

# A NEW DAWN

## OWEN FARR

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|---|------------------------------|------|
| 1. A NEW DAWN © <i>Christopher Bond Music</i>                   | Christopher Bond             | 4.06 |
| 2. DRAGON DANCES © <i>Jagrins</i>                               | Andrew Baker                 | 6.53 |
| 3. A CELTIC PROMISE © <i>Wright &amp; Round</i>                 | Philip Harper                | 4.45 |
| 4. TENOR TOCCATA © <i>Prima Vista Musikk</i>                    | Rodney Newton                | 5.46 |
| 5. DIVERSIONS ON GWAHODDIAD © <i>Studio Music</i>               | Tom Davoren                  | 6.28 |
| 6. TRIP THE LIGHT FANTASTIC © <i>Prima Vista Musikk</i>         | Dan Price                    | 5.19 |
| 7. TRIPTYCH (on a Theme by Handel) © <i>Peter Meechan Music</i> | Peter Meechan                | 7.36 |
| 8. MÉDITATION FROM THAÏS <i>M/s</i>                             | Massenet arr. Judith Hayes   | 5.15 |
| 9. LA CAPRICIEUSE © <i>Note for Note Music Services</i>         | Elgar arr. John Jemmett      | 3.57 |
| 10-12. CONCERTO FOR TENOR HORN © <i>Lucy Pankhurst</i>          | Lucy Pankhurst               |      |
| i. <i>Call to Arms</i>  | 5.00                         |      |
| ii. <i>Forgotten Oath</i>                                       | 6.21                         |      |
| iii. <i>Fool's Dance</i>  | 3.29                         |      |
| 13. SWINGY THING © <i>Wright &amp; Round</i>                    | Ellington arr. Philip Harper | 3.28 |

Total CD Playing Time 68.32

DOY CD335

Executive Producer: Trevor Caffull  
 Producer: Adam Goldsmith  
 Engineer: Melissa Dee  
 Post-Production: Adam Goldsmith and Melissa Dee  
 Production Manager: Nicki Tonge

Project Coordinator: Neil Brownless  
 Artwork and Design: GK Graphic Design  
 Programme Notes: Philip Harper  
 Recorded by World of Sound on 28-30 March 2014 at  
 Ysgol Gyfyn Rhydywaun, Aberdare

# A NEW DAWN



OWEN FARR  
 CORY BAND  
 PHILIP HARPER

## A NEW DAWN OWEN FARR

It's true to say that every instrument, in its quest to find a place within the landscape of music, needs its champions, pioneers and virtuosi. Where would the violin be without Paganini or Menuhin; the piano without Liszt or Horowitz; the trumpet without André or Marsalis? To lead the tenor horn into undiscovered territory, enter Owen Farr. Not only has Owen dedicated so much of his life to developing the most incredible technique the instrument has ever known, he continues to spearhead the growth of its repertoire, the latest step along the path of which is this solo CD, consisting entirely of première recordings. In making this disc over two hard days of solid playing, Owen never faltered, either physically or mentally, in his mission to celebrate the tenor horn and bring the highest quality of performance to you, the listener. Across the ever-changing landscape of music, a new dawn has arrived.

*for Helen Farr*



## PHILIP HARPER



Philip Harper became Musical Director of the world-famous Cory Band in 2012. Within 18 months he had steered the band back to the Number One World Rank by winning three of the four major titles in the brass band calendar: the National, the European, and Brass in Concert (with a runner-up prize in the other, the British Open!) as well as receiving media awards for the band's CD recordings, and plaudits for the concert tour of Australia.

Philip won the coveted Conductor of the Year Award for 2013, voted for by 10,000 readers of the website *4barsrest.com*. With previous bands, Tongwynlais Temperance Band and Flowers Band, he achieved unprecedented contest success, as well as winning acclaim for his entertaining concert performances.

A resident of Gloucester, Philip is also the Editor of Brass Band World magazine, the Music Editor of the historic Wright and Round publishing company, and in demand as a freelance conductor, educator and adjudicator with brass bands of all levels.

Philip is a prolific composer and his original works and arrangements are played all over the world. In 2012 he composed Journey for the 650 musicians of the Gloucester Music Service Massed Ensemble, conducting the first performance in a packed Royal Albert Hall at the Last Night of the Schools Proms. You can find out more detail and listen to audio excerpts of Philip's music at [www.philipharper.co.uk](http://www.philipharper.co.uk).

En route to this point in his life, Philip graduated from the University of Bristol in 1994 before going on to take a Masters Degree in Composition and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education. He had a successful performing career and was the Principal Tenor Horn of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain and Sun Life Band in Bristol, as well as winning through to the Brass Final of BBC Young Musician of the Year in 1991. Between 1996 and 1998 he lived in Japan and was a guest soloist with most of the 'British-style' brass bands with whom he still keeps a close connection, visiting annually.

# PERSONNEL

Steve Stewart	Soprano Cornet	Sue Thomas	First Baritone
Tom Hutchinson	Solo Cornet	Matthew Fletcher	Second Baritone
Darren Thomas	Solo Cornet	Martyn Patterson	Solo Euphonium
Ian Williams	Solo Cornet	Dan Thomas	Second Euphonium
Carl Saunders	Solo Cornet	Chris Thomas	Solo Trombone
Seamus Gallagher	Solo Cornet	Gareth Robinson	Second Trombone
Chris Howley	Solo Cornet	Jake Durham	Second Trombone
Neil Blockley	Solo Cornet	Andrew Williams	Bass Trombone
Will Norman	Repiano Cornet	Simon Howell	Eb Bass
Stephanie Wilkins	Second Cornet	Kate James	Eb Bass
Taddy Evans	Second Cornet	Jeremy Taylor	Eb Bass
Phill Harris	Third Cornet	Fraser Bish	Bb Bass
Dan Sharpe	Third Cornet	Rob Nicholson	Bb Bass
Richard Davies	Flugel Horn	Tim Evans	Bb Bass
Ailsa Russell	First Horn	Alun Horgan	Percussion
Lowenna Taylor	First Horn	Dave Mitchell	Percussion
Lucy Griffiths	Second Horn	James Andrews	Percussion
		Omri Tau	Percussion



The title track, *A New Dawn* composed by Cornishman Christopher Bond, was commissioned by Owen in the autumn of 2013, and the first performance took place with Cornwall Youth Brass Band and Richard Evans. After an explosion, like the beginning of a new galaxy, the burning embers recede to pave the way for the first entry of the horn. Much of its material is highly rhythmic, a feel which returns after a brief central oasis, before launching again into the glare of the blazing sun.

*Dragon Dances* enjoyed the same genesis, being first performed by Owen, Cornwall Youth Brass Band and Richard Evans back in 2010. Welsh composer Andrew Baker has fashioned his piece on two particularly Welsh concepts - 'hiraeth' (a yearning for home) and 'hwyl' (ecstatic joy and fervour) which constitute the two linked sections of the music: a melancholy melody followed by a more dance-like, joyful second part.

I composed my *A Celtic Promise* in 2003 for Richard Knight to perform at the Octagon in Yeovil, Somerset. The melodies are of my own invention, although the atmosphere is

intended to be one of ancient Celtic legend, with the mist rising over quiet, brooding hills. The flugel horn and other tenor horns are often featured as prominently as the soloist.

Rodney Newton has written a number of works for tenor horn, and the *Tenor Toccata* was composed for Owen and premièred in Manchester in 2002 with piano. This band arrangement arrived much later. The work is in a single movement which develops from a fanfare-like introduction into a cheerful melody, then a more relaxed passage with a flowing theme and discourse between the horn and the band, before finally reprising the material and finishing with an energetic coda.

*Diversions on Gwaboddiad* was composed for Owen Farr's predecessor in the Principal Horn chair at Cory Band, David Cornelius. The composer conducted the first performance with BTM Band in 2011 and the piece is a celebration of the versatile character of the tenor horn through musical elements found in John Roberts' Welsh hymn tune. There are similarities with the traditional theme and variation format, although rather than simply elaborating on an existing 'tune', new material

is drawn from the inherent rhythmic and melodic qualities of Roberts' original hymn.

When responding to a commission in 2009, composer Dan Price decided to make his tenor horn piece, *Trip the Light Fantastic*, something of a character study of its commissioner. Dan writes: 'Anyone who knows Owen will know that he has an infectious and engaging presence and a lively sense of humour, as well as endless passion and enthusiasm for music.' Conforming to an ABA musical structure, the outer sections take the form of a jig. Near the conclusion there is what the composer describes as 'a sizeable cadenza for the soloist to really strut his stuff.' Hearing Owen perform this cadenza on the CD session was one of those open-mouthed moments for everyone else in the room!

Peter Meechan's *Triptych (on a Theme by Handel)* was commissioned by Lesley Howie for a première performance at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. In three broad sections, the work is another modern take on the traditional theme and variations concept, and there are three sections: fanfare and theme – a setting of Handel's *Sarabande* (from his sixth

suite for keyboard); slow song – a simple melody, becoming more elaborate throughout the section; finale – a quasi-tango making some fiendish technical demands of the soloist.

The *Méditation* from Jules Massenet's opera *Thaïs* is actually designed as an entr'acte and is played as the scenery is changed in Act II. It has of course become the most well-known part of the opera, and is in the repertoire of all the great violin players, as well as those of most other instruments for which versions exist, the intoxicating sweep of the melody and exotic harmony being more than most arrangers can seem to resist! This new adaptation has been made by Judith Hayes and also features the vibraphone.

Edward Elgar penned several charming miniatures in the early part of his life, *Salut d'Amour* being among the best well-known. Also from this time came *La Capricieuse – morceau de genre, for violin & piano* which has been arranged for Owen by John Jemmett, and fully lives up to its capricious, light-footed title.

The most large-scale work on this disc is the *Concerto for Tenor Horn* by Lucy Pankhurst.



Cory Band is recognised as one of the Principality's finest and most innovative music ensembles. Its numerous CD recordings and live concert performances have received worldwide acclaim.

In May 2012 the band announced the beginning of a new era with the appointment of Philip Harper as its new Musical Director. 2013 was an historic year for Cory as it has once again showcased its consistency on the contest stage by winning the European championships in Oslo in May, awarded runner up in the World Championships in Kerkrade in July and at the British Open Championships in September, crowned National Champions of Great Britain in October for the sixth time in its history and in November it successfully defended its

title of Brass in Concert Champions. This contesting dominance meant that Cory ended 2013 as the World's number one ranked brass band for the seventh consecutive year. On top of that the band has had a full concert schedule throughout the UK and Europe and also enjoyed a very successful 10 date concert tour of Australia in August. Cory added several new CDs to its collection in 2013 and its new release *Words and Music* was recently awarded CD of the Year by *Brass Band World* and *British Bandsman* magazines.

For more information, to purchase any recordings or to join the Cory Band Fan Club please visit [www.coryband.com](http://www.coryband.com) or check out our latest news at [www.facebook.com/coryband](http://www.facebook.com/coryband).



2005 when the band made history giving the première performance of his Gaia Symphony at the prestigious Cheltenham International Festival. The Symphony was broadcast live on Radio 3, and lasting over an hour in duration, it is currently the largest scale original work in the repertoire.

The band is dedicated to new music, raising the profile of the brass band genre and keeping music alive in Wales. It has an active commissioning policy and has performed works by many of Britain's leading composers: John McCabe, Judith Bingham, Elgar Howarth, Edward Gregson, Alun Hoddinott, Karl Jenkins, David Bedford, as well as John Pickard to name but a few. The band's current

'Composer in Residence' is Welshman Gareth Wood.

In 2002 the band was selected to play for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and has since performed in many of the world's finest concert venues including the Grieg Hall, Stravinsky Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, Birmingham's Symphony Hall, the Parc & Dare Hall and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw.

In 2003 it performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Last Night of the Welsh Proms and was more recently featured during the opening celebrations of the new Welsh Millennium Centre. Last year, the band enjoyed its own Welsh Prom in St David's Hall, Cardiff.

Lucy is herself a fine horn player, studying contemporaneously with Owen at the Royal Northern College of Music, when the concerto was composed in 2002.

She has since gone on to develop a fine reputation as a composer, winning a British Composer Award in 2011, but this concerto is one of her earliest works. She has said: 'I had never heard a brass player like Owen before and was stunned by his technical brilliance as well as his musicality. Also, being at college myself and exploring the horn repertoire in more detail, I wanted to write something which showed the versatility of the instrument and used more of the extreme range.'

Lucy actually gave the première of the second movement in her final degree recital, but the official première of the entire concerto was given by Owen at Birmingham Conservatoire in 2005. This is the première recording.

There are three movements: *Call to Arms*; *Forgotten Oath*; and *Fool's Dance*. Although the piece is not programmatic, the titles give a glimpse into the style and ambience of each movement, with the overall theme being of bygone times of knights, oaths and honour, and the youthful exuberance of a composer learning her trade is evident throughout this major work.

After the herculean efforts of the concerto, the disc wraps up with a virtuosic encore in the shape of *Swing Thing*, which is based on Duke Ellington's jazz classic *It Don't Mean a Thing if it Ain't Got that Swing* and shows that this new dawn for tenor horn repertoire, in the hands of Owen Farr, knows no bounds of genre or musical style. It's a brilliant close to a ground-breaking solo CD by a peerless performer on an emerging instrument. We hope you enjoy your steps with us on this journey.

*Philip Harper*



Owen began his musical career with Pontypool Brass Band at the age of six. He soon joined Gwent County Youth Brass Band and the National Youth Brass Band of Wales, progressing to Principal Horn in both ensembles. In 1995 he became the British Open Junior Solo Champion at the age of 16.

He studied at the Royal Northern College of Music playing with the famous Williams Fairey Band before returning to the 'land of his fathers' by joining Cory Band in 2004 since when he has won all there is to win in the brass band world, with lots of individual solo awards including a concerto performance on Cory Band's 2013 *Brass Band World* magazine and *British Bandsman* CD of the Year Award winner, *Words and Music*.

Owen is now a tutor of many national youth bands across the world and is also a member of the Eminence Brass Quartet with international Euphonium Soloist David Childs, Black Dyke Band Principal Cornet Richard Marshall and the London Symphony Orchestra Principal Trumpet Philip Cobb.

His work as a Besson clinician sees him touring the country raising awareness of the tenor horn and he travels to France every month to control the production of all Besson tenor horns.



Owen Farr

## CORY BAND

Cory Band hails from the Rhondda Valley in South Wales. It was formed in 1884 and originally bore the name 'Ton Temperance'. In 1895 Sir Clifford Cory, Chairman of Cory Brothers, heard the band and offered to provide financial assistance for it resulting in the band's change of name to 'Cory'.

In 1920 the band gained championship status and three years later achieved the distinction of performing what is believed to have been the first radio broadcast by a brass band. A significant honour was bestowed on the band in 1976 when it was chosen to represent Wales and the Brass Band Movement on a tour of the USA as part of their bicentennial celebrations.

Cory Band has developed musically outside of the contest field. In 2001, together with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales the band was appointed as resident ensemble to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and in the same year appointed Dr John Pickard as its 'Composer in Residence'. John Pickard's tenure with the band ended in July