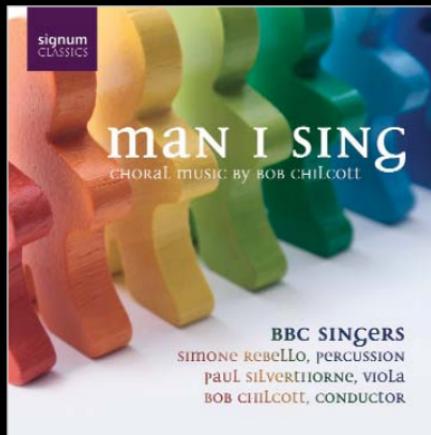


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# REMOTER WORLDS

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REMOTER WORLDS  
JUDITH BINGHAM

1. **Glams of a Remoter World** [6.49]  
**The Shepheardes Calender**
2. Winter [3.57]
3. Spring [4.18]
4. Autumn [2.44]
5. **Water Lilies** [7.03]  
**Irish Tenebrae**
6. My Lagan Love [4.15]
7. The Road to Sligo [3.34]  
Soloist: Edward Goater *tenor*
8. The Crying of the Women at the Slaughter [5.15]
9. The Wake: Round the House and Mind the Dresser [2.01]  
Soloists: Edward Goater *tenor*  
Stephen Charlesworth *baritone*  
Edward Price *bass*
10. I Have a Secret to Tell [4.28]  
Soloists: Stephen Jeffes *tenor*  
Andrew Murgatroyd *whistler*
11. I Know My Love [2.24]
12. The Sailor Boy [6.00]  
Irish Tenebrae Soloists: Olivia Robinson *soprano*  
Krysia Osostowicz *violin*  
Iain Farrington *chamber organ*  
Richard Benjafield, Chris Brannick *percussion*

13. **Unpredictable but Providential** [3.35]  
Soloist: Christopher Bowen *tenor*
14. **Beneath these Alien Stars** [3.45]  
Soloist: Alison Smart *soprano*  
Iain Farrington *organ*
- Ghost Towns of the American West**
15. I Speak Out of the Desert [3.33]
16. The Gray Mask High in the Mountains [4.20]  
Soloists: Margaret Feaviour *soprano*  
Deborah Miles-Johnson *mezzo-soprano*  
Robert Johnston *tenor*  
Jennifer Adams-Barbaro *whistler*
17. The Voices of the Multitude [3.31]  
Soloists: Margaret Feaviour *soprano*  
Christopher Bowen *tenor*
- Total Timing: [71.21]

BBC SINGERS  
DAVID HILL CONDUCTOR  
RICHARD BENJAFIELD PERCUSSION  
CHRIS BRANNICK PERCUSSION  
IAIN FARRINGTON ORGAN  
KRYZIA OSOSTOWICZ VIOLIN  
OLIVIA ROBINSON SOPRANO

## **Gleams of a Remoter World (1997)**

Both *Gleams* and *Waterlilies* come from the same period in my life, when I was continuously influenced by Alpine landscapes. I made many visits, especially to the cul-de-sac valley of Kleinwalsertal in Austria, and my first Mass setting and trumpet concerto *A Shooting Star* were a direct result of experiencing the landscape there in different seasons.

*Gleams* however, slightly predates those and was influenced by a singing job I did with the Schütz Choir, travelling round the Dolomites. Views of the mountains straddling different countries gave me the idea for having the Shelley words 'sleep and death' echoing in different languages, and so a solo quartet sings 'sonno e morte' and 'schlaf und tod' distantly. In this recording, we took advantage of the space in St Paul's church and placed the soloists behind the main body of the choir.

The Alpine influence has been a constant in my composing life, as it has embraced other themes as well, in particular Shelley (and, just lately, Byron) and Turner. The watercolour views of chasms on Mont Blanc had an effect also on *Vorarlberg*, a guitar duet written just after *Gleams*. In *Gleams* I tried to give a mystical sense

of height and depth as well as the feeling that snow falling is like the 'veil of life and death' that Shelley talks of in Mont Blanc. Shifting weather gives different aspects on the landscape.

## **The Shepherdes Calender (2006)**

I have had an enjoyable creative relationship with the St Louis Chamber Choir for several years now, thanks to Richard Rodney Bennett, who introduced us. Their conductor, Philip Barnes, concocts wonderful themed concerts and has commissioned many composers over the years. Both for the SLCC and Philip's other choirs in Missouri I have written five pieces - *Aquileia* (of which more anon), two settings of *God be in my Head*, and most recently *The Shepherdes Calendar*. Most commissions start with a brief, but one of the briefest and strangest ones was for this piece, in that I should include the word 'rams'. The dedicatee of the piece Linda Ryder, the Executive Director of the choir, is a supporter of the St Louis Rams, their baseball team. She was not to know how difficult it would be to find a poem with that word in it! I asked a friend of mine, John Rowlands Pritchard, who is an expert on all things English, for his advice, and he immediately thought of the Somerset folk song *One Man shall Mow my Meadow* with the words 'shall shear my lambs and ewes and rams' in it.

Intrigued by the tune, I decided I would use it as the basis for the piece. He also pointed me in the direction of Edmund Spenser and *The Shepherdes Calender*.

I thought I would write a piece that was an allegory for sin and forgiveness, and so the movements move from winter to autumn, cruel weather to a good harvest. In the first movement, *Winter*, the rhythms are stilted and jagged, describing a vicious winter with the sheep and cows (and their herdsmen) standing frozen and shivering. With the cold comes Death. Spenser warns that you may think yourself invincible, but a freezing winter can carry you off! In the middle movement, *Spring*, I wanted to give the impression of the mysterious and magical arrival of the first shoots, pushing up through the cold earth. The words are 'The Lord to me a Shepherd is', from the 1651 Bay Psalm Book, because I liked the idea of linking the rich English of Spenser with the first art of the Puritan Americans. In the last movement, *Autumn*, the shepherd saves a sheep from the wolf and a beautiful description of autumn 'all in yellow clad' follows. The folk song is finally heard in its entirety, like a Morris, ushering in warm weather and redemption. For this recording a small group from the choir walked, while singing, from the west end of the nave up to

the choir and back again, a somewhat shorter distance than in the Cathedral-Basilica of St Louis!

## **Water Lilies (1999)**

*Water Lilies* was commissioned in 1998 to be part of 'A Garland for Linda', a compendium of eight anthems about the healing power of music. The previous year I had been to Kleinwalsertal on holiday and had swum in a warm lake, high up in the Allgäuer Alps. There had been rafts of flowering water lilies, which twined round my legs as I got out. It reminded me not so much of Monet as of the morbid eroticism of John Waterhouse's painting of Hylas, lured to his death by Pre-Raphaelite nymphs in a pool of water lilies. The following winter in Austria was very harsh and I wondered what happened to the lilies, whether they could survive being frozen. I looked it up and found that the buds for next year's flower form in the summer under water and often freeze in winter. This struck me as a wonderful symbol for surviving serious illness and I decided to write my own poem for the Garland. This took a long time, and may have been the reason why I only took two weeks to write the anthem itself.

The idea was to create a tapestry of sound, multi-dividing the choir and having lots of tiny

solos which would further thin out the texture. This was something akin to dots of impressionistic paint. The work opens in a dream-like way where the word 'nymphs' rises from the texture like sirens calling. The sound is warm and dreamy but gradually becomes more worrying. In the middle section all is ice with tiny staccato chords and long high melodic lines. Finally the summer returns, ecstatically, and the water lilies flower.

### **Irish Tenebrae (1990, revised 1992 and 2007)**

Irish folk song settings are one of those staples of choral music: I had thought of doing a set for some time, but it was never going to be a simple, nostalgic response to beautiful melodies. Irish folk music has a complex resonance for me: it reminds me of my mother's family, the McGowans from Armagh, and especially of my grandparents whose terraced house in Nottingham I remembered and loved better than my own family home. And from when I arrived in London in 1970, my life, like everyone else's, was coloured by the Irish 'Troubles'; I was several times very close to bomb incidents - unforgettable experiences.

At some point I must have been singing in a Maundy Thursday service and made a mental note to set the Tenebrae when the opportunity arose,

and in that mysterious way in which pieces develop in the peri-compositional stage, this idea and the idea of Irish folk song settings came together. The Tenebrae have powerful overtones of violent revenge, and their mood typified for me the cycle of blame that made the Irish situation (and so many others) so addictive to its protagonists. Gradually a drama unfolded, in which a solo female singer acts like a commentator, a witness to a violent event. I was really influenced by an old LP of Irish folk music sung by an anonymous woman, recorded at the beginning of the 20th century. Her singing, with its roulades of decoration, was somehow reminiscent of Indian music - the Celtic sailors' link.

In the first song *My Lagan Love*, the words are by Yeats, summoning the listener to a strange, ancient, arcane place, on a starlit night. He asks 'who can distinguish darkness from the soul?'. The folk song is divided between the soprano and the violin, playing in a gypsy-like way. This piece is very much about duality: sacred and profane (organ and violin), male and female (male choir and solo soprano), church and army (organ and percussion), their meeting places, their huge gulfs. In the second movement *The Road to Sligo*, the unique sound of the bodhrans ushers in the men, talking of grievances: 'Remember O Lord

what is come upon us: our inheritance is turned to strangers'. The atmosphere is heightened, sinister. The men are unable to contemplate forgiveness ('only the dead can be forgiven') and the organ solo at the end of the movement seems to move the action into the church. In *The Crying of the Women at the Slaughter* I set part of Seamus Heaney's great poem *Casualty*. The solo soprano is a witness at the funeral of 13 men: the percussion, the constant drizzling rain, the Sanctus bell, the shots fired over the coffins. The voice keens in anguish. But the camera seems to pan away with the mourners to the pub, for in movement four, *Round the House and Mind the Dresser*, the men are plotting revenge drunkenly, the words of the Tenebrae mixed with words by Maurice Craig: 'it's to hell with the future and let's live on the past'. The bodhrans and the wild violin are both pub music and a demonic edge. Then, in the little shanty movement *I Have a Secret to Tell*, the men are staggering home, some of them to the docks. The organ is a squeeze box, someone whistles the tune, a ship's bell sounds. The soprano and tenor duet is the Irish voice of the sea, the ancient bard Cormac, and the following movement, *I Know my Love*, continues this theme of the sea, except that the soprano challenges Christ to mend his ravelled nets that cannot catch her shining soul. This beautiful poem by Mary

Lavin, with its imagery of tiny shiny fishes evading the strictures of the fisherman offers a different way from the terrible dark world of the men, locked into their hatreds and vendettas. In the final movement *The Sailor Boy*, we are back in that world, where the men are brooding on perceived injustice. Using the spaces of St Paul's again, on this recording the men are at a distance. There are echoes of the church, and the bass drum is both an omen and a blustery rainy wind. In the middle, the soprano and violin hear in 'an old dream' an ancient and forgotten truth, an old peace that is 'crying to come back again'. But the word 'remember' seems to hold a darker and more ambiguous meaning, maybe one that can never be fully relinquished.

### **Unpredictable but Providential (1992, revised 2007)**

This piece is a take on those Elizabethan bird song pieces, with their 'jug-jug, peewit' refrains. The subtitle is 'the arrival of a few summer migrants,' and the text is a list of birds interspersed with a few words by Auden - 'Spring with its thrusting leaves and its jargling birds is here again' (jargling is an archaic word often used to describe the sound of bells ringing). The music attempts, not too seriously, to imitate the songs of birds such as

the spotted fly-catcher and the corncrake, in the latter case using a comb as a percussion instrument. The piece was commissioned by the Britten Singers for their inaugural concert in April 1991, and is dedicated to their conductor Stephen Wilkinson.

### **Beneath these Alien Stars (2001)**

This little anthem was written on the 15th of September 2001, as a way of releasing my pent-up feelings of bleakness and despair after 9/11. I looked around for an American poem and found a work called *Pioneer Woman* by Vesta Pierce Crawford (1899-1983), a Mormon poet who was to figure much larger in my life a few years later. The words describe, as a lot of her poetry does, the feeling of being overwhelmed by a vast and inhospitable landscape. It is written for upper voices and organ, and has simple melodic lines which echo each other, accompanied by a limping, almost Baroque organ part.

### **Ghost Towns of the American West (2005)**

In 2004 I saw an advert for a competition called the Barlow Prize, offered every year in a different genre by Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. I had just written *Aquileia* for the Saint Louis Chamber Choir and thought I would submit it for

the prize. I was surprised and very pleased to win, as the prize was a commission to write a choral piece for performance by three choirs - the University of Utah Singers, VocalEssence in Minneapolis and the BBC Singers. It also gave me the opportunity to go to Utah and work with singers, composers and choral conductors there.

From the start, I wanted to try and find an American text that would also have a more universal theme of impermanence. The image of ghost towns came to mind and the huge open spaces of Utah. I remembered the words by Vesta Pierce Crawford that I'd used for *Beneath these Alien Stars* and wondered what else she had written. I managed to buy an out-of-print volume of her verse on the web for \$1 and when it arrived it was a signed first edition of *Short Grass Woman*. I discovered that she had taught at the University of Utah and her parents had been Mormon pioneers. This strange serendipity was irresistible, and I chose several extracts from her poems to be the text. She writes very vividly of a huge bright landscape in which Man is small and vulnerable, and describes the hopes and sometimes desperate lives of the people who sought their fortune there. It was very moving that her grandchildren came to the Utah performance in April 2007.

The first movement describes how the landscape quickly re-asserts itself when man has left - 'his covenant with earth, fervent and brief.' Against stark word setting, some voices whisper the names of Utah ghost towns, some of them unsettling, some hopeful, 'Death Canyon, Peerless, Joy, Silver City.' The second movement describes a miner returning to his cabin in the mountains after a day digging in vain. Against a hummed background, a tenor solo sings a folksy tune. At the end I included 'Home Sweet Home,' originally an American song. The third movement 'Where are the Voices of the Multitude?' talks of people being a short interlude in the eternities of time. The poet says that her ancestral voices will come from the seed of grass scattered in storm rather than from a fallen house or her father's grave. The huge bright landscape dominates and triumphs.

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## **TEXTS**

### **1. Gleams of a Remoter World**

Some say that  
gleams of a remoter world  
visit the soul in sleep -  
that death is slumber.

Has some unknown omnipotence  
unfurled the veil of life and death?

Far,  
far above,  
Mont Blanc appears.

In the calm darkness of the  
moonless nights,  
the snows descend.

Sonno e morte, schlaf und tod.  
(Sleep and death)

(Percy Bysshe Shelley)

## The Shepheardes Calender

### 2. Winter

Ah for pittie, wil rancke Winters rage,  
These bitter blasts never ginne tasswage?  
The kene cold blowes through my beaten hyde,  
All as I were through the body gryde.  
My ragged rontes all shiver and shake,  
As doen high Towers in an earthquake:  
They wont in the wind wagge their wrigle tailles,  
Perk as Peacock: but nowe it avales.

Winter is come, that blowes the bitter blaste,  
And after Winter dreerie death does hast.

You thinke to be Lordes of the yeare.  
But eft, when ye count you freed from feare,  
Comes the breme winter with chamfred browes,  
Full of wrinkles and frostie furrowes:  
Drerily shooting his stormy darte,  
Which cruddles the blood, and pricks the harte.  
Then is your carelesse corage accoid,  
Your carefull heards with cold bene annoied.  
Then paye you the price of your surquedrie,  
With weeping, and wayling and misery.

Winter is come, that blowes the balefull breath,  
And after Winter commeth timely death.

*(From The Shepheardes Calender and The Faerie Queene,  
Edmund Spenser)*

### 3. Spring

The Lord to me a shepheard is: want therefore  
shall not I.  
Hee in the foulds of tender grass doth make me  
down to ly:  
Hee leads me to the waters still. Restore my soul  
doth hee;  
In paths of righteousness, he will for his names  
sake lead mee.

In valley of deaths shade although I walk I'le fear  
none ill:  
For thou with me thy rod, also thy staff me comfort will.  
Thou hast fore me a table spread, in presence of  
my foes:  
Thou dost anoint with oyle my head, my cup it  
over-flowes.

Goodness and mercy my dayes all shall surely  
follow mee:  
And in the LORDS house dwell I shall so long as  
dayes shall bee.

*(Psalm 23 from The Bay Psalm Book)*

### 4. Autumn

Thereby is a Lambe in the Wolves jawes:  
But see, how fast renneth the shepheard swayne,  
To save the innocent from the beastes pawes:  
And here with his shepehooke hath him slayne.

Then came Autumn all in yellow clad,  
As though he joyed in his plenteous store,  
Laden with fruits that made him laugh, full glad,  
That he had banished hunger.....  
Upon his head a wreath, that was enrolled  
With ears of corn of every sort, he bore;  
And in his hand a sickle he did hold,  
To reap the ripened fruits the which the earth  
had yold.

One man shall mow my meadow,  
Two men shall gather together,  
Two men, one man, and one more  
Shall shear my lambs and ewes and rams,  
And gather my gold together.

Three men shall mow my meadow,  
Four men shall gather together.  
Four men, three men, two men and one more  
Shall shear etc.

*(Traditional Somerset folk song)*

### 5. Water Lilies

*(Nymphæa)*  
Hard to believe this was the lake  
where we swam last summer.

Sometimes I dream of that night,  
Swimming blindly through silky warm water,  
Through liquid moonlight,  
Into a pool of water lilies  
Swaying, near the shore.

Sometimes I dream of that night....  
We are swimming through heart-shaped leaves:  
Thick twining roots,  
Clutching, tugging,  
Pulling, deeper,  
Into the murkier depths.

Hard to believe....  
Wrapped in a gown of pale green mist,  
The lake lies frozen: green lily pads  
Stare from her icy face.

And deeper still, dreamless fish,  
Sightlessly wait by seed pods, dreaming of  
Summers past and flowers to come.

For summer will come again,  
And moon-coloured lilies, not yet born,  
Will open their petals to the night,  
Throw their scent in the air,  
And turn their faces to the stars.

(Judith Bingham)

### Irish Tenebrae

#### 6. My Lagan Love

I summon to the winding ancient stair;  
Set all your mind upon the steep ascent,  
Upon the broken, crumbling battlement,  
Upon the breathless, starlit air.  
Who can distinguish darkness from the soul?

(*Dialogue of Self and Soul*, W.B. Yeats)

#### 7. The Road to Sligo

Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us: our inheritance is turned to strangers: we are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows. Servants have ruled over us: there is none that doth deliver us out of their hand. Only the dead can be forgiven, But when I think of that my heart's a stone.

(*Dialogue of Self and Soul*, W.B. Yeats)

#### 8. The Crying of the Women at the Slaughter

It was a day of cold  
Raw silence, wind-blown  
Surplice and soutane:  
Rained on, flower-laden,  
Coffin after coffin  
Seemed to float from the door  
Of the packed cathedral  
Like blossoms on slow water.  
The common funeral  
Unrolled its swaddling band  
Lapping, tightening  
Till we were braced and bound  
Like brothers in a ring.

(*Casualty*, Seamus Heaney)

#### 9. The Wake: Round the House and Mind the Dresser

The wicked merchant Judas sought our Lord with a kiss. He, like an innocent lamb, refused not the kiss of Judas. For a few coins, he delivered Christ to the Jews. It had been better for him if he had never been born.  
It's to Hell with the future and let's live on the past;  
May the Lord in His mercy be kind to Belfast.

(*Ballad to a Traditional Refrain*, Maurice James Craig)

#### 10. I Have a Secret to Tell

Wilt thou steer my frail black bark  
O'er the dark sea's foam?  
Wilt thou come Lord, to my boat,  
Where, afloat, my will would roam?

(*The Heavenly Pilot*, Cormac, 9th century)

#### 11. I Know My Love

Christ, if you wanted my shining soul  
That flashed its happy fins  
And splashed in the silent seas of sin.  
Then Christ, keenest fisherman  
On the Galilean shore,  
If you wanted to catch my shivering soul  
Why did you let down nets that were worn,  
Unravelled and floating light?  
I slid along the ribbony web  
In and out  
And when the nets slime-wet and black  
Crawled over the prow of your boat again  
Empty as nets that sway all day  
In an empty sea,  
My sly soul waited  
And swam aloft  
To play at leaping the ripples  
And showing its silver dapples  
To the silently floating fishes

On the outer-side of the wave  
The little silver minnows of the moon.

(*I Know My Love*, Mary Lavin)

#### 12. The Sailor Boy

I heard the sighing of the reeds,  
At noon-tide and at evening,  
And some old dream I had forgot,  
I seemed to be remembering.

I hear the sighing of the reeds,  
Is it in vain, is it in vain,  
That some old peace I had forgot,  
Is crying to come back again?

(*The Sailor Boy*, Arthur Symonds)

#### 13. Unpredictable but Providential The arrival of a few summer migrants

*Spring with its thrusting leaves and jargling birds is here again \**  
Willow warbler, wood warbler, chiff-chaff, black-cap, redstart, black redstart  
*Spring with its thrusting leaves and jargling birds is here again*  
Nightjar, corncrake, ring ouzel, turtle dove  
*Spring with its thrusting leaves and jargling*

*birds is here again*

Spotted fly-catcher, pied fly-catcher, house  
martin, sand martin, swift, swallow, hobby  
*Spring with its thrusting leaves and jargling  
birds is here again*  
Nightingale, cuckoo

\* The italic words are by W.H. Auden, by permission of Faber and Faber.

#### 14. Beneath these Alien Stars

Beneath these alien stars  
In darkness I have stood alone,  
Barriers more than mountains  
Between me and my home

The Desert Wind has waved my hair,  
And desert sands have etched my face,  
And the courage of the mountains  
Has bound me to this place

And something of its peace I've won,  
Triumphant now the day is done,  
Oh, I have stood with only God  
Between me and the sun.

*(Pioneer Woman, Vesta Pierce Crawford)*

#### Ghost Towns of the American West

[foreword]

*They cannot scare me with their empty spaces  
Between stars - on stars devoid of human races.  
I have it in me so much nearer home  
To scare myself with my own desert places.*

(Robert Frost)

#### 15. I Speak Out of the Desert

*[Running through this movement, the names of  
some Utah ghost towns: Alunite, Aragonite,  
Argyle, Beryl, Hebron, Peerless, Rains,  
Cedarview, Cisco, Clear Creek, Death Canyon,  
Devil's Slide, Dragon, Echo, Forest City, Frisco,  
Joy, Osiris, Sage Creek, Silver City, Soldier  
Summit, Thistle, Topaz]*

I speak out of the Desert,  
Out of the black gullies,  
Out of the silence and shadow.

Kin unto the anchored sage,  
With the yucca shaft I am one  
Companioned by the gusty winds,  
And branded by the sun.

Brush and thistles claim their heritage  
Within the dust of arid acres borne  
Through long dominions of persistent sage:  
And wide shall be the latitude of days  
With seed forgotten and the reaping done,  
The fields returning to primeval ways,  
The bending contours lost, the furrows gone...  
A man's dominion of the grain and leaf,  
His covenant with earth, fervent and brief.

*(Arid Theme and Posterity of Rain, Vesta Pierce Crawford)*

#### 16. The Gray Mask High in the Mountains

Moon-mantled, mist-hung, gray mask cabin,  
The gray mask high in the mountains -  
And there at night the strong winds came  
Calling for those who had dug in vain  
On the dump-dotted slopes of the mountains.

And there at night the bent shadows climbed  
Up from the holes of the claims they mined  
On the tunnelled ridge of the mountains;  
Up they came with their picks that clanged  
To the gray mask high in the mountains.

And the squat old cabin opened her doors,  
Wound her smoke to the low-hung stars,  
Welcomed the hope-ridden, dream-driven diggers,

Gathered and garnered them home to her heart  
In the gray mask high in the mountains.

*(Gray Mask Cabin, Vesta Pierce Crawford)*

#### 17. The Voices of the Multitude

The hill hermits and the followers of sheep  
Can never tell where time has gone,  
Nor those infinite boundaries  
From which eternities will come.

Where are the voices of the multitude?  
The lonely ones whose days are spent  
In that space between the stone and the star  
Are silent in their testament.

So the ancestral voice shall come  
Not from my father's grave, nor the fallen house,  
But from the seed of grass scattered in storm -  
Forever from silence and sound and morning  
and night,  
The terrible darkness and the shouting light!

*(A Decree for the Rain and Never a Lost Valley, Vesta Pierce  
Crawford)*

Texts by Vesta Pierce Crawford, by kind permission of her  
granddaughter Wendy Blackburn, and the Utah State Poetry Society

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## BIOGRAPHY

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### JUDITH BINGHAM

Born in Nottingham, and raised in Mansfield and Sheffield, Judith Bingham began composing as a small child, and then studied composing and singing at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Her composition studies there with Alan Bush and Eric Fenby were later supplemented by lessons from Hans Keller. She was awarded the Principal's prize in 1971, and six years later the BBC Young Composer award. Composition prizes include the Barlow Prize for a cappella music in 2004, two British Composer Awards in 2004 (choral and liturgical) and one in 2006 (choral). Most recently, she was made a Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music (May 2007).

Her first commissions, in the 1970s, were from the Finchley Children's Music Group, the King's Singers, and Peter Pears, but she also wrote four pieces for the newly formed Songmakers' Almanac, and a string of chamber works for, amongst others, David Roblou, David Mason, Anton Weinberg, and the New London Consort, and was one of the first composers to write new music for medieval instruments.

In 1983, she joined the BBC Singers as a full-time member of the alto section and toured extensively with them singing many solo parts. She left the Singers at the end of 1995 to concentrate on her activities as a composer, though she continued to sing professionally for some years. Since 2004 she has been the BBC Singers' Associate Composer, a highly successful collaboration that has been extended to 2009.

On joining the BBC Singers, she wrote a series of choral works, many of them based on texts compiled from disparate sources as an integral part of the compositional process. Several of these were for the BBC Singers, but there were also pieces for other professional, amateur and collegiate choirs, including *Salt in the Blood*, written for the BBC Symphony Chorus to perform at the 1995 Proms, a Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for King's College, Cambridge, and diverse anthems and church works for the cathedrals of Winchester, Lichfield, Westminster Abbey, St John's College, Cambridge, and more recently, Westminster Cathedral, Wells Cathedral and the Edington Festival.

Although Bingham's output is marked by the number and variety of its choral works, she has always been seen as an all-rounder, and the scope of her activities has included pieces for brass band, symphonic wind ensemble and various chamber groups and solo instruments, concertos for trumpet and bassoon, and several impressive works for large orchestra including *Beyond Redemption* (1995), a BBC commission for the BBC Philharmonic, and *The Temple at Karnak* (1996). *Chartres*, a significant work for large

symphony orchestra, was performed to great acclaim by the BBC Philharmonic under Jane Glover in 1994, and was conducted by James MacMillan in Liverpool Cathedral as part of the BBC/Royal Philharmonic Society's 'Encore' project. She has written a series of works for solo organ, including *Ancient Sunlight* for Thomas Trotter's 500th lunchtime recital in Birmingham, a short ballet for the Royal Ballet, and *Down and Out* for the Goldberg Ensemble and the tuba player James Gourlay.



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She has been involved in many education projects: *The Red Hot Nail*, written for the LSO, has been performed more than 100 times, including performances in Louisiana, and the LSO also commissioned *The Mysteries of Adad* for a project at the British Museum. *Inside the Mandala* was a dance project commissioned by the BBC Philharmonic, and several of Bingham's works have been used as the basis for work in schools. She has regularly acted as a judge in many high-profile events like the BBC Young Composer of the Year, and has lectured in many of the British music colleges and in several American universities.

Recent major works include *The Christmas Truce*, inspired by a celebrated incident in the First World War, and was first performed by the BBC Singers and the Britten Sinfonia in Norwich in December 2003. *The Ivory Tree*, a music-drama for soloists, chorus and ensemble, had its first complete performances in Bury St. Edmunds Cathedral in May 2005. A carol *God would be born in thee* was performed at the King's College, Cambridge Nine Lessons and Carols at Christmas 2004 and was released by EMI on the CD 'On Christmas Day'. Naxos recently issued a portrait CD of her choral works including *Salt in the Blood* and *The Secret Garden* which received rave reviews. More recently, Bingham has written an Organ Concerto for Philip

Brunelle and *Shakespeare Requiem* for the BBC Philharmonic and Leeds Festival Chorus.

Judith Bingham has a well-established international profile, and in 2007 alone her works were performed in France, Norway, Mexico, Spain, Estonia, Latvia, Denmark, Finland, Minneapolis and St Louis.

## BBC SINGERS

Established in 1924, the BBC Singers are the UK's only full-time professional chamber choir. The versatility of this virtuoso 24-voice ensemble makes it both an important resource in the BBC's music broadcasting and a major force in British musical life. The BBC Singers' repertoire includes everything from Renaissance music to the latest contemporary scores, and the choir's unrivalled expertise with the latter has brought about creative relationships with some of the most important composers and conductors of the 20th and 21st centuries.

As at home on the concert platform as in the recording studio, the BBC Singers also regularly work with the BBC's own orchestras, a number of period-instrument and contemporary music ensembles, and with a host of internationally renowned conductors. The BBC Singers' extensive



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outreach programme includes regular collaborations with school children, youth choirs and the amateur choral community, as well as with the professional composers, singers and conductors of tomorrow.

For more information visit [bbc.co.uk/singers](http://bbc.co.uk/singers)

## DAVID HILL

Widely recognised as one of the leading choral directors in the UK, David Hill's fine musicianship was recognised by his appointment to the post of Chief Conductor of the BBC Singers in 2007. He is also Musical Director of The Bach Choir; Chief Conductor of the Southern Sinfonia and Music Director of the Leeds Philharmonic Society.

Born in Carlisle and educated at Chetham's School of Music, of which he is now a Governor, he was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists at the remarkably young age of 17. Having been Organ Scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, David Hill returned to hold the post of Director of Music from 2004-2007. His appointments have included Master of the Music at Winchester Cathedral, Master of the Music at Westminster Cathedral and Artistic Director of the Philharmonia Chorus. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Southampton for services to music.

David Hill has a broad-ranging discography of over 50 recordings covering repertoire from Thomas Tallis to John Tavener. Conducting The Bach Choir, he has contributed to the film sound tracks of *Kingdom of Heaven*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Shrek the Third*.

He has also appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, Northern Sinfonia, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Orchestra and Chorus of Welsh National Opera, the Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North, Sinfonia 21, the Netherlands Radio Choir and RIAS Kammerchor, Berlin. David Hill's

recent engagements have seen him conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg. 2008 engagements include début appearances with the Minnesota Orchestra and the RTE National Symphony Orchestra.

## RICHARD BENJAFIELD

Richard Benjafield studied music at the Royal Northern College of Music, University of Ghana and Tanglewood Music Centre. Now an international performer as a soloist and in contemporary ensembles, such as the London Sinfonietta, Nash Ensemble, and his own group the 'three strange angels', he is also on the senior music staff of Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Notable events in 2008 included releasing a CD "Lullabies and Nightmares", a festival "The Stamping Ground" at Guildhall, a book on percussion ensemble repertoire, and performances at the BBC Proms, Cheltenham Music Festival, King's Place and Royal College of Art. He has been described as "strangely charismatic" (classicalsource.net), "a radical in the field of percussion" (BBC Music Magazine), and "the hardest-working percussionist in London?" (johnsonsrambler.wordpress.com), none of which he is inclined to disagree with.

## CHRIS BRANNICK

Chris, a founder member of the internationally renowned percussion group ensemblebash, holds both a maths degree (Imperial College, London) and an honorary music degree (Royal Academy of Music). He is the Head of Instrumental Music for the borough of Newham in addition to pursuing a busy performing career. His compositions and arrangements feature on CDs, websites, documentaries, Children's BBC and music festivals and he has been music advisor to Legoland. He plays cimbalom, percussion, steel pan, drum kit, guitar, bass guitar, bugle, piano and he sings in a stupidly high voice. He has been a Professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, a Percussion Clinician at the Royal College of Music and a tutor at the Junior Department of the same college. Chris runs workshops for many different organisations. He is also an actor, with credits running from 'Mole' in *Wind in the Willows* to 'The Journalist' in *Making History*. He runs another percussion quartet, The Brake Drum Assembly, and appears in Classic Rhythm, a bravura trio with a sense of musical adventure. His cabaret bands, 'The Favoured Few' and 'The Brannick Academy' appear in this country and New York.

## IAIN FARRINGTON

Iain Farrington has an exceptionally busy and diverse career as a pianist, organist, composer and arranger. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London and at Cambridge University. He has also participated in masterclasses with Malcolm Martineau at the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.

As a solo pianist, accompanist, chamber musician and organist, Iain has performed at all the major UK venues, including the Wigmore Hall, the Purcell Room, the BBC Proms, the Royal Opera House, the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, St David's Hall, Cardiff, and Birmingham's Symphony Hall. Abroad, he has given concerts in Japan, South Africa, Jordan, Malaysia, Hong Kong and all across Europe. He regularly works with many of the country's leading musicians, including John Mark Ainsley, Lesley Garrett, Sir Simon Rattle, the London Sinfonietta and the BBC Singers. He regularly gives broadcasts on BBC Radio 3.

Iain was Organ Scholar at St John's College, Cambridge University, and Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle where he played for numerous Royal occasions. His solo performance in the BBC Proms 2007 on the Royal

Albert Hall organ was critically acclaimed, the Independent writing "he's an authentic star, and deserves to have a Prom all to himself".

Iain is also a prolific composer and arranger; his solo piano arrangement of Elgar/Payne Symphony No.3 is published by Boosey and Hawkes, and his transcription of Elgar's *Five Piano Improvisations* is published by Novello. As a composer, Iain's works have been performed in the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, France and Germany.

## KRYZIA OSOSTOWICZ

Kryzia Osostowicz studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and Cambridge University before completing her violin studies in Salzburg with the distinguished violinist and quartet leader, Sandor Vegh. She has given concerto and recital performances across Europe and made a series of award-winning recordings. She leads the Dante Quartet, one of the UK's finest string quartets, which won the Royal Philharmonic Society Award for chamber music in 2007. Previously, she was a founder member of the pioneering piano quartet Domus, which toured with its own portable concert hall - a large white geodesic dome - and went on to win a worldwide audience and two Gramophone awards in ten years. She has made over 20 CD recordings of solo, duo and ensemble repertoire,

including the sonatas of Brahms, Fauré and Bartók for Hyperion. More recently, she has recorded the complete chamber music of Edmund Rubbra for Dutton - described as "performances of flawless integrity" - as well as his Violin Concerto with the Ulster Orchestra for Naxos. Kryzia is also principal violinist of Endymion Ensemble, specializing in new music, and teaches at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

## OLIVIA ROBINSON

Olivia Robinson has sung with various consorts, ensembles and choirs, including The Sixteen, Polyphony and The English Concert, performing all over the UK and Europe. She has been a full-time member of the BBC Singers since 2003, with whom she has worked with conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Gianandrea Noseda and Richard Hickox, performing a huge breadth of repertoire - from Byrd and Tallis to new commissions by Sir Harrison Birtwistle and James MacMillan. Highlights of her solo work for the BBC include singing the role of Procula, Pilate's wife, in the world premiere performance and broadcast of Francis Grier's *The Passion of Jesus of Nazareth*, Judith Bingham's *Irish Tenebrae* live for Radio 3 and Mozart's Mass in C minor broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and across the European Broadcasting Union.

Outside the BBC, her solo performances have included Handel's *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*, Bach's Mass in B minor, *St John Passion*, *Magnificat* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Haydn's *The*

*Creation* and *The Seasons*, Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* and *Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Orff's *Carmina burana*, Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* and Verdi's *Requiem*.



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SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK  
+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: [info@signumrecords.com](mailto:info@signumrecords.com)

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