

MUSIC FOR MY LOVE

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF SOMEONE SPECIAL
100+ NEW WORKS FOR STRING ORCHESTRA, VOLUME TWO

MUSIC BY

NICOLAS BACRI

RONALD CORP

WIM HAUTEKIET

SEAN HICKEY

JOHN KINSELLA

DAVID MATTHEWS

PHILLIP RAMEY

GREGORY ROSE

GERARD SCHURMANN

JOSÉ SEREBRIER

ROBIN WALKER

RICHARD WHILDS

Ukrainian Festival Orchestra
Paul Mann



FIRST RECORDINGS

MUSIC FOR MY LOVE, VOLUME TWO

by Martin Anderson

Yodit Tekle was born in Asmara, the capital of Eritrea, on 29 December 1977, and came to the United Kingdom as a refugee from the harsh internal policies of her native country. We were introduced by a mutual friend at a concert on 13 April 2008, and she stopped the breath in my throat – I hope you know the feeling when you first see someone and know that's where you have to be – and, but for a hiatus of a few months, we spent the rest of her short life together. In the autumn of 2014 Yodit was diagnosed with stomach cancer. That kind of news throws everything into perspective and so the first thing I said to her when I went to see her in hospital was: 'I hadn't realised I loved you so much.' Quick as a flash, she answered: 'So where's the ring?' I countered: 'But what happens if we get married and you survive?' We both laughed loudly – because neither of us thought for a minute that she really might die. Even so, on the bus home that evening I didn't require much reflection to understand what needed to be done, and as soon as I got in, I went online and bought a ring. We duly got engaged on Christmas Day, when Yodit was so full of life and happiness that even now, years later, it doesn't seem possible that she had less than five months to live.¹

This project of 100+ new pieces for string orchestra had its origins in a Skype conversation with the composer Steve Elcock just after that first shocking diagnosis.

¹ Some of the composers' commentaries below refer to Yodit as my fiancée and others describe her as my wife, and so a word of explanation may be required. Formally, we were indeed only engaged, but one day in late March 2015 (I think), as I was growing worried at the speed of her deterioration, I said to Yodit: 'We ought to get married, you know'. She answered calmly: 'We already are married'. That was good enough for me, and so I think of her as my wife. I did try to organise a ceremony in the chapel of Charing Cross Hospital but she was already too weak, and we had to settle for a blessing on our union from Will Leaf, Yodit's family pastor at St Paul's, Hammersmith, delivered at the side of her hospital bed; I have been an atheist since I was a lad, but that semi-formal solemnisation meant much to me.

Steve said that he was very sorry to hear the news and that he didn't suppose that there was anything he could do to help but, of course, to let him know if there might be. Off the top of my head, I said, yes, there was: could he write Yodit some music to bring her some comfort in her illness? I expected perhaps some jolly little tune to cheer her up; instead, to my surprise and delight, the very next day Steve sent the score of his deeply felt, deeply moving *Song without Words for Yodit* (we later streamlined the title as *Song for Yodit*),² along with an electronic realisation so that she could hear it. I immediately e-mailed the two files to her in hospital. She texted me back her reaction, which began: 'Wow Wow!'; she described it as 'healing music'.

In spite of a brief window of hope, it wasn't long before chemotherapy was doing as much harm as good. Over the course of the spring Yodit slowly lost strength and she died on 24 April 2015, aged only 37, and leaving our five-year-old son, Alex. The courage she displayed in her illness left me open-mouthed with admiration – it was a side to her character I had barely glimpsed before then. Only twice did I see her give in to despair, when tests confirmed there was no hope – and even then her sole concern was for Alex: 'But I have a child!' Not once did I hear her ask 'Why me?' By the same token, she refused to let us show any weakness in her presence: the slightest sign of tears brought a frown and a rebuke. We understood, of course – if you wake from morphine-induced sleep to such a terrible reality, the last thing you need to see is a wall of weeping faces – but it was bloody difficult all the same. And it was made the more difficult by Yodit's determination that, aided by the God she so believed in, she would survive. That meant that we could not discuss with her the possibility that she might die: it would have been betraying her astonishing resolve. And so, in front of her, at least, we had to maintain the proverbial stiff upper lip and talk as if she would indeed recover.

Because I therefore had to put an optimistic spin on the awful reality of our future, we naturally discussed its more appealing possibilities – like taking a real holiday together, all three of us, since we had never spent more than a few days away as a family. And then, given the pleasure that Steve Elcock's piece had brought her, an idea came

² Recorded by the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Paul Mann, on Volume One of this series, Toccata Classics TOCC 0333.

into my head: given that Yodit and I had met at a concert at Cadogan Hall (just off Sloane Square in central London), I would ask some other composer friends to write companion pieces to Steve's *Song for Yodit* and put on a concert there – on 29 December, her birthday. I meant it, too, and told her about it. A few years earlier I had forgotten her birthday – it just went completely out of my mind. Of course, I was horrified when I did remember, a few days afterwards, and apologised with a forest of roses. Yodit said it was OK, it didn't matter, but she must have been hurt. Now I reminded her of that omission and told her I was going to overcompensate and put on a concert in her honour: it would consist entirely of music written specially for her and last for an hour or so, so that family and friends could then convene downstairs for a birthday party – 'and all you have to do is be there'. She gave me a you're-bonkers kind of grin, but you could tell that she was really tickled by the idea, even though she was already too weak to discuss it in any detail. In my mind, it would also have been an upbeat, optimistic opportunity for her family, scattered around the world, to come together and say goodbye to her. That's when I started writing to my composer friends, one after the other, to ask if they would consider writing a piece – for the concert, and so I imposed, rather imperiously, an October deadline.³ I had expected most people to say: 'Sorry, I'm too busy – I have a commission from Aldeburgh, Tanglewood, wherever, and so can't make your deadline'. Instead, almost no one answered along those lines; the responses were overwhelmingly supportive of the idea. In parallel, it was becoming increasingly obvious that Yodit was not going to live much longer and so this concert was going to have to be a memorial event – but even before she died, I already had too many pieces for it.

That's why and when it became a recording project – but it didn't stop there. Although I decided right at the start that I would not ask any composer with whom I didn't already have a personal connection, I kept thinking of friends whom I really should ask. And I honestly wasn't aware that I knew so many composers. I suppose that, after some four decades' activity in classical music, first as a writer (often reviewing

³ To begin with, the idea of a birthday concert wasn't so outlandish: halfway through Yodit's course of chemotherapy, her oncologists told us that the results were so encouraging that she might have another year of life – but the reprieve turned out to be far shorter than that prognosis, which was itself shocking enough. In the event, her cancer turned out to be unusually aggressive.

performances and recordings of new music), then as a publisher of books on music, as Toccata Press, and, since 2005, as Toccata Classics, I should have realised there might be quite a few – but you don't sit down and add up the number of economists or doctors that you know, do you? And with the memorial concert no longer an issue (it turned out that the Cadogan Hall was already booked on 29 December, in any case), there was no restriction on numbers. Now, as soon as I thought: 'Oh, yes, I must ask so-and-so', off would go an e-mail – and in came one acceptance after another; I think I had only four refusals, and almost all because of the pressure of existing deadlines (one composer had just broken his wrist, his wife explained, and he wasn't going to be writing anything for anyone anytime soon). And because the series was growing incrementally, one name at a time, I didn't realise how big the whole thing was getting.

For a few months, the project had the title 'Music for Yodit', because that's exactly what it is, but it soon became clear that Yodit was too exotic a name – although it is only the equivalent of Judith (and Yodit was calling herself 'Judy' when we first met). 'Music for Helen' or 'Music for Miranda' would have been clearer, but no one understood that Yodit wasn't a village in Uganda or a Japanese transcendental technique, and so the public face of the undertaking became the more universal 'Music for My Love', in the hope of getting the message to the widest audience – but in my mind, of course, it's still 'Music for Yodit'.

The basic aim, of course, is that Yodit should be remembered in music: she was pleased by the idea that some more pieces were being written for her in succession to Steve Elcock's *Song for Yodit* – although she would have been embarrassed (and, I hope, touched) by the size the project has now reached. A further hope is that, since I don't think so much music has ever been written for a single individual (practising musicians like Rostropovich and Ysaÿe apart, of course), it will help sustain Yodit in Alex's memory. Since he was five when she died, he does have a clear grasp of who she was, but if in years to come he can look on what 'Music for Yodit' has generated and think to himself: 'My mum was such a wonderful person that all these composers have written music for her', I'll be well pleased (even more so, of course, if he also thinks 'because my dad asked them to', but that was no part of my design). Perhaps he'll attend a concert where one

of these pieces is performed; perhaps, indeed, since he is now in his third year of violin lessons, he may even end up playing in one of them himself.

It wasn't until I listened to Chi-Chi Nwanoku on *Desert Island Discs* on 16 February 2018 that another important aspect of 'Music for My Love' struck me. Chi-Chi is the Nigerian-Irish bassist who founded Chineke!, a London-based orchestra that exists specifically to give a platform to gifted black and minority-ethnic musicians, and on *Desert Island Discs* she discussed her work in bringing Chineke! to life. All of a sudden, it struck me that not only had all these 'Yodit' pieces been written for a civilian, a non-musician: they had been composed for a black African woman. I had supposed that this project was probably unique in the history of music; in view of the identity of its central figure, it almost certainly is, and I hope that, like Chineke!, it can do something to expand the audience for new classical music beyond the boundaries that convention has set.

My thoughts soon turned, too, to what further good the project might do. This first release suggests that recording all 100+ pieces will require around £200,000. If we can raise that amount in donations, anything the project earns above that can be directed elsewhere. I have five targets in mind, where any revenue will go in equal measure. Financial and practical help from Macmillan Cancer Support made Yodit's last months easier: they paid for a bed in a private ward in Charing Cross Hospital and provided a special pressure-sensitive bed at home to help her rest. Winston's Wish is a charity that supports bereaved children (every year, apparently, over 35,000 children in the UK lose a parent – more than 100 a day), and they gave me invaluable advice in preparing Alex for his mother's death. With her diagnosis, Yodit and I naturally took a fierce interest in the state of cancer research, and Cancer Research UK is battling to find a remedy for this awful illness; some of any extra money must go to them. Fourth, I have set up a trust fund for Alex – and Yodit would have insisted that any project in her name must bring him some benefit. Lastly, given the open-ended nature of this project, Toccata Classics needs to be able to look after later commissions in the series.

I must thank all the composers who have found the time and inspiration to allow this venture to begin. It will be many years before it is concluded, but if in that time it enriches your life just a tiny bit as much as Yodit enriched mine, you will understand why I should want to commemorate such a wonderful woman. In life she gave me more than I can measure; in death she can receive.

Martin Anderson founded Toccata Classics and the publishing house Toccata Press after a degree from St Andrews University in mediaeval French and German. He spent twenty years of his professional life as an editor of economics, for the Institute of Economic Affairs in London and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris. He writes on music for a variety of publications in Britain and abroad, with a special interest in Nordic and Baltic composers.

THE COMPOSERS AND THE WORKS

1 Nicolas BACRI

Prélude aux chants d'amour

The *Prélude aux chants d'amour* was written after the shocking news of the death of Yodit, wife of my friend Martin Anderson. Since I was busy composing the final part of my song-cycle *Chants d'amour*, on love poems that the Belgian poet Émile Verhaeren had written for his wife (*Les heures*), I thought straightaway that a purely instrumental prelude might introduce the thematic elements developed in these songs and that it could be played independently as a memorial piece. The work begins with a modal, Ravelian harmonic sweetness and grows more and more chromatic before ending in a mood of peace.

NB

Born in November 1961, **Nicolas Bacri** is one of France's most frequently performed and recorded composers. After a period marked by highly polyphonic atonalism (his First Symphony is dedicated to Elliott Carter), he found an interest in tonality – far from a sign of musical conservatism, but rather an earnest, and constantly renewed, exploration of his own musical mind. A major breakthrough came in January 1985, with the first performance of his Violin Concerto, Op. 7, on Radio France, and since then his orchestral works have been championed by a wide range of prominent musicians. The composer of more than 140 works in many genres, he has won a number of awards, among them the Prix de Rome (entailing two years' scholarship at Villa Medici, in 1983–85), Prix Georges Wildenstein de l'Académie des Beaux Arts, Casa de Velazquez (bringing two years' scholarship in Madrid, in 1991 – 93) and the Prix Pierre Cardin de l'Académie des Beaux Arts. Recent commissions have come from the French Ministry of Culture, Radio France, the Orchestre des Jeunes de la Méditerranée, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Pro Quartet and elsewhere. He made his debut as conductor with the London Symphony Orchestra with his *A Day: Four Images for Orchestra* at the Opéra Royal of the Château de Versailles in September 2013. His one-act opera, *Così Fanciulli*, written with Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt using the same characters as *Così fan tutte*, was given twelve performances at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris in June 2014.



Photo: Olivier M. Palade

[2] John KINSELLA

Amhrán do Yodit

Not long before Yodit's death I sent Martin a short piece for solo violin entitled *Amhrán do Yodit* ('Song for Yodit') and will never forget him telling me that, rather than wait for a violinist, he had immediately rung her in hospital and sung it to her over the phone. This new string piece has no musical connection with that earlier work; instead, it is

constructed with wisps of melodic material from the Eleventh Symphony that I was composing at the time and which were filling my imagination. It is therefore a very personal offering to both Martin and Yodit. JK

John Kinsella was born in Dublin in 1932 and after a varied career in administration retired from his position of Head of Music at Ireland's national broadcaster, Raidió Teilifís Éireann, at the age of 56 to take up composition on a full-time basis. He likes the comparison that he truly began his career as a composer at roughly the same age that Beethoven stopped.

Since 1988 he has composed a steady stream of pieces and has now completed eleven symphonies, a second cello concerto and a second violin concerto, five string quartets and many other smaller works. He completed his Eleventh Symphony at the age of 84 in 2016.



Photo: Chris O'Dell

[3] Richard WHILDS

176 reasons...

Forty-four string players. All playing the same melody. Fragments into two. The new melody doubles the tempo but diminishes the dynamic. Then it splits into three. Then four. Then six. Then nine. Then thirteen. Then 22. Each time the new voice will be quicker than the previous one and will drag the dynamic down a notch. Until a point is arrived at where all 44 players are playing individually, and at the quietest dynamic of the piece, with the newest voice playing at the fastest rate. Total dissolution. Then, inevitably, everything begins to reassemble: the players start very gradually to play the same material as their neighbours, with decreasing speed but increasing volume. However, now they do not play *unisono* but in harmony, until a *fortissimo tutti* arrives, comprised, unlike the opening single line, of massive chords. A chorale. RW

Richard Whilds was born in Nottingham in 1966. His father was a jazz trumpeter and arranger. As a thirteen-year-old, he sent some compositions to Malcolm Williamson, which led to lessons, while still at school, with Robin Walker and Geoffrey Poole at Manchester University. Later he studied with Denis Smalley at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. He has worked as a conductor and *répétiteur* in Germany, Austria and Brazil. Since 1997 he has been active in this capacity at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, working under the musical leadership of Zubin Mehta, Kent Nagano and Kirill Petrenko. In addition to his regular work there, he has recently conducted new productions of *The Bear* by Walton and *Mare Nostrum* by Kagel, as well as providing the music for several special events – *Wagnerinnen* and *Geliebt, gehasst und trotzdem treu* – and creating chamber-orchestral versions of Ullmann's *Der zerbrochene Krug* and Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*.



As well as many chamber-music pieces, he has written extensively for voices, including three operas, the chamber operas *Islands* and *Donna Gallina* receiving their premieres in Aachen und Innsbruck. His latest project is a large work for soprano and orchestra called *Endsongs*, the piano version of which has received its premieres in London and Tokyo.

As an arranger of light music, he has achieved considerable success, including one gold record and three Number One positions in the German Classic charts.

[4] David MATTHEWS ***A June Song*, Op. 140a**

My piece in memory of Yodit was written in June 2015, a time of fulfilment, and I hope my piece expresses that feeling as well as sadness for her loss. It is a more or less continuous melody, passing from violas to violins; starting again on cellos; then, after some mysterious *pianissimo* chords, continuing on violins and violas and finally coming to an end on a quiet D major chord.

An expanded version of *A June Song* for full orchestra later became the central slow movement of my Ninth Symphony.

DM

David Matthews did not start composing until the age of sixteen when, hearing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the first time, he decided to write a symphony himself. He was self-taught in composition until his twenties, when he studied privately with Anthony Milner, and was also much helped by the advice and encouragement of Nicholas Maw and later by Peter Sculthorpe. He spent four years as an assistant to Benjamin Britten at Aldeburgh in the late 1960s. He was Music Advisor to the English Chamber Orchestra in the 1980s and 1990s and Artistic Director of the Deal Festival from 1989 until 2003. He has largely avoided teaching, but to support his composing career has done editorial work (he collaborated with Deryck Cooke on the performing version of Mahler's Tenth Symphony and is currently editing major works by Vaughan Williams), orchestration of film music and arranging. He has also written books on Tippett and Britten and articles and reviews for various journals. His music is widely played in Britain and around the world, and is frequently broadcast.



Photo: Clive Barda

His music includes nine symphonies (all of which have now been recorded), five symphonic poems, six concertos and fourteen string quartets (which are being recorded by the Kreutzer Quartet for Toccata Classics). His numerous chamber works include eight commissions for the Nash Ensemble, five of them recorded on the NMC label. He is currently writing a Concerto for Orchestra for the 2019 Chipping Campden Festival.

www.david-matthews.co.uk

5 Wim HAUTEKIET **Alex's Waltz**

Once upon many a time, I was enjoying dinner with Martin in a Chinese restaurant in London, and the conversation turned to *Music for My Love*. An idea emerged to include a short, light and lively piece in the project, specifically dedicated to Alex, Yodit's and Martin's young son. I remembered a piece I had written as a youngster but had never finished, and so, for Alex, I completed the arrangement, recorded a demo with

a friendly violinist, sent it to Martin and, with a helping hand and a sprinkle of magic from amanuensis Paul Mann, *Alex's Waltz* emerged to pay tribute to a family that is held together through *Music for My Love*. WH

Wim Hautekiet read law, psychology and philosophy at the Universities of Leuven (Belgium) and Illinois (USA); later he focused on finance (Solvay Business School and INSEAD). He started his career at the Brussels bar (Linklaters) and went on to serve as general counsel, regionally for BNY Mellon and JP Morgan (London) and globally for Clearstream (Luxembourg) and Dexia (Paris). Wim lives in London, is married to Jackie, has five children, is a keen rider and is fond of classical music. His lack of formal training as musician or composer hasn't prevented him from writing down his tunes – preferably in odd time-signatures – and working out elaborate accompaniments, resulting *inter alia* in a full album from his hand entitled *Renaissance in Fives*. Combining his business and musical skills he serves on the Advisory Board of the City Music Foundation in London.



[6]–[7] Gregory ROSE

Eritrean Sunset and Tigrinya Dance

'Eritrean Sunset' [6] was composed by Beraki Gebremedhin, and when Martin Anderson invited me to contribute to his 'Yodit' project, I was delighted to discover the florid nature of this lovely composition and so obtained permission to arrange it. Although not imitating the original score exactly, I have tried to keep to the spirit of the piece, passing the main melody between the instruments, and keeping the soul of the piece constantly in mind, trying not to make it too 'western classical' in style.

The traditional Eritrean song 'Tigrinya Dance' [7] appears in many different versions. After an introduction the main tune, accompanied by a drum, presents a charming, flowing melody in three-time. Again, I have passed the tune between the instruments. The second part of the song contains five beats, and the song drifts towards a dreamy ending.

Although I never met Yodit, these pieces are dedicated to her memory. Martin tells me that the ‘Tigrinya Dance’ was one of her favourite Eritrean songs, and I hope this tribute to her life would have made her smile!

GR

The composer-conductor **Gregory Rose** has composed orchestral, instrumental and choral music, including many liturgical pieces. His *Missa Sancta Pauli Apostoli* won one of the 2006 British Composer Awards and several of his pieces have been published and broadcast. His music-theatre work, *Danse macabre*, was premiered in Tallinn in 2011, and a recording was released on Toccata Classics in 2015. Recent premieres include a violin concerto, *Five Schwitters Songs* for solo voice, *The Dancing Fiddler* for violin, *Ave Maria II* for choir, *Music for a Kytherian Amphitheatre* for piano, *The Richard Mutt Case* for singer and percussion and *Quelques gouttes d'eau sur une surface* for marimba. Future premieres include *Westron Wynde Blow* for mediaeval instruments and *Requiem for Spinalonga* for soloists, chorus and chamber orchestra. An album of his choral music, performed by the Latvian Radio Choir, was recently released, also on Toccata Classics. He has been featured composer three times in various contexts in the USA, and has arranged and conducted for Diana Ross, Linda Ronstadt and Madness.

As a conductor, he has worked with orchestras, ensembles and choirs throughout eastern and western Europe and the Far East, particularly in Romantic and contemporary repertoires. He is conductor of the Jupiter Orchestra and Singers, Singcircle and CoMA London Ensemble, and has conducted many operas. He has worked closely with composers such as Birtwistle, Cage, Lachenmann, Montague, Reich, Stockhausen and Wolff, and has appeared in festivals throughout Europe, including two BBC Promenade concerts with the amplified vocal ensemble Singcircle. In November 2017 he directed a 40th-anniversary performance of *Stimmung* at the Barbican Hall in London, a piece with which he has been closely associated since the 1970s. He has been a staff conductor at Trinity Laban since 1996.

www.gregoryrose.org



8 Sean HICKEY

Single Malt

Single Malt, scored for string orchestra, was commissioned in 2015 by Martin Anderson in memory of his partner, Yodit. Cast in a single movement, the piece is more or less in two parts. The first, marked by an aggressive introduction which, after some contrapuntal tossing of themes across the strings, settles on a series of chords which might be characterised as unsettled. Divided violins later introduce a diatonic melody of an aching tenderness, and the section reintroduces segments of music heard in the first half. After an isolated solo violin intones the slow theme, the piece ends on a muted, divided chord. This young work has already enjoyed several performances in the USA, Russia and at the Edinburgh Festival, where Misha Rachlevsky led the Russian String Orchestra.

The piece is dedicated to Martin Anderson, in friendship, and in memory of Yodit –
hodie tibi, cras mihi. SH

Sean Hickey was born in Detroit in 1970. His music education began with an electric guitar, a Peavey Amp, and a stack of Van Halen records – the early ones, of course. After graduating from Wayne State University, he settled in Brooklyn, New York, and his orchestral, choral, chamber and solo works have now been performed around the world by some of its finest soloists, ensembles and orchestras. His debut Naxos recording, *Left at the Fork in the Road* (chamber and chamber-orchestral works), and three subsequent releases on Delos (Clarinet and Cello Concertos and *Cursive* – piano and chamber works), and Our Recordings (*A Pacifying Weapon*, a recorder concerto commissioned by Michala Petri) have all been well received. He is also Senior Vice-President, Sales and Business Development, for Naxos of America, and lectures regularly on his work, new media and musician entrepreneurship at colleges, universities and conservatories throughout North America and Europe.

www.seanhickey.com



9 Ronald CORP

The Wings of Memory

There are a number of depictions of angels in music. There's the solitary angel which accompanies Gerontius as he journeys from this life into the next, and in Elgar's oratorio (and Newman's poem) there is also a chorus of angels which sing 'Praise to the holiest in the height' around the heavenly throne. A host of angels is featured in settings of the Mass, which includes the Sanctus, where the words of the angels are taken from the Christmas story of the birth of Christ as they proclaim 'Hosanna in the highest'.

Thinking of these hosts of angels made me think of the sound that might be made by the beating of their wings and my *Wings of Memory* represents this fluttering of angels' wings. The fast-moving semiquavers provide a drone effect, rather like an intense murmur and notes of a different pitch are picked out in a pointillist way to represent the movement of the various angels. The piece has a three-part structure, with the opening material returning after a middle section which presents a melody in longer note-values, not quite like a hymn, but a song of reverence and love. The work is intended as a joyful commemoration of Yodit and a celebration of her life and it asks the listener to imagine her soul on its journey accompanied by a crowd of angels.

RC

Composer and conductor **Ronald Corp** is founder and Artistic Director of the New London Orchestra and the New London Children's Choir and also Musical Director of the London Chorus and the Highgate Choral Society. He has worked with BBC Singers, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and orchestras in the UK, South Africa and throughout Europe. His recordings for Hyperion and Dutton Epoch have brought much unfamiliar fare before the public: music by Armstrong Gibbs, Rutland Boughton, Ina Boyle, Hubert Clifford, John Foulds, Herbert Howells, Sidney Jones, Darius Milhaud, Lionel Monckton, Gabriel Pierné, Francis Poulenc, Sergei Prokofiev, Erik Satie, Fraser Simpson, Virgil Thomson and Sir Arthur Sullivan, as well as a series of British, American and European light-music classics.

His own compositions to have been recorded include *Forever Child* and other choral music, a cantata *And All the Trumpets Sounded*, his Symphony No. 1, Piano Concerto, Cello Concerto and *Guernsey Postcards*, works for unaccompanied choir, including *Dhammapada* and *Things I didn't say*, as well as the song-cycles *Songs of the Elder Sisters*, *Fields of the Fallen* and *Dawn on the Somme*.

Also recorded are three string quartets, a clarinet quintet and the children's opera *The Ice Mountain*. Current projects include a Second Symphony and a chamber opera *The Pelican*, based on Strindberg's play. *His Letters from Lony* (2017) – an extended song-cycle for soprano, string quartet and piano, based on letters from Lony Rabl, deported from Amsterdam, via Terezín, to Auschwitz and murdered there – is in preparation from Toccata Classics.

His experience and expertise in choral directing are crystallised in the textbook, *The Choral Singer's Companion* (first edn. Batsford, London, 1987; rev. edn. Thames Publishing, London, 2006). He was awarded an OBE in the New Year Honours List in 2012. He has received the award of Honorary Doctor of Music from the universities of Anglia Ruskin and Hull. www.ronaldcorp.com



Photo: Julian Handford

[10] **Phillip RAMEY**

Symphonic Song

Symphonic Song is a lyrical, at times dramatic, threnody for string orchestra. Commissioned by Martin Anderson as part of this recording project to commemorate the life of his late fiancée, Yodit Tekle, the work was composed in May 2015, in Tangier, Morocco. It is cast as a continuous dark-hued narrative, and incorporates some material from my Tenth Piano Sonata, dating from the same year. The sonorous *fortissimo* ending is marked *Grandioso*. PR

Phillip Ramey (b. 1939 in Elmhurst, Illinois) is an American composer, pianist and writer. He studied composition with Alexander Tcherepnin at the International Academy of Music in Nice and De Paul University in Chicago (1959–62) and with Jack Beeson at Columbia University (1962–65). From 1977 to 1993 he held the position of Program Editor for the New York Philharmonic, which commissioned and premiered his Horn Concerto to celebrate its 150th anniversary. He is the author of an award-winning biography of the American composer Irving Fine (Pendragon Press, Hillsdale (NY), 2005, in association with the US Library of Congress), along with numerous

programme notes for the New York Philharmonic and hundreds of sleeve notes for recordings. He has enjoyed professional friendships with such luminaries as Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Paul Bowles, Aaron Copland, Vladimir Horowitz, William Schuman and Virgil Thomson, with all of whom he published interviews.

Ramey's musical output comprises various orchestral works, including *J.F.K.: Oration for Speaker and Orchestra* (text from speeches of President Kennedy) and a series of concertos (three for piano, one each for horn, trombone and cello), along with chamber and vocal scores. He has also written a sizable body of solo-piano works (including ten sonatas), much of which is available in four albums released by Toccata Classics. As pianist he has recorded for Columbia Masterworks and Vox Turnabout. His music is published by G. Schirmer, C. F. Peters and Boosey and Hawkes, among others.

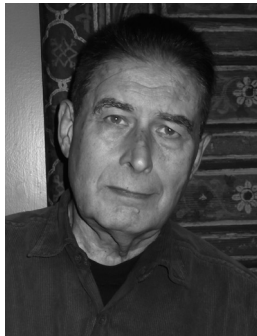


Photo: Count Randal MacDonnell

[1] Gerard SCHURMANN

Nefertiti

When Martin Anderson asked me to contribute a piece for string orchestra to an album to be dedicated to his fiancée Yodit Tekle and their son Alex, I was touched and moved by accounts of the tragic death of Yodit from cancer, leaving Martin bereft with a five-year-old son. A photograph of Yodit, showing a beautiful young woman of Eritrean descent, immediately brought to mind the Egyptian Queen Nefertiti, whose name means ‘the beauty has come’, and I wrote the piece in response to gentle and noble qualities that I saw in Yodit’s image, without ever having met her. The music, in the form of a small vignette, is wistful but optimistic for Alex’s future.

GS

Gerard Schurmann was born of Dutch parents in the former Dutch East Indies. He left his home at an early age and grew up in England. At the age of 21, Schurmann began to combine his concert career as a pianist with the position of acting Cultural Attaché at the Netherlands Embassy in London. This double life continued for several years until Eduard van Beinum, the conductor of the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam, helped him attain the position of resident orchestral

conductor at the Dutch Radio in Hilversum. At the end of his contract there, he returned to England, determined to devote his life mainly to composition, henceforth limiting his conducting activities to guest appearances.

In 1980 he was invited by the US State Department to tour orchestras and universities in the United States, a five-month visit also partly sponsored by the British Council. In 1981 Schurmann moved to the USA, where he settled in the Hollywood Hills, California. He continues to receive commissions for concert works and was at one time associated with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra through the conductor Lorin Maazel, who introduced his music, first with the Cleveland Orchestra and subsequently in Pittsburgh and elsewhere.

His music is published by Novello & Co., and his compositions have been recorded on Albany, CBS, Chandos, Cloud Nine, EMI, GDI, Nonesuch, Pye, Silva Classics, United Artists, Virgin Classics and, most recently, Toccata Classics, which has released a series of chamber and instrumental recordings.

www.gerard-schurmann.com



[12] Robin WALKER

She Moved Through The Fair

It seems to me that modality is a sure and appropriate musical response to grief at the death of a beloved person. The Mixolydian melody of the Irish folksong ‘She Moved through the Fair’ underscores with rare poignancy a text that tells of a woman who comes as a ghost to the chamber of her lover, and announces that their ‘wedding day’ will shortly be held upon his joining her in death.

I thought for a long time before embarking on this piece, mainly because I realised that my bag of ‘tools’ (taking a cue from my late father – who in early life was an apprentice carpenter, and whose joiner’s tools I still use for practical tasks) was not fit for the purpose I had in mind. I therefore took time to fashion new ‘tools’ to address the

material that had presented itself, and to shape it through a valid formal undertaking that would do justice to the solemn procession of grief through the human system.

To this end the work charts a progress through an organised series of sentiments, where abysmal horror and loss are not transformed but studied and endured, and as a result find a less threatening place to exist within the human mind. My purpose here was always to live with the ambiguity of providing a static monument to the beloved while at the same time showing that organic growth away from tragedy is what Nature demands that we accomplish in the name of equilibrium. A state that I believe we are all called to – grief or no grief.

RW

Robin Walker was born in York in 1953 and attended schools attached to York Minster – where he was Head Chorister – for ten years. He studied at Durham University with the Australian composer David Lumsdaine, and at the Royal College of Music with the late Anthony Milner. He taught successively at the universities of London and Manchester before resigning his post and moving to the Pennine hills of northern England. For the last thirty years he has lived on or next to a farm in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

Though a serious student of modernism until the mid-1980s, he withdrew from its secular mythology (and consequent fabrications) in order to investigate the instinctual basis of musical composition, unhindered by the intellect. This process involved a long – and continuing – apprenticeship to Nature, and an extensive exploration of differentiated feeling. The musical result of this activity formed a preoccupation with symphonic music, and with spontaneous ‘folk’ utterance – elements most recently brought together in his full-length opera *Odysseus on Ogygia*.

His work has benefited spiritually and technically from two periods of time in India – investigating the dance rituals of Bharata Natyam in the south, and the rituals of Buddhist monasteries in the far north. He does not believe in God, which he is very sorry about, not least



Photo: Justine O'Brien

because the composition of music is without doubt a religious activity. He is an interpreter of dreams, and lives according to their instruction. He learnt more than he can say from conversations in his formative years, severally, with the composers Michael Tippett and Harrison Birtwistle.
www.robinwalker.org

[13] José SEREBRIER

Last Tango before Sunrise

As with my previous essays in this medium, *Tango in Blue* and *Almost a Tango*, this new chapter intends to simulate the spirit of the tango, more for reflection than for the dance floor. A quality of nostalgia is typical of most tangos.

I wrote *Last Tango before Sunrise* at the request of publisher-critic-entrepreneur Martin Anderson, who asked for a work memorialising the love of his life, Yodit, recently deceased. I met Yodit only once, for a brief moment, at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Martin introduced her thus: 'meet the mother of my son.' Martin's devotion merits the more than 100 compositions he has inspired to honour her memory. JS

José Serebrier established himself as an important composer as far back as the 1950s. He was born in 1938, in Montevideo, Uruguay, to Russian and Polish parents. At age nine he began to study violin and made his conducting debut at eleven. While in high school he organised and conducted the first youth orchestra in South America, touring the continent and giving more than a hundred concerts over four years. At fifteen, he won the annual composition contest run by the National Orchestra, and was invited by Aaron Copland and Bohuslav Martinů to study at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, and with Copland at Tanglewood, where he won the Koussevitzky Award. When Serebrier was seventeen, Stokowski conducted and recorded his Symphony No. 1, as the last-minute replacement for the still unplayable Ives Fourth Symphony. After serving for two seasons as Apprentice Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra with Antal Doráti, Leopold Stokowski named him, at age 22, Associate



Conductor of the newly formed American Symphony Orchestra in New York, a post he held for five years. Stokowski conducted the first New York performance of Serebrier's *Elegy for Strings* in 1962 at Carnegie Hall. For the 1968–69 and 1969–70 seasons, George Szell appointed him Composer-in-Residence of the Cleveland Orchestra. Today, Serebrier conducts most major orchestras around the world, and has become one of the most recorded conductors in history, with well over 350 titles to his credit. His published compositions number over one hundred and include four symphonies, many *concertante* pieces and orchestral works, several works for percussion ensembles, chamber and instrumental music, and transcriptions and arrangements of music by other composers, including a *Carmen Symphony* based on Bizet, Gershwin piano pieces, Grieg songs, a 'symphonic synthesis' from Janáček's *Več Makropulos* and several Tchaikovsky works. The National Ballet of Canada has choreographed the Bizet–Serebrier *Carmen Symphony*, and in October 2018 choreographed the Tchaikovsky–Serebrier *Andante Cantabile*, presented simultaneously in Toronto, Baden-Baden and at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

www.joseserebrier.com

Paul Mann is a regular guest-conductor with many orchestras throughout Europe, the USA, Australia and the Far East. His work as chief conductor of the Odense Symphony Orchestra in Denmark achieved considerable critical success, particularly in the symphonies of Beethoven, Elgar, Mahler, Schumann and Shostakovich; with it he made numerous recordings of a wide range of repertoire, for such labels as Bridge, DaCapo and EMI.

He first came to international attention as winner of the first prize in the 1998 Donatella Flick Conducting Competition, as a result of which he was also appointed assistant conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. He made his LSO debut shortly afterwards, and subsequently collaborated regularly with the Orchestra, both in the concert hall and the recording studio. Special projects with the LSO included the Duke Ellington Centenary Concert at the Barbican Hall with Wynton Marsalis, and a famous collaboration with the legendary rock group Deep Purple in two widely acclaimed performances of Jon Lord's *Concerto for Group and Orchestra* at the Royal Albert Hall, the live DVD and CD of which remain international bestsellers. Among



his more recent recordings is the first-ever studio account of Lord's Concerto, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, in collaboration with Jon Lord himself and a star-studded cast of soloists, and the live recording of *Celebrating Jon Lord*, a special concert which took place at the Royal Albert Hall in April 2014 with an all-star cast paying tribute to the late composer.

This is his thirteenth recording for Toccata Classics. The first featured the orchestral music of Leif Solberg (TOCC 0260) and the second, third and fifth (TOCC 0262, 0263 and 0299) presented the complete orchestral music of the Scottish Romantic Charles O'Brien (1882–1968). His fourth was the first volume in this series of new works for string orchestra, *Music for My Love* (TOCC 0333), featuring the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra in music by Brahms (arranged by Ragnar Söderlind), Maddalena Casulana (arr. Colin Matthews), Brett Dean, Steve Elcock, Andrew Ford, Robin Holloway, Mihkel Kerem, Jon Lord (arr. Paul Mann), John Pickard, Poul Ruders and Ragnar Söderlind himself. More recently, Toccata Classics released his recordings of the Ninth (TOCC 0393) and Tenth and Thirteenth (TOCC 0452) Symphonies of David Hackbridge Johnson and the Third by Steve Elcock (TOCC 0400), each accompanied by smaller works, and an album of orchestral works by Josef Schelb (TOCC 0426). Paul Mann's first two volumes of the complete orchestral music of Henry Cotter Nixon (1842–1907) appeared on TOCC 0372 and 0373, also with the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra; a third and final volume is in preparation (TOCC 0374). Toccata Classics has also recently released a first volume of the symphonies of the English composer Rodney Newton (b. 1945) with the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra, with the Symphonies Nos. 1 and 4 and the tone-poem *Distant Nebulae* (TOCC 0459).

The **Ukrainian Festival Orchestra** (UFO) grew out of the chamber orchestra Collegium Musicum, founded in 2014 in Lviv, western Ukraine, by conductor Ivan Ostapovych and culture manager Taras Demko. The repertoire of the UFO includes music from the Baroque to the present, but its fundamental aim is to record Ukrainian classical music and popularise it all around the world – a celebration of Ukrainian music that Ivan Ostapovych describes as 'a festival that lasts forever'. Among the major musicians with whom the UFO has worked are the violinists Noah Bendix-Balgley, Corey Cerovsek, Sergey Ostrovsky and Josef Spaček, pianists Antonii Baryshevskiy, Andrei Gavrilov and Vadym Kholodenko, cellist Jacob Shaw and the violinist-conductors Sigiswald Kuijken and Lev Markiz. Taras Demko is the director of the UFO, Ivan Ostapovych the conductor and artistic director, and Theodore Kuchar the principal guest conductor.

<http://uforchestra.com>



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MUSIC FOR MY LOVE Volume Two

1	Nicolas BACRI <i>Prélude aux chants d'amour</i>	2:57
2	John KINSELLA <i>Amhrán do Yodit</i>	4:50
3	Richard WHILDS <i>176 reasons...</i>	9:12
4	David MATTHEWS <i>A June Song</i>	4:44
5	Wim HAUTEKIET <i>Alex's Waltz</i>	2:24
	Gregory ROSE <i>Eritrean Sunset and Tigrinya Dance</i>	9:28
6	<i>Eritrean Sunset</i>	4:19
7	<i>Tigrinya Dance</i>	5:09
8	Sean HICKEY <i>Single Malt</i>	6:02
9	Ronald CORP <i>The Wings of Memory</i>	4:46
10	Phillip RAMEY <i>Symphonic Song</i>	7:56
11	Gerard SCHURMANN <i>Nefertiti</i>	2:15
12	Robin WALKER <i>She Moved Through The Fair</i>	13:34
13	José SEREBRIER <i>Last Tango before Sunrise</i>	3:23

Ukrainian Festival Orchestra
Paul Mann, conductor

TT 71:33

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