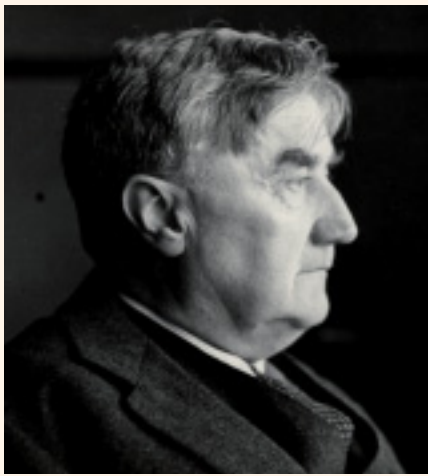


Vaughan Williams in 2008



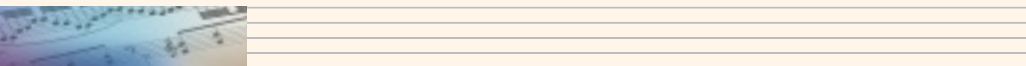
The fiftieth anniversary of the death of Ralph Vaughan Williams is, as Tony Palmer suggests in his fascinating article (see page 5), a good opportunity to celebrate both a great composer and the contribution that he made to English musical life. Whilst still a student Vaughan Williams's dissatisfaction with the way English music had developed—underpinned by an over-reliance on German forms and models—led him on a personal crusade to explore

Elizabethan and Jacobean music and English folk-music, thus seeking out the roots of English music in a way that had never been done before. He selected tunes for the English Hymnal, was a church organist, writer, conductor, music editor, and lecturer – all these activities seeming to enhance his inspiration rather than hinder it. Vaughan Williams believed that a composer should 'make his art an expression of the whole life of the community'; that belief, together with the vision and humanity of his music, should lead to a major re-assessment of this unique and inspiring man.

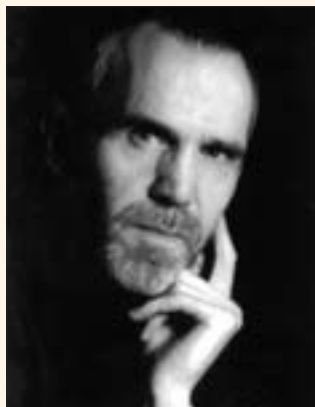
Included with this edition of OMN is a free CD sampler, featuring a selection of Vaughan Williams's finest works. His catalogue is extraordinarily diverse, and on request the Promotion Department in the UK or US can supply you with a full catalogue of his works published by OUP (for contact details please see the back page). On page 4 a number of composers write about their impressions of Vaughan Williams and his music, and on page 5 the film-maker Tony Palmer writes about the making of his forthcoming film on Vaughan Williams, *O Thou Transcendent*.



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Howard Skempton at 60



Born in Chester in 1947, Howard has worked as a composer, accordionist, and music publisher. In 1967 he began a period of study with Cornelius Cardew, with whom he was later to become one of the founding members of the influential Scratch Orchestra. His individual voice is undeflected by compositional trends, and he has produced a corpus of more than 300 works, many of them miniatures for solo piano or accordion. Howard calls these pieces 'the central nervous system' of his work.

Throughout his career Howard has been commissioned by leading artists from around the world, resulting in a catalogue as diverse as it is long. In recent years Howard has concentrated increasingly on writing vocal and choral pieces, complementing his extensive list of instrumental and orchestral pieces. In 2005 Howard's second string quartet, *Tendrils*, won him an award from the Royal Philharmonic Society for 'Best chamber-scale composition', as well as a British Composer Award.

2007 is Howard's sixtieth birthday year, and is being marked by performances of his music around the UK and overseas. Liverpool's Ensemble 10:10 recently gave the premiere of Howard's new work for ensemble, *Piazza*, which will be performed again later this year. Meanwhile, at the Vale of Glamorgan Festival, in Wales, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and soloist James Gilchrist will present the premiere of his new orchestral song cycle, *The Moon is Flashing*.

'Howard's music always feels like a still centre in this hectic world—profound, exquisitely crafted, moving (often unbearably so). This is of course enough, but Howard is also a tireless supporter and encourager, of other composers, young composers, concerts and concert-going, and an erudite and captivating speaker on all things musical. Happy Birthday Howard from us all!'

STEPHEN NEWBOULD,
Artistic Director, BCMG

'It is not that Howard does not recognize the dark threatening clouds that are engulfing us but, unfathomably, he can perceive a silver lining. It's in the music. Happy Birthyear, Howard, and heartfelt thanks for "being there".'

JOHN TILBURY, *pianist*

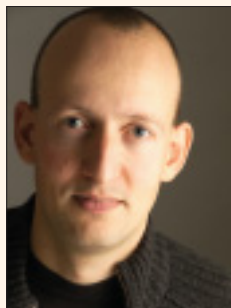
'Where to start, for there are so many Howards to celebrate! Above all, of course, there is the fastidious, surprising and always fascinating composer; there is the virtuoso telephone conversationalist, the laconic and inscrutable chansonnier (less frequently encountered, sadly), the vividly delighting anecdotist, the unfailingly generous and supportive colleague. It is this generosity of spirit that is the most precious of all, for it is there in everything he does—but most importantly it is in every bar of the music that it is his unique gift to the world, and for which we must give thanks not just in this 60th birthday year but each and every day.'

GABRIEL JACKSON, *composer*

'Howard Skempton's music is like himself, generous, direct, and clean.'

GERALD BARRY, *composer*

Richard Causton



The Britten Sinfonia has commissioned Richard Causton to contribute to a series in which young composers are invited to write a work to match the instrumentation of a twentieth-century 'classic'. Richard's new work will be paired with Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro*, and here he gives OMN a preview of what's in store.

'My forthcoming piece for the Britten Sinfonia is scored for flute, clarinet, harp, and string quartet—the combination used by Ravel in his *Introduction and Allegro*. Although Ravel's piece is designated as being for harp, with the other instruments accompanying, his approach is almost orchestral, and he draws

textures from the ensemble which sometimes make it sound as if there are twice as many players.

'One of the most fascinating things about this medium is the possibility it offers to focus on different levels—from the most pared down, note-against-note writing to the broad-brushstroke, impressionistic sounds sometimes heard in the Ravel.'

'I don't usually like to talk much about work in progress but I can say that my new piece will be about these different levels of focus (rather like looking at a pane of glass, seeing a reflection and then refocusing to see distant objects on the other side) and will contrast exuberant, joyful, bustling passages with quieter, more intimate moments exploring some unusual and complex instrumental sonorities.'

Richard's new work will be premiered by the Britten Sinfonia in Aldeburgh on 13 October 2007, and will be then taken on tour in the UK and to Poland. It will subsequently be heard in broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Gabriel Jackson

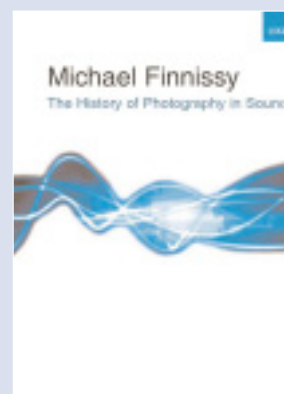
Gabriel Jackson is renowned for the quality of his choral music, which can regularly be heard in concerts and services worldwide. A lesser-known side of his work is his non-choral compositions, which nevertheless form a substantial part of his catalogue. Gabriel has recently been commissioned by the pianist David Wilde to write a new piano sonata. Gabriel writes:

'Much as I enjoy my work with choirs, I've not written as much instrumental music as I'd have liked in the last few years so I'm very excited to be returning to large-scale instrumental composition

with this sonata for David Wilde. David is a virtuoso in the grand tradition, and as an ardent pianophile—it is my favourite instrument, by miles!—I am relishing the chance to exploit that unfailingly thrilling capacity to corruscate and scintillate that is the preserve of the greatest pianists, but also to engage with that rich and profound repertoire tradition that is summoned up by the word Sonata.'

David Wilde will give the first performance of Gabriel's new piano sonata in St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, in the autumn of 2007.

A new way to explore the best new music from Oxford



In May 2007 OUP launched *Oxford Contemporary Repertoire* – a new series that, for the first time, brings together in one place an engaging and vibrant range of smaller-scale choral, chamber, and instrumental works by OUP's distinguished house composers.

The series incorporates the works previously published 'on demand'. All titles will continue to be published by Oxford, but from 1 May 2007 the printing, supply, and invoicing of OCR orders will be handled on our behalf by the specialist publisher, Goodmusic Publishing.

In launching *Oxford Contemporary Repertoire*, we have also taken the opportunity to re-introduce a number of smaller-scale works from our back-catalogue. To place an order for any of the works in the OCR series, please visit www.goodmusicpublishing.co.uk, telephone +44 (0)1684 773883, or e-mail sales@goodmusicpublishing.co.uk. More details on the OCR service can be found at www.oup.com/uk/music/pressrelease.

Vaughan Williams: from the composers



Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, on 12 October 1872. He read History at Cambridge and went to the Royal College of Music where his teachers were Parry, Wood, and Stanford. He then went on to study with Bruch in Berlin, and Ravel in Paris. Vaughan Williams's wide-ranging musical activities greatly enhanced English musical life but his love for English musical traditions and folksong has also contributed to the mistaken view that his compositional work was in some way parochial. He believed in the value of music education and wrote practical competition pieces and serviceable church music; on the other hand his profoundly disturbing *Symphony No. 6* (1948) received international acclaim with more than a hundred performances in a little over two years. With the *49th Parallel* (1940–41) he also found a new outlet in writing for film.

Although one of his first works to achieve success, *Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1* (1906), makes use of folksong, he rarely incorporated such material directly into his orchestral and instrumental compositions. Rather his enthusiasm for folksong (he collected over 800 examples) undoubtedly influenced his compositional language, as did his interest in Elizabethan and Jacobean music. Vaughan Williams's great sensitivity, his flexibility in writing for all levels of music making, and his unquestionably great imagination made him one of the key figures in twentieth-century music. He died on 26 August 1958 and his ashes were interred in Westminster Abbey.

As the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Ralph Vaughan Williams draws near, we asked four composers to write a few words on what impact RVW's music had on them.

'As a boy at King's VW's music was unmissable. I sang on the King's recording of *An Oxford Elegy* and *Flos Campi* which we loved because the harmonies were so cool. VW seemed a pretty modern composer to us boys in the sixties – nothing comfortable or conservative about him in my view.'

BOB CHILCOTT

'When I think of Vaughan Williams, I think specifically of two things: his enormous expressive range and his courage. Consider the astonishingly varied series of symphonies, for my money the most searching and wide-ranging symphonic set of the twentieth century, each one completely different from the others. The choral works have a similarly wide range, and his operas, underestimated as they are, have a remarkable variety: from Shakespearian comedy in *Sir John in Love*, through the human tragedy of *Riders to the Sea*, to the epic vision of *Pilgrim's Progress*. When you add his work in writing for the community, you have an all-encompassing figure, a man of the people who can express the deepest aspects of humanity with unflinching gaze.'

'He always had the courage to be himself, even from the earliest days, and maintained a strikingly adventurous mind to the end, in terms both of form and timbre – few composers would have contemplated ending such a great symphonic journey with three saxophones weaving in and out of an orchestral chord, and his use of "all the 'phones and 'spiels" known to him invigorated his imagination and stirred up developments in his own style. From the great sonic cathedral of the Tallis Fantasia through the editing of the English Hymnal to the profound bleakness of the Sixth Symphony's finale, we have a musical journey to be celebrated.'

JOHN MCCABE

'When, as a teenager, I first came across the music of Vaughan Williams – a radio broadcast of the Fifth Symphony – I realized in an instant that it spoke most powerfully to a part of me that had not been reached by anything I had so far heard. Subsequent encounters with other pieces only increased my admiration, and Vaughan Williams has retained his hold on my affection to this day.'

'In a famous and much quoted exchange, Sibelius once told Mahler that he believed the symphony should possess severity of form and a profound logic, only for the other to reply "No, the symphony should be like the whole world, all-embracing". Vaughan Williams encompasses both these attitudes. Quite simply, I believe him to be England's greatest twentieth-century composer, a creator who dared all by expanding his style in response to new visions. How many composers have written works as different as the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies, while maintaining absolute integrity of style and personality? I honour Vaughan Williams as both man and artist.'

ANTHONY PAYNE

'The work of Vaughan Williams impressed me from an early age, via the *Five Mystical Songs* as a chorister and the Fourth and Sixth Symphonies as an orchestral percussionist. Harmonic tension, electrifying colour, and humour abound in all his works, be they miniature or operatic; the translucence of the scherzo from the Fifth Symphony, the despair and anger of *Job*, humour in *Wasps*, or the sheer colour of the later symphonies (obviously heightened by his wartime work as a film composer) cannot help but fill one with a real sense of joy. One could mention many more works (many of his choral and vocal works are deeply haunting) and not a cowpat in sight!'

KENNETH HESKETH

Vaughan Williams: a director's view



The award-winning film-maker and director Tony Palmer is currently making a documentary on the life and music of Vaughan Williams, to be broadcast on television at Christmas and subsequently released for sale on DVD. For OMN Tony gives an exclusive preview of his film.

Vaughan Williams holds an extraordinary fascination for a surprising number of fellow musicians. Known for his openness with advice to younger colleagues, he was often besieged by requests along the lines of "I'm thinking of becoming a composer. Can you give me a few hints?" Thus the 80-year-old grand old man of British music received the 16-year-old 'whippersnapper', Harrison Birtwistle. The great American composer John Adams was taken by his parents as a 9-year-old to his first orchestral concert in Boston, USA. The first piece on the programme was by Vaughan Williams. Adams, previously (he believed) destined to be an engineer, told his parents he now wanted to be a composer – 'like that!' Neil Tennant, famous as part of *The Pet Shop Boys*, had a similar Damascus moment as a schoolboy in Newcastle. The list of such musicians is considerable.

Next year will be the fiftieth anniversary of his death. Having made films about Britten and Walton, I knew I had to face up to the man whose shadow falls across the whole of twentieth-century English music, and also deal with why he was not immediately thought of in the same breath as, say, Elgar. It seems to me now, as I put the finishing touches to my three-hour film, that his importance exceeds the other three. Two stories illustrate this. In 1936 Vaughan Williams

went to Norwich for the premiere of his *Five Tudor Portraits*. When he arrived at the rehearsal, the leader of the orchestra asked him to 'deal with' the composer of the other work on the programme who was being a 'hysterical pest', and in any case they hated the piece. VW asked who it was, and then told the leader: 'Sir, you are in the presence of greatness. If you do not perform his work, then you cannot perform mine.' The other work was *Our Hunting Fathers*; the composer the 22 year-old Benjamin Britten. Michael Tippett tells the film, in an interview recorded some years ago, that although as a student he had despised everything VW stood for with 'all that folk waffle', after VW died Tippett realized he had made the most appalling misjudgement because it was VW 'rather than any of his contemporaries' who had 'set us free'.

'Folk waffle'? I agree with Tippett, a profound misjudgement. It doesn't even begin to describe some of the bleakest, most desperate, and yearning English music written in the last hundred years. This is the musician who leapt back across the centuries to Tallis, Byrd, Dowland, and Purcell long before it became fashionable to do so. This is the scholar who read Walt Whitman, long before anyone had ever heard of him on this side of the Atlantic. This is the visionary who single-handedly rescued the English Hymnal, who prodded the Churchill government during the Second World War to establish what eventually became the Arts Council and The Third Programme on the BBC.

But that's not the main thrust of my film, which is about the man himself. First, his family – related, either directly or by marriage to Darwin, Wedgwood, Keynes, and Virginia Woolf, and centre stage among the intellectual aristocracy at the beginning of the twentieth century. Then married, and devotedly so, for over fifty years to a woman who was for much of that time a cripple – can you imagine what that did to his psyche, his sexuality? And he was a devastatingly good looking young man, not the crumpled, cuddly figure that has become (until now, I hope) his lasting image. A man who *volunteered*,

aged forty-one, to serve in the infantry in the First World War, but who eventually served in the Ambulance Corps (and don't forget his very sheltered background – Charterhouse, and a man who never needed to earn his living), picking up bits of bodies blown to smithereens in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. And this had no effect on him and his music? Of course it did.

In the end, of course, it's the music which speaks to us. Gergiev's Mariinsky Orchestra provides much of it in specially recorded extracts. The National Youth Orchestra, which also celebrates fifty years in 2008, also plays, underlining VW's commitment to the young. Also represented are the English Chamber Orchestra, the BBC Chorus, Simon Keenleyside, Joan Rodgers, Jordi Savall, the great folk singer Martin Carthy and his daughter Liza who perform the folk songs that VW heard (and as he probably heard them) on his walking tours with Gustav Holst in 1903-4, and not least Gloucester Cathedral Choir with the hymns and *The Mass*. There are also recordings from the Dorking and Leith Hill Music Festivals, which VW conducted for over fifty years. And then there are the witnesses who knew and worked with him – Roy Douglas (now over 100 years old), Michael Kennedy, David Willcocks, Lady Barbirolli, Lord Armstrong, and of course Ursula Vaughan Williams herself.

My intention is to awaken the television audience to a central figure in our musical heritage who did more for us all than *Lark Ascending* and *Greensleeves*, who not only deserves his place among the greatest of British composers, but who deserves our respect and admiration as a man of phenomenal courage and nobility.

Tony Palmer's film, *O Thou Transcendent*, will be shown over several weeks on the UK's Channel Five later this year. The premiere showing will take place at the Barbican Cinema, London, and there will be a DVD of the complete film available in time for Christmas 2007.

New signing! Mack Wilberg joins OUP

Mack Wilberg already has sixty-three works published by OUP, and we're delighted to announce his signing as an Oxford house composer.

Mack Wilberg is the Associate Music Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Music Director of the Temple Square Chorale. His arrangements and compositions, with their grandeur, energy, and melodic charm, inspire performers and audiences everywhere. Whether it's a rousing setting of a popular folk tune, a beautifully orchestrated hymn, or a gentle Christmas carol, his music touches the soul.



Recent and popular works include:

Be still, my soul 978-0-19-386879-3
for SATB and orchestra (3.1.ca.2.2-2.0.0.0-hp.str) or organ

Come, ye thankful people, come 978-0-19-385299-0
for SATB and orchestra (2.2.2.2-4.3.3.1-timp.2perc-org-str) or organ

Peace like a river 978-0-19-386814-4
for SATB and orchestra (2.2.2.2-4.3.3.1-hp-str) or organ

Shenandoah 978-0-19-386820-5
for SATB and orchestra (2(3+picc).2.2.2-4.0.3.1-hp-str) or piano
(four hands)

Mack Wilberg also works as pianist, clinician, composer, arranger, and guest conductor throughout the United States and abroad, and in 2007 will be appearing as a guest presenter at the Annual Convention of the Association of British Choral Directors.

The ABCD Convention 'Inspiring Voices' is held this year in Chester. Mack's sessions will introduce choral directors from across the UK to US choral music from a range of traditions: Mack and the ABCD are looking forward to exploring some trans-Atlantic differences and similarities! Visit <http://www.abcd.org.uk/cnvn2007.htm> for full details.

Mack enjoys a fantastic reputation in the States for the quality of his music, already performed and recorded by artists including Renée Fleming, Frederica von Stade, Bryn Terfel, The King's Singers, Audra McDonald, and narrators Walter Cronkite and Claire Bloom. He enjoys a special artistic

partnership with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, for whom much of his music is written. The choir's Music Director, Craig Jessop writes:

'Mack Wilberg has emerged as one of the pre-eminent composers and arrangers of choral music in the United States today. His sublime arrangements and compositions for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square, as well as other ensembles, are now being performed by choirs and orchestras around the world to great acclaim. Truly he has become a national treasure.'

If you would like to find out more about Mack Wilberg's music, or would like to request perusal scores or a copy of his full catalogue, please contact Cathy Markall, Choral Promotion Specialist, or visit www.oup.com/uk/mackwilberg.

John Rutter is awarded a CBE



Oxford warmly congratulates John on his CBE, announced in the 2007 New Year's Honours List, and awarded in recognition of his outstanding services to music as composer, conductor, and producer.

The CBE bears testament to all that John has done for new music, and the unique way that his music has touched generations of performers and listeners. Coinciding with the award, we are re-issuing John's major choral works this year with bright new covers. In the last issue of OMN we brought news of the new Te Deum setting for Winchester Cathedral, which is now the first title in his special new cover design.



Surprisingly, alongside his major choral works, there are some superbly crafted gems from the hundreds of Rutter titles in OUP's catalogue which remain largely undiscovered. We'd like to take this opportunity to (re-)introduce OMN readers to some of these rarely performed works, among the most original choral works of a generation.

Two unaccompanied motets

Hymn to the Creator of Light (1993)

978-0-19-350474-5

6 minutes/for double SATB choir unaccompanied

Written in honour of Howells, the piece is full of mystical intensity, and with its iridescent chromatic harmonies reminiscent of Howells's own music. After a lively central section, the finale is ingeniously written and incorporates both the chorale melody which features throughout the piece and the opening motif.

'This is visionary music indeed.'
Church Music Quarterly

'Rutter's exquisite Hymn to the Creator of Light . . . looks back to William Harris's *Faire is the Heaven* . . . and to Herbert Howells.'

Evening Standard

Come down, O love divine (1998)

978-0-19-350491-2

7 minutes/for double SATB choir unaccompanied

This powerful and moving setting for unaccompanied double choir is densely scored with rich chromaticism and exciting textural contrasts.

'Come down, O Love divine, a lyrical, ardent work which at times suggests Britten, is a very impressive achievement indeed.'

International Record Review

Two works with organ

Veni Sancte Spiritus (1998)

Also available in *Cantica Nova*

978-0-19-335536-1

7 minutes/For mixed choir, with organ

Written for Stephen Cleobury and the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, this is music of the utmost intensity and brilliance, an unusual and striking setting of the Pentecost (or Golden) Sequence.

Arise, shine (1999)

978-0-19-350525-4

3 minutes/For double choir and organ

Arise, shine, commissioned by Westminster Cathedral for an Advent service, is a glorious and luminescent setting of verses from Isaiah 60. Rutter captures perfectly the essence of the text, the music moving through bold determination to quiet reflection before coming to a rousing conclusion.

'Anthems *Arise, shine* [and *Come down, O Love divine*] show a more complex Rutter, whose harmonic style and concept of textual development takes us into richer and far more

intellectually/musically challenging territory than we're used to.'

DAVID VERNIER, *Classics Today*

Recordings

You can hear fine performances of these works on the following discs, amongst others (not available from OUP):

Gloria and other sacred music

Come down, O love divine

Polyphony/Stephen Layton
Hyperion 67259

Mass of the Children and other sacred music

The Cambridge Singers/John Rutter

Come down, O love divine

COLCD 129

Gloria: The sacred music of John Rutter

Arise, shine; Hymn to the Creator of Light

CD CSCD 515

Requiem and other sacred music

Arise, shine; Come down, O love divine;

The Choir of Clare College, Cambridge
Naxos 8557130

Rutter Requiem

Hymn to the Creator of Light;

Veni Sancte Spiritus

The Choir of King's College, Cambridge

Please contact us for further information and to obtain perusal scores of any of these works.

WNO performs Walton's epic *Belshazzar's Feast*



Welsh National Opera recently staged several performances of Walton's epic choral work *Belshazzar's Feast*.

Joining WNO was a 120-strong community choir recruited from across South Wales and Birmingham. The performances took place during May and June in Cardiff and Birmingham, and were the highlight of a special programme of summer events in the two cities. WNO's acclaimed Music Director Carlo Rizzi conducted, and the guest soloist was Robert Hayward,

who sang the title role in the Company's award-winning production of *Mazepa* in 2006.

Belshazzar's Feast is a spectacular piece of music, referencing a vast array of different sources, including jazz and brass bands. The story is taken from the Book of Daniel and centres on Belshazzar, the Babylonian King, who was an oppressor of the Jews living in exile in his country. At a magnificent feast, Belshazzar commits sacrilege by using the Jews' sacred vessels to praise the heathen gods. A disembodied hand appears on the wall of the feasting chamber and writes a curse. That night, Belshazzar is killed, his kingdom falls, and the Jews regain their freedom.

'We created WNO's new summer season to showcase the world-class talents of the Orchestra and Chorus of WNO in Birmingham Hippodrome

and our new home, Wales Millennium Centre,' explains WNO Music Director Carlo Rizzi. 'I am proud to welcome the participation of local people from Cardiff—and from our second home in Birmingham—in the community choir for our performances of *Belshazzar's Feast*.'

Since its premiere in 1931 *Belshazzar's Feast* has come to be regarded as one of the finest choral works of the twentieth century, with one critic, writing in *The Times*, calling it 'the biggest knees-up known to the English choral tradition'. Perusal scores of this epic work can be obtained free of charge from the Music Hire Library, and recordings are widely available to buy from any good record store. Various recordings of *Belshazzar's Feast* can also be downloaded from iTunes (www.itunes.com).

News in brief

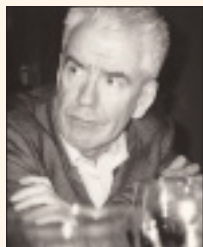
- Look out for *Man I Sing*, a new CD of choral works by Bob Chilcott performed by the BBC Singers on the Signum label. Excerpts from the disc were played on Radio 3's *The Choir* in March, when Bob met Aled Jones for a programme devoted to his music. Full details of the new release can be found on page 12.
- Gabriel Jackson has been commissioned by the Musicians Benevolent Fund to write an anthem for the Festival of St Cecilia Service in November 2007. His anthem will be performed in Westminster Abbey by combined choirs of the Abbey,

Westminster Cathedral, and St Paul's Cathedral. More about this project in the next issue of OMN.

- A new sampler of upper-voice contemporary repertoire is now available, including music by Bullard, Chilcott, Daley, McDowall, and others. See page 12 for details of how to obtain your copy.
- The BBC National Orchestra of Wales's new state-of-the-art recording space and performance hall at the Wales Millennium Centre will be named BBC Hoddinott Hall. Regarded as one of the most

significant composers of his generation, Alun Hoddinott's bond with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales has been life-long. They have premiered and recorded many of his major works and taken his music to audiences throughout the UK and overseas. In 2004, the Orchestra undertook a year-long season of Hoddinott's work to celebrate the composer's 75th birthday.

Gerald Barry



Orchestras and ensembles across the world are discovering Gerald Barry's vibrant and electrifying music. From performances in his native Ireland, to the UK, Europe, United States, and beyond, he continues to be performed by some of the world's leading musicians.

The London Sinfonietta, conducted by Richard Baker, recently gave a 'composer portrait' concert of Gerald's works, which included the UK premiere of his dazzling piece for piano and ensemble, *Lisbon*. Richard Baker writes:

'I first encountered Gerald Barry's music as a student via the excellent Nua Nós recordings, and it made a profound impression. Here was a composer who could conjure strangeness from the most familiar musical objects, and who had a unique gift for melody. My next

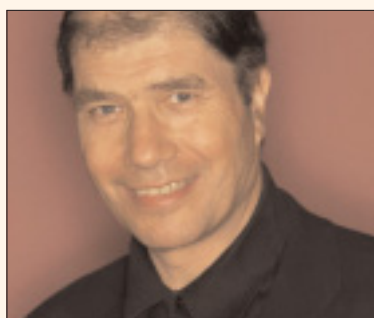
encounter was through the Channel 4 televised production of *The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit*, which I think I watched with my mouth open in astonishment for its entire 55 minutes. The work's juxtaposition of insane, hard-driving intensity, with moments of spare, tender beauty completely captivated me, and it was the realization of a dream to be invited to assist Thomas Adès on the live premiere production in 2002 for Almeida Opera, and to conduct the last night of the run.

'The particular joy of performing Gerald's music is that its difficulties are very satisfying to master. The individual parts make extraordinary demands on instrumentalists and yet the reaction of players is invariably one of excitement and delight, because they appreciate that the difficulties are not the result of incompetence or miscalculation, but rather a profound understanding of instrumental virtuosity. During rehearsal, the sense of exhilaration which spreads through the ensemble as, for instance, a particularly vertiginous tutti comes into focus, or everyone manages to negotiate a sudden tempo change absolutely together, is palpable. As a conductor, I

enjoy the very special kind of concentration that the music requires in performance, informed by the knowledge that to make the slightest mistake would be completely catastrophic.

'But perhaps the greatest pleasure has been the opportunity to rehearse and record pieces with Gerald present, because there can be few composers who have such a keen sense of how their music should sound in performance. Because of the unique way in which Gerald composes—in which material is shaped and placed according to sensation rather than predetermined schemes—it is fascinating to work closely with him in rehearsal, and the imagery and language he uses to describe the effect he wants can be as surprising and bizarre as the music itself. I have joked with Gerald that his principal directions are usually "faster" and "louder", and indeed, scrupulous attention to metronome markings and dynamics is an absolute prerequisite. But mere accuracy is just the starting point: ultimately, performing this music feels no different from approaching Schubert or Beethoven, or anything from the classical repertoire.'

Michael Berkeley in 2008



2008 will see the sixtieth birthday of Michael Berkeley. An Oxford house composer since the late 1970s, Michael has written a particularly wide variety of works, encompassing song cycles, chamber works, concertos, opera, and much more besides. He is currently Associate Composer with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and is busy writing his third opera, for Music Theatre Wales, which will be premiered and taken on tour around the UK in 2008.

Forthcoming highlights for Michael include performances at the Oxford Contemporary Music Festival, where he is featured composer; at the Presteigne Festival, for which he has been commissioned to write a work for oboe and harp; and performances around the UK, Europe, and in the US. Many of his works have been recorded, notably in the 'father and son' series (see page 13 for more details). A full catalogue of Michael Berkeley's works is available on request from the Music Promotion Department.

Livingmusic

The free CD sampler that accompanies Oxford's ground-breaking new scheme for amateur orchestras, Living Music, is now available.

Living Music aims to encourage the performance, by non-professional orchestras, of recent works written by Oxford's house composers. The scheme features fourteen outstanding works composed within the last thirty years, which have all been chosen with non-professional orchestras in mind. They vary in difficulty and

duration, and the chosen works are all exciting to play and rewarding to listen to.

Any UK-based non-professional orchestra who programmes one or more of these works will benefit from substantially reduced hire fees, and 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.)

Contact Will Harriss, Promotion Manager, for your **free** CD sampler, by telephoning +44 (0)1865 355 020, or e-mail repertoire.promotion.uk@oup.com.

For more information on Living Music please visit the scheme's website, at www.oup.com/uk/livingmusic.

Musical chairs

OUP is delighted to announce the appointment of **Naomi Burgoyne** (replacing Chloe Brookes) as our new Promotion Assistant in the UK, and **Phillip Cheah** (replacing Suzanne Ford) as the new Assistant Manager, Choral and Performance Promotion, in the US.

Naomi graduated in Music from the University of Birmingham in 2005, and plays the cello, piano, and saxophone. She joins OUP from the Royal Academy of Music, where she was Assistant to the Instrument Custodian.

Phillip holds degrees from Indiana University in piano and choral conducting. In addition to his work with OUP, he is also a staff singer with the Bach Choir at Holy Trinity Lutheran and teaches music at Manhattan School of Music and Barnard College.

Coinciding with these appointments, OUP has set up a second UK promotion office, based in the Music Department in Oxford. Will Harriss, Promotion Manager, has relocated to

this new office, which is also staffed by Naomi Burgoyne, and Cathy Markall, Choral Promotion Specialist.

David Wordsworth, Head of Music Promotion, remains in the London office, and now oversees the promotion of OUP's renowned list of house composers worldwide.

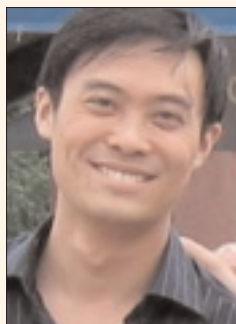
[Key contact details for OUP's UK and US Music Promotion offices are given on the back page of this issue.](#)



DAVID WORDSWORTH



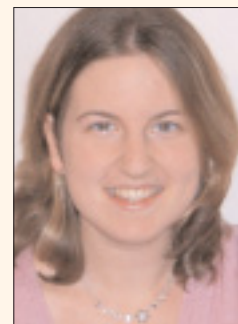
WILL HARRISS



PHILLIP CHEAH



NAOMI BURGOYNE



CATHY MARKALL

Selected reviews

Gerald Barry

The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit

Los Angeles, November 2006

'There is a fierceness in Gerald Barry's *Triumph of Beauty and Deceit* that hammers words and music into a single onward surge of energy. The impact of the music, virtually non-stop, could easily be shared wherever you were in that vibrant hall.'

ALAN RICH, *LA Weekly*

'Part mad Stravinsky, part mad Purcell, part mad Handel, Gerald Barry's *The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit* is a zany, outlandish, and, of course, thoroughly batty 55-minute Irish opera. It was also a triumph of Pleasure, Truth, and Time (its three other characters) in its American premiere at the Walt Disney Concert Hall.'

'Though barely known in America, Barry happens to be one of Ireland's most important composers. His latest opera, which premiered at English National Opera last year, was *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*, based upon the Rainer Werner Fassbinder film. *Beauty and Deceit* was a commission for television (British television, it goes almost without saying). It turns Handel's oratorio *The Triumph and Truth* on its head.

'It should be done again. Next, *Petra von Kant* needs to be seen in this town obsessed with mingling opera with film.'

MARK SWED, *Los Angeles Times*

Michael Finnis

'Finnis is a recent discovery for me; I picked his choral disc *Maldon* as one of my favourites last year, and I've been taking in his monumental piano cycle *The History of Photography in Sound*, whose movements include *My Parents' Generation Thought War Meant Something* and *Seventeen Immortal Homosexual Poets*. The music completely defies categorization, ranging from unadorned

folkish tonality to monstrous polyrhythmic dissonance. Some mad conviction or conspiratorial world-view (or simply superb technique) holds the disparate pieces together. It would be something to hear the cycle in NYC.'

ALEX ROSS, *New York Times*

Joseph Phibbs

Tenebrae

'The Bach Choir had been touched by a legacy from a former member, Mary Draper, and devoted most of it to a commission for a choral piece, *Tenebrae*, from Joseph Phibbs. 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. Further, the composer had visited the main choir during their preparations, and the soloist had also been at that meeting. Three out of the four stimulating poems he chose come from the 17th century and deal with classically 'metaphysical' matters; three are brief movements with Latin Mass text, given only to the off-stage performers. The intention is that the work's title should convey contrast and opposites, such as movement between turbulence and calm, and darkness to light; the two choirs join forces only for the last pages.

'Merely a look at the total text attracts interest, and Phibbs has added a thrilling composer's dimension. The choir found the preparations challenging ('chords out of nothing, and rapid delivery of dissonances') but seem really to have looked forward to the rehearsals from the outset. Lesley-Jane Rogers was outstanding in the stratospheric soprano role, sometimes making a ninth vocal line, above the divided choir parts. The work deserves more performances, and quickly...'

JOHN WESTCOMBE, *St Albans Observer*

'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's *Tenebrae*. Although only 15 minutes long, the work, which was commissioned by the St Albans Bach Choir in memory of former member Mary Draper, was big in many other aspects. It used not only the Bach Choir and orchestra but also an off-stage choir made up of the Abbey Singers with the Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir and soprano soloist Lesley-Jane Rogers.'

'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".

The piece was thoroughly exciting. Although it was essentially a modern work, it was not at all difficult to listen to and it was clear that the choir thoroughly enjoyed singing it...'

JOHN MANNING, *Hertfordshire Advertiser*

CD releases and reviews

Berkeley

The Berkeley Edition, Vol. 6

*Concerto for Orchestra 'Seascapes';
Gregorian Variations*
CHAN10364



'The highlight of the disc for me is Michael Berkeley's *Concerto for Orchestra: 'Seascapes'*, written for the Proms in 2005, dedicated to conductor Richard Hickox, and darkly overshadowed by the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004, when Berkeley heard the grim news that a friend was amongst the victims. The slow movement is a threnody for solo trumpet, while the outer movements have a desperate energy and vivid detail that submerges the listener in startling colours and conflicting emotions. Performance and recording are superb, with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales playing as though their lives are at stake in this turbulent seascape. If the Berkeley Edition has to end here, at least it's on a real high.'

ANDREW MCGREGOR,
BBC Radio 3 'CD review'

Butler

American Rounds

American Rounds; Siward's River Song; Suzanne's River Song; Nathaniel's Mobile; Funérailles; Two Scarlatti Sonatas (arr. Butler); Sequenza Notturna; Walden Snow
The Schubert Ensemble / William Howard, piano
NMC D120



William Howard and the Schubert Ensemble in Martin Butler's piano quintet *American Rounds*, and other chamber music, plus *Funerailles* – Butler's major new work for solo piano – and arrangements of two Scarlatti sonatas.

Chilcott

Man I Sing: Choral Music by Bob Chilcott

Advent Antiphons; And every stone shall cry; 'Beach' from Songs for Seven Storeys; The Making of the Drum; The Modern Man I Sing; Pange Lingua; My Prayer; The Shepherd's Carol; Simple Pictures of Tomorrow; Weather Report
BBC Singers/Bob Chilcott with Simone Rebello (percussion)/Paul Silverthorne (viola)
Signum Forthcoming



Arrangements for The Sixteen: Borodin Polovtsian Dance No. 1; Tallis Canon; Pachelbel Canon (Rosa Mystica); Anchieta Con amores, la mi madre
Decca Forthcoming

Landscape and Time

Even such is time
King's Singers/Andrew Swait (treble)
Signum SIGCD090

Rawsthorne

String Quartets No. 1 'Theme and variations'; No. 2; No. 3; Theme and Variations for two violins

Maggini Quartet
Naxos 8.570136



'If you admire Rawsthorne, then I imagine this disc will be an automatic purchase. I hope others may be tempted to explore this music too, especially as it's so well played and recorded here.'

NIGEL SIMEONE,
International Record Review

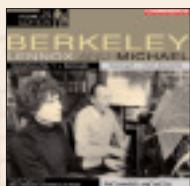
Zhou Long

Seascapes

The Deep, Deep Sea
Singapore Symphony Orchestra/Sharon Beazley (flute)/Lan Shui (conductor)
BIS-SACD-1447

LSO/Colin Davis
LSO Live LSO0076

The Berkeley Edition



Chandos's innovatory Berkeley Edition, launched in 2002, is now regarded as one of the UK's most important recording projects of recent years, providing a valuable sound document of the music of father and son Sir Lennox and Michael Berkeley.

The series comprises six volumes of CDs, and includes a number of premiere recordings. Many of Michael's key works are represented, including his gripping and dramatic *Concerto for Orchestra*, commissioned by the BBC for their 2005

'This superbly conceived and executed series has been a landmark event: a model of its kind for British music.'

INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW

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Volume 2: Concerto for Oboe; Secret Garden

Volume 3: The Garden of Earthly Delights; Cello Concerto

Volume 4: Concerto for Organ; Concerto for Viola

Volume 5: Gethsemane Fragment; Tristessa

Volume 6: Concerto for Orchestra 'Seascapes'; Gregorian Variations

OUP Promotional CDs available on request

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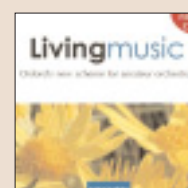
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New titles

Please note: **OCR** denotes a title that is published as part of the Oxford Contemporary Repertoire series, and should be ordered direct from the specialist supplier Goodmusic Publishing: telephone +44 (0)1684 773 883, or e-mail sales@goodmusicpublishing.co.uk (see page 3).

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Berkeley

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*See page 12 for details of new CD releases which feature the above pieces, plus a selection of other recently published works by Bob Chilcott.

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