

John Gardner

list of selected works

Chamber/Instrumental

Theme and Variations for Brass Quartet, Op.7 (1951) **9'** **OUP**

[2 Trumpets, Horn & Trombone](#)

First Performance: Philip Jones Brass Quartet, BBC 22nd April 1952

I wrote this piece in early 1951 for Philip Jones, then first trumpeter at the Royal Opera House, who had formed what was, perhaps, Britain's first professional brass quartet with three other members of the orchestra. At that time the crying need for such ensembles was repertoire; and my piece was certainly one of the first, if not THE first work written for such a combination by a British composer.

Since then many better and more considerable works have emerged - I could, with the experience I've had since then, do better myself now; yet I've still a soft spot for this little piece. It's happy, varied in texture, and quite fun to play. There are seven variations in different tempos and forms, and a final fugue, all of them based on the unaccompanied melody played at the outset by the trombone. (John Gardner)

Five Hymn Tune Preludes, Op.44 (1959) **Novello**

[Organ](#)

First Performance: John Birch, St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, 15th October 1959

- 1 *Old Hundredth*
- 2 *Dundee*
- 3 *Darwall's 148th*
- 4 *Down Ampney*
- 5 *Veni Creator Spiritus*

Little Suite in C, Op.60 (1964) **7'30"** **OUP (Allegro)**

[Recorder \(or Flute\) and Piano](#)

First Performance: Carl Dolmetsch & Joseph Saxby, Wigmore Hall, 12th February 1964

- 1 *Overture*
- 2 *Scherzo*
- 3 *Saraband*
- 4 *Finale*

Partita for Solo Cello, Op.98

(1968) 15'

OUP (Allegro)

[Solo Cello](#)

First Performance: George Isaac, Eglwys Dewi Sant, Cardiff, 6th March 1969

Apart from one negligible dance-number composed for the 1959 production of *All's Well at Stratford*, this Partita is the first work I've written for solo stringed instrument. Notoriously one of the most difficult tests a composer can undergo, I would not have dared essay it had I not been commissioned expressly to do so by the Cardiff Festival of 20th Century Music.

The word 'partita' came, in the seventeenth century, to mean 'suite': a series of pieces, mostly in dance-forms, arranged in a pleasing order of varied tempi and moods. My gavotte, like Massenet's in *Manon*, begins on the first beat of the bar, and may, therefore, scan slightly differently from its Baroque models, whose middle sections, or trios, were often, as mine is, in the style of a musette (French for bagpipe and composed upon a drone). The coranto became later the corrente. I use the former word because the cretic meter of my dance reminds me of 16th rather than 17th century models. My sarabanda attenuates the traditional scansion of the dance somewhat. No matter. It won't ever be danced to. As for the rondo, the word here has formal rather than choreographic implications, and means merely a sectional piece with recurrent tunes.

In one way, so far as my own output is concerned, this Partita is unprecedented. It was completed on Christmas Day, an occasion devoted by civilised people to eating, drinking, playing with the children, opening presents, even going to church; certainly never before, in my case, to the writing of music. Nevertheless, I don't think anyone will detect a seasonal quality in the work. It might just as well have been written in midsummer, or at either of the equinoxes. (John Gardner)

Sonata Secolare, Op.117

(1973) 17'

MS

[2 Tpts, Hrn, Tbn, Tuba & Organ](#)

First Performance: Simon Lindley & Philip Jones Brass Quintet, St Alban's Abbey, 25th June 1973

This piece was commissioned for the Seventh International Organ Festival and first performed in St. Alban's Cathedral on 25th June, 1973 by Simon Lindley and the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. Originally it had four movements, but later I dropped the third movement.

This piece is neither churchy enough to be a sonata da chiesa, nor roomy enough to be a sonata da camera. I have called it therefore *Sonata Secolare*, which means secular (but not Profane) sonata. The work originally had four movements but has been reduced to three: *allegro con brio*, *largo*, and *vivace, ma non troppo presto*. (John Gardner)

Sonata Da Chiesa Sopra Una Thema di Claudio Montiverdi, Op.136

(1976) 15'

OUP

[2 Trumpets and Organ](#)

First Performance: John Wilbraham, Michael Laird, John Birch, Rotterdam, 1976

This work was written in its original version for John Wilbraham, Michael Laird and John Birch (organ). It was given its first performance in Rotterdam in 1976, subsequently revised, and performed in the new version in Chichester Cathedral in 1977. Using the simple five-note ascending and descending motif from Montiverdi's "l'Orfeo", Gardner creates a four-movement work, full of vitality and musical interest with a sense of homage to Baroque forms and techniques. Trumpet and organ idioms are skillfully combined with much imitation and ingenious manipulation of the thematic material.

English Dance Suite, Op.139

(1977) 23'

OUP (hire)

picc.2fl.2ob.Ebcl.3Bbcl.Ebacl.bcl.Ebcbcl.2asax.tsax.bsax.2bn-hn.3tpt.3corn.3tbn. euph.tba-timp.3-5perc-cb□

First Performance: Band of the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, cond. Lt Col T E Sharpe, , Royal Albert Hall, London, 7th June 1977

- 1 *Chacony upon a golden theme*
- 2 *Alman*
- 3 *Hornpipe*
- 4 *Corranto*
- 5 *Volta*
- 6 *Pavan*
- 7 *Reel*

Written for the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, this beautiful work was all but forgotten after its first performance at the Royal Albert Hall in 1977. The second performance, by the Royal Northern College of Music Wind Orchestra, conducted by Clark Rundell in June 1992 restored two of the seven movements which had been cut from the first performance. Yet this is a superbly crafted work in a traditional - but completely non-derivative - style. Though the first movement clearly looks back to the Chaconne of Holst's Eb suite, the remainder of the work uses dance styles as opposed to folk tunes. We hear no marches composed of folk songs but rather Renaissance and Maritime dances. Gardner's orchestration is expert, but his real genius lies in the instruments he leaves out. The welcome sound of Harmoniemuik in the almost Mozartian Courante is every bit as striking as the dynamic Volta for the brass alone.

Flourish for a Wedding, Op.162

(1983) 3'

MS

2 Tpts, Horn, 2 Tbns, Tuba & Organ

First Performance: Copenhagen, January 1984 at the wedding of Michael Schoenwandt and Suzanne Lange

Quartet for Saxes, Op.168

(1985) 9'

MS

SATB sax

First Performance: The Fairer Sax, Purcell Room, 17th December 1985

This piece was written for The Fairer Sax in November 1985, for their South Bank debut at the Purcell Room. "The saxophone is unlike any other wind instrument: neither wood nor brass, yet mixing with both in ensembles. It is so powerful that it can pair with a trumpet (think of the Horace Silver Quintet), so tender that it can match a bassoon or clarinet. These qualities, together with the fact that, of all the instruments it is the one most capable of ""speech"", made me give it a starring role in both my opera "The Visitors" and in my Mass in D. Never before, however, have I written a piece for saxes alone, except for one tasteless escapade during the war when I dished up "The Londonderry Air" for a septet. The result, which sounded like a chorus of sentimental eunuchs, is best forgotten." This work is charmingly simple in its conception. Comprising three short movements it flows from one mood to another with easy elegance; exploiting but not extending the range of each instrument. The second movement opens with a hauntingly beautiful alto solo and grows into the most powerful and substantial of the three. The outer movements are lively and effective with some dramatic moments, but the conclusion is disarmingly understated. (John Gardner)

Sonata No 2 for oboe and piano, Op.172

(1986) 16'

OUP (Allegro)

Oboe and Piano

First Performance: George Caird & Roger Vignoles, BBC Radio 3 1987

John Gardner's Oboe Sonata No.2 was commissioned by and dedicated to George Caird, who first performed it on Radio 3 in 1987. Since then it has become an acknowledged classic of the modern oboe repertoire, appearing frequently in the programmes of Nicholas Daniel and Julius Drake.

The piece is in four movements. The second makes reference to phrases from Thomas Bidgood's military march Sons of the Brave – a favourite piece of Gardner's from his own bandmastering days – whilst chord progressions used at the end of the third movement pay tribute to one of Bill Evans's Alone tracks which haunted Gardner while composing the sonata in 1986.

- String Quartet No. 3, Op.176** (1987) 22' MS
- [String Quartet](#)
- First Performance: Bochmann Quartet, Bootham School, York, 15th October 1987
- 1 *Allegro Molto*
 - 2 *Presto Possible, leading to*
 - 3 *Adagio Molto*
 - 4 *Tempo di Menuetto*
 - 5 *Allegro Trionfale*
- Five Dances for organ, Op.179** (1988) 17' MS
- [Organ Solo](#)
- First Performance: Catherine Ennis, Holy Trinity Church, Reading, 4th June 1988
- 1 *Lavolta*
 - 2 *Pavin*
 - 3 *Jig*
 - 4 *Lament*
 - 5 *Fling*
- Ecossaises, Op.205** (1992) 4'30" MS
- [Oboe, clarinet and piano](#)
- First Performance: Daniel Trio, Tonbridge, Kent, 6th February 1993
- "Ecossais"" is the French for Scottish and, as an adjective with a feminine termination, implied on the continent the unspoken noun ""Danse"" and, for composers like Mozart, Weber, Beethoven and Schubert, a fast galumphing hop in 2/4 time. As my piece has several galumphing dance-tunes in that metre, I thought ""Ecossaises"" an apt title. (John Gardner)
- Sextet for piano and wind instruments, Op.223** (1995) 17' MS
- [Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, Piano](#)
- First Performance: Hamline University, St Paul, Minnesota, 20th October 1996
- Easter fantasy for Organ and Brass Quartet, Op.232** (1997) 6'30" Hinshaw
- [Organ, 2 Tpts, 2 Tbns](#)
- First Performance: Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis, 30th March 1997
- Intrada and Finale for Organ, Op.241** (2000) 13'30" MS
- [Organ](#)
- First Performance: Catherine Ennis, 28th June 2000 BMA annual meeting
- 1 *Intrada*
 - 2 *Finale*
- Commissioned by the British Medical Association for its Annual General Meeting on 28th June 2000

Choral

The Turning Year, Op.19

(1953) 10'

MS

SATB unaccompanied

First Performance: conducted by John Eliot Gardiner, Wigmore Hall, 4th July 1966

- 1 *Spring* MS
SATB unaccompanied
- 2 *Summer* MS
SATB unaccompanied
- 3 *Autumn* MS
SATB unaccompanied
- 4 *Winter* MS
SATB unaccompanied

In *The Turning Year, Op.19*, written on holiday in Budva, Montenegro in 1953, we hear the same vivid response to poetry as in John Gardner's later choral pieces, but with a complexity of texture and a mercurial inventiveness to match the images in the poems- The dreamy second section, *Summer*, quotes the 13th century round *Sumer is icumen in* in all the voices, and finally in the tenor. Christopher Scaife (1900-1988) was an Oxford intellectual; a poet, author, actor, singer, and education adviser to the government of Iraq, who lived in retirement near Arezzo in Italy. The four seasonal songs are dedicated in turn to the composer's future wife Jane, to Christopher Scaife himself, and Rolf and Marabel Gardiner. Rolf Gardiner, father of the conductor John Eliot Gardiner, led the Springhead movement in rural regeneration and the arts on the Dorset estate adjoining that of his uncle, the composer Balfour Gardiner, between the wars.

Anthony Cairns

The work was first performed at the Wigmore Hall on 4th July 1966 by a choir conducted by John Eliot Gardiner.

Christopher Scaife (1900-1988) was a true Renaissance man in modern times. Poet and author, composer, thespian (acclaimed for his work with Tony Guthrie) and singer (a great admirer of Duparc), he was an Oxford educated intellectual and leader. Early on he headed the Oxford Union, and later became English Department chair at Fuad Al-awal University and the American University in Beirut, and education adviser to the Iraq government. He retired to a small farm near Arezzo, along the ancient Via Sette Ponti (Road of Seven Bridges), where he welcomed visitors of many nationalities interested in the life of the mind.

Taken from the website <http://www.msacd.com/1173/1173.html>

Seven Songs, Op.36

(1956) 18'

OUP (Banks)

mixed chorus and piano duet or small orchestra: 1(+picc).1.1.1-hn-1perc-str

First Performance: Birmingham University Special Choir, Goldsborough Orchestra, John Gardner, Barber Institute, Birmingham, 6th February 1957

- 1 *Hark, hark! the lark*
- 2 *Crabbed Age and Youth*
- 3 *Gather ye rosebuds while ye may*
- 4 *Fear no more the heat o' the sun*
- 5 *Under the greenwood tree*
- 6 *It is not growing like a tree*
- 7 *How happy is he born and taught*

These songs were composed partly in the summer of 1955, partly in that of 1956. In both instances time spent on them was more like play than work, coming as it did between spells of concentration on longer and more complicated pieces, and I doubt if they would ever have progressed beyond the stage of incipience had not Professor Anthony Lewis suggested performing a composition of mine at the Barber Institute in 1957, which generous proposal spurred me on to complete them.

Each of the poems I have used has been set a hundred times before by composers as diverse as Arne, Benjamin Cooke, Finzi, Constant Lambert, Henry Lawes, Moeran and Schubert. It was in fact my intention to attain maximal comprehensibility partly through the use of widely known and much loved texts, it being a truism that no musical setting of words whose meaning is in any way obscure can itself be fully understood, however strong or beautiful it may be.

In no way can these songs be said to form a Cantata or even a Cycle. Just as they have no underlying literary theme so are they without a recurrent musical motive. As a reader moves from one page to another of an anthology so do my settings hang tenuously together, linked only by my affections and a desire for a pleasing variety of mood and key. (John Gardner)

[Baritone, SATB chorus, 2.2.2.2.-4.2.3.1-timp.perc.pno\(cel\).hp.stg](#)

First Performance: Dorset Guild of Singers, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Charles Groves, Winter Gardens, Bournemouth, 12th March 1959

- 1 *The White Horse*
- 2 *The Northmen*
- 3 *The Vision of the King*
- 4 *The Gathering of the Chiefs*
- 5 *The Harp of Alfred*
- 6 *The Battle of Ethandune*
- 7 *The Baptism of Guthrum*
- 8 *The Scouring of the Horse*

Chesterton wrote his Ballad in 1911. It is a long narrative poem of over five hundred verses and, in order to set it as a choral cantata lasting about three-quarters of an hour, I have had to reduce these to less than a hundred. Not an easy task, and I would be the first to admit that the selection might have been more aptly made.

My aim was neither to impair the story essentially nor to reduce the ubiquitous ethical slant of Chesterton to the status of a mere occasional piece of colouring. He tells the story of King Alfred and the Danes against the background of the Uffington White Horse, which he depicts as a kind of Dorian Gray portrait of England's morale, the weeds upon its white face being directly proportionate to our misdeeds and misbeliefs as a nation.

Outstandingly typical of his attitude is his description of the Danes as wholesome pagans ('Great, beautiful half-witted men'), infinitely preferable as invaders to the mean, snivelling verbose intellectuals who were to assail us in later centuries. Against these the aged Alfred points a prophetic accusative finger: "They shall come mild as monkish clerks, With many a scroll and pen; And backward shall ye turn and gaze, Desiring one of Alfred's days, When pagans still were men."

The poem is in the form of a Dedication and eight Books, of which I have used only five, divided into eight musical numbers, structurally separate but sharing a certain amount of material.

The Dedication is omitted entirely, and Book Two (The Gathering of the Chiefs) reduced to a mere account of Alfred's setting out 'across the windy wastes' to round up his chiefs.

In Book Three (The Harp of Alfred) the lively exchange of minstrelsy between the incognito Alfred and the Danish chiefs has been cut down to one heartfelt burst of song from Alfred, in which he assures the superior Guthrum that his end is near and that Christianity will triumph.

Book Four, which tells of the Cakes episode and of the massing of the English armies against the Danes, is left out entirely, if regretfully, and I have taken from the three books devoted by Chesterton to the Battle of Ethandune some verses from the end of the third of these books only, which tell of the turning of the tide of battle beneath the vision of Mary' on dreadful cherubs borne " of the surrender of Guthrum, and of his subsequent Conversion and Baptism.

Book Eight (The Scouring of the Horse) was my greatest problem. In a cantata of moderate length it would have been impossible to include the further battles which led to Alfred's entry into London - Chesterton's final line. So I chose some verses in which the old king enjoins Englishmen to keep the White Horse white, and warns us of our true enemies, the intellectuals who come armed with pens rather than swords.

I decided to end the cantata on a note of pessimism, to which Chesterton himself might have taken exception, with the unforgettable verse which describes the perpetual defacement of the White Horse by weeds. To do this seemed to me to strengthen the ethical in pact of the poem, and it enabled me musically to link my end with my beginning. I am aware, however, that I may be accused of taking a liberty in darkening the final effect of the Ballad.

The musical material of the work pretends to originality with one exception: the use I have made throughout of the Ave Maria canon of Adam Gumpelzhaimer, itself based upon the plainsong hymn. It is fitting that this should occur in a work written by me for a Dorset choir, for it was in that county that, twenty-five years ago, I first met and fell in love with the canons of this sixteenth-century master. (John Gardner)

Herrick Cantata, Op.49

(1961) 30'

E C Schirmer

[Tenor Solo, Choir, 2.2.2.2.-4.2.1.0-timp.perc.hp.stg](#)

First Performance: Birmingham City Choir and Symphony Orchestra, cond Meredith Davies, 30/11/61

- 1 *To music, a song*
- 2 *To daisies, not to shut too soon*
- 3 *A dialogue betwixt himself and Mistress Eliza Wheeler*
- 4 *Cherry ripe*
- 5 *Love: what it is*
- 6 *To love*
- 7 *Corinna's gone a-Maying*
- 8 *To music, to becalm his fever*
- 9 *On himself*
- 10 *To Anthea, who may command him anything*

A Latter Day Athenian Speaks, Op.51

(1961) 13'

OUP (hire)

[Mixed voices](#)

First Performance: Elizabethan Singers, Louis Halsey, Wigmore Hall, 21st June 1962

This secular motet was commissioned by the Oxford University Press in 1961 and first performed by the Elizabethan Singers under Louis Halsey in the Wigmore Hall on 21 June, 1962. The author Christopher Scaife (1900-1988), poet, actor, singer, dancer, Arabist and finally Professor of English at the American University in Beirut, published the poem in 1937. In it Athens and Sparta are depicted as bride and bridegroom, as lovers, as north and south poles 'with Hell vibrant between them.' Instead of fighting one another, they should march against Corinth, the city that encouraged and made money out of their wars. (John Gardner)

Christopher Scaife (1900-1988) was a true Renaissance man in modern times. Poet and author, composer, thespian (acclaimed for his work with Tony Guthrie) and singer (a great admirer of Duparc), he was an Oxford educated intellectual and leader. Early on he headed the Oxford Union, and later became English Department chair at Fuad Al-awal University and the American University in Beirut, and education adviser to the Iraq government. He retired to a small farm near Arezzo, along the ancient Via Sette Ponti (Road of Seven Bridges), where he welcomed visitors of many nationalities interested in the life of the mind.

[Http://www.msrd.com/1173/1173.html](http://www.msrd.com/1173/1173.html)

<http://www.msrd.com/1173/1173.html>

Five Hymns in Popular Style, Op.54

(1962) 15'30"

OUP (Banks)

[Mixed or women's voices. Alto solo.\(a\) piano solo \(from SATB voice vocal score\) with optional percussion; \(b\) piano duet \(on hire\) with optional percussion \(c\) orchestra \(on hire\) max. 3.3.3.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc\(4\).org.stg, but works with less.](#)

First Performance: Combined Schools Choirs, Vincent James, Farnham Parish Church, 14th May 1963

- 1 *Brightest and best of the sons of the morning*
- 2 *Saviour, again to thy dear name we raise*
- 3 *Nearer, my God, to thee*
- 4 *Abide With Me*
- 5 *Fight the good fight with all thy might*

In these five hymns I have been inspired particularly by the example of Malcolm Williamson, to whom they are dedicated, and 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! (John Gardner)

The tunes are my own except in the case of the second hymn, which is based upon E. J. Hopkins' famous melody 'Eilers', associated by me always with the last Evensong of the school term. I can still feel, as I play or sing this lovely tune, my boyish pleasure in being swept this way and that, in a state of mingled ecstasy and anguish, upon the contrary currents of expectation and nostalgia that flow so strongly from both words and music.

A Shakespeare Sequence, Op.66

(1964) 15'

OUP (Banks)

women's voices, piano duet, and percussion (opt)

First Performance: Greenhead High School Choir, cond. Neville Atkinson, Huddersfield Town Hall, 3rd December 1964

- 1 *It was a lover and his lass*
- 2 *Who is Silvia?*
- 3 *O mistress mine*
- 4 *If music be the food of love, play on*
- 5 *Take, o take those lips away*
- 6 *Full fathom five*
- 7 *Orpheus with his lute*
- 8 *Under the greenwood tree*

Four Wanton Ballads, Op.81

(1966) 10'

OUP (Banks)

SSAATTBB

First Performance: New English Singers, cond John Gardner, Royal Festival Hall 3rd February 1967

- 1 *Pleasant New Court Song*
- 2 *Godly Girzie*
- 3 *Sandgate Girl's Lamentation, The*
- 4 *The Old Man and Young Wife*

Three Amorous Airs, Op.104

(1969) 8'

OUP (Banks)

Female voices and piano

First Performance: Choraleers of State University College, Oneonta, New York

- 1 *Waly waly*
- 2 *German flute, the*
- 3 *Ballad of Nancy Dee, the*

Cantata for Easter, Op.105

(1970) 30'

OUP (hire)

Soloists, mixed chorus, organ and percussion (5 players)

First Performance: Alumni Cabinet of the School of Sacred Music, Union Theological Seminary, New York, 25th June 1970

"Cantata for Easter" was commissioned by the Alumni Cabinet of the School of Sacred Music, Union Theological Seminary, New York, and first performed by the Alumni's workshop on 25th June 1970 in the Chapel of the Interchurch Centre, Riverside Drive, New York, under the direction of Donald Wilkins. John Gardner writes:-

I had been asked to provide an Easter analogue to my Cantata for Christmas (1966) which U.T.S. had already performed. In fact, except in title, the two are somewhat dissimilar. The Christmas piece anthologises settings of traditional Christmas tunes, whilst Cantata for Easter tells the Easter story from Palm Sunday to Resurrection in terms of well-known hymns and verses with but one break in the narrative where Herrick's Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve acts as an interlude between Christ is risen and Wesley's Love's redeeming work is done.

There were no intentional inter-relationships between the various movements, which flow in an unbroken flow. This did not prevent a well-known American musicologist from suggesting that, in the chord progression of the first three choral bars of the opening movement, I had adumbrated the key-scheme of the entire work. Certainly, had such an idea occurred to me in the act of composition, it would have been straightaway jettisoned. I have no objection, however, to such a plan's operating unconsciously: indeed I am quite pleased to think that it did.

Seven Poems of Stevie Smith, Op.126

(1976) 9'

MS

[Mixed voices and wind quintet](#)

First Performance: 4th November 1977, BBC Northern Singers conducted Stephen Wilkinson

- 1 *Apres la politique*
- 2 *Bereaved swan, The*
- 3 *My cats*
- 4 *Jungle husband, the*
- 5 *Cock and the hen, the*
- 6 *Pad Pad*
- 7 *Private means is dead*

Five Part Songs to Poems by Wallace Stevens, Op.142 (1977) 8'**OUP (Banks)**[Mixed voices](#)

First Performance: Kansas City University Choir, Rod Walker, Lawton, Oklahoma, USA, 17th March 1978

- 1 *Depression before Spring*
- 2 *Peter Quince at the Clavier*
- 3 *Ploughing on Sunday*
- 4 *Life is motion*
- 5 *Cy Est Pourtraicte, Madame Ste Ursule, et Les Unze Mille Vierges*

Six American hymns in a free style, Op.147

(1979) 15'

Hinshaw[SATB & Piano](#)

First Performance: The Highlander Concerts, 21st October 1979

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | <i>Go tell it on the mountain</i> | Hinshaw |
| | SATB or SSAA & Piano | |
| 2 | <i>Just a closer walk with thee</i> | Hinshaw |
| | SATB and Piano | |
| 3 | <i>God of our fathers</i> | Hinshaw |
| | SATB and Piano | |
| 4 | <i>Let us break bread together</i> | Hinshaw |
| | 3 equal voices and piano | |
| 5 | <i>It is well with my soul</i> | Hinshaw |
| | SATB and Piano | |
| 6 | <i>God of grace and God of glory</i> | Hinshaw |
| | SATB and Piano | |

The Six American Hymns in a Free Style are based on six hymn tunes which are very familiar to US churchgoers. Celebratory in tone, they are almost all influenced by the wonderful harmonies and rhythms of American gospel and spiritual music. Go Tell It On The Mountains is a deceptively simple opener: but Gardner cleverly alters rhythms at every opportunity, to create a wonderfully varied piece from a simple melody. The accompaniment to Just A Closer Walk With Thee takes its inspiration partly from the opening bars of Bach's Chorale Herz und Mund und That und Leben from Cantata no. 147 but it is cleverly intertwined with the tune of the hymn, here given a lilting rhythm and a gospel feel with wonderfully sensitive harmonisation by Gardner. Perhaps the only time in the history of Western music where Bach has been given a gospel makeover! Let Us Break Bread begins with all voices in unison, but they quickly divide first into two, then three parts, accompanied by a folksy, almost guitar-like piano accompaniment. It Is Well With My Soul opens with a haunting alto solo for the first verse with a beautiful four-part harmonisation in the third verse, which gives way to a glorious eight-part chorale at the close of the hymn. The final song, God of Grace and God of Glory echoes the jazzy, showbiz rhythms of a song from the shows and ends the cycle with a suitably joyous flourish.

Simon Funnell

Mass in D, Op.159

(1983) 28'

OUP (Banks)

[contralto solo, mixed voices, and orchestra: 2.2.2.asax.2-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-pno-str](#)

First Performance: Leith Hill Festival Orchestra, William Llewellyn, 14th April 1984

- 1 *Kyrie*
- 2 *Gloria and Credo*
- 3 *Sanctus-Osanna-Benedictus-Agnus Dei*

Three musical ideas lie behind by Mass in D. First the intonation of Credo VI; secondly the well-known intonation to the Gloria of Mass IV (Cunctipotens Genitor Deus); thirdly the opening fanfare and first eight bars of Chopin's Waltz in E flat op. 18, on which the Gloria as a whole is based and which returns, in a different guise, at the climax of Agnus Dei. Both Latin and English texts are used, either separately or in conjunction, in the Kyrie, Sanctus, Benedictus, Osanna and Agnus Dei sections. In the Gloria, which appears as the second section of the work according to Roman usage, and the Credo, I have used Latin only in the intonations, preferring that the complex theological concepts contained in the rest of these sections be more fully comprehended by singers and listeners alike by an unadulterated use of the vernacular.

I am not a church-goer, not even a believer; but I know and love the text of the Mass and all my life have lived with the greatest settings of it, especially those of Bruckner and Josquin des Pres. You won't find much of the former composer in my work, but you may spot that I have used the same juxtaposition of key or mode between the end of my Credo and the opening of my Sanctus as the latter master did in his peerless *Missa de Beata Virgine*. Where my Mass differs from most other settings is in its ultimate pessimism. Like everyone I want peace. I do not believe, however, that there is the slightest chance of averting war by prayer; and this is the feeling with which my Mass in D ends. (John Gardner)

A Burns Sequence, Op.213

(1993) 25'

OUP (Hire)

[mixed chorus and orchestra: 2\(II+picc\).2.2\(II+bcl\).2-2.1.3.0-timp.1perc-str](#)

First Performance: Strathclyde Schools' Chorus, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Christopher Bell, City Hall, Glasgow, 12th March 1995

- 1 *Prayer under the pressure of violent anguish*
- 2 *Raging fortune*
- 3 *My luvie is like a red, red rose*
- 4 *Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary?* OUP (Banks)
- 5 *O whistle an'I'll come to you* OUP (Banks)
- 6 *Ca' the yowes to the knowes*
- 7 *Macpherson's farewell*
- 8 *Paraphrase of the First Psalm*

Though of peasant origin, Burns was a highly cultured man: vastly well-read and with a knowledge of foreign languages, mathematics and music. He cut a striking figure amongst the cognoscenti of Edinburgh society.

This Sequence contains poems to do with some of the many varied activities which exercised his fancy during his short life. His religious conviction (in the hymns which begin and end the work); his penchant for writing new words to traditional Scottish melodies; his delight in both romantic love (in numbers III and IV) and philandering (in number IV); and his not infrequent use of High English rather than the Lallans with which he is usually associated (in number II).

He made two versions of *Ca' the yowes* (number VI), being later dissatisfied with his first attempt to match this wonderful tune. Nevertheless I have used his earlier version which, though less 'literary' and less 'romantic' than its successor, has, I feel, more passion. This is the only traditional melody I have used, apart from an altered version of the Slow March *McPherson's Lament* in number VII, which sets a poem telling the stirring tale of the freebooter who played the fiddle at his public execution in the marketplace of Banff in 1700. (John Gardner)

Four English Country Songs, Op.216

(1994) 9'

MS

[Mens voices & piano](#)

First Performance: Palmetto Mastersingers - Columbia, N.C., USA, 6th May 1995

- 1 *Derby Ram, the*
- 2 *Lark in the Morn, the*
- 3 *Down in my garden*
- 4 *The Soldier and the sailor*

Waltzsongs, Op.224

(1996) 8'

MS

SATB and piano duet

First Performance: Huddersfield Singers, Philip Honnor, 6th July 1997

- 1 *Love in thy youth, fair maid*
- 2 *A Birthday*
- 3 *Upon Julia's clothes*
- 4 *A song*
- 5 *Sigh no more, ladies*
- 6 *Living*

In 1993 I wrote, for fun, a set of 24 Laendler for piano solo in all the major and minor keys entitled ""Hommage a Schubert"". In 1996 I got a letter from Philip Honnor about my "A Shakespeare Sequence" which he'd done with the Huddersfield Singers in 1995, asking if I'd written any other similar pieces. It was then that I got the idea of adding vocal parts and an extra pair of hands to some of these Laendler in the style of Brahms' Liebeslieder - a favourite work of mine. In the event, I retained three of the original Laendler - in the present suite numbers I,IV and VI - and wrote three additional waltzes to make a set of six altogether.

I had little difficulty in adapting I and IV to existing lyrics by an anonymous Elizabethan and Herrick. In the case of VI, I could find no poem to match its rhythms, so I wrote some doggerel of my own. Numbers II, III and V set poems of C.G.Rossetti, Herrick and Shakespeare.

There is one aspect in which I've fallen short of the Liebeslieder ideal. Nearly all of Brahms' waltzes can be played satisfactorily without the voice; mine cannot, except for VI where the original remains intact on the piano save for its redistribution amongst four hands. (John Gardner)

Christmas

We Wish You a Merry Christmas (arr Gardner), Op. (1964) **Novello**

SATB & piano

First Performance:

The First Nowell (arr Gardner), Op. (1963) **Novello**

First Performance:

When Christ Was Born of Mary Free, Op.55 (1962) **1'30"** **Novello**

Unaccompanied voices

First Performance:

Three Carols, Op.58 (1963) **MS/OUP**

First Performance:

- 1 *Angels, from the realms of glory* OUP (Banks)
unaccompanied female voices
- 2 *The Holly and the Ivy* OUP
mixed or equal voices (3 or more parts), and piano or orchestra:
3.3.3.2-4.2.3.1-timp.dance band drummer-pno-str
- 3 *Dives and Lazarus* MS
voice & piano or guitar

Two Carols, Op.75 (1965) **OUP (Banks)**

First Performance:

- 1 *Good King Wenceslas* OUP (Banks)
Female voices and piano
- 2 *Tomorrow shall be my dancing day* OUP
Mixed, equal, or unison voices, piano and percussion (opt), or
strings and percussion

Cantata for Christmas, Op.82

(1966) 24'

OUP

[mixed voices and ob.bn-hn-strings](#)

First Performance: Elizabethan Singers, Thames Chamber Orchestra, cond. Louis Halsey, St Clement Danes Church, London, 14th December 1966

- 1 *Wie schoenleuchtet der Morgenstern*
- 2 *An ode on the birth of our Saviour*
- 3 *Les anges de nos campagnes*
- 4 *O magnum mysterium*
- 5 *Puer nobis nascitur*
- 6 *Coventry Carol*
- 7 *In dulci jubilo*

Cantata for Christmas is a suite of seven songs. Five of them are settings of well known Christmas numbers; the other two, to a differing extent, are based on Nicolai's hymn 'Wie schoen leuchtet der Morgenstern' which, together with the tune 'Puer nobis nascitur' from Piaee Cantiones (1582), permeates the entire cantata in one way or another, besides forming the direct basis of the first movement and part of the finale.

The work is scored for mixed-voice chorus (occasionally double), with some optional solo passages, and an orchestra of oboe, bassoon, horn and strings.

Here is a movement-by-movement description:

- (i) A string sinfonia leads into a chorale-prelude on 'Wie schoen leuchtet'. The first choir and woodwind have the tune; the second choir and strings decorate. The text depicts the morning star as 'full of God's Grace and Truth', and salutes Our Lord in words of warm and tender naivete.
- (ii) A setting of Herrick's Ode on the birth of Our Saviour, a poem which deploys its address of homage in four verses of identical but subtle metrical pattern. The melody is partly a dorian derivative of 'Wie schoen leuchtet'.
- (iii) A straightforward setting, with some rhythmical variation, of the French carol 'Les anges dans nos campagnes', usually sung in this country in Montgomery's inaccurate paraphrase 'Angels from the realms of glory'. It concerns itself with the story of the appearance of the angel of the Lord to the shepherds and with the sound of the heavenly hosts praising God and saying 'Glory to God in the highest'.
- (iv) 'O magnum mysterium', the fourth responsory at Matins on Christmas Day: 'Behold, a great mystery and a wonderful sacrament; that oxen should see the new-born Lord lying in a manger! Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Hail, Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with thee'. This is set for soprano and alto voices only with accompaniment for oboe and horn, and is, in fact, a free variation of 'Wie schoen leuchtet' in a sort of phrygian mode.
- (v) A setting of 'Puer nobis nascitur', the gayest of gay songs, usually sung here as 'Unto us is born a son'. I have monkeyed about somewhat with its rhythm.
- (vi) Coventry Carol, whose words and tune are taken from the Coventry Nativity Play. No cosy lullaby, this; Herod has ordered the first-born to be slain, and Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt with the infant Jesus. The musical setting uses the burden complete only at the end.
- (vii) In dulci jubilo, set rather faster than usual and very freely treated. The original macaronic Germano-Latin text is used. Later I bring in the 'Wie schoen leuchtet' tune, abridged, with words associated with it in Bach's Cantata 36: 'Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara und laszt die siisze Musica ganz freudenreich erschallen'. This might be translated 'Pluck the cittern strings and let sweet music ring out, rich with joy'. There are no citterns in my orchestra, I fear, and I have to make do with pizzicato. I hope the effect is sufficiently 'freudenreich'. (John Gardner)

Four Carols, Op.109

(1970) 10'

OUP (Banks)

[Solo Soprano; Mixed or Upper Voices; Organ & Percussion](#)

First Performance:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 <i>Chanticleer's carol</i> | OUP (Banks) |
| 2 <i>Balulalow</i> | OUP (Banks) |
| 3 <i>Remember</i> | OUP (Banks) |
| 4 <i>Gallery Carol</i> | OUP (Banks) |

A Christmas Hymn, Op.109 a (1971) **OUP (Banks)**
 Mixed voices and organ
 First Performance:
 1 *Chanticleer's carol* OUP (Banks)
 2 *Balulalow* OUP (Banks)
 3 *Remember* OUP (Banks)
 4 *Gallery Carol* OUP (Banks)

Two Seasonal Songs, Op.145 (1978) **5'** **OUP (Banks)**
 mixed voices and brass: 4tpt.3tbn.tba-perc
 First Performance: cond. John Gardner, Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, 1stDecember 1978
 1 *Relax!*
 2 *Rejoice!*

Room in the Inn, Op.152 (1981) **5'** **OUP**
 mixed chorus, audience, flute, piano, bass, and kit-drummer
 First Performance: cond. David Robinson, St. Phillip's Church, Harrow, 14th December 1981

Opera

Bel And The Dragon, Op.120 (1973) **60'** **OUP (Banks)**
 A school opera for 2 sopranos or tenors, mezzo-soprano or baritone, contralto, two speaking parts, SA or SATB semi-chorus, SA or SATB acting chorus, piano duet, organ, 3 percussion, and strings
 First Performance: W10 Opera Group, London, 1973

Orchestral

Symphony No 1 in D Minor, Op.2

(1947) 45'

OUP (Banks)

[3.3.3.3-4.3.3.1-timp.2perc-cel-hp-str](#)

First Performance: Cheltenham Festival, 1951. Halle Orchestra, cond. John Barbirolli

My first symphony assembled itself in my mind in stages during the last year or two of the War. The opening even goes back further to a short piano piece I wrote in 1939 or 1940 which ended at that A major chord on the brass some of you may recognise when you hear the work this evening. At that time I'd no idea that it could be the beginning of a symphony, though I was aware that it hardly constituted a complete piano piece.

Other elements in the score started variously as a mid-war setting of passages from Blake's Book of Thel, a theme I conceived for a set of variations and, in the case of the main theme of the finale, a transformation of the opening of the finale. of my first string quartet which had in fact gained two or three performances in Paris and England by the Blech Quartet in 1939 but with which I was deeply unsatisfied and which I eventually withdrew.

I do not believe it is exceptional for a big work to derive from several sources - there are many examples of such a process in the origin of many of Brahms' best known pieces : the first piano concerto, for example, the German Requiem and the Violin Concerto. In my case it was, of course, due to the fact that I was serving in the R.A.F. around the World and could only conceive music in the scrappiest manner on odd pieces of paper in the most unsympathetic ambiances. Demobilisation, therefore, came as a blessed chance to write at length, which is what I did during the bitter Winter of 1946-7 on those evenings when I did not have to be in attendance at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, where I earned my living as a répétiteur. In June 1947 I reached the end of the fair full score, put it aside and began to write an opera that never got performed.

How the symphony got put on is quite a story. In 1950, through the kindness of a colleague of mine Percy Heming, in his day a leading British baritone, I played through my opera to John Barbirolli. Though he recognised its unperformability at once, he asked me if I'd written anything else. I gave him the symphony to look through and a month or later he said that, provided I could convince him that the first movement made sense, he'd do it at the Cheltenham Festival of 1951. I tried to make the first movement more sensible by some re-writing here and there. He did the symphony with some success; more performances followed; I got commissions, royalties and performing rights fees, and found that I could decently regard myself as a professional composer.

I do not approve of telling audiences what to expect when they listen to my music, so I will say no more than that there are four movements, of which the second is a scherzo with trio and the third a slow movement. I hope you enjoy it. (John Gardner)

Variations on a Waltz of Carl Nielsen, Op.13

(1952) 23'

Novello (Hire)

[2\(2pic\).2\(ca\).2\(bcl\).2+cbn-4.3.3.1-timp.perc-hp-str](#)

First Performance: 16th July 1952, Cheltenham Town Hall

The Waltz upon which these Variations, completed in March, 1952, and dedicated to Sir John Barbirolli, are based, is taken from a set of Humoresque Bagatelles, Op. 11, for piano, which are of limited technical difficulty. It is an enchanting piece of great melodic span and intensity and of deceptive harmonic subtlety; it is scored in this version for flutes, harp and solo' cello. There are eleven variations and a finale, employing a full orchestra of double woodwind, normal brass, percussion, strings and harp.

1. A free but not irrelevant melodic line; follows the harmonies of the Waltz closely.
2. Continuous development of original melody for violas and cellos against intermittent woodwind chords derived from □ closing bars of the Waltz.
3. Woodwind, brass and strings set off against one another in a brisker tempo.
4. For brass alone. Light and gay.
5. An arid Canon, mostly for woodwind.
6. The first six bars of the Waltz are augmented into a chorale against which the entire motivic content of the Waltz is set in diminution.
7. A ground-bass, mostly canonically treated.
8. For strings only with 'cello solo. Follows harmony of Waltz closely though it is melodically independent of it for the most part.
9. A scherzo derived solely from the left-hand part of the original.
10. A kind of Spanish dance with an important solo violin part.
11. A decadent little waltz spun from loose threads of the original melody which later is combined with it.

This leads into the Finale by means of a side-drum ostinato (introduced in honour of Carl Nielsen's predilection for this instrument in his later works). A climax is crowned by a vulgar statement of the Waltz on the brass, harshly harmonised. This is soon swamped by a combination of the Chorale of Variation 6, with the closing bars of the Waltz Melody. A grand restatement of the stretto from Variation 7 is silenced by a drum rhythm. The music disintegrates and is only pulled together by six final hammer-blows on all the bass instruments and percussion. (John Gardner)

A Scots Overture, Op.25 (1954) 6' OUP (hire)

[1.picc.1.ca.2.2-4.2.3.1-timp.perc-cel-hp-str](#)

First Performance: LPO, Basil Cameron, Royal Albert Hall, 16th August 1954

Written for the RAF Fighter Command Band and first performed at the RAF Station, Drem, Scotland in June 1941. When, years later, Basil Cameron asked him to write a short piece for his 70th birthday, Gardner orchestrated and extended and much improved the work for one of the conductor's Proms in August 1954. It is based on five bagpipe tunes, one of which, the perennially haunting Macpherson's Lament, Gardner used in his 1993 choral suite, A Burns Sequence.

Concerto No1 in Bb for Piano and Orchestra, Op.34 (1957) 25' OUP (hire)

[2\(II+picc\).2\(II+ca\).2\(II+bcl\).2-4\(2opt\).2.0.0-timp.perc-str](#)

First Performance: Cyril Preedy, Halle Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, Cheltenham Town Hall, 18th July 1957

This concerto was completed in July of 1957 and is dedicated to Alfred Blundell. It is scored for double woodwind and brass without trombones and tuba, two percussion players and strings.

The first movement follows the classical symphonic pattern closely, but does not include the extended exposition and solo cadenza typical of the classical concerto.

The second movement consists of:

- (a) A short introduction.
- (b) The 16 bar theme.
- (c) A short development and abbreviated reprise of the above.
- (d) Four variations in quicker tempo, the last of which is extended and leads back to :
- (e) A reprise of the theme.
- (f) A cadenza for piano assisted now and then by other instruments which passes straight into the Rondo Finale, the main tune of which is directly derived from the Variation theme.

(John Gardner)

Sinfonia Piccola, Op.47 (1960) 13' OUP (hire)

[String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: Berkshire String Players, Thames Bank, Whitchurch, 10/09/1960

I wrote the Sinfonia Piccola (Little Symphony) for a semi-professional string orchestra which first performed it in September 1960 at a beautiful house on the banks of the Thames in Goring Gap. As I was to do in my 3rd Symphony from 1990, I repeat the opening section or exposition in adherence to classical form, but in recapitulating the second theme I turn it upside down, a procedure which was not part of classical practice. The middle movement is a modulating passacaglia which moves through several keys. At one point the bass is turned upside down and moves to the top of the texture. The finale is a sonata rondo with a development section in which the main theme becomes the subject of a fugato. (John Gardner)

Half Holiday Overture, Op.52 (1962) 4' Novello (hire)

[2131/2210/timp.perc/str](#)

First Performance: Ardingly School, December 1962

Half Holiday was written for a series of works for School Orchestra edited by Geoffrey Bush for the Novello catalogue in 1962. Though the idiom is mid-century "light" its themes and episodes are elaborately interrelated: a process I found both spontaneous and enjoyable. (John Gardner)

Trumpet Concerto, Op.53 (1962) 12' Novello (hire)

[Trumpet & String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: October 1962, Philip Jones and the ECO

Overture: Midsummer Ale, Op.73 (1965) 6' OUP (hire)

[3.3.3.asax.3-4.3.3.1-timp.3perc-hp-pno-str](#)

First Performance: Morley College Symphony Orchestra, Graham Treacher, Morley College, 9th November 1965

Debussy and Joan Last must be the only composers who never found the naming of pieces one hell of a chore. I spent longer searching for the title of this piece than in writing down its notes on a five-line stave. The commission, from the Friends of Morley, for a piece to assist in the celebration of the College's 75th Birthday in 1965, suggested something light and gay and, as the original intention was to perform it at a concert on 29th June, the idea of a summer party came to my mind. I decided, however, at first to call it Academic Festival Overture until I realised that that title had already been used in connexion with a bean feast in Breslau in 1879. Eventually a perusal of Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable (a must for all composers in searching for titles) threw up the expression 'Midsummer Ale', which uses the word 'ale' in a sense it has now lost: that of a feast or celebration at which, naturally, a lot of ale was drunk.

The first performance was given by the Morley College Symphony Orchestra under Graham Treacher in the Emma Cons Hall on 9th November 1965 at a farewell concert to the newly departed Principal Denis Richards. (John Gardner)

Prelude for Strings, Op.148 a () 2'45" MS

[String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: No public performance to date

Symphony No 2, Op.166 (1984) 32' MS

[3\(picc\).3\(c.a.\).3\(bcl\).3\(cb\)-4.3.3.3.1-Timp.2Perc-Pno-Strings](#)

First Performance: Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra, Adrian Brown, Fairfield Hall, 12th July 1985

Symphony No 3, Op.189 (1989) 16' MS

[2.2.2.2-4.2.3.1-timp.stg](#)

First Performance: Morley College Orchestra, Lawrence Leonard, Southwark Cathedral, 6th March 1990

My third symphony was written in answer to a request from Lawrence Leonard for a 17 minute orchestral piece as part of a concert in Southwark Cathedral on 6th March 1990 to celebrate the centenary of Morley College. Since the programme included Brahms's second symphony, I scored it for the same orchestra as that work, except for an afterthought: one cymbal crash at the climax of the first movement. I'm proud to say that its one length almost exactly matched Lawrence's request. It is one of the few pieces I've written in which I was aware of an incommunicable non-musical programme. The first movement is in march tempo throughout, though its latent aggressiveness is muted until the mid-point of the development section. In order to clarify its form I repeated the opening (exposition) section. The final (recapitulation) section is brief and makes only scant reference to the more lyrical second subject. The middle movement has five clearly differentiated sections. Firstly, interfolding solo and muted tutti strings, secondly an episode on woodwind, thirdly an episode on brass, at the climax of which unmuted strings and timpani interrupt and take over. Finally there's a return to the mood of the opening but more fully scored. The Finale has two themes: the first on bassoon, the second on horns. In the middle (development) section the reticent lyrical theme of the first movement appears and towards the end the first movement's opening is quoted. The final loud cadence in thirds on the horns inverts the soft phrase of the clarinets at the end of the first movement. (John Gardner)

Concerto for Oboe and Strings, Op.193 (1990) 15' MS

[Oboe and String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: Nicholas Daniel, City of London Sinfonia, Richard Hickox, BBC Maida Vale, 27th February 1992

I wrote this piece for Nick Daniel in 1990. It is in three movements. The first (Allegro Molto) is so "classical" in outlook that its two main sections are both repeated. It closes not in D major but D minor, in which key the strings' figuration decelerates to become the accompaniment to the oboe's melody in the slow movement, the closing phrase of which quickens to become the opening theme of the finale. I'm still unable to explain in musical terms why I ended this sunny D major movement in an impatient D minor. (John Gardner)

Flute Concerto, Op.220

(1995) 16'

MS[Flute and String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: No public performance to date

I wrote the Flute Concerto in 1995 for Jennifer Stinton, who had been a student of mine at the Royal Academy of Music in the early eighties. I remember in writing it my determination that it should not resemble my Oboe Concerto of 1990, which is one reason I gave it four and not three movements, and adopted a relaxed romantic style for its sonata form first movement. The second movement is based on a Nocturne I wrote for piano in 1993; the flute plays the right-hand's part and the strings impersonate the left-hand's arpeggios and sostenuto pedal. The third movement, a gavotte, is interrupted by two virtuosic episodes for the flute over drones on the strings, recalling the musette, i.e. bagpipe, sections of Baroque gavottes. The finale is a rondo with three themes and recalls the first movement in its final section. (John Gardner)

Irish Suite, Op.231

() 10'

MS[2.2.2.2-2.4.0.0-Timp-Strings](#)

First Performance: 6th March 1997, Morley College Orchestra, Southwark Cathedral, conducted by the composer

- 1 *Love Song*
- 2 *War Song*
- 3 *Sad Song*
- 4 *Spring Song*
- 5 *Reel*

I dedicated this to my two friends Michael and Kathleen Bowles, both now alas dead. Michael founded the Radio Eireann Orchestra in the 1930s, and was a learned folklorist and Irish speaker to boot. Four well-known Irish tunes are used, but the Spring Song is my own invention and I've added two tunes to the Reel. The first of them appears fortissimo in the bass and is then added by the trumpet to the tune of the reel. Later, the second of my tunes is played by all the fiddles. Finally the original reel and my two tunes appear simultaneously in a raucous riff. (John Gardner)

Petite Suite for Recorder and Strings, Op.245

(2001) 12'

Peacock Press[Recorder & String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: John Turner, Kendal Parish Church, 2006

- 1 *Prelude*
- 2 *Idee Fixe*
- 3 *Marche Joyeuse*
- 4 *Marche Funebre*
- 5 *Contredanse*

I wrote the Petite Suite for John Turner's CD ("English Recorder Concertos", White Line WHL 2143). As I had already written a Little Suite for recorder and harpsichord, I thought it better to use French for the new piece, which is in a hotchpotch of styles. The Prelude is a lightweight Baroque pastiche, while the *Idée Fixe* pays homage to an earlier style with umpteen statements of a five-note Landini cadence with a trill on its third note. The two marches are self-explanatory: the joyous one is very short, but the funereal one, in which the basses play a theme from my 1946 First Symphony, could easily have been extended into something longer and weightier. The tune of the finale, though mine, owes a lot to Playfair's English Dancing Master. The movement is a sonata-rondo and ends with a staccato restatement of the legato phrases at the end of the March Funebre. (John Gardner)

Concerto for Bassoon and String Orchestra, Op.249

(2004) 19'

MS[Bassoon & String Orchestra](#)

First Performance: 28th July 2007, Budeleigh Salterton Festival, Graham Salvage & Festival Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Marshall

This concerto was written in early Summer 2004 in response to a request from Graham Salvage, to whom it is dedicated. John Gardner has produced a delightful work with all the hallmarks of his style – elegant, witty and tuneful - which will surely be a welcome addition to the limited repertoire of bassoon concertos.

It has four, rather than the customary three, movements. The first is based mainly on the motif heard on the bassoon in the opening bars. The second contrasts a dotted motif in the violins with a florid, wide-ranging melody in the bassoon, leading to a short cadenza. The third movement is in the form of a minuet and trio, and the fourth is a lively finale in which the main theme is heard in various guises, interspersed with two further subsidiary themes, the second of these returning near the end in slow tempo before a final short flourish.

Nicholas Marshall

Vocal

Five Encounters for Six Voices, Op.118

(1973) 13'

MS

First Performance: The King's Singers, Harrogate Festival, 12th August 1973

- 1 *There was a maid a-milking*
- 2 *As I sit by my spinning wheel*
- 3 *The thankful country lass*
- 4 *The new balow*
- 5 *There was a knight and he was young*

Commissioned by the King's Singers with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain. First performance Harrogate Festival 12 August 1973.

This suite is based upon anonymous poems. I have pruned the verses somewhat and here and there have made changes of scansion to help the tunes along. About the music I wish to say no more than that I'll be happy if it does not actually get in the way of the words.

1. "Three maids a-milking would go" (Anon. from a Broadside)

One of the maids accosts a young man and comes to regret her folly.

2. "As I sat at my spinning-wheel" (Anon. from D'Urfey's 'Pills to purge melancholy' 1719 - 20)

In this encounter the young man accosts the girls as she sits at her spinning-wheel. It is with some difficulty that he persuades her to quit the making of thread for the delights of love. This time, however, she has no regrets.

3. "The thankful country lass" or "The Jolly Bachelor Entertained" (Anon. Old Ballad)

A thoroughly happy encounter for both parties. Things rarely go so hitchlessly.

4. "The New Balow" or "A wench's lamentation for the loss of her sweetheart, he having left her with a babe to play her, being the fruits of her folly" (Anon from a Broadside)

The young mother feels ambivalently towards her lover. She finds that she must love him though he be her foe.

5. There was a knight and he was young (Anon. from D'Urfey)

Here the boot is very much on the other foot. The girl, bored by the knight's prevarication, lures him to her father's house, shuts the door in his face, throws him a purse of gold 'for his pains' and tells him 'If you will not when you may, You shall not what you will, sir.' (John Gardner)

Hebdomade, Op.150

(1980) 15'

MS

High voice, oboe & piano

First Performance: Messiter Taylor Trio, Purcell Room, 3rd July 1980

- 1 *Sweet Suffolk owl*
- 2 *Fain would I change that note*
- 3 *Weep you no more, sad fountains*
- 4 *A sparrow-hawk proud did hold in wicked jail*
- 5 *Mother, I will have a husband*
- 6 *Interlude*
- 7 *It was a lover and his lass*

Triad, Op.165

(1984) 8'

MS

Counter tenor and lute

First Performance: Nigel Perrin, David Parsons, South Hill Park, Bracknell, 29th June 1984

- 1 *An odd conceit*
- 2 *In love's dispraise*
- 3 *A proper song*

Recollections of Love, Op.242

(2000) 9'30"

MS

Soprano and Piano

First Performance: Maria Jette, Phillip Brunelle, Minneapolis, c2000

- 1 *How warm this woodland wild recess*
- 2 *Eight springs have flown*
- 3 *No voice as yet made the air*
- 4 *As when a mother doth explore*
- 5 *You stood before me like a thought*
- 6 *has not, since then, Love's prompture deep*
- 7 *A slumber did my Spirit Seal*

These songs were written at the suggestion of Philip Brunelle, Director of Music at Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, and the soprano Maria Jette. They were to be in memory of my wife Jane, who died of Motor Neurone Disease in April 1998, and their commissioning fee was to contribute towards the cost of the active but so far unsuccessful search for a cure for this terrible condition. They set the six verses Coleridge entitled Recollections of Love, in which he addressed the greatest passion of his life, Sara Hutchinson, and end finally with the most famous of Wordsworth's Lucy poems. (John Gardner)

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