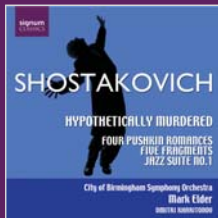


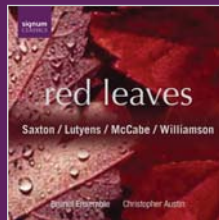
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John Metcalf

In time of daffodils

Thomas Bowes violin
Gerard McChrystal saxophone
Jeremy Huw Williams baritone
BBC National Orchestra of Wales
Grant Llewellyn conductor

JOHN METCALF IN TIME OF DAFFODILS

	Paradise Haunts...	
1.	Paradise Haunts...	[25.13]
	Three Mobiles	
2.	Mobile I	[2.58]
3.	Mobile II	[8.01]
4.	Mobile III	[3.11]
	In Time of Daffodils	
5.	The Lent Lily	[4.01]
6.	Daffodils	[5.48]
7.	White and Green	[1.46]
8.	Interlude	[1.42]
9.	To Daffodils	[3.41]
10.	A Thing of Beauty	[7.39]
11.	To an Early Daffodil	[2.29]
	Total	[66.31]

BBC NATIONAL ORCHESTRA OF WALES
CONDUCTED BY GRANT LLEWELLYN

THOMAS BOWES - VIOLIN / GERARD McCHRISTAL - SAXOPHONE
JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS - BARITONE

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PARADISE HAUNTS: THREE MOBILES: IN TIME OF DAFFODILS

The three works on this disc span a period of twelve years of creative work. There are connections in the way that they were conceived in that that they all started life either as a whole or in part as works with piano; the versions on the disc evolved, therefore, over time.

Paradise Haunts was composed at a creative turning point in my life. It marked the end of a long process of simplification of my musical language and was the first work of mine to embrace a wholly pan-diatonic or 'white note' style. It is, however, only in this sense a 'minimalist' work because its structure and textures are more intuitive than motoric and are developed in ways which, at least on the surface, will be familiar to experienced listeners.

Three Mobiles take this pan-diatonic process further, displaying (to reflect the title) a structural approach influenced by serialism and - especially in the outer movements - a rhythmic complexity which is also a feature of my music.

The most recent work of the three is In Time of Daffodils. I drew on my experience of writing opera in composing it. The challenge of writing for baritone and a large orchestra yet keeping the texture and words clear was an important one to respond to. I also attempted a quasi symphonic structure with the parallel sets of three poems being musical paraphrases. At the same time the piece makes a tentative move back to a small degree of harmonic discursiveness - the central song of each set of three containing the tonality of the outer two songs as well as its own harmonic area.

These intellectual, structural and harmonic devices serve a simple purpose in the music - to retain unity and consistency in what is very often a romantic outpouring.



“PARADISE HAUNTS . . .”

Thomas Bowes, after hearing a performance of my music in 1994, invited me to compose a new piece for him. A chance reading of a review of a book about film-maker Derek Jarman's garden started the creative process. The particular quote that became etched on my memory was “paradise haunts gardens and it haunts mine”. As well as the starting point it gave me the central impetus for the work - the sense of the metaphysical that inhabits gardens (which others have also noted) - and, of course, the work's title.

Jarman's garden was very distinctive and the images of it were striking. Contrasts abounded - between exotic plant species and driftwood sculpture, the austere beauty of the Kent coast and the dominating presence of the nearby nuclear power station. But the focus of the inspiration for the piece also quickly moved both to gardens in general and moreover to my own wild garden by the Afon Teifi in West Wales. Also present in the piece is a sense of mortality. Jarman's garden had been developed in the last years of his life and had clearly been important to him during his final illness.

As the composition progressed I found myself drawn into new creative areas. For some years I had been moving towards a pan-diatonic, 'white-note' music. Though Paradise Haunts marked the completion of this stage of development it was nevertheless quite a shock to write such an extended work without any chromatic change. The piece is in strict variation form and the white note harmony rotates around a simple four note progression in the bass - A/F/D/E. Notwithstanding this rigour and simplicity, the surface of the music is in no way 'minimal' but is characterised, rather, by essentially familiar contrasts of mood and texture. The violin writing is often virtuosic and incorporates fast passage work and, in one section, rapid alternation between arco playing, left hand and standard (right hand) pizzicato. The piece is at times impressionistic and also to a degree suggestive, in what might be called a naturalistic way, of the subject matter.

The variations proceed without a break, an emotional progression informing the music and moving it forward. Towards the end of the work a long flowing passage of endless melody leads to a sustained climax and what seems like a very final chord, the solo part doing a downward glissando into silence. This was, indeed, the intended ending of the piece - but it was not to be. At this point in

the composition I felt the need to continue and I did, writing the last five minutes of the piece in a single afternoon in July 1995. In a final section, after a brief return to the music of the very opening of the piece and a series of elegiac chords answered by single notes on tubular bells, the violin again climbs steadily accompanied by reiterated chords before once more subsiding gradually into silence, this time in a new, unknown, space.

The original version of Paradise Haunts was for violin and piano and was premiered on October 3rd 1995 by Thomas Bowes and Eleanor Alberga in St. David's Hall, Cardiff. I subsequently orchestrated the work. Thomas Bowes also gave the world premiere of this version with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by Grant Llewelyn on September 9th 1999 in Llandaff Cathedral as part of the 1999 Vale of Glamorgan Festival.

THREE MOBILES

Since my music sometimes wears its heart on its sleeve I have frequently employed quite limited material and rigorous structures to counterbalance this - simple 'white note' harmony and palindrome to give just two examples. When making choices such as these, I have simultaneously aimed for a

certain lightness or playfulness of expression so, although the music is, in certain senses, very strict, in others it is the very opposite. Works like Light Music for piano (four hands) and the palindrome for six pianos Never Odd or Even typify this approach and so, by slightly different means, does Three Mobiles.

In sculptural terms a mobile is a three dimensional object with moving parts. Those parts never change in essence but, as they move, are seen in a seemingly endless series of different combinations and perspectives. This is the effect I have tried to achieve in this piece. I have taken a series of 36 chords, all diatonic to E flat major. Some are common chords, while most have one or more notes added to the basic triad. The chords have a further 'logic' in that the bass of each successive chord moves down step by step. Using them as a basis, I have constructed the three movements in the manner of classical variation technique adding a 'free' melody on top drawn from notes of the current chord. In this way I have tried to replicate the qualities of mobiles in terms of sound.

Mobile 1 is fast and lively; it has repeated chords overlaid with polyrhythms. In a further attempt to represent the concept of the piece, the material is

presented in the same rhythmic and metric format three times. Mobile 2 has a slow walking bass over which combines with a very free, almost jazz-inflected melody conveying a feeling of calm and tranquillity. Mobile 3 is very playful and light and moves swiftly through and around the now familiar harmony.

Like Paradise Haunts, Three Mobiles also started out as a piece with piano accompaniment. It was commissioned by the Machynlleth Festival with funds made available in part by the Arts Council of Wales and was first performed on August 21st 2001 by Gerard McChrystal with Dan Moriyama (piano). The piece was revised in 2003 (when the version for String Orchestra was made) and again in 2006.

IN TIME OF DAFFODILS

Like the other two works, the version of In Time of Daffodils heard on this disc also evolved in its own particular way. The starting point was a commission from Jeremy Huw Williams to write a short song cycle for voice and piano. Flowers have inspired many poets and there are, in particular, a number of beautiful poems about daffodils. This was a strong enough impulse to pursue the idea but it was also helpful to have such a clear and

consistent theme and the obvious associations with Spring (when the first performance was to be given) and with Wales, further encouraged this approach. Having chosen To Daffodils by Herrick, To an Early Daffodil by Lowell and the famous Wordsworth poem, I was ready to set to work.

In the meantime, a commission had arrived from BBC Radio 3 for an orchestral work to mark my 60th birthday year. It soon became clear that a much more substantial song cycle was possible and three further poems were added - Housman's The Lent Lily, the famous prologue to Endymion by Keats and a second Amy Lowell poem - White and Green. In order to pursue a more symphonic approach to the now much longer cycle, I decided to group the poems into two sets of three and also to make the second set of three a musical paraphrase of the first - the Housman of the Herrick, Keats of Wordsworth and the second Lowell setting a reworking of the first. I also decided to write a short orchestral interlude between the two sets. I then decided on a final order:

Housman; Wordsworth; Lowell

Interlude

Herrick; Keats; Lowell

In a further move towards symmetry, I then made specific structural decisions about the tonalities of the settings. The Housman is diatonic to A minor and the Lowell to D major. The central Wordsworth setting contains stanzas in these two tonalities alternating with its own tonality (diatonic to B minor/D flat major). The second sequence of poems follows the same tonal scheme. The aim of this whole approach was to represent in music both the familiarity of the turning/returning year and the different feelings and circumstances that we may encounter at those same times. I also wished to touch on the theme of death and renewal.

The poems are, on the whole, very well known, especially the Wordsworth - which is perhaps the best known of all poems in English. Herrick paints a poignant picture of transience and mortality which I have reflected in a very romantic setting while Housman evokes a compelling image of a lost rustic world. Amy Lowell's poems contain sensuous imagery and a bright vibrant energy which are evocative of the flower and the time of year. Coming towards the end of the cycle the Keats extract, drawn from the prologue to his wonderful epic poem Endymion, introduces a new dimension and emphasis. While all the other poems speak solely through and about nature,

Keats reminds us of the comparable experience and solace to be found in the art created by man:

'And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read!
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink'

The title of the piece is drawn from the first line of a poem by ee cummings (not set).

The first three songs of In Time of Daffodils were commissioned by Jeremy Huw Williams with funds made available by the Arts Council of Wales and the National Lottery. The subsequent reworking into a symphonic cycle of six songs with a short orchestral interlude was in response to a commission from BBC Radio 3. The orchestration of the work features prominent roles for solo woodwinds - to reflect the pastoral quality of the piece - and for brass and harp (for their visual association with daffodils).

© John Metcalf

TEXTS

The Lent Lily
A.E. Housman

'Tis spring; come out to ramble
The hilly brakes around,
For under thorn and bramble
About the hollow ground
The primroses are found.

And there's the windflower chilly
With all the winds at play,
And there's the Lenten lily
That has not long to stay
And dies on Easter day.

And since till girls go maying
You find the primrose still,
And find the windflower playing
With every wind at will,
But not the daffodil,

Bring baskets now, and sally
Upon the spring's array,
And bear from hill and valley
The daffodil away
That dies on Easter day.

Daffodils
William Wordsworth

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed and gazed but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

White and Green
Amy Lowell

Hey! My daffodil-crowned,
Slim and without sandals!
As the sudden spurt of flame upon darkness
So my eyeballs are startled with you,
Supple-limbed youth among the fruit-trees,
Light runner through tasselled orchards.
You are an almond flower unsheathed
Leaping and flickering between the budded branches.

To Daffodils
Robert Herrick

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,

As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

A Thing of Beauty (Endymion)
John Keats

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkn'd ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,

Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read!
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink

To an Early Daffodil
Amy Lowell

Thou yellow trumpeter of laggard Spring!
Thou herald of rich Summer's myriad flowers!
The climbing sun with new recovered powers
Does warm thee into being, through the ring
Of rich, brown earth he woos thee, makes thee fling
Thy green shoots up, inheriting the dowers
Of bending sky and sudden, sweeping showers,
Till ripe and blossoming thou art a thing
To make all nature glad, thou art so gay;
To fill the lonely with a joy untold;
Nodding at every gust of wind to-day,
To-morrow jewelled with raindrops. Always bold
To stand erect, full in the dazzling play
Of April's sun, for thou hast caught his gold

BIOGRAPHIES

JOHN METCALF

John Metcalf was born in Swansea, Wales in 1946. A joint UK/Canadian citizen, he is one of the foremost composers working in Wales, his composing career embracing a large variety of work including six operas, two to commission from Welsh National Opera. His chamber operas Kafka's Chimp and A Chair in Love - notable in that they are performed without a conductor and with instrumentalists memorising much of the score - have received international exposure and recognition from productions in several countries.

Since the early 1990s a definitive series of orchestral and chamber works have also enhanced his reputation nationally and internationally. These include Paradise Haunts, Mapping Wales, Cello Symphony and the String Quartet Llwybrau Cân (Paths of Song).

During this time he has also continued to explore the boundaries and context of music performance in projects such as the collaboration with artist Catrin Webster on Transports performed at the Galleria



Comunale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Rome. Performances around the world marked his 60th birthday year in 2006.

John Metcalf was both an Artistic Director and Associate Artistic Director at the Banff Centre, Canada for a period of nearly ten years and was Artistic Director of the Swansea Festival from 1996 - 2007. He is presently Artistic Director of the award-winning Vale of Glamorgan Festival. He has led creative music projects in more than one hundred schools throughout Wales, reflecting his

belief in an active, participatory role for the composer in society. In 1999 his music was played during the signing, by Her Majesty the Queen, of the Act bringing into being Wales' first elected Assembly for 500 years.

www.johnmetcalf.com

GERARD McCHRISTAL

Gerard McChrystal comes from Derry, N.Ireland. He took up the saxophone in 1982 and by 1989 had already performed concertos with The Philharmonia, London and the RTE Concert Orchestra. Gerard studied at the RNCM, Manchester, Guildhall School of Music & Drama and Northwestern University, Chicago.

Gerard has performed in over twenty five countries including South Africa, USA, Korea, New Zealand, India, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Caribbean, Germany, Slovenia and Sweden.

Albums include Debussy Rhapsody for Chandos Records conducted by Yan Pascal Tortelier, a concerto



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album with London Musici called Meeting Point and a recent CD on the Meridian label called pluckblow with guitarist Craig Ogden.

Orchestras and artists Gerard has worked with include, The Orchestra of San Francisco Ballet, The Staatsorchester, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland,

Seoul Wind Orchestra, The Soweto String Quartet, tenorist Tommy Smith, The Smith Quartet and vocal group Codetta.

In 1998 Gerard was appointed Professor of Saxophone at Trinity College of Music, London and tutor at The Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff.

JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS

The Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams studied at St John's College, Cambridge, the National Opera Studio, and with April Cantelo. He made his debut with WNO as Guglielmo (Cosi fan tutte) since when he has appeared in fifty operatic roles. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, Hong Kong, and most European countries.

He has given recitals at Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and has appeared with the BBCCO, BBCNOW, BBCSO, BBCSSO, BBC Philharmonic, CBSO, Hallé, Philharmonia, RLPO, RPO, LPO and LSO.



He is renowned as a fine exponent of contemporary music, having commissioned much new music and given premieres of works by Alun Hoddinott, William Mathias, John Tavener, Martin Butler, John Metcalf, Julian Philips, Edward Dudley Hughes, Ian Wilson, Richard Causton, Edward Rushton and Huw Watkins. He has frequently recorded for BBC Radio 3 (in recital, and with the BBCNOW, BBCSO, BBCSSO, BBC Philharmonic, and CBSO), and has made many commercial recordings, including seven solo discs of songs.

He appeared with WNO at the opening night of the Wales Millennium Centre, and received the inaugural Sir Geraint Evans Award from the Welsh Music Guild, given annually to a person who has made a significant contribution to Welsh music: “there has been an unanimous decision that the first award should be made to baritone Jeremy Huw Williams in recognition of not only his performing ability but also for the tremendous support that he has given to Welsh composers and their music in recent years”.

premiered the concerto of Eleanor Alberga with the SCO and Joseph Swensen.

As the duo “Double Exposure” with the composer and pianist Eleanor Alberga, he toured regularly and extensively in the USA until 2000. The duo made a ground breaking trip to five Chinese

cities in 1997. In 2003 Bowes became the Artistic Director of the annual “Langvad Chamber Music Jamboree” chamber music festival in northern Denmark. He plays a 1659 Nicolo Amati.

More details at www.thomasbowes.com

THOMAS BOWES

The product of many years of steady growth, the playing of Thomas Bowes is now fast gaining international recognition.

With the Elgar he made his Halle debut with Mark Elder in 2007. With the Britten concerto he made his German debut with the Bremer Philharmoniker in 2003, returning to Germany in 2005 for the Elgar with Ari Rasilainen. In 2006 he played the Britten with the Britten-Pears Orchestra at the Snape Maltings and Paul Daniel. He has given performances of the Walton and Elgar concertos

with renowned British music interpreter and expert Vernon Handley.

Bowes has excelled with the Szymanowski concertos, making a specially recorded broadcast of No.2 for the 1998 BBC Proms season with the Ulster Orchestra and Takou Yuasa. Future plans include the concertos of Bartók and Schoenberg.

Bowes made his debut with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in the world premiere of John Metcalf’s “Paradise Haunts...”. In 2001 he



BBC NATIONAL ORCHESTRA OF WALES

“...the Welsh orchestra, conducted by Thierry Fischer, was outstanding from the downbeat.”
Washington Post, January 2007

The BBC National Orchestra of Wales occupies a very special role as both a national and broadcasting orchestra, acclaimed not only for the quality of its performances but also for its importance within its own community. The 2006/07 concert season has been an exciting time for the Orchestra's conducting team, who have gone from strength to strength with newly appointed Principal Conductor Thierry Fischer.

The Orchestra is committed to performing contemporary music and developing the talents of new composers, highlighted by the appointment in February 2006 of Guto Puw as Resident Composer to compliment the Orchestra's relationship with Composer-In-Association Michael Berkeley.

BBC National Orchestra of Wales is Orchestra-in-Residence at St David's Hall, Cardiff and it also presents a concert series at the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea. The Orchestra tours throughout Wales and internationally, with their concerts being

broadcast on BBC Radio 3, BBC Cymru Wales radio and television, and BBC 4. In autumn 2008, the Orchestra will be moving to their new state-of-the-art recording and rehearsal space, BBC Hoddinott Hall at the Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff.

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GRANT LLEWELLYN

Music Director of the North Carolina Symphony, Principal Conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society and Associate Guest Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Grant Llewellyn is renowned all over the world for his exceptional charisma, energy and easy authority in music of all styles and periods.

His guest conducting includes the symphonies of Boston, Houston, Milwaukee, St. Louis and Toronto and, in Europe, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, the BBC Symphony and the Helsinki Philharmonic.

Llewellyn's repertoire is wide. He is renowned as a formidable interpreter of music of the Baroque and Classical periods as well as being one of our foremost conductors of symphonic and operatic repertoire.

Grant Llewellyn lives in Cardiff with his wife Charlotte and their four children.



© Michael Lutch



This recording was made in the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, part of the Grade I-listed Guildhall. The Hall, decorated with murals by renowned British artist Frank Brangwyn, is popular as a concert and recording venue, and is visited regularly by leading orchestras.



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trwy Gyngor Celfyddydau Cymru

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