music to the heart of communities across the region. The Ulster Orchestra's Learning and Community Engagement programme aims to connect the orchestra with communities and individuals across Northern Ireland, both as audiences and participants. All the orchestra's musicians work on activities including relaxed performances for people with additional needs, mentoring and coaching for players at all stages and the Crescendo project, the orchestra's community-led residency project for children from disadvantaged areas in North and West Belfast.

Up by the Roots, commissioned as part of a PRS for Music Foundation 'Beyond Borders' award to the Fidelio Trio, Sinéad Morrissey and Piers Hellawell, was premiered by the Fidelio Trio and Sinéad Morrissey on a 'Beyond Borders' tour of the UK and Ireland beginning in May 2016.

atria was commissioned by Belfast Music Society for their 2013 International Festival of Chamber Music, and premiered by Paul and Huw Watkins in the Great Hall, The Queen's University of Belfast on 21 February 2013.

Ground Truthing was commissioned by Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble with funds from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Support for the Individual Artist Programme, and premiered by them in the Sonic Lab, The Queen's University on 17 February 2019.

Piani, Latebre, commissioned by Landmark Chambers, was premiered by William Howard at the Spitalfields Festival, London in June 2010.

Wild Flow was commissioned by the BBC for the 2016 Proms, and premiered by the Ulster Orchestra conducted by Rafael Payare at the Royal Albert Hall on 21 August 2016.

I want to express my respect for the outstanding artists on this disc. A special thank you goes to Sinéad Morrissey for her words and voice.

These recordings, like many of my previous discs, could not have come into being without the tireless skill and patience of producer, sound engineer and one-man recording-studio Chris Corrigan – and so I dedicate to him the disc 'Up by the Roots'.

— Piers Hellawell

Also available on Delphian



Piers Hellowell: Airs, Waters

Robert Plane, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra; Fidelio Trio
DCD34114

With sources of inspiration ranging from the self-immolation of Czech student Jan Palach in January 1969 to the lost Etruscan language and the sculptures of abstract expressionist David Smith, the full breadth and depth of Hellowell's compositional preoccupations are represented in authoritative performances by some of his closest collaborators. Alongside chamber and solo piano works sits the clarinet concerto *Agricolas*, premiered at the 2008 Vale of Glamorgan Festival by soloist Robert Plane, who now commits it to disc as part of this diverse programme of premiere recordings.

'The performances do the music proud, not least the limpidly precise pianism of Mary Dullea and soulful clarinet-playing of Robert Plane, while the sound has a clarity and perspective equally evident in solo and chamber as in orchestral pieces' — Gramophone, Awards issue 2012

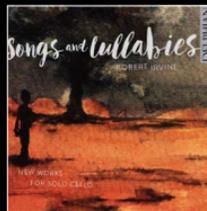


Out of the Silence: orchestral music by John McLeod

Dame Evelyn Glennie, Royal Scottish National Orchestra / Holly Mathieson & John McLeod
DCD34196

Energetic and active in his eighties, John McLeod is currently enjoying a resurgence amply justified by the indelible colour and drama of the orchestral works assembled here, three of them under the composer's own baton. *The Shostakovich Connection* (1974) and *Out of the Silence* (2014) pay homage respectively to the Russian master's Fifth Symphony and to the maverick yet impeccable craftsmanship of the Danish composer Carl Nielsen. The Percussion Concerto – a substantial display piece – makes full use of the extraordinary talents of Evelyn Glennie, for whom it was written thirty years ago, while the *Hebridean Dances*, in lighter vein yet no less vivid, bring proceedings to a rousing finish.

'Beginning in hushed tones, this develops into something magical ... [The Percussion Concerto] is particularly impactful, utilising the nuanced sounds of every instrument.' — BBC Music Magazine, August 2018

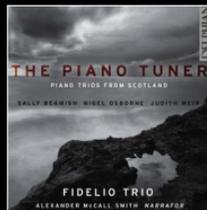


Songs and Lullabies: new works for solo cello

Robert Irvine
DCD34173

Inspired by the plight of disadvantaged and mistreated children around the world, Delphian artist Robert Irvine has commissioned 18 new pieces for solo cello. As a musician who works at the heart of the English and Scottish scenes, he is able to draw on an impressive roster of friends and colleagues that includes some of the UK's leading composers. Each of them has contributed a short solo piece, drawing out the cello's most lyrical aspects, while Irvine's own startling alertness to the finest expressive nuance further enhances this unique recording project.

'Irvine responds to each piece with the same sincerity, imagination and technical assurance; lovely playing, captured in warm, natural sound' — Gramophone, November 2016



The Piano Tuner: piano trios from Scotland

Fidelio Trio, Alexander McCall Smith
DCD34084

Storytelling takes centre stage in the Fidelio Trio's second recording for Delphian, in which they are joined by Alexander McCall Smith, who narrates Sally Beamish's evocative *The Seafarer Trio* with a mingled intimacy and plangency. The comparatively abstract sounds of Nigel Osborne's *The Piano Tuner* track a journey into the dark heart of nineteenth-century Burma, while the stories told in Judith Weir's Zen-inspired Piano Trio Two include that of 'How grass and trees become enlightened'.

'as bracing as a splash of water from a Highland stream ... This kind of music is food and drink to the Fidelio Trio and it gives sure-footed, rhythmically alive, directly communicative performances of all three works' — International Record Review, December 2010

