

Michael Berkeley's *Jane Eyre* in St Louis

'The story is compressed beyond mere telescoping. The score is musically and dramatically intense.'
St Louis Post-Dispatch

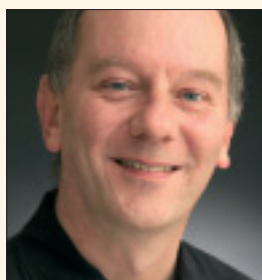
Following on from the Australian premiere in 2005 Michael Berkeley's opera *Jane Eyre* received its US premiere this summer in a production staged by Opera Theater St Louis. This was in fact a sort of world premiere as at the suggestion of the stage director Colin Graham, the composer turned the original two acts into one with a brief connecting orchestral interlude, that puts the total running time at a short, but intense, 80 minutes. Erhard Rom's set stuck strictly to the period of the book with high mirrors and a winding staircase leading to the attic that houses the unstable Mrs Rochester. Ghostly images of Thornfield Hall projected on to the set heightened the gothic atmosphere. Kelly Kaduce and Scott Hendricks (whom Graham called a 'dark, brooding actor') led a strong cast as Jane and Rochester respectively, whilst members of the St Louis Symphony were conducted by Andreas Mitisek, making his debut with the company.



Ken Howard

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Martin Butler's Brighton Residency



Katie Van Dyck

Martin Butler took up his position as the Brighton Philharmonic's first ever 'Composer in Focus' in October 2006. The orchestra's General Manager, Ivan Rockey, writes on the two-season tenure, which will culminate in the world premiere of a new orchestral work by Butler in 2008:

"We were very fortunate in receiving a grant from a local arts charity for a work to be commissioned for the Brighton Philharmonic. Barry Wordsworth (our Music Director and Principal Conductor) and I both admired Martin's music and when we discovered that he lived in Hove he seemed to be the natural choice for the commission; the premiere of the new work is scheduled for early 2008.

The position of 'Composer in Focus' was then created for Martin because we wanted our audience to hear some of his music before the new piece was 'unleashed' on them! I think an audience responds much more to a world premiere if it knows something

of the composer's style in advance and can better relate to it. Martin will also be taking part in some of our regular pre-concert talks, so that he can explain his music in his own words, and the audience can gain an insight into the way he works and the way he thinks about his own music.

From the orchestra's point of view this also gives the musicians a chance to get to know a composer's style. I believe an orchestra can give a much more interesting interpretation of a work if it has a greater knowledge of the composer's style (something which is especially true when giving a premiere).

The works which are programmed for this coming season are (in my opinion at least!) a wonderful portrait of Martin's diverse styles. I have wanted to be able to programme *Dirty Beasts* in a family concert for a long time, since it appeals so well to both adults and children, and with a whole animal-themed concert this was too good an opportunity to miss!

The *Piano Concertino*, while obviously not as light-hearted as *Dirty Beasts*, is a good introduction to Martin's music and having the composer as soloist is an added, and extremely welcome, bonus! So often the only time an audience sees a composer is when they are invited onstage to take a bow *after* their piece.

To have the composer on stage during the piece, giving what must surely be the most 'authentic' interpretation possible, is a massive step towards helping an audience identify with him.

Fixed Doubles is a purely orchestral piece which serves as a fitting 'overture' for our colourful end-of-season concert. The new work that Martin is writing for 2008 will also be a concert-opener, although since he has recently been asking us whether he can include harmonicas and a toy piano in the orchestral line-up (to which the answer was an intrigued and excited 'yes') it looks like it is going to be even more colourful!"

Dirty Beasts and the *Piano Concertino* were performed in October 2006, and were broadcast on BBC Radio 3. *Fixed Doubles* will be performed on 25 March 2007, and the new work early 2008.



Peter Jones

Composer Birthdays and Anniversaries

2007

Howard Skempton – 60th birthday

Gordon Crosse – 70th birthday

John Gardner – 90th birthday

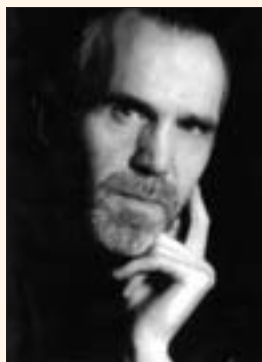
2008

Vaughan Williams – 50th anniversary of death

Michael Berkeley – 60th birthday



Howard Skempton's chamber music



Adrian Burrows

“What a supreme craftsman he is, and how deceptively straightforward and instinctive his music sounds even when it is constructed with meticulous care.”

ANDREW CLEMENTS, *The Guardian*

February 2007 marks the start of the celebrations for Howard Skempton's 60th birthday year, with two major concerts taking place in London that feature his chamber works.

The Schubert Ensemble continues with its highly successful and revealing 'Composer Portrait Series' in 2007 with a concert programmed by Howard Skempton. William Howard, Artistic Director and pianist of the Schubert Ensemble writes:

“On 8 February the Schubert Ensemble will make its own

contribution to Howard Skempton's 60th birthday celebrations with a concert at the Purcell Room. This will be the fourth in our Composer Portrait Series, which was born out of the Ensemble's long and fruitful relationships with several important living composers. In addition to two works that Howard wrote for the Ensemble a while ago (*Party Piece* and *Spadesbourne Suite*) the programme will feature a new piece for violin, viola, and cello, which has the distinction of being the first ever Schubert Ensemble commission to omit the piano. The compensation for me is to have another chance to perform *Reflections*, a beautiful collection of piano pieces that Howard wrote for me between 1999 and 2002.

My first encounter with Howard's music was back in 1988, when I premiered a piece for oboe, cello and piano at the Brno Festival. I was, I confess, surprised by the apparent simplicity of the music, at a time when I was more used to being confused by the complexity of new scores. As my familiarity with his music grew over the years, I came to love and respect its extraordinary integrity and individuality. I learnt more about how to approach it in performance when I played *Images*, another collection of

solo piano pieces, many times on stage with an improvising dancer, varying the order and selection of the pieces on the spur of the moment in each performance. As with Schubert's music, preparation has to be meticulous, but you cannot fix too many elements of the performance in advance, especially tempi. The music must exist totally in the moment. A critic wrote of *Reflections*: “to play these pieces needs a purity of soul”. Now that is a challenge for us performers!”

<http://www.schubertensemble.com>



Alain Lafont

The London premiere of Howard Skempton's award winning string quartet, *Tendrils*, will be given by revered Canadian group Quatuor Bozzini on 11 February 2007 at the BBC Maida Vale Studios. We are delighted that the quartet will also be performing Skempton's *Catch* in this concert, as well as Gerald Barry's *String Quartet No. 1*. *Tendrils* received RPS and British Composer Awards in 2005. Quatuor Bozzini gave the Swedish premiere of *Catch* and *Tendrils* in October, and the Canadian premiere will take place in Montreal on 12 December 2006.



John Clark

Michael Finnissy – Composer & Pianist



In June Michael Finnissy was chosen to be ‘Composer in Residence’ at the prestigious New England Conservatory’s Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice in Boston, Massachusetts. During this week, Michael worked with composers and gave a recital of some his own music, as well as works by Bernard Stevens, Elisabeth Lutyens, Judith Weir, Howard Skempton, Claudia Molitor, and Andrew Toovey. This recital was reviewed in the Boston Globe by Richard Dyer:

“The British composer–pianist turns 60 this year, but he’s still a maverick. His recital for New England Conservatory’s Summer Institute for Contemporary

Performance Practice offered a brief survey of his life in music. It began with three pieces he wrote between the ages of 12 and 14 and ended with a homage to Satie, *ERIK SATIE, like anyone else* which he composed in 2002. In between came short works by two teachers and mentors, Bernard Stevens and Elisabeth Lutyens, and album leaves by colleagues, friends, and students. Even at 12 Finnissy had an unusual mind. *Two Mazurkas* are rescued from conventionality by the fact that the right and left hands are playing in different keys; the slightly later *Romance (with Intermezzo)* stands in the narrow territory between late Brahms and early Schoenberg. The tribute to Satie, at about 18 minutes, was the longest piece on the program. The model here is not any of the composer’s hit parade pieces, but instead the elegant and relatively little-known *Socrate and the Nocturnes*. Much of the music consists of slow, quiet, two-part inventions in the right hand, supplemented from time to time by more in the left. Pauses are significant as the music gradually

speeds up, develops a more complex texture, and a more playful mood.

“Finnissy is an amazing pianist, commanding a full spectrum of colors, textures, and dynamics which he deploys in a very subtle way, even when he is pounding the keyboard with green-socked hands. He offered a single encore. “It’s by Gershwin,” he said, “not me. It’s *Swanee* – or it was.” Finnissy’s version, dense in counterpoint, rich in harmony, and ravishingly played, finds in it music of nostalgia, regret, and profound sadness.”

Michael Finnissy’s new song cycle *Whitman* will receive its world premiere at this year’s Huddersfield Festival of Contemporary Music, following the cancellation of this premiere in 2005. Kirsten Blaise (soprano) and Nic Hodges (piano) will give the performance at 5pm on 23 November in St. Paul’s Hall.

Images from ‘The Finnissy Weekend’, 23 – 24 September 2006, which celebrated the composer’s 60th birthday. Performers included EXAUDI, Plus-Minus, IXION, and Michael Finnissy on piano.



Michael Finnissy, Jonathan Powell and wind quintet following a performance of *Piano Concerto No. 7*



Michael Finnissy with the ‘Finnissy Weekend’ organisers and conductor James Weeks following the concert given by EXAUDI in St. Paul’s Church, Knightsbridge



Michael Finnissy after his dazzling solo recital of *English Country Times*

Gerald Barry at the Présences Festival



Clive Barada

Gerald Barry has just completed a brand new one act opera for soprano and orchestra, which sets to music the 19th century play *La Plus Forte* by August Strindberg. The work will be given its premiere by the Philharmonia under Thomas Adès, with Barbara Hannigan in the solo role, at the 2007 Paris 'Présences' Festival next February.

Gerald Barry writes:

Strindberg wrote *La Plus Forte* (The Stronger) in December 1888 - January 1889, as part of the repertoire for his Experimental Theatre in Copenhagen. Like all his plays it is based on fact. Since his marriage to the actress Siri von Essen he had had various flirtations with other women. The part of Madame X appears to be based mainly on his wife Siri, and that of Mademoiselle Y (Amelie, a non-speaking role) on the actress Helga Frankenfeldt, who Strindberg had given up seeing in 1882 after she had insulted Siri at a party.

In *La Plus Forte* a traumatic encounter between the two women takes place in a cafe on Christmas Eve. Madame X, friendly and wary at the beginning,

gradually becomes vulnerable and then violent as it dawns on her that Mademoiselle Y had possibly had an affair with her husband. To her horror she realises that this was why her husband had chosen the name Eskil for their son (it was Mademoiselle's Y's father's name) and had chosen for her certain colours, authors, food, drink, because these were the favourites of Mademoiselle Y. She feels possessed and is filled with loathing. But in the end she says that she is the stronger because she did not run away, she stayed, but that Mademoiselle Y is now alone, and bitter.

"Thank you for teaching my husband to love! Now I am going home, to love him."



Steve Pike

Richard Causton has written a new choral work for upper voices and four instruments entitled *Three Riddles*. The work was commissioned by the New London Children's Choir, who will give the first performance at their concert with percussionists O Duo on 9 November 2006 at LSO St Luke's, London.

Fran Flowers, Choir Manager of the NLCC writes:

Causton is one of the most original of the younger generation of composers working in the UK, bringing a balance

Richard Causton

of stylistic influences together in a language that is immediate, emotional, engaging and challenging. He has set a number of texts for solo vocalists, and the choir has been looking for an opportunity to commission a work from him for children's voices for a number of years.

Richard Causton was approached to write a new piece for the choir, with flexible instrumentation, which could then be performed in a variety of spaces with or without piano. As Causton says: 'I have long been an admirer of the pioneering work that the New London Children's Choir has done in commissioning and performing new music at the highest level.'

Three Riddles will also be performed at The Aldeburgh Festival in summer 2007.

For more information, please contact Fran Flowers: 020 7823 5523 or nlcc@nlo.co.uk

www.newlondonchildrenschoir.org.uk



Jackson's *Sanctum est verum lumen* on tour

The National Youth Choir of Great Britain took Gabriel Jackson's motet in forty parts, *Sanctum est verum lumen*, on tour with them across Central Europe in August, culminating in a tour reunion concert on 16 September, and recording on 17 September for the Delphian label.

Director Mike Brewer told us: 'The National Youth Choir members were thrilled by "Verum Lumen" from day one of rehearsal. It was exciting to explore different sound colours for each section of the piece, and to take advantage of the variety of combinations of the 40 voices. The spatial effects were glorious.'

Sanctum est verum lumen was written as a companion-piece to *Spem in alium* to celebrate the Tallis quincentenary. Jackson explores a variety of ways of combining the forty voices: there are massive contrapuntal tuttis, antiphonal exchanges between groups of singers, huge monolithic chords, and an 'über gimmel' for the eight sopranos alone. The piece is essentially about light, and the text, though funeral in origin, is radiantly optimistic and invites a variety of ways of evoking that sense of light in music – from gentle luminosity to fiercely dazzling brightness.

Links: www.nycgb.net,
www.delphianrecords.co.uk



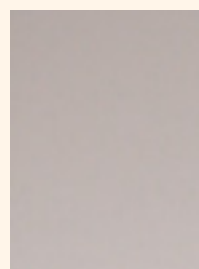
Katle Van Dyck

News

- In partnership with the CBSO, Worcestershire Arts Education has commissioned a new work for youth choir and orchestra from Chilcott, which will be premiered on 4 March 2007 in Symphony Hall. *Butterfly's Son* is a fantasy that reflects on the thoughts and life of a young boy, born to a Japanese mother and an American father, growing up in San Francisco in the Jazz Age.
- Gabriel Jackson has been invited to write a new work for the Choir of Wells Cathedral and Matthew Owens, as part of its ground-breaking Cathedral Commissions project in 2007.
- Oxford has signed US composer Mack Wilberg as a house composer. Mack will be appearing as a presenter at the 2007 ABCD conference. More to follow in the next issue of *Oxford Music Now*.
- In 2007 Oxford will be launching a monthly e-mail bulletin for all non-professional orchestras. By signing up to receive this bulletin you will receive new repertoire ideas as well as access to promotional offers on hire music from OUP. Sign up by sending your name and contact details to repertoire.promotion.uk@oup.com, with 'email bulletin' in the subject box

Zhou Long

International performances continue to build for Zhou Long, his works becoming a regular part of the repertoire of ensembles and orchestras throughout the USA, Europe and his native China. He has a busy schedule of commissions over the next few years that includes new works for the Westfield Symphony, the Network for New Music (Philadelphia), the Syracuse Children's Choir and a Flute Concerto for the Pacific Symphony Orchestral, who championed Zhou Long's music on their recent European Tour.



Chilcott and the BBC Singers

Bob Chilcott spent two weeks this summer directing the BBC Singers in a recording of his music for release next year. We asked Michael Emery, Senior Producer of the BBC Singers, to tell us about Bob's special relationship with the choir:

"We are fortunate to work with some of the finest conductors on the international choral scene. All of them bring to the Singers a passion for their work, varied areas of expertise, and different repertoire interests. But you always know that a week with Bob Chilcott will add to these an extra ingredient: fun. Bob's been our Principal Guest Conductor for four years now and the weeks when he works with the BBC Singers are always marked by those qualities which anyone who's had the privilege of being conducted by him will instantly recognize: enthusiasm, friendship, a wonderful ability to nurture those with whom he works - and all underpinned by a passionate belief in the value of singing together and the ability to communicate with an audience through great music-making. Recording projects include a survey of Bob's own choral music which will be used as the basis of a profile of him in BBC Radio 3's weekly specialist choral programme *The Choir*, to be broadcast in Spring 2007, and released as a CD on

the Signum label later in the year. And latterly, through the BBC Singers' ongoing programme of outreach and educational work (which is - dare I say it? - unrivalled on the UK choral scene, embracing as it does work with children and adults, amateurs and professionals, from all backgrounds and sectors of society) we're seeing Bob in a mentorial role, something for which his patient, genial and easy personality makes him brilliantly equipped.

Of course, most people will know Bob best as a composer - one of great practicality with a highly realistic sense of what's possible, what's effective, and how best to make it work. Last Spring, as I compiled the programme for the BBC Singers' first tour of Japan, it became clear that we needed a really brilliant show-stopping finale to end the second half. Having put the programme together as a bird's-eye-view of five centuries of British choral music, it seemed to me that it would be fun to finish the concert with a piece dealing with a characteristically British obsession: the weather. Bob took up the commission with alacrity, disappeared off to his composing-desk, and several weeks later delivered *Weather Report* - a setting of traditional words, compiled and assembled in typically witty fashion, coupled to irresistibly jazzy music. It has



Sophie Laselet

to be said that it's not a piece for the faint-hearted - it's a sort-of virtuoso choral toccata - but for choirs who are up for a challenge it's a terrific piece, and brought the house down in Japan every time we performed it.

In December this year, Bob will conduct the BBC Singers in BBC Radio 3's contribution to the annual day-long series of seasonal concerts promoted by the European Broadcasting Union: *Christmas across Europe*. It'll be broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on Sunday 17 December, but our concert will be recorded the day before, at 6pm in St Giles' Church, in London's Barbican. The theme of the concert is the connection between English and French music for Christmas (stronger than you might think: many carol tunes which we reckon quintessentially English are just as well-known on the other side of the Channel). Bob's promised to write us a new piece which will link these themes together.

A new CD sampler of Chilcott's music is available on request - see p 15 for details.

Bob Chilcott directs the World Youth Choir

The Making of the Drum forms the centre-piece of the 06/07 winter session's programme for the World Youth Choir, 'Sing we and chant it'.

In the last issue of *Oxford Music Now* we brought you news of Bob Chilcott's prestigious invitation to direct the Choir, which is an exciting artistic and cultural collaboration between the International

Federation for Choral Music, Europa Cantat, and the Jeunesses Musicales International, involving the choral organizations of over fifty countries.

The Choir will tour Belgium, France, and Germany in early January 2007. The full winter itinerary and programme is now available to view online at www.worldyouthchoir.org.

- 05/01: Centre Culturel les Roches, Rochefort, Belgium
- 06/01: Limburg, Germany
- 07/01: Church of Sombreffe, Belgium
- 10/01: Church of St Loup, Namur, Belgium
- 11/01: Mannheim/Ludwigshafen, Germany
- 13/01: Pont-à-Mousson, France
- 14/01: Auditorium, Epinal, France

Walton and Vaughan Williams: From the conductors

Leonard Slatkin on Walton



Steve J. Sherman

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra will give 4 performances Walton's *Partita* for orchestra in May and June 2007, under the baton of Leonard

Slatkin. Slatkin also conducted *Partita* with the National Symphony Orchestra this year. He writes:

The first musical memories most children have are of the songs heard by the cribside, or what was being listened to by their parents. I had a resident string quartet in my house and among the very first pieces they played was the A minor Quartet by Walton. The composer even came to the house to help supervise the performance and subsequent recording. The beauty

and energy of this piece always stayed with me and so from almost a womb state, I was enticed into his musical world.

Given the way in which he changed the face of British music early in his compositional career, it is easy to look at some of his later works as slightly lighter pieces. But it is hard to imagine the likes of the 2nd Symphony, Cello Concerto or *Partita* as being lesser in stature as those groundbreaking opuses. Walton began to develop relationships with orchestras and artists living in America. Perhaps because of this, some of his later music indulges in moments of almost jazz-like rhythmic and melodic structures. Certainly a work like the *Partita* should be performed more often, simply because it has a universal musical appeal.

But like with most of Walton's music, there are a lot of notes. It is not easy music in that sense. A piece like the Hindemith Variations requires a virtuoso orchestra of the highest calibre. But ultimately, these later pieces yield a great sense of satisfaction as well as introducing audiences to a composer who is at once accessible but with a very individual style and sound.

Walton would go on to make an expanded version of his Quartet for full string orchestra. As I sat quietly on the steps, listening to my parents play the original version, it never occurred to me that it would be possible for another young person to hear this work in a different way. Perhaps this will be a first listening experience for another budding conductor. In any event, Sir William's musical world is very special and one journey very much worth taking.

Peter Oundjian on Vaughan Williams



Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Vaughan Williams. Since 2004, conductor and violinist Peter Oundjian has forged a committed

path in leading world class performances of the Fourth and Sixth Symphonies, the *Fantasia on Greensleeves*, and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, with orchestras including the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Detroit, St. Louis, Toronto, and San Francisco Symphonies. The Detroit Symphony will give a performance of the Sixth in May 2007. Oundjian writes of his early

experiences of Vaughan Williams' music whilst a pupil at the composer's alma mater, Charterhouse:

1972 was an important year for the music of Vaughan Williams. As is so often the case, it takes a centennial celebration to bring a great artist's work to the attention of a larger audience. 1972 happened also to be the centennial of celebration of the school's relocation from London to Godalming in Surrey. As a 4th year music scholar at Charterhouse, a school with a magnificent music department, I was immersed in performances of many of Vaughan Williams' greatest works, including the *Sea Symphony*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, the *Tallis Fantasy*, *Serenade to Music* and *The Lark Ascending* which I also

played at Down Ampney at a special celebration. The power and beauty of his music was overwhelming for a 16 year old.

In recent times I have discovered a passion for the darkness and density of his middle period pieces, the Fourth and Sixth symphonies and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and regularly bring these pieces and others to North American listeners.

The significance of his contribution to our world cannot be underestimated; a contrapuntal genius with a profound understanding of dramatic pacing and spiritual beauty and a powerful influence on many, both of his generation and the next.

John Gardner at 90



John Gardner will celebrate his 90th birthday on 2 March 2007. Here, his son Chris has provided a retrospective on his father's compositional career:

John Gardner is sometimes thought of as a Mancunian, but his birth in Manchester on 2nd March 1917 was merely the result of a quirk of family circumstances. He was in fact brought up in the North Devon town of Ilfracombe. Gardner began composing at the age of six, and by the outbreak of war in 1939 he had more than 30 juvenile opuses to his name. OUP published the *Intermezzo for Organ* in 1935 and the anthem *The Holy Son of God Most High* in 1938. His *Rhapsody for Oboe and String Quartet* attracted attention with a performance at the Wigmore Hall in 1935, and the *String Quartet No. 1* was performed and broadcast by the Blech Quartet shortly before the outbreak of War.

During the War he served in the RAF, firstly as a bandmaster and then as a navigator. Opportunities to compose were few and far between, and it was with some relief that he settled down to write the *Symphony No. 1 in D minor* Op. 2 between 1946 and 1947. Barbirolli introduced the Symphony at the 1951 Cheltenham Festival where it caused a minor sensation. It was generally agreed

that rarely had a previously unknown composer made such an impressive debut. Other major works followed including *Cantiones Sacrae* Op. 12 at the Three Choirs Festival in 1952, and the *Piano Concerto No. 1*, Op. 34 at the 1957 Cheltenham Festival. In 1957 he cemented his early reputation with the opera *The Moon and Sixpence* which had its premiere at Sadler's Wells.

John Gardner's compositional style reflects a deep understanding and love of the music which preceded him. He has a remarkable contrapuntal skill, and a real gift for melodic invention. He is sometimes influenced by jazz, and his music sometimes has echoes of the baroque. His best music is witty, inventive and highly memorable. He has composed prolifically throughout his career, almost exclusively to commission, whilst also teaching at the Royal Academy of Music, Morley College and St Paul's Girls' School. In 1976 was made a CBE.

He is best known for his choral music. His most important choral work is probably 'A Latter Day Athenian Speaks', a 15 minute unaccompanied work to a text by Christopher Scaife. Louis Halsey, who conducted the first performance in 1962, described it in the Musical Times as "a robust and chunky work, tough and energetic, but so firmly based on triads that there is no particular problem over pitch intervals."

The *Five Hymns in Popular Style* Op. 54, dedicated to Malcolm Williamson, were at one time Gardner's most popular work. They were a deliberate attempt to "lower the brow" of the Church. "In these five hymns I have been inspired... by the wonderful poetry of Bishop Heber, Henry Lyte and Mrs. Adams, so full of simple profound thoughts, expressed in language which is both noble, evocative and memorable. Popular art in the best sense, in fact!". Ever the practical composer, Gardner

wrote these hymns for young performers but they work well with adults, and can be performed successfully by many different combinations of vocal and instrumental resources.

A much later work, *The Burns Sequence*, Op. 213 is an absolute delight. As with many of his larger choral works, the movements are a collection of pieces which work well as a group but can also be performed separately. In *Oh Whistle and I'll Come to Ye* you will find one of the most catchy and memorable of all Gardner melodies, and both this and *Will ye go to the Indies my Mary?* stand in their own right as charming choral songs.

2007 will see two important CDs release. The long-awaited commercial release of the *Symphony No. 1 in D minor*, Op. 2, coupled with the *Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat* Op. 34 will be on Naxos Records in performances by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, conducted by David Lloyd-Jones, with Peter Donohoe as soloist. Toccata Classics will be releasing a choral CD comprising *A Latter Day Athenian Speaks* and the *Cantata for Easter*, performed by the Guildford Camarata conducted by David Wordsworth. The CD will also include a re-release of the splendid performance of *A Burns Sequence* by the Scottish National Youth Choir, conducted by Christopher Bell.

For more information about John Gardner and a complete catalogue of works please visit his website:- <http://www.johnlintongardner.co.uk>

Michael Berkeley in Denmark

Michael Berkeley was chosen to be a 'featured composer' at this year's Holstebro International Musikfestival - "Klassiske Dage 2006", which, in its second year, took place in Holstebro, Denmark, in November. Flautist Janne Thomsen, with whom Michael has enjoyed a long standing collaboration, explains why she invited Michael to the Festival:

I first met Michael about 6 years ago when I was invited to play at the Cheltenham Festival, and I did a first performance in a German festival of a wonderful piece that Michael wrote for flute and harp. As I have these past years been searching for works for solo flute, Michael then agreed to look at and perhaps revise a piece for solo

flute that he had done in earlier years. I am delighted to say that it has now turned into a completely new piece, 'Inner Space'. I very much appreciate the collaboration with Michael and it has been a great privilege to be able to work closely together on this piece. I am delighted to give this first performance, which will be broadcast by the Danish Radio.

The Festival's final concert featured a new version of *Touch Light*, in which violin and flute took the place of the solo voices the work was originally written for, accompanied by the Strings of the English Chamber Orchestra. Janne Thomsen reports that "It's a most wonderful work which in fact rarely leaves its place on my hi-fi at home."

Several other works by Michael Berkeley were performed at the Festival, which also featured a talk by the composer: The first performance of *Inner Space* for solo flute, played by Janne Thomsen, *La Veilleuse*, performed by Priya Mitchell, violin, and Mauricio Vallina, piano, and Ensemble MidtVest performed Michael's wind quintet *Catch Me if you Can*.

The Festival is situated in Holstebro in Jutland, and ran from 9 - 12 November. As well as music, the Festival shows films, street parades, sound installations, master classes, student concerts, children's concerts and exhibitions. www.klassiskedage.dk

News from the USA

New opera from Libby Larsen



Libby Larsen writes:
What is rogue genius? How does a culture nurture its brilliant minds? Why such romance and sport in witnessing the self-

destruction of genius? Muse to these questions, American writer Jack London is the centrepiece of Libby Larsen's new opera, *Everyman Jack*, (libretto: Philip Littell; commission: Sonoma City Opera) which receives its world premiere run November 11-18, 2006 in Sonoma, California.

The opera's subject concerns Everyman's struggle to live life to full potential while dealing with chemical addiction, told by Jack London in his autobiography *John Barleycorn*. Born in San Francisco in 1876, London grew up witness to a world in transition. America in the late 1800s was a battleground for unscrupulous tycoons and robber barons.

In music, the Victrola and fledgling wireless radio telegraphy injected a sudden melange of music from composers Scott Joplin, Victor Herbert, John Philip Sousa and Edward MacDowell, mixed with Vaudeville acts, church choirs, folk music and classical European music, into the culture.

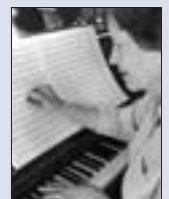
Jack London absorbed all, living a hand-to-mouth existence as an oyster pirate, deep-sea sailor, hobo, Alaskan prospector. But most important of all Jack London's adventures was his struggle to become a writer. Without guidance, writing under almost impossible circumstances, for the most part educating himself, and faced with continual economic hardship, he became the highest paid, most popular novelist and short story writer of his day.

Presented by the Green Music Festival, *Everyman Jack* stars Rodney Gilfry as Jack London, Jennifer Lane as Charmian London, and featuring John Duykers (Man), Susan Narucki (Woman), Ilana Davison (Girl) and Brad Bradshaw (Boy) with Earplay, San Francisco's premiere

new music ensemble, Mary Chun, conductor, Joseph Graves, director, Margaret McKowen, costumes, Nan Zhang, lighting.

Hilary Tann

Hilary Tann was guest of the Chamber Mix Ensemble and Stanford University in October. Her residency included rehearsals with three different orchestras (Oakland Civic Orchestra, Berkeley High School Orchestra, and Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra), guest lectures at Lick Wilmerding High School and Stanford, two chamber music concerts (San Francisco Community Center and Stanford's Campbell Recital Hall), and a performance of "Water's Edge" for string orchestra at Stanford's Dinkenspiel Auditorium. Chamber Mix gave the West Coast premiere of "The Gardens of Anna Maria Luisa de Medici" (for flute, cello, piano) last May and continues to champion Hilary Tann's work.



Lawrence White

Music for Dance from Oxford

Just launched is our new catalogue 'music for dance and ballet'. Fully updated with comprehensive information on all of the ballet and dance works in the Oxford catalogue, we have also included for the first time a separate section highlighting particular composers choreographers might want to consider when creating new dance works.

Oxford's prestigious catalogue of house composers includes Vaughan Williams, Constant Lambert, and William Walton, all of whom played a major role in the creation of an English ballet tradition – alongside some of today's leading composers from the UK and around the world. Over the years the music of our house composers has attracted the

attention of leading choreographers, resulting in some striking collaborations for the stage.

We offer a free consultancy service for any choreographer looking for the perfect music for their next dance project. We would be delighted to meet, by appointment, with any choreographer in our offices in London, Oxford, or New York to discuss collaborations with our composers and their music, and on request we can supply sampler CDs of the music we publish. Contact Will Harriss, Promotion Manager, for more information and to arrange a meeting. The 'music for dance' website can be found at www.oup.com/uk/music/dance.



Oxford launches

Livingmusic

Oxford is proud to announce the launch of 'Living Music', an innovative new scheme for amateur and youth orchestras.

The aim of Living Music is to encourage the performance by non-professional orchestras of recent works written by Oxford's 'house' composers. We've selected fourteen outstanding works composed within the last thirty years, and any non-professional orchestra (based in the UK) who programmes one or more of these works will benefit from substantially reduced hire fees. Participating orchestras will also have access to other promotional offers from OUP. For orchestras based in countries where we have agency representation, please contact your local agent for more details.

The featured works are:

Michael Berkeley: *Meditations; The Romance of the Rose; Touch Light*

Bob Chilcott: *Tandem*

Edward Harper: *Chanson Minimale*

Alun Hoddinott: *Investiture Dances*

Libby Larsen: *'One Dance, Many Dancers'; Overture for the End of a Century*

William Mathias: *Celtic Dances*

John Rutter: *Distant Land; Five Meditations for orchestra*

Howard Skempton: *Lento*

Hilary Tann: *From the Feather to the Mountain*

Zhou Long: *Chinese Folk Songs*

The featured works have all been chosen with non-professional orchestras in mind – they vary in difficulty and duration, but they are all exciting to play and rewarding to listen to.

To discover more information on each work and composer, please visit the Living Music website:

www.oup.com/uk/livingmusic.

We have also produced a free CD sampler to accompany this scheme; to receive your copy please email Will Harriss, Promotion Manager, at repertoire.promotion.uk@oup.com

Selected concert reviews

Berkeley

Jane Eyre

Opera Theater of St. Louis,
June 2006

“The score is musically and dramatically intense...Berkeley’s score effectively conveys Thornfield’s menace, its hidden mistress’ madness, Mr. Rochester’s anguish and Jane’s evolving emotions. It opens effectively with the low wind instruments and builds spikily to the climax.

Berkeley quotes briefly from Britten’s “The Turn of the Screw” and frequently from Donizetti’s “Lucia di Lammermoor.” Baritone Scott Hendricks brooded nicely and sang strongly and with presence. Mezzo-soprano Elizabeth Batton as Bertha Rochester made the role her own, with a rich, dark voice and edgy air of madness. As Mrs. Fairfax, mezzo-soprano Robynne Redmon made clear both the housekeeper’s essential decency and her role in Rochester’s deception. Soprano Adele Reiter sang sweetly as Adele and made a convincing child.”

SARAH BRYAN MILLER, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

Causton

Saraband/The Way the World Ends

Britten Sinfonia, Aldeburgh Festival 2006

“An imaginatively written pair of miniatures for string orchestra each of which has a powerful emotional tug and suggests Causton should mine this seam further.”

MATTHEW RYE, *Telegraph*

Finnissy

Favourite Poets

The Chanctonbury Chorus, June 2006

“A remarkable work, full of vocal and instrumental colour, striking invention and musical architecture. Finnissy cleverly set the words of seven “Favourite Poets”, including Edward Carpenter, William McGonagall and Vladimir Smolenskii. The very first setting had some magically shifting melodic lines for choir with off-stage interjections from solo horn and viola. There was some ravishing choral writing and singing... delicate harp arpeggios and gentle string pizzicatos.”

JOHN ALEXANDER, *Shoreham Herald*

Phibbs

Tenebrae

St. Alban’s Bach Choir, April 2006

“In more than 50 years of concert-going I cannot remember an event that more electrified an audience than the world premiere of Joseph Phibbs’ *Tenebrae*. For the unaccompanied choir, Phibbs used words from the Latin Mass while the main choir and orchestra was provided with settings of one modern poem, David Gascoyne’s ‘The Uncertain Battle’, and three 17th-century metaphysical pieces. Although the opening bars, an unaccompanied Kyrie, brought instant thoughts of the music of Sir John Tavener, they were dispelled with the wonderfully-brassy and hard-sounding setting of The Uncertain Battle. The deep and sombre setting of Henry Vaughan’s ‘The World’ contrasted well and the fast, staccato of Henry King’s ‘Sic Vita’ added huge excitement to the work which concluded with an exquisite setting of Phineas Fletcher’s verse which begins ‘Drop, drop slow tears’. Written specifically for the choir and St Alban’s Abbey, the piece was thoroughly exciting.”

JOHN MANNING, *Herts Advertiser*

“So many good things arose from this imaginative action, not least an unusual request for both Bach Choir and off-stage (Abbey Singers and Lay Clerks; director Simon Johnson) choirs, together with solo high soprano and small orchestra, Sinfonia Verdi. Merely a look at the total text attracts interest, and Phibbs has added a thrilling composer’s dimension. The composer was well pleased, the work deserves more performances, and quickly, after this significant world premiere.”

JOHN WESTCOMBE, *St. Albans Observer*

Skempton

And there was War in Heaven

Opus Anglicanum, September 2006

“*And there was war in Heaven* was constantly imaginative. It embraced shifting drones, uneasy interplay of semitone and tones, slurs almost like quartertones, and at one stage what sounded like Skempton’s own pared-down version of Arvo Pärt’s rocking tintinnabuli technique.”

RODERIC DUNNETT, *Church Times*

Lento

BBC Concert Orchestra, October 2006

“Howard Skempton’s *Lento* was played with almost Wagnerian gravitas, drawing us inexorably into its world of resignation, grief and consolation. It’s a beautiful work, and deservedly popular.”

TIM ASHLEY, *The Guardian*

New titles

Berkeley

Shooting Stars

For symphonic wind ensemble
4' (can act as a prelude for *Slow Dawn*)
Score and parts on hire

Slow Dawn

For symphonic wind ensemble
8 - 9'
Score and parts on hire

Touch Light

Soprano and counter-tenor soloists
(or violin and flute), & string orchestra
6 - 7'
Score and parts on hire

Causton

Poems Almost of this World

Unaccompanied solo female voice
8'
9780193356030

Saraband / The Way the World Ends

String orchestra (min 7.5.3.3.2)
5'
Score and parts on hire

Chilcott

The Dove and the Olive Leaf

SATB, sop sax/clarinet, strings
6'
9780193869080

The Face of Peace

SATB, brass ensemble, and percussion
Score and parts on hire
9780193356856

A Little Jazz Mass

SATB, piano, optional bass & drum kit
12'
97801934332811

Missa 'Cantate'

SA(T)B & optional piano
9780193356382

Remember, O thou man

SATB & piano
9780193356351

So fair and bright

SSA & piano
9780193356870

To those who matter

SATB, upper-voice choir & piano
9780193857520

The Skye Boat Song

SSA & piano
2'
9780193356719

Weather Report

SSAATTBB unaccompanied
9780193356443

White waves on the water

SSA (with divisions), piano, flute
9780193356887

You Are My God

SATB & piano
9780193356405

Finnissy

Brighton!

Solo tenor and string quartet
10'
9780193355965

Favourite Poets

Sop. Solo, SATB, chamber orchestra (2 hn,
hp, org, timp, vln, 2 vla, 2 vc, cb)
30'
Score and parts on hire

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis 'St Pancras Service'

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Jackson

Edinburgh Mass

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13'
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LM-7: Aquarius

Saxophone quartet
Score and parts on hire

Now I have known O Lord

SATB (with divisions) unaccompanied
7'
9780193355538

Sanctum est verum lumen

40 part choir, unaccompanied
10'
Score and parts on hire

The following titles by

Gabriel Jackson are now available from Oxford University Press

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Clarinet & string quartet
19'
9780193356818

Comerah Litanies

Solo organ
10'
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Eurydice

Solo clarinet
9'
9780193356801

Rhapsody in Red

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Larsen

An Introduction to the Moon

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amplified voice
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9780193865730

Rutter

Ave Maria

SATB & piano
9780193356634

Winchester Te Deum

9780193356894
7-8'

Vocal score on sale; orchestral material on hire

Skempton

And there was war in heaven

ATTBB solo voices unaccompanied
5'
9780193356085

Walton

Music for Brass - 'Walton Edition'

9780193683198

Symphony No. 2, full score - 'Walton Edition'

27'
9780193683198

CD releases and reviews

Berkeley

Abstract Mirror, Magnetic Field
Chandos CHAN10364



"In *Abstract Mirror* there's a special richness about the two cellos throughout and the parallel sixths at the opening. The dramatic contrasts here and in *Magnetic Field* are consistently eloquent."

THE GRAMOPHONE

"Berkeley knows how to generate intense passion in the fabulous falling, wailing finale (of *Magnetic Field*)."

SUNDAY TIMES

"A sonic spectacular for the ensemble (*Magnetic Field*)... There is an eastern European flavour to much of the material, with deeply felt, Janàček-like 'speaking' lines and figures emerging with real eloquence, and towards the end a spare, rather resignedly melancholic music sets in whose expressive stance is reminiscent of the late Shostakovich quartets... an absorbing work."

INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

Chilcott

Songs and Cries of London Town, The Making of the Drum, The Runner, Canticles of Light, My Prayer, The Shepherd's Carol, God so loved the world, And so it goes
Chamber Choir of Europe/Matt Nicol
Bayer-records BR 100 342

The isle is full of noises

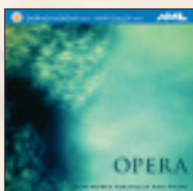
'Leith Hill Music Festival: Centenary 2005'
Herald HAVPCDLH 2006A

Irish Blessing

'Inspiration'
Canterbury Cathedral Choir/David Flood
York Ambisonic YORKCD 192

Causton

Seven States of Rain
Darragh Morgan and Mary Dullea
NMCD108



"Best of all is the large-

scale, engrossing narrative from Richard Causton. It moves from an arresting pizzicato study through five more 'states of rain' to reveal a piano coda of Messiaenic peace. Endless grey rain (to quote the composer) has never sounded more comforting."

THE STRAD

"Richard Causton surveys rain in a compendious sequence involving violin and piano separately or combined – and ranging from intricate pointillist interplay, via eloquent melodic writing, to chorales that evoke a monochrome consistency, the whole pursues a cumulative arc of intensity that makes absorbing listening irrespective of the subject."

SUNDAY TIMES

"*Seven States of Rain* by Richard Causton 'invokes the poetry of rain in its various moods and forms.' Pizzicato notes from the violin are echoed in the piano by prepared, dampened strings, invoking immediate memories of John Cage, but effectively uniting the violin and piano in a refreshing way. The piece's seven sections progress through more conventional bowed violin and untreated piano strings, contrasting in nature from violence through gentler reflection in an expressive, if somewhat angular chorale. The elements are combined and layered, and finally arch through a weighty climax toward a solo piano chorale: 'the endless, grey rain of of an afternoon.'"

MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

Finnissy

Stabant autem iuxta crucem (from Seven Sacred Motets)
The Choir of Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge/Geoffrey Webber
Signum SIGCD 070

John Gardner

Sonata da Chiesa sopra un tema di Claudio Monteverdi
'The Morning Trumpet'
Michael Tunnell & Reese Land (trumpets),
J. David Wagner (organ)
Centaur CRC 2793



Jackson

Salve Regina
'Macmillan and his British Contemporaries: Twentieth Century Masters Volume 2'
The Choir of New College
Oxford/Edward Higginbottom
Robert Patterson; Nicholas Wearne (organ)
Avie AV 2085

"*Salve Regina* by Gabriel Jackson . . . provides a lovely, pacific, ending to the programme."

JOHN QUINN, *MusicWeb International*

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

The Abbey School Choir,
Tewkesbury/Benjamin Nicholas
Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum DCD
34713

Rawsthorne

The Creel

Walton

Portsmouth Point Overture
Campion Cameo CAMEO2036

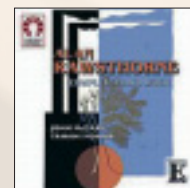
Lambert

Trois Pièces Negres

Rawsthorne

Complete Piano Works

John McCabe
Dutton Laboratories CDLX7167



"This is definitive Rawsthorne and it fills gaps in the current record catalogue. This cd is filled out with Lambert's delightful duets... The real Rawsthorne begins with the *Bagatelles* and stays on that level with the wry and sometimes comic *Sonatina*... He made a valuable contribution to 20th century British piano music."

THE GRAMOPHONE

"Rawsthorne's musical personality emerged in the *Four Bagatelles* of the late 1930s – clean and dry in the manner of Hindemith, perhaps most personal in the quietly reflective epilogue. The *Four Romantic Pieces* explore a wider expressive range."

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

Mathias

Improvisations for Harp
On 'Catrin Finch – Byw'
Kissan Productions
KISSANCD007

Rutter

Mass of the Children
Wedding Canticle
Shadows

Clare College Choir,
Cambridge/Tim Brown
Naxos 8.557922

"Rutter re-imagines Britten's brilliant juxtaposition of adult and children's voices in a joyful context... The shades of Britten and Pears hover over *Shadows*, a cycle of pleasant settings of 16th and 17th century poems, playing tribute to the lute-song tradition. The *Wedding Canticle* is sweet, airy and graceful. Rutter's many fans will not be disappointed."

THE GRAMOPHONE

Tann

Light from the Cliffs
'American Women Composers'
Max Lifchitz (piano)
North/South Recordings N/S R. 1043

Walton

Henry V Suite
Cello Concerto
Violin Sonata
Oregon Symphony Orchestra/DePreist
Delos International DE3342

Symphony No. 1
Prelude and Fugue: The Spitfire
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic
Orchestra/Handley
Resonance Sanctuary Classics CDRSN3067

Symphony No. 1
LSO/Colin Davis
LSO Live LSO0076



"The hushed opening seems as though the music is only just emerging into human consciousness. The mystery quickly evaporates as the nagging syncopations of the ostinato figure become more insistent, developing into a powerful climax. The clarity of texture and sharpness of attack add to the impact..."

THE GRAMOPHONE

"The playing is staggeringly impressive – and Sir Colin's reading is astounding in its insight and resistance to superficial effect... here is a great record to add to your collection."

INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

"It is clear that he (Davis) sees this Symphony as an emotionally coherent whole: there's no sense of a gulf between the end of the Andante and the Finale, and the triumphant ending feels in every way a logical outcome."

BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

"The weight, the darkness, the fury and agony of the LSO performance is exceptional. Davis drives the argument with unstoppable force, building tension across the ears like a scythe."

GEOFF BROWN

"The first movement is one of the most exhilarating in any 20th Century symphony, and all its power and propulsive energy is unleashed in Sir Colin's performance. The LSO cover themselves in glory with crisp rhythms and virtuosic playing from every department."

THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

Viola Concerto

Callus (vla), New Zealand Symphony
Orchestra/Taddei
ASV CDDA1181

"The most beautiful account I have ever heard of the Walton Concerto. She brings out the warmth of Walton's lyricism, one memorable theme after another and finds a rare mystery in the pianissimo passages, above all in the haunting epilogue."

THE GRAMOPHONE

Cello Concerto

Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra/Previn,
Müller-Schott (cello)
Orfeo C621



"An intense and fiery interpretation with the advantage of Previn's masterly ear".

INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

String Quartet in A Minor

Coull Quartet
Hyperion Helios CDH55218

Vaughan Williams

Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus
Partita for Double String Orchestra
English Sinfonia/Farrer
Resonance Sanctuary Classics CDRSN3057

Tuba Concerto
Symphony No. 5

Brandenburg State Orchestra
Genuin GEN86064

'An Introduction to Vaughan Williams'
The Lark Ascending

Fantasia on Greensleeves
Davis (violin), London Philharmonic
Orchestra & London Symphony
Orchestra/Vernon Handley & Bryden
Thomson
Chandos CHAN2028



Symphony No. 4 in f minor
'The Composers Conduct'
BBC Symphony Orchestra/Vaughan
Williams
Naxos Historical 8.111048

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A Little Jazz Mass; Be thou my vision;
I share creation; Irish Blessing; Jubilate; The
Lily and the Rose; O Danny Boy; Sussex
Carol; The Twelve Days of Christmas

Christmas choral highlights

A seasonal selection from our recent carol publishing

OUP is delighted that Wyastone Estate Limited has released 37 titles in the catalogue of record label Lyrita. These include the works of many of OUP's most important figures from the 20th century, including a recording of Walton conducting his own music. Please see www.lyrita.co.uk for full catalogue

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