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## Britten 100 launched

Celebrations for Britten's centenary in 2013 include performances in 140 cities around the world.



Photo: Britten-Pears Foundation

Britten at Snape Maltings, 1969

The Britten-Pears Foundation has launched Britten 100, celebrating the centenary in 2013 of one of the 20th century's greatest cultural figures. Over 1200 performances of Benjamin Britten's music in 30 countries have already been announced for the centenary seasons, amounting to the widest ever global celebration of a British composer. His significance in British cultural history is recognised by the Royal Mint's announcement that a new 50 pence coin depicting Britten will go into circulation ready for 2013.

In the UK all 14 of Britten's major operas will be performed, including a new staging of *Gloriana*, which returns to The Royal Opera 60 years since it was first given to celebrate the Queen's Coronation. This co-production with Hamburg Opera will be screened in cinemas worldwide. Four Britten operas will be staged by Opera North, and Birmingham Royal Ballet presents a new choreography of *The Prince of the Pagodas* produced with National Ballet of Japan.

### Vivier new guide

A new Boosey & Hawkes guide to the music of Claude Vivier (1948-1983) looks set to further the rediscovery of one of the most original voices of the latter half of the 20th century. Since the Canadian composer's works joined the B&H catalogue in 2005 over 400 performances have taken place.

The comprehensive guide is the first to cover Vivier's complete output, featuring the composer's original thoughts and writings about his music, together with repertoire notes by Vivier expert Bob Gilmore in English, French and German. Complementing this is a CD sampler providing audio excerpts from 18 works — these Vivier audio clips are also available online at [www.boosey.com/av](http://www.boosey.com/av).



Highlights in Aldeburgh, where Britten lived and worked most of his life, include performances of *Peter Grimes* on the beach and six new works specially commissioned by the Britten-Pears Foundation and Royal Philharmonic Society. A week-long festival in Glasgow sees Scotland's four leading orchestras and ensembles come together in April 2013.

Britten's global appeal is demonstrated with territorial premieres of his operas staged in Brazil, Chile, China, Israel, Russia, Turkey, Japan and New Zealand. A Britten festival in Moscow includes operas, four concerts with the Russian National Orchestra and an exhibition at the Pushkin Museum. Special centenary series are mounted by Deutsche Oper am Rhein and Opéra de Lyon, each presenting four Britten operas. *War Requiem* travels widely with over 50 performances,

including three by the Berliner Philharmoniker and Simon Rattle. A series of events at Carnegie Hall in New York will be announced in early 2013.

New books for the centenary include Paul Kildea's *Benjamin Britten* - the first major biography for twenty years (Penguin's Allen Lane), a collection of rare images from The Red House archive entitled *Britten in Pictures*, and the sixth and final volume of *Letters from a Life* (Boydell & Brewer). BBC Radio and Television honours Britten with a year-long celebration including broadcasts of all his operas and new TV documentaries. New films are planned by Tony Palmer, Tony Britten and Margaret Williams, and the British Film Institute presents a Britten season.

For full details on the centenary visit [www.britten100.org](http://www.britten100.org)

## Glanert Solaris premiere



World premiere staging of Detlev Glanert's *Solaris* at the Bregenz Festival

Detlev Glanert's new opera *Solaris*, based on the novel by Stanislaw Lem, opened at the Bregenz Festival in July, and travels to the Komische Oper in Berlin next May. The production by Moshe Leiser and Patrice Caurier, conducted by Markus Stenz and with Dietrich Henschel in the lead role, explores themes of human communication in Lem's metaphysical book, set on a space station circling the planet Solaris. As the scientists probe the planet's 'thinking ocean' *Solaris* retaliates by recreating figures from their memories, prompting disturbing journeys of self-discovery.

"[Glanert] has an exceptional knack for music drama. His score reflects the cosmic solitude just as well as the psychological terror which the scientists on *Solaris* repeatedly experience, exposed through the personification of their own feelings of guilt. At the same time, Glanert places great emphasis on the comprehensibility of the text, and finds a skilful balance between the recitative-like arioso and the musico-dramatic elements, which are allowed to flow in and out of each other perfectly." *Südkurier*

"In his portrayal of *Solaris* with orchestra and a large chorus, Glanert has created his own soundworld for the work: alongside sections of overwhelming intensity, there is much translucent chamber music. The music is stylistically flexible, dramatically precise... and it creates both atmosphere and tension." *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

"Glanert's art of allowing the orchestral colours to shimmer is shown here anew. In masterly fashion he gives choral voice to the planet, from the first stuttering syllable to fully-formed language." *Badische Zeitung*

"[Glanert] delivers what is missing in most modern operas. He is accomplished in the world of the theatre. He has an instinct for the structure of a work. He is able to conjure up orchestral colours and atmospheres. He can make scores comprehensible to first-time listeners... But above all, he knows how to write for singers. Glanert is

one of the most, perhaps the most, practical of the current generation of opera composers." *Münchner Merkur*

The Glanert feature at the Bregenz Festival also included *Nijinsky's Diary*, which fuses opera, theatre and dance, and the Austrian premiere of *Theatrum bestiarum*. Other summer highlights were the UK premiere of *Caligula* at English National Opera in London and the world premiere under the baton of Ivan Fischer of a new ten-minute orchestral *Nocturne* commissioned by the Berlin Konzerthaus.

## IMAGEM update



Janis Susskind has been promoted to Managing Director of Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers, recognising her responsibility for all classical music publishing on the Board of Imagem UK. Joining Boosey & Hawkes in 1980, Janis Susskind learnt the publishing business from the ground up, becoming a B&H director in 1997 and joining its board as Publishing Director in 2004. She has fostered an international approach to catalogue promotion and has expanded the list of contemporary composers with many of today's leading figures.

Janis Susskind has been active in the UK music scene since the early 1980s, including

## Holloway in San Francisco



Photo: Charlie Tomran

Robin Holloway travels to San Francisco on 10 January for the world premiere of his new Debussy song orchestrations for soprano Renée Fleming. Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the San

Francisco Symphony in ten settings of Paul Verlaine's poetry, which Holloway has titled *C'est l'extase* after one of the chosen songs. Orchestra and conductor have long championed Holloway's music, commissioning a sequence of works including *Clarissa Sequence*, the *Fourth Concerto for Orchestra* and the earlier Debussy arrangement *En blanc et noir*, and presenting the US premieres of the *Third Concerto for Orchestra* and the *Viola Concerto*.

Holloway writes of the new work: "From nearly 20 Verlaine settings made by Debussy early in his career I selected the *Ariettes oubliées*, six songs which by common consent don't function as a cycle, together with another group of three and a singleton. The ten songs are reordered into a key scheme, with a trajectory of moods and tempi, and I've composed transitions of between 6 and 20 bars where necessary. The last song is prefaced by a longer introduction and an extended coda which captures the surge of the sea in the poem to provide a brilliant and sonorous conclusion. As with *En blanc et noir*, and my Mary Queen of Scots Schumann songs orchestration *Reliquary*, my aim has been to capture not the letter of Debussy's music, but its spirit."

### Holloway in China

Also in the New Year the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing plays host to the world premiere of Holloway's 15-minute orchestral work *In China*. This is the musical fruit of the composer's trip to China in 2011, as part of the Composing China project. Along with four other composers Holloway travelled around the country, on plane, bus, boat and train, visiting sprawling cities and remote rural villages.

Holloway's resulting score is more a response to visual stimuli, ranging from the vastness of the physical landscape to the exploding urban chaos, than to the Chinese folk music he experienced. *In China*, which will be premiered by the NCPA Concert Hall Orchestra, joins a series of Holloway works initiated by travel to countries or cities, including the *Third Concerto for Orchestra's* impressions of South America and *Scenes from Antwerp*.

Holloway's 70th birthday is celebrated in 2013.

roles as Chairman of the Society for the Promotion of New Music, trustee of the Royal College of Music, and board member of English National Opera. She is currently a Trustee of the Britten-Pears Foundation and has recently joined the board of the International Artist Managers' Association.

Boosey & Hawkes's sister company **Rodgers & Hammerstein** is expanding with the creation of a new European branch headquartered in the London offices of Imagem UK. R&H Theatricals Europe will manage and license a catalogue of over 100 musicals, including *The Sound of Music*, *The King and I*, and *White Christmas*, throughout the UK and across Europe.

**Vivien Goodwin** has been appointed Managing Director of the new R&H division to be launched in January 2013. Formerly of the prestigious licensing house and publishing firm Samuel French Ltd, where she has been Managing Director for 13 years, Vivien Goodwin will work with current R&H representatives Josef Weinberger Ltd to ensure a smooth transition.

# Turnage Cello Concerto and Speranza

This season brings four European performances of Mark-Anthony Turnage's new *Cello Concerto* for Paul Watkins and the premiere of *Speranza* by the London Symphony Orchestra

Following string concertos for violin and viola, what particular challenges does a cello concerto present?

The concertos for violin and viola both used fairly large orchestras and I had to be cautious about balance. But with cello the issue is even more acute – it's partly to do with the range, which is wide but centred in the middle of the orchestra, and partly that on some cello strings the instrument doesn't cut through. Oly Knussen suggested I look at what Elgar does technically in his cello concerto, and I took this advice to heart. You notice Elgar doesn't have a lot going on in the orchestra. He avoids doubling and only allows the orchestra to be heavy when the soloist isn't playing. So I've used a smaller orchestra than my other string concertos and have tried to take special care of the soloist.

Paul Watkins has played a lot of your music over the years. How did the collaboration develop?

I've got to know Paul's style of cello playing over many years when he performed a lot of my music with the Nash Ensemble. As well as having an amazing technique, he's always been incredibly sympathetic to what I wanted. I've been stung once or twice by soloists who'd never done my stuff before. But with a cello concerto I knew that if I wrote one it just had to be for Paul. We haven't needed to talk much so far, as I know his style so well, but I'm looking forward to the collaboration up to the premiere.

The fourth movement is titled Prayer for a Great Man. Who is that?

He was Neil Swallow, my father-in-law, who died a couple of years back and was an inspiring man for me. I wrote a version of this Prayer for his funeral. In the concerto it takes the form of a duet for horn and cello and takes the place of where a cadenza would normally appear. It's not flashy at all though, and is instead lyrical and meditative. I wondered whether to orchestrate it but decided it said everything that was needed in its pared back form.

Your major new orchestral work is titled Speranza. Why?

Sometimes the title comes early but here it came late. This was because my first intentions were to write a big, dark, despairing work as I'd been through a tough time. The piece was to have been in memory of poets and writers who'd committed suicide including Paul Celan, Primo Levi and Sadeq Hedayat. But I soon realised this all seemed a bit gloomy and not exactly a fun evening in the concert hall, especially with a piece lasting 45 minutes. So I started brightening things up and it soon became more upbeat, extrovert and optimistic. Eventually the work turned completely round and became a positive piece about hope – I guess it was something of a personal transformation. Although *Speranza* shimmers a lot, I suspect the dark heart of the original idea still peeks through.



Photo: Philip Galloway

Each movement is headed by 'Hope' in a different language. Is the music flavoured by the nationality?

No, not at a conscious level. It's certainly not an Olympic-style piece, travelling to five countries. That said, there may be some elements of folk music, for instance Arabic in the first movement and Jewish in the last, which may relate to the original poetic sources, but they are so absorbed you can't really hear them at all. The work overall is dedicated to my younger kids Milo and Amelie, who for me are a real hope for the future.

Both the Cello Concerto and Speranza are five-movement works. Have your recent ballet scores, built from smaller units, influenced your orchestral writing?

Yes. In the past I've often tended to link the musical flow together into a single sweep. So, if you think of my last big purely orchestral piece, *Chicago Remains*, it is continuous music, building from start to finish. I had to think differently for the ballets *Undance* and *Trespass*, which demanded shorter movements that had to express different characteristics fully within a short span. This forced me to compose in a very different way. I knew with *Speranza* that I had to create 45 minutes of orchestral music with no words and no chorus. So the five resulting movements exist as worlds in themselves, with the development in each happening in a much denser timeframe.



Photo: Johann Passon

Turnage's *Trespass* at the Royal Ballet in London

## Turnage Cello Concerto (2010) 20' for Paul Watkins

13 October 2012 (world premiere)  
De Singel, Antwerp  
Royal Flemish Philharmonic/Edo de Waart

18 January 2013 (Finnish premiere)  
Tampere Hall  
Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra/Hannu Lintu

7 February 2013 (UK premiere)  
Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool  
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/  
Vasily Petrenko

20 June 2013 (German premiere)  
Gewandhaus, Leipzig  
Gewandhausorchester/Andris Nelsons

*Speranza* (2011-12) 45' for orchestra

7 February 2013 (world premiere)  
Barbican, London  
London Symphony Orchestra/Daniel Harding

## Weinberger Schwanda in Dresden

"Schwanda lives again" wrote the *Frankfurter Rundschau* of the major revival in March of Weinberger's stagework at the Dresden Semperoper, described as "a reawakening of a sumptuous, immensely accomplished opera". This "hellishly good premiere" (*Das Bild*) was the latest step in the rehabilitation of one of the hits of the 1920s, following a production at the Wexford Opera Festival in 2003 which was also released on CD by Naxos, and recent stagings in smaller German houses including Augsburg and Görlitz. The new Dresden *Schwanda* by Axel Köhler put the opera back on a major stage, winning new friends to its unique blend of folk tradition and modern theatrical verve.

"One of the craziest scores in operatic history: brimming with melodies, scrambled with anarchic counterpoint, raucous and blissfully operetta-like, virtuoso and naively showy. Jaromir Weinberger's *Schwanda the Bagpiper* was a sensational success in the late 1920s, making the rounds through theatres all over the world. Was it possible back then to gauge the uniqueness of this musical language which lifted the genre of popular opera to almost absurd heights? Czech folklore, both raised and at the same time repressed, as an illusion and as a 'broadband' vision; the dance and folksong characters kaleidoscopically rolled together and peppered with modern nervousness, and at the same time always in the mysterious undertow of a lyrical, catchy theme tune (in 3/4 time) – as in a classic movie score." *Frankfurter Rundschau*

The Weinberger reappraisal has also embraced his operatic version of Schiller's *Wallenstein* trilogy, including its first modern staging in Altenberg-Gera in 2009 and a concert performance this June at the Konzerthaus in Vienna, with plans for a recording to be released next year. The opera was premiered in 1937 in Vienna, but further performances were thwarted by the Nazi rise to power and Weinberger and his wife fled to Florida. *ConcertoNet*, reviewing the Vienna performance, noted how "this Czech composer seemed all his life to have been at the wrong place at the wrong time".

Weinberger's *Schwanda the Bagpiper* at the Dresden Semperoper, staged by Axel Köhler



Photo: Dresden Semperoper/Matthias Creutziger

## Adams Gospel in LA



Photo: Margareta Michal

John Adams's new full-evening oratorio, *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*, premiered in May by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, was summed up by *The New Yorker* as "an immensely potent work, one that may prove

pivotal in the composer's output." Scored for three soloists, a trio of countertenors, chorus and orchestra, the cast included Kelley O'Connor, Tamara Mumford, Russell Thomas and the LA Master Chorale.

The Other Mary of the title is Mary Magdalene, who along with her siblings Martha and Lazarus, offers an original perspective on Christ's final days. The libretto by Peter Sellars assembles texts from the Old and New Testaments together with poetry on religious themes by Louise Erdrich, Rosario Casetlanos, Hildegard of Bingen, Primo Levi and Ruben Dario. Writings by the social activist Dorothy Day provide a strong contemporary slant, shifting the drama into what the composer describes as "the eternal present".

"A dozen years ago, composer John Adams and librettist Peter Sellars reinvented the Nativity oratorio with *El Niño*, a brilliantly innovative work that fused biblical and contemporary texts in revelatory ways. Now they've given the piece a fittingly dynamic counterpart. The result is by turns fierce and lyrical, a twin meditation on charity and death. And both formally and thematically, it serves as a reply to Bach's Passions in much the same way that *El Niño* did for Handel's *Messiah*." *San Francisco Chronicle*

### "Adams at his most evocative and inventive" *San Francisco Chronicle*

Like *El Niño*, the new work is intended as an oratorio that can either be performed in concert or staged. Next year brings the *Other Mary*'s stage premiere in a production by Peter Sellars to be unveiled in Los Angeles on 7 March. It will then be toured by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Dudamel to the Barbican in London, the Lucerne Festival at Easter, Cité de la Musique at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, and Lincoln Center in New York (16-27 March). As a co-commissioner, the ZaterdagMatinee series in Amsterdam will present a concert performance conducted by Markus Stenz on 8 June as part of the Holland Festival.

"The composer has put everything he knows into this score about the final days of Christ, which means he includes some of the most stunning, probing, questing...music of his important career. Adams' use of the orchestra is multi-tiered, the writing having many, many small solos but also producing an ever changing tapestry of effective atmospheric effects." *Los Angeles Times*

"In rough parallels to Bach's Passions, Adams writes fugue-like passages, chorale equivalents, dramatic and contemplative arias, and turba (crowd) choruses. But his language is entirely his own, with powerful motor rhythms and passages of luminous lyricism, achieving a natural textural flow." *Musical America*

"...some of the strongest, most impassioned music of Adams's career... running the gamut from the neo-medieval harmonies of the high male voices to the end-times funk of the bass guitar, with the twang of the cimbalom lending a gritty exoticism to almost every page..." *The New Yorker*

Adams is currently embarking on a new saxophone concerto written for Timothy McAllister for premiere in August 2013 by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer.

"Written 10 years after *Schwanda*, *Wallenstein* offers considerably richer musical content. The score is densely crafted... There are but few references to Weinberger's Bohemian heritage, and more to the late works of Richard Strauss and Alexander Zemlinsky. Strictly tonal, Weinberger uses a rich harmonic language, with original chord progressions... A revival long overdue." *ConcertoNet*

## Stravinsky Rite at 100

Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, the work most often topping polls for the greatest classical score of the 20th century, reaches its centenary on 29 May 2013. Dance companies and orchestras around the world are giving celebratory performances, with attention focusing on Paris where the premiere by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes resulted in a legendary riot with rival audience factions acclaiming or denigrating the ballet's primitivist break from 19th century tradition.

The Parisian celebrations at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées total 14 performances of the *Rite* in various guises, opening on the centenary day itself with a visit by the Ballet of the Mariinsky Theatre. Valery Gergiev conducts the original choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky in its recreation by Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer, followed by a new choreography by Sasha Waltz. Tanztheater Wuppertal dances the iconic choreography by Pina Bausch, and Akram Khan creates a new dancework inspired by *The Rite of Spring*. Orchestral concerts include performances of the score by the Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre National de France and Rotterdam Philharmonic.

In Russia the Bolshoi Ballet mounts a special festival celebrating the *Rite* centenary, with four choreographies of the work (27 March – 21 April). The festival in Moscow opens with a new choreography by Wayne McGregor, followed by the versions by Nijinsky, Béjart and Bausch. In addition to the Paris and Moscow performances, the Bausch choreography also travels to Taipei, Gothenburg and Naples, and a new



Photo: BRB/Steve Hanson

30-minute documentary film is released with archive footage of Bausch rehearsing the ballet. The Polish National Ballet revives its triple-decker *Rite* programme in Warsaw in April with choreographies by Nijinsky, Emanuel Gat and Béjart all in a single evening.

The largest *Rite* event in the New World is the season-long festival mounted by Carolina Performing Arts at Chapel Hill, exploring the lasting impact of Stravinsky's work. As well as performances by the Joffrey Ballet and Martha Graham Dance Company – Graham's choreography has not been seen for 20 years – the series includes 11 new works inspired by the *Rite*. These include commissioned ballets from Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane and by Medhi Walerski for the Netherlands Dans Theater. For full information visit [www.theriteofspringat100.org](http://www.theriteofspringat100.org)

### Centenary Edition

In honour of the centenary the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel, which houses the Stravinsky archive, is issuing a special Centenary Edition. Three volumes are to be published for the first time: an annotated facsimile of the magnificent autograph full score, another of the composer's version for piano four-hands and a new collection of essays by leading Stravinsky scholars. Due to be published in May 2013, the three volumes are available – individually and as a collection – at special introductory prices.

For details and pre-order prices of these historic limited edition publications visit [www.boosey.com/rite100edition](http://www.boosey.com/rite100edition)

# Carter controversies

Elliott Carter's *Two Controversies and a Conversation*, the recently expanded version of *Conversations*, was premiered in New York in June, with pianist Eric Huebner, percussionist Colin Currie and members of the New York Philharmonic conducted by David Robertson. The 11-minute work was summed up by the *New York Times* as "a pocket-sized double concerto", and future performances include the French premiere at the Salle Pleyel in Paris on 22 February with Currie joined by Pierre-Laurent Aimard as pianist and the Orchestre de Radio France with Jukka-Pekka Saraste.



The Australian premiere of Elliott Carter's *What Next?*

the piano which ends the movement in a flourish."

"Carter's *Two Controversies and a Conversation*, emerges as a genial, economic rumination on percussive structures and strictures... the soloists trade snappy, tricky rhythmic impulses on a piano plus numerous tapping/stroking/banging devices. Supporting instruments add unpredictable commentary and echoes. As always, Carter ignores aesthetic concessions and stylistic compromises." *Financial Times*

"Two initial movements engaged the soloists in volleys of brittle one-upmanship, with no small show of athleticism from the constantly sprinting Mr. Currie. The last and longest eased them into more involved exchanges. The applause for Mr. Carter, wheelchair bound but characteristically animated, resounded thunderously." *New York Times*

Carter's one-act opera *What Next?* is enjoying two stage productions this season. The Australian premiere by Victorian Opera in Melbourne in August paired the Carter with Falla's *Master Peter's Puppet Show* – the first time *What Next?* has been seen in the coupling originally suggested by the composer. The French stage premiere follows on 30 November with the Opera National Montpellier: Carter's continuing importance in the French musical world was recently recognized with his naming as a Commandeur de la Legion d'Honneur.

"...five adults and a child awake in an apocalyptic world in which at first they can barely speak... five minutes after that, its fascinating sound world and extremely clever libretto, full of word games, had drawn me in, and I was captivated." *The Age*

Carter's *Dialogues II* for piano and orchestra will receive its world premiere at La Scala Milan on 25 October with Daniel Barenboim as soloist and Gustavo Dudamel as conductor. The German premiere of the five-minute work follows in Berlin on 15 November with Barenboim and the Staatskapelle conducted by Zubin Mehta.



## Rautavaara heart of light

Einojuhani Rautavaara's new work for string orchestra, *Into the heart of light*, was premiered in Kokkola in September. Commissioned by the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra to celebrate its 40th anniversary and dedicated to its director Juha Kangas, the 15-minute work is the fifth in the composer's *Canto* series. During its composition, ideas and motives took on an inner life as Rautavaara describes: "As a natural scientist would say: an emergence takes place. And something began to brighten up gradually, a certain kind of light towards which this music was moving."

"Rautavaara's music is easy to like and *Into the heart of light* is no exception. The harmonies and chords are fascinating, the music flows, undulates and strives purposefully towards the light. The music creates the illusion of being underwater in the darkness, looking upwards towards a distantly shining light... The strings sound magnificent... Impressive!" *Keskipohtaanmaa*

"*Into the heart of light* is almost surprisingly melodic with beautiful string lines that form a pleasing symmetry. Under the compact surface it bubbles with life and energy." *Osterbottens tidning*

A further Finnish performance is scheduled by the Pori Sinfonietta on 31 October, and the work's UK premiere is on a four-city Scottish tour by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and John Storgårds in December. This month brings the Australian premiere of Rautavaara's recent *Missa a cappella* on a five-concert tour by the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and its Swedish premiere by the Swedish Radio Choir in Stockholm. The RIAS Kammerchor gives the German premiere in Berlin in April.

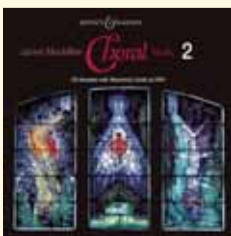


## Meyer double concerto

Joshua Bell and Edgar Meyer are touring a new *Double Concerto* for violin and double bass this season, the second commission Meyer has written for the duo. Following its premiere at the Tanglewood Festival in July, performances followed at the Aspen Festival and the Hollywood Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, with dates scheduled by the Nashville Symphony and Toronto Symphony next May and June. As *Boston Classical Review* described, "the attic-to-basement relationship between violin and bass as solo partners leaves an obvious gap that Meyer has filled skilfully... the soloists meet and bounce off each other".

"...a work that is light on its feet, as are its soloists. Bell and Meyer, students together in Indiana two decades ago, are old friends... Recurring melodic figures were the most engaging aspect of the concerto's three movements. The first proved contrapuntally sociable, the soloists in perky partnerships not only with each other but also with various solo instruments in the orchestra... The third flowed with an impressively seamless mix of bluegrass funk and funky Indian rhythms. A rhythmically tricky light orchestral backup was meant to sound deceptively laid back. It did." *Los Angeles Times*

Alongside his collaborations with Joshua Bell, Meyer's mixing of various roots music with classical has seen him create works with Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax and Hilary Hahn. February brings the first performances outside the USA of Meyer's 2006 *Triple Concerto* for himself, bluegrass mandolinist Béla Fleck and tabla player Zakir Hussain, with the India Symphony Orchestra in Mumbai and Muscat.



## MacMillan Woman of the Apocalypse

James MacMillan's newest orchestral score is a large-scale fusion of symphonic poem and concerto for orchestra, entitled *Woman of the Apocalypse*. The work was commissioned for the Cabrillo Festival's 50th anniversary and the composer travelled to California for the premiere in August conducted by Marin Alsop. The title refers to a female figure in Revelation whose exact identity has been open to a number of interpretations, including the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and a matriarchal symbol for the Church. MacMillan describes his score as being "inspired by a range of visual art works on the topic through the ages, principally by Dürer, Rubens, Doré, Blake, Marvenko and others."

"MacMillan approaches his subject like a Mannerist painter, using the orchestra to stir up big, splashy swirls of instrumental color. The 30-minute piece unfolds in five connected movements that have a narrative structure of sorts, but the effect of the music depends less on the pictorial specifics than the verve and drama of MacMillan's writing." *San Francisco Chronicle*

"In his scoring for strings and brass, one seems to hear the melting of cosmic tears and the lumbering power of the dragon that assaults the Woman of the Apocalypse. Combining the severe and the ecstatic, the delicate and the demonic, the piece stretches in one movement across about 30 minutes, outlining five phases of the great battle." *San Jose Mercury News*

Also premiered this summer was *Since it was the day of Preparation...*, an 80-minute work for voices and small ensemble which extends the narrative beyond the close of MacMillan's *St John Passion*, to take in the Resurrection and the final pages of John's Gospel. This major work with compact forces was commissioned by the Hebrides Ensemble, Edinburgh International Festival, Soli Deo Gloria and Kings Place. Performances in Edinburgh and London featured the Hebrides Ensemble under William Conway, Synergy Vocals and soloist Brindley Sherratt.

A new festive setting of the *Credo* for choir and orchestra was premiered at the BBC Proms in August and travelled to the Grafenegg Festival in Austria where MacMillan was Composer in Residence. The French premiere takes place in February at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées with John Nelson conducting the Jeune Chœur de Paris and the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris.

A new CD sampler with a PDF Guide to MacMillan's choral music by Paul Spicer is available upon request from [composers.uk@boosey.com](http://composers.uk@boosey.com).

# Golijov Ainadamar in Madrid

Osvaldo Golijov's opera *Ainadamar*, which has received nearly 90 performances worldwide, was staged for the first time in Madrid in July, a significant production in Lorca's country of birth and death, embracing the "long shadow of a universal subject" (ABC). This builds upon growing interest in the Argentinian-born composer's music in Spain, following a production of *Ainadamar* at the 2011 Granada International Festival which is set to travel to the Oviedo Opera and Santander Festival, and an extensive Golijov feature last year in the Orquesta Nacionales de Espana's *Carta Blanca* festival in Madrid.



Photo: Teatro Real Madrid © Javier del Real

The Teatro Real presented a new version of the original Peter Sellars staging from Santa Fe Opera, incorporating the famed actress Nuria Espert as an acting double to the singing role of Margarita Xirgu, framing the action with her memories of the young author Lorca 40 years earlier. At key points in the drama Espert declaimed Lorca poems drawn from the *Divan del Tamarit*, and *El País* praised her total identification with the writer: "the text in her voice, thanks to her intelligence, sounds with crystal clarity... Her appearances provided some sublime moments, with the ring of truth and the sense of history."

The title *Ainadamar* is Arabic for 'fountain of tears', referring to the place near Granada where Lorca was allegedly executed by Falangists soon after the

outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. The fountain not only acts as the site of the central tragedy in the opera but also symbolises a hope for future transformation as voices sing of freedom. The Sellars production stresses the ongoing contemporary relevance of the drama, enhanced by the urban-style murals of the Chicano artist Gronk. Golijov's music focuses on the three female voices of the actress Margarita Xirgu, her student Nuria, and the trouser role of Lorca, sung in Madrid by Jessica Rivera, Nuria Rial and Kelley O'Connor, joined by the flamenco musicians Gonzalo Grau and Adam del Monte.

"The composer Osvaldo Golijov has a fluid technique, applied to an intriguing act of intermingling, where arias and popular rhythms are in dialogue with choral writing inspired by Stravinsky. The result shifts

between a true hybrid and a search for individual styles; it is to his merit that the origin of each source of inspiration is distinguished, expertly poured into a common musical flow."

*El Mundo*

"...flamenco music, twisting jazzy melismas and rhythmic ostinati..." *La Razón*

Further Spanish performances of Golijov take place in February at the Bilbao Carnival with Lawrence Foster conducting two programmes with *Last Round* and *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*.

# Chin Alice in St Louis



Alice meets the Caterpillar in the US premiere of *Alice in Wonderland* at the Opera Theatre of St Louis

Unsub Chin's opera *Alice in Wonderland* received its US premiere in June in a new staging by the Opera Theatre of St Louis, combining clear storytelling with highly imaginative stagecraft and video projection. The *St Louis Post Dispatch* praised James Robinson's production for its "air of calculated lunacy" and soprano Ashley Emerson as "perfectly cast in the title role. She's an adorable Alice who whips off coloratura and cartwheels with equal aplomb and displays a fine sense of humour."

"...as anarchic and surreal as the book itself..." *Opera*

The St Louis production follows stagings in Munich (also filmed for DVD by Unitel), Geneva and Bielefeld, and was heard in a new reduced orchestration. With double woodwind and more modest brass, percussion and string forces, the new alternative scoring makes the opera performable in smaller houses. Tasters from the opera are also available to orchestras and ensembles in the form of two suites: *snags&snarls* for soprano and orchestra (13 minutes) and *Scenes from Alice in Wonderland* for soprano, mezzo and orchestra (40 minutes).

"One of the leading figures in contemporary music, the Korean-born, Berlin-based composer shares many traits with her teacher György Ligeti, and her music is both highly complex and mesmerizing in its sonorities. Ligeti himself once toyed with the idea of an operatic *Alice*, and in fulfilling this project Chin has written one of the most significant of recent new operas." *Opera*

"...a nightmare journey that constantly throws both the heroine and the audience off balance. Like a super-G-force roller coaster, it's weirdly and perversely fun... The vocal writing is full of outrageous swoops and leaps, some of it in Sprechstimme, and its jittery, upside-down quality is mirrored and echoed in the layered, twittering, percussive orchestration. Once in a while, Ms. Chin throws in pure lyricism, as when a children's chorus sings a breathtakingly

beautiful setting of the Mock Turtle's lament, *Beautiful Soup*; the contrast is all the more startling." *Wall Street Journal*

Chin's future projects include a work to be premiered by Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group in February, and a new score for voice and orchestra commissioned by Roche for the 2014 Lucerne Festival to be premiered by Barbara Hannigan and the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra under Simon Rattle.

## Anniversaries

2013

HK Gruber 3 January 70th birthday

Robin Holloway 19 October 70th birthday

Ned Rorem 23 October 90th birthday

Benjamin Britten 22 November Centenary of birth

2014

York Höller 11 January 70th birthday

Karl Jenkins 17 February 70th birthday

Louis Andriessen 6 June 75th birthday

Richard Strauss 11 June 150th anniversary of birth

Harrison Birtwistle 15 July 80th birthday

Peter Maxwell Davies 8 September 80th birthday

Andrzej Panufnik 24 September Centenary of birth

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Rorem



Photo: Christian Steiner

Jenkins



Photo: EMI/Phys-Franzton

# Rorem Our Town



Our Town at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama

Ned Rorem's operatic setting of Thornton Wilder's iconic play *Our Town* received its European premiere in May at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. With its cast of cameo roles surrounding the three principal characters of stage manager and young lovers, and a compact chamber orchestra, it is an ideal work for conservatoire productions and for

small or touring companies. Stephen Medcalf's London staging admirably captures Wilder's highly original dramaturgy and the theatrical journey from apple-pie charm to stark pathos.

"Wilder's picture of life in small-town New Hampshire in the years before the first world war attracted the attention of several composers before Rorem, and his librettist JD McClatchy managed to secure the rights to adapt it. They remained very faithful to the original, making one strand of the play, the love story between George and Emily, the central focus, but preserving its overall simplicity, with a bare stage, few props and much use of mime. It could all be sentimental and too cosily American, but, in fact, it's charming and rather touching, especially in the final act, when the action takes an unexpected twist into fantasy. Rorem's music is spare and typically diatonic, and the writing for chamber orchestra so transparent that every word of the text is clear." *The Guardian*

## "Rorem's text-setting is impeccable" The Times

"Were you only to hear Act I and II of *Our Town*, you might think this was Rorem's *Falstaff*: a comedic swansong, lit up by the sweet romance of the central couple... Then, as Wilder's play takes a gut-wrenching turn from life to afterlife - Emily dies in childbirth and tragically attempts to relive her youth - a ghostly chorus of the deceased puts us in a considerably more wintry place. Accept this dramatic evolution and a small-scale, but beautifully concise score comes into focus, the sweet, folksy elements (the wide open harmonies of Copland, who wanted to adapt *Our Town* himself, are never far away) gradually telescoping into more intense territory." *The Times*

"Ned Rorem's 2006 adaptation is exactly the sort of touching idyll the play would seem to require. A truly authentic American opera... Made when the composer was 83 and the playwright had been dead for 30 years, it is a beautifully autumnal piece of work, yet suits student performers well." *Opera*

Rorem's 90th birthday is celebrated in 2013.

# Gál on disc

Recent years have seen an explosion of new recordings expanding the discography of Hans Gál (1890-1987). Following musical training in Vienna, he achieved considerable success in the 1920s both as a composer - signing a publishing contract with Simrock in 1924 - and as a teacher. When the National Socialists gained power in 1933, Gál's position as Director of the Mainz Conservatory was suspended, his music was banned, and he returned to Vienna. With the Anschluss in 1938 Gál fled with his family to the UK, settling in Edinburgh. During the Second World War he was sent to internment camps near Liverpool and on the Isle of Man - his diaries *Music behind Barbed Wire* are in preparation for publication by Toccata Press. With peace restored, Gál was offered a lectureship at Edinburgh University and was instrumental in Rudolf Bing's plans to found the Edinburgh Festival. He continued composing into his 90s, his life and music providing a chronicle spanning close to a century.

The revival in Gál's music has been driven largely by a flood of discs, capturing the attention of the recording-buying public with its lyricism, Romantic harmonies, and colourful orchestration. This phenomenon was selected by the *Washington Post* in a recent article as a demonstration of how the recording studio is providing reputational restitution to composers who were not radical trailblazers and whose music has unfairly vanished from view: "Elegant, adeptly constructed, and unashamedly tonal, even beautiful, Gál's music hearkens back to a bygone tradition of Viennese late romanticism".

It was the release in 2005 of an Avie 3-CD set of Gál's piano music by Leon McCawley that first attracted attention including an Editor's Choice in *Gramophone*. This was followed by a piano recital by Martin Jones on Nimbus and two CDs of string quartets by the Edinburgh Quartet on Meridian. Since 2010 Avie has released a further seven Gál recordings, including a cycle of Gál symphonies with the Northern Sinfonia and Orchestra of the Swan. Labels with a special interest in exiled composers and 'Entartete Musik' have recorded Gál's orchestral and chamber works, including Gramola, eda records and Toccata Classics, which recently released an attractive disc of cello works.

Music by Gál continues to be published by the historic Edition Simrock, now a Boosey & Hawkes imprint, with recent catalogue additions including the *Piano Quartet* commissioned by left-hand pianist Paul Wittgenstein and a *Concertino for Organ and String Orchestra*. For further information on the composer visit [www.boosey.com/gal](http://www.boosey.com/gal) and the Hans Gál Society's website [www.hansgal.com](http://www.hansgal.com).



Hans Gál, c.1930

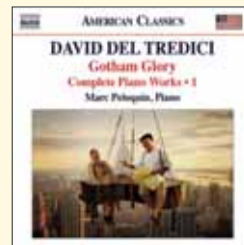
# Britten Palmer films

A special collection of Tony Palmer films about Benjamin Britten and his music are assembled into a new box set of DVDs, released this month in advance of the composer's centenary in 2013. Together with *A Time There Was*, which won Palmer the Italia Prize, are three of the director's films not seen for 30 or more years, collected in the *Britten at 100* box set and accompanied by a special 58 page booklet. Also included is Britten's famous 1964 Aspen Award Speech, illustrated with over 50 photographs.

*Benjamin Britten and his Festival* was made for the BBC in 1967 to commemorate the opening of Snape Concert Hall and offers a behind the scenes look at the Aldeburgh Festival and the opening of the new hall by The Queen. *The Burning Fiery Furnace*, made for the BBC the same year, documents the recording of the church parable in Orford Church and is the longest single piece of film of Britten at work. *Death in Venice* was shot on location in Venice at the request of Peter Pears following Britten's death, assembling many singers from the original cast. *A Time There Was* is a 1979 portrait of Britten with appearances by Pears, Janet Baker, Julian Bream, Richter, Bernstein and a host of the composer's close friends.

# New Recordings

**David Del Tredici**  
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Marc Peloquin  
Naxos 8.559680

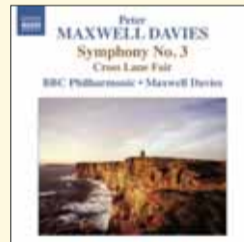


**HK Gruber**  
*Busking/3 MOB Pieces*  
**Kurt Schwertsik**  
*Divertimento Macchiato*  
Håkan Hardenberger/  
Swedish Chamber Orchestra/HK Gruber  
BIS-CD-1884



**Magnus Lindberg**  
*Trio/Santa Fe Project/Partia*  
Anssi Karttunen/  
Kari Kriikku/  
Magnus Lindberg  
Ondine ODE 1199-2  
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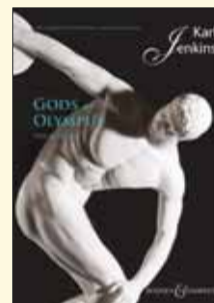
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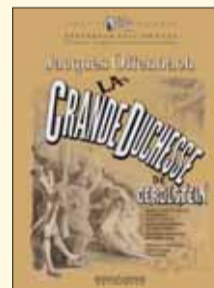


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