



OLIVER KNUSSEN

CATALOGUE OF WORKS

'Music of crystalline concision, complexity, and richness'

TOM SERVICE, THE GUARDIAN

FABER *ff* MUSIC

OLIVER KNUSSSEN 1952–2018

Oliver Knussen was a towering figure in contemporary music, as composer and conductor, teacher and artistic director. The relatively small size of his compositional output conceals music of exceptional refinement and subtlety – few bars of Knussen may have more impact than whole movements by lesser composers. Besides definitive interpretations of his own music he must surely have given more first performances than any other conductor, alongside an outstanding body of recordings. He was the central focus of so many activities, and an irreplaceable mentor to his fellow composers, who constantly sought and relied on his advice and encouragement.

He was born in Glasgow; his father Stuart Knussen was principal double bass of the London Symphony Orchestra for nearly 20 years. Although he would have laughed at any idea of his being a child prodigy this gave him an unrivalled insight into the workings of the orchestra from an early age. It culminated in his conducting his First Symphony with the LSO at the age of 15, when their principal conductor István Kertész fell ill. His father played in the first performance of Benjamin Britten's church parable *Curlew River* in 1964. Knussen attended all the rehearsals, and Britten was very encouraging to the young composer, commissioning a work for the 1969 Aldeburgh Festival.

Between 1963 and 1969 he studied with the composer John Lambert, which gave him a solid but untraditional grounding. His musical perspectives were expanded greatly by studying with Gunther Schuller from 1970 until 1973 at the Tanglewood Music Center, where he met his wife Sue, then a horn player, later a maker of documentary films. This period saw him writing with ever greater confidence – a Concerto for Orchestra commissioned by André Previn in 1969, and his Second Symphony, commissioned by Yehudi Menuhin in 1970 – the latter the first major work in which he felt fully confident of his abilities. Even at the age of 18 his musical personality seemed fully formed.

The 1970s were a period of intense creativity for Knussen, with chamber works including *Rosary Songs*, *Océan de Terre*, and *Ophelia Dances*, culminating in the completion in 1979 of his Third Symphony, a work whose first movement had been conducted by its dedicatee, Michael Tilson Thomas in 1973. But this activity came at a cost: his extreme scrupulousness led him to take increasing care in composing, whether the work was on a small or large scale, and the material for the first complete performance of the symphony at the Proms was only delivered at the last minute. The 1970s also saw the beginning of his longstanding relationship with Faber Music.

The major works of his middle years were the two 'fantasy operas' he wrote in collaboration with Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are* (1979-83) and *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (1984-85). These superbly crafted, colourful works give every impression of unaffected spontaneity, but for Knussen it was a meticulous and painstaking process before he could be satisfied with them. Both operas were first performed incomplete, while the final version of *Higglety* was only arrived at to the composer's satisfaction in 1999.

Until the 1980s conducting had been a second string for Knussen, but it gradually began to take up more of his time, particularly with his appointments as Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival from 1983-98 and Head of Contemporary Music at Tanglewood between 1986 and 1993. In 1992 he and I founded the Aldeburgh Contemporary Composition Course, where it gave him great pleasure to work with young composers and performers, who gratefully sat at his feet. Conducting was an occupation which gave him much satisfaction, with the opportunity to programme the music of both senior and junior composers, as well as his contemporaries, but it inevitably distracted him from composing. 'I certainly wish I could afford to keep the two roles, conducting and composing, in better balance' he said in an interview in 2012.

Most of the works from the next decade were on a smaller scale, but the *Whitman Settings* (1991), *Songs without Voices* (1991-92) and *Horn Concerto* (1994) stand out as major achievements. He seemed to recover something of the flair of the 1970s when he composed *Prayer Bell Sketch* in three days in 1997 in memory of his great friend the composer Toru Takemitsu; the *Violin Concerto*, composed in 2002 for Pinchas Zukerman, seemed to come almost out of the blue.

Abbreviations

WOODWIND

picc	piccolo
fl	flute
afl	alto flute
bfl	bass flute
ob	oboe
bob	bass oboe
ca	cor anglais
acl	alto clarinet
Ebcl	clarinet (Eb)
cl	clarinet
bcl	bass clarinet
cbcl	contra bass clarinet
bsn	bassoon
cbsn	contra bassoon
ssax	soprano saxophone
asax	alto saxophone
tsax	tenor saxophone
bsax	baritone saxophone

BRASS

hn	horn
fl.hn	flugel horn
ptpt	piccolo trumpet (Bb)
tpt	trumpet
trbn	trombone
btrbn	bass trombone
scrt	soprano cornet
crt	cornets
rcrt	repiano cornet
btuba	bass tuba
euph	euphonium
bar	baritone

PERCUSSION

ant.cym	antique cymbals
BD	bass drum
c.bell	cow bell
cast	castanets
ch.bl	chinese block
chic.cym	chic cymbal
ch.dr	chinese drum
chtpl.bl	chinese temple block
chimes	wooden chimes
chi.ba	chime bars
crot	crotales
cym	pair of cymbals
glsp	glockenspiel
mcas	maracas
mar	marimba
met.bl	metal block
mil.glsp	military glockenspiel
riv.cym	rivet cymbal
SD	side drum
siz.cym	sizzle cymbal
susp.cym	suspended cymbal
t.bells	tubular bells
t.mil	tambour militaire
tab	tabor
tam-t	tam-tam
tamb	tambourine
TD	tenor drum
tgl	triangle
timb	timbales
tpl.bl	temple blocks
vib	vibraphone
wdbl	wood block
xyz	xylophone
xyrim	xyloimba

STRINGS

vln	violin
vla	viola
vlc	cello
db	bass

KEYBOARDS

pno	piano
cel	celesta
synth	synthesizer

OTHERS

gtr	guitar
bgtr	bass guitar

All other instrument names are given in full.

The similar intensity of *Requiem: Songs for Sue* (2005-6) was his considered reaction to the death of his wife in 2003 (he had much earlier composed *Sonya's Lullaby* for the birth of their daughter, now a gifted singer, in 1977). He described this major late work succinctly: 'It's not a huge work... but it's a big piece emotionally'. However other works from this period remained incomplete, including the remarkable *Cleveland Pictures* for orchestra begun in 2003, withdrawn for revision and still unperformed, and concertos for piano and cello. His last completed work was *O Hototogisu!* for soprano, flute and large ensemble, a tantalising but substantial fragment of an intended larger piece.

Honours came to him in later years – a CBE, and Honorary Membership of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1994, the Royal Philharmonic Society's Honorary Membership in 2002 and Conductor Award in 2010, the Ivor Novello Classical Music Award and the Queen's Medal for Music, both in 2016. He had a close association with the London Sinfonietta from the late 1970s onwards, and was their Music Director from 1988 until 2002. He became Associate Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1989 and was their Artist in Association, 2009-12; was Artist in Association with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group from 2006; and Associate Artist of the Southbank Centre in 2006. From 2014 he was Richard Rodney Bennett Professor of Music at the Royal Academy and was awarded an honorary doctorate there shortly before his death.

But in spite of these significant roles, any sense of Olly (as everyone knew him) belonging to the establishment would be an illusion. He was too big a figure to fit into any easily defined category. He had a voracious appetite for knowledge, with a special love for films – he was a Hitchcock obsessive and became friends with Jim Jarmusch – and painting: he had a fascination for obscure artists such as Joachim Patinir and Ivan Bilibin. But above all his consuming passion was for music. There was hardly any composer into whom he could not offer insights, although his taste was very much for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was a love that could and did get in the way of composing: it was as if every bar that he wrote was measured against all the music that he knew, and this explains the almost painfully slow process by which his music was written, and the number of fragments left behind.

He had close friendships with most of the major twentieth century composers – Takemitsu, Hans Werner Henze, Elliott Carter (whose late works he championed), Mauricio Kagel, Harrison Birtwistle and Alexander Goehr among many others. He even established a relationship with Karlheinz Stockhausen, and loved to tell the story of how, when he said to him 'You can call me Olly', the reply came back 'You can call me Stockhausen'.

Although he leaves a wonderful legacy of performance it is primarily as a composer that he would want to be remembered. It makes it all the more regrettable that, although he gave less time to conducting due to the ill health which dogged his last years, it did not mean – as he said to me in hope only a couple of months before he died – that he would have time to write the music that was in his head, and which would undoubtedly have taken him in new and rewarding directions.

Colin Matthews



Jennie from *Higglety Pigglety Pop!*
by Maurice Sendak

Handwritten musical score for *Requiem: Songs for Sue*, marked *Leggiero* with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 90c.$ The score is written for a large ensemble and includes parts for:

- Flute
- English horn
- Clarinet
- Horn
- Piano
- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Flute (fl.)
- English horn (e.h.)
- Clarinet (cl.)
- Horn (hn. muted)
- Piano (pno.)
- Violin (vln.)
- Viola (va.)
- Cello (vlc.)

The score features various musical notations, including dynamics (mf, f, p, mp, pp, sub.mp), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (tr., tr.m., muted, p.p., ped., SOLO, arco, pizz.). The tempo is marked *Leggiero* with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 90c.$ The score is written in 4/4 time and includes a page number 120.

Higglety Pigglety Pop! and Where the Wild Things Are

'Timeless classics... There are differences between these scores, but what they share is a playfully allusive wit and a bright translucence as the musical ideas morph intricately: Knussen's highly-coloured sound-world is an invigorating place to be.'

The Independent (Michael Church),
11 June 2012

'A delight, with gorgeously sensual and richly textured music embodying a plot that illustrates the need that infants have for imaginative freedom as well as domestic security.'

The Daily Telegraph (Rupert Christiansen),
11 June 2012

'What emerges so forcefully in hearing these one-acters again is the formal elegance of both works – *Wild Things* is a through-composed work; the more varied, psychologically complex *Higglety* a number opera divided into set-piece arias and ensembles – and the dazzling imagination of Knussen's sound world. With its vast range of stylistic references, there is not a note out of place.'

The Guardian (Andrew Clements),
10 June 2012

Higglety Pigglety Pop!

'A miracle of balance, masterly in the ease and flexibility of its dramatic processes, wonderfully characterized, and touching in the emotional discoveries just below the surface.'

The Guardian (Tom Sutcliffe),
7 August 1985

Where the Wild Things Are

'Perfect... a source of constant surprise and delight, matched by music of a scintillating aptness, colour and variety that haunts the memory.'

The Daily Telegraph (Robert Henderson),
10 January 1984

'The score glitters with wit, beauty, romantic fantasy, and operatic objets trouvés rendered marvellously fresh; the stagecraft behind the whole thing reveals Knussen as a born theatre composer.'

Opera (Max Loppert), March 1984

'The musical language, while often gritty and thick-textured, abounds in energy, atmosphere, alluring sounds and visceral drama.'

The New York Times (Anthony Tommasini),
11 April 2011

OPERA

Higglety Pigglety Pop! Op.21 (1984-90)

or There Must be More to Life

fantasy opera in one act (nine scenes) for soloists and orchestra

60 minutes

Libretto (Eng): Maurice Sendak and Oliver Knussen after the book by Sendak

Singers: Jennie (MS)/Potted Plant/Baby/Mother Goose (S)/Rhoda/voice of Baby's Mother (S)/Cat-Milkman/high voice of Ash Tree (T)/Pig-In-Sandwich-Boards/low voice of Ash Tree (BBar)/Lion (BBar)

3(III=picc).1.ca.3(III=bcl).2(II=cbsn) – 4030 – perc(4): vib/5 susp.cym/timp/cast/bells/ch.cym/slidewhistle/xyl/2 tgl/tamb/2 tpl.bl/mcas/tam-t/3 ratchet/whip/cyms/anvils/glsp/SD/sleighbells/siz.cym/football whistle/wind machine/BD/vibraslap (offstage): 7 bells/3 anvils/football whistle/SD – pno/cel – harp – strings (66444)

Commissioned by the BBC for Glyndebourne

FP: (preliminary version) 5.8.85 Glyndebourne Festival Opera, UK: London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen/dir. Frank Corsaro

FP: (final version) 3.2.91, Barbican Centre, London, UK: London Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Libretto 0-571-51933-4 and full score 0-571-52957-7 on sale, vocal score and parts for hire ☉

Where the Wild Things Are Op.20 (1979-83)

fantasy opera in one act (nine scenes) for soloists and orchestra

40 minutes

Libretto (Eng): Maurice Sendak and Oliver Knussen after the book by Sendak

Singers: Max (S)/Mama (MS)/Tzippy (MS)/Wild Thing with Beard (T)/Wild Thing with Horns (Bar)/Rooster Wild Thing (BBar)/Bull Wild Thing (B)

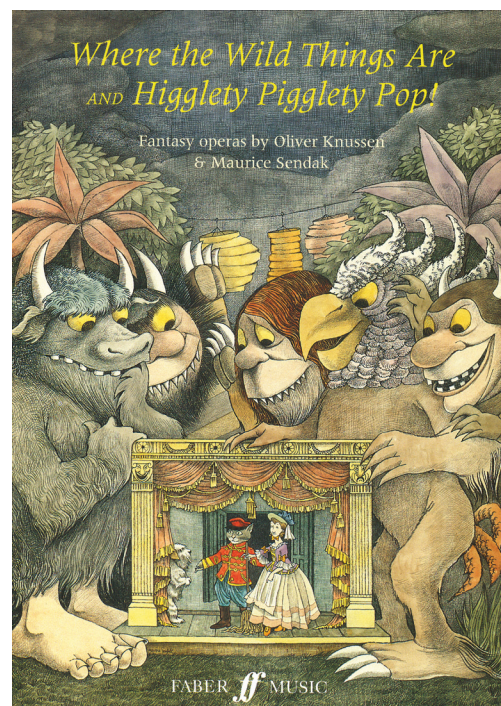
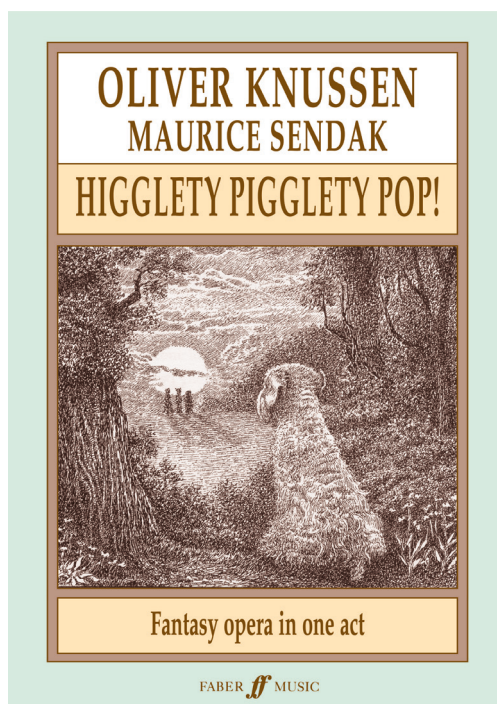
3(III=picc).1.ca.3(III=Ebcl).1.cbsn – 4030 – perc(4): vib/t.bells/2 tgl/4 susp.cym/c.bells/whip/5 tpl.bl/clogs/TD/3 tom-t/xyl/anvils/siz.cym/flexatone/mcas/2BD/balloon with pin/glsp/wind machine/spring coil/tam-t/gong/claves/vibraslap/tamb – pno (4 hands) – harp – strings (66444)

Commissioned by Opéra National, Brussels, on the occasion of UNESCO International Year of the Child

FP: (original version) 28.11.80, Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, Belgium: Brussels National Opera/Ronald Zollman/dir. Rhoda Levine

FP: (final version) 9.1.84, National Theatre, London, UK: Glyndebourne Opera/London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen/dir. Frank Corsaro

Libretto 0-571-51933-4 on sale, full score, vocal score and parts for hire ☉



ORCHESTRA

Choral Op.8 (1970-72)

wind, percussion and basses

10 minutes

4(IV=picc).3.ca.4(II=E♭cl).cbcl.2 asax.tsax.bsax.3.cbsn – 4342 – perc(3): 2 tam-t/susp.cym/burmese gong/t.bells/2 tom-t/bongos/BD/glspl/3 tpl.bl/TD/2 tgl/crot – double basses (1-4)

The four saxophones may be omitted and replaced by four extra horns

FP: (final version) 30.3.75, Carnegie Hall, New York, USA: American Symphony Orchestra/Michael Tilson Thomas

Score and parts for hire ☉

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Fanfares for Tanglewood (1986)

13 brass and percussion in three groups

2 minutes

Group A: 3 tpt – perc(1): t.bells/susp.cym

Group B: 2 hn (or Wagner tubas/euphoniums etc.) – 3 trbn – tuba – perc(1): 2 tam-t

Group C: 4 hn – perc(1): t.bells

FP: 2.8.86, Theatre Concert Hall, Tanglewood, USA: Roger Voisin/Fellows of Tanglewood Music Center/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51051-5 on sale, parts for hire

Flourish with Fireworks Op.22 (1988/93)

large orchestra

4 minutes

4(IV=picc).2.ca.4.2.cbsn – 4331 – timp – perc(4): 2 susp.cym/glspl/3 wdbl/tam-t/BD/tgl/TD/vib/spring coil/whip/SD – cel(=keyboard glsp.ad lib) – harp – strings (min 12.10.8.6.6)

Commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra for the opening concert of Michael Tilson Thomas's first season as their principal conductor

FP: 15.9.88, Barbican Hall, London, UK: London Symphony Orchestra/Michael Tilson Thomas

FP: (revised) 25.8.93, Theatre Concert Hall, Tanglewood, USA: Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51459-6 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Horn Concerto Op.28 (1994)

horn and orchestra

13 minutes

4(III+IV=picc).2.ca.3(III=E♭cl).bcl.2.cbsn – 4220 – timp(2) – perc(2): mar/susp.cym/2 tam-t/tgl – cel – harp – strings (14.12.10.10.8)

Commissioned by Suntory Limited for the Suntory International Program for Music Composition in 1994

FP: 7.10.94, Suntory Hall, Tokyo, Japan: Barry Tuckwell/Tokyo Metropolitan Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51667-X, piano score and horn part 0-571-51824-9 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Music for a Puppet Court Op.11 (1972/83)

puzzle pieces for two chamber orchestras

10 minutes

2(I=picc+afl.II=picc).2.2.2 – 2000 – perc(2/3): 2 vib/t.bells/7 handbells/2 tgl/anvil/susp.cym/mcas/tam-t/whip/ratchet/guio/alarm clock – cel – harp – gtr – strings (44442)

Commissioned by the Greater London Council for the 1983 South Bank Summer Music Festival

FP: 23.8.83, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, UK: London Sinfonietta/Simon Rattle

Score 0-571-50865-0 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Songs and A Sea Interlude Op.20a (1979-81)

from the opera *Where the Wild Things Are*

soprano and orchestra

17 minutes

Text (Eng): Maurice Sendak and Oliver Knussen after the book by Sendak

3(III=picc).1.ca.3(III=E♭cl).1.cbsn – 4030 – perc(4): vib/2 t.bells/tgl/5 c.bells/3 susp.cym/5 tpl.bl/2 pair clogs/TD/xyl/anvil/siz.cym/mcas/whip/2 BD/2 glsp/spring coil/2 tam-t/tamb/claves/(wind machine) – pno (4 hands) – harp – strings (min 66444)

FP: 14.2.81, BBC Radio 3: Jane Manning/BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-50706-9 on sale, parts for hire

Symphony in One Movement Op.5 (1969/2002)

orchestra

13 minutes

3(III=picc).2.ca.3(II=E♭cl.III=bcl).2.cbsn – 4231 – timp – perc(4): glsp/tam-t/3 susp.cym/SD/bongos/TD/drum kit/xyl/cyms/burmese gong/2 tom-t/tamb/claves/tgl/BD/2 tpl.bl/2 wdbl/c.bell – pno – strings

Commissioned by Florida International Festivals Inc.

FP: 1.2.70, Royal Festival Hall, London, UK: London Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

FP: (revised) 25.3.02, BBC Studio recording, Maida Vale, London, UK: BBC SO/Andrew Davis

Score and parts for hire

Choral

'Awe-inspiring, and left behind a melancholy sense of what might have been.'

The Daily Telegraph (Ivan Hewett),
6 November 1992

Flourish with Fireworks

'A display of fizzing orchestral virtuosity to rank with Stravinsky's brief *Fireworks*.'

The Sunday Times (Paul Driver),
11 November 2012

'A four-minute masterpiece of orchestral colour, as brilliant as anything in the repertoire.'

The Guardian (Tom Service),
4 November 2002

Horn Concerto

'Knussen's unfailing sense of pacing, and the way in which every chord and every colour is perfectly voiced, gives the work a sense of absolute assurance.'

The Guardian (Andrew Clements),
26 June 1995

'A masterpiece... a magical transfigured night, moonlight glistening on snow... full of the most marvellous sonorities, some clear, some only half-glimpsed.'

Boston Globe (Richard Dyer),
25 November 1995

Music for a Puppet Court

'A stunning palette of orchestral colour which transforms the 16th-century material without abusing its essential character.'

The Independent (Michael John White),
1 April 1988

'A fascinating and wonderfully scored work... With its tintinnabulations of bells, its soft-edged evocation of the past through winds, guitar, harp and marimbas, its extraordinary use of percussion, the work is a delight for the ear.'

Boston Herald (Ellen Pfeifer),
1 November 1994

Songs and A Sea Interlude

'A properly fantastic kaleidoscope of sound, brilliantly orchestrated.'

The Daily Telegraph (Alan Blyth),
14 September 1982

Symphony in One Movement

'Lacerating opening chords, a corporate pizzicato upbeat, and we were off. Within seconds, the sibilance of a snare-drum signalled the jazz-inflected undercurrents which would coalesce in a cadenza for piano originally written for André Previn.'

The Times (Hilary Finch),
4 November 2002

Symphony No.2

‘Darkly glinting, expertly tangled, the symphony inviting and unsettling all at once.’

Boston Globe (Matthew Guerrieri),
15 April 2013

‘The scoring is light and the effect is of transience, of fleeting, fragile beauty that always remains just out of reach.’

The Guardian (Andrew Clements),
31 July 2012

‘Every note in this intricate work is fastidiously placed.’

The Independent (Michael Church),
31 July 2012

Symphony No.3

‘The music’s surfaces move with a captivating shimmer and dazzle, but each time you listen you will take a new pass through the work’s musical currents and undercurrents, finding new layers of poetry and technical-expressive alchemy in its crystalline construction.’

The Guardian (Tom Service),
8 July 2014

‘Knussen at 27 is a composer, who with unerring ear and musicianship appears to have synthesised the entire 20th century tradition of virtuoso orchestral writing... Here is that exciting, beautiful and short work which orchestral managers are always telling us they are looking for in order to do their bit for new music.’

The Sunday Telegraph (Bayan Northcott),
9 September 1979

Violin Concerto

‘The finale brims with energy, spinning a virtuosic solo against a precisely shaped orchestral backdrop.’

Boston Globe (Jeremy Eichler),
13 April 2013

‘The high point of the piece is the gorgeously lyrical Aria, in which the soloist soars above a gently syncopated accompaniment...’

Evening Standard (Barry Millington),
15 August 2003

The Way to Castle Yonder

‘A little jewel of a five-minute orchestral piece...’

The Guardian (Edward Greenfield),
17 June 1988

Whitman Settings

‘Every complex accompaniment... was beautifully and precisely judged, with wind and brass chords that seemed to ring with the clarity of bells.’

The Daily Telegraph (Malcolm Hayes),
9 March 1992

Symphony No.2 Op.7 (1970-71)

high soprano and small orchestra

17 minutes

Text (Ger/Eng): Georg Trakl and Sylvia Plath

2222 – 2000 – perc(1): 4 ant.cyms ad lib – strings (min 66442)

Commissioned for the Second Windsor Festival

FP: (preliminary version) 3.10.70, Waterloo Chamber, Windsor Castle, UK: Poppy Holden/Menuhin Festival Orchestra/Yehudi Menuhin

FP: (complete) 18.8.71, Tanglewood, USA: Poppy Holden/Berkshire Music Center Orchestra/Gunther Schuller
Score 0-571-50747-6 on sale, parts for hire ☺

Symphony No.3 Op.18 (1973-79)

orchestra

15 minutes

4(IV=picc).2.ca.4(III=Ebcl).3.cbsn – 4331 – timp – perc(6): 2 timp/cyms/tam-t/anvil/tgl/2 tamb/crot/3 susp.

cym/hi-hat/2 BD/2 tpl.bl/whip/mcas/bongos/claves/glsp/xyl/mar/SD/TD/t.bells/2 vibraslap/guero – cel – harp – gtr(=mandolin ad lib) – strings (min 12.12.10.8.6)

Commissioned by the BBC for the 1979 Promenade Concerts

FP: (complete) 6.9.79, BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London, UK: BBC Symphony Orchestra/Michael Tilson Thomas

The first part of this Symphony was performed separately, under the title *Introduction and Masque*, on 24th January 1974 in Symphony Hall, Boston as part of a Spectrum concert by the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas.

Score 0-571-50639-9 on sale, parts for hire ☺

Violin Concerto Op.30 (2002)

violin and orchestra

17 minutes

3.1.ca.2.1.cbsn – 3220 – timp(=ratchet) – perc(2): glsp/vib/t.bells/tgl 2 susp.cym/SD/TD/tam-t – pno(=cel) – harp – strings

Commissioned by the Pittsburgh Symphony (Mariss Jansons, Music Director) and The Philadelphia Orchestra (Wolfgang Sawallisch, Music Director) for Pinchas Zukerman

FP: 5.4.02, Heinz Hall, Pittsburgh, USA: Pinchas Zukerman/Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen
Study score 0-571-52360-9 for sale, score and parts for hire ☺

The Way to Castle Yonder Op.21a (1988/90)

Pot-pourri after the opera *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* for orchestra

8 minutes

3.1.ca.3.1.cbsn – 4030 – perc(4): timp/tam-t/2 t.bells/susp.cym/vib/tamb/sleigh bells/cast/BD/tgl/SD/glsp/vibraslap – cel/pno – harp – strings (min 66444)

FP: (preliminary version) 15.6.88, Aldeburgh Festival, Snape Maltings, Snape, UK: English Chamber Orchestra/Stewart Bedford

FP: (revised version) 31.1.91, Barbican Hall, London, UK: London Symphony Orchestra/Michael Tilson Thomas

Work contains the following sections of music from the opera *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* (a) ‘The Ride to the Big White House’ (b) ‘Kleine Trauermusik’ (c) ‘The Ride to Castle Yonder’

Score 0-571-51443-X on sale, parts for hire ☺

Whitman Settings Op.25a (1991/2)

soprano and orchestra

12 minutes

Text (Eng): Walt Whitman

3(III=picc).1.ca.2.cbcl.2.cbsn – 4200 – perc(4): vib/BD/4 SD/glsp/2 ant.cym/t.bells/tgl/xyl/3 susp.cym/2 tam-t/whip – cel – harp – strings (min 12.10.8.6.6)

Commissioned by the Amphion Foundation

FP: 5.3.92, Barbican Hall, London, UK: Lucy Shelton/BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51410-3 on sale, parts for hire ☺

The Wild Rumpus Op.21 (1983)

from the opera *Where the Wild Things Are*

orchestra

4 minutes

3(III=picc).1.ca.3(III=Ebcl).1.cbsn – 4030 – perc(4): vib/2 tgl/4 susp.cym/3 tpl.bl/TD/6 tom-t/xyl/anvil/2 BD/siz.cym/glsp/tam-t/tamb/mcas – pno (4 hands) – harp – strings (min 66444)

FP: 21.7.87, BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London, UK: London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen

Score and parts for hire

ENSEMBLE

Coursing Op.17 (1979)

Etude No.1

chamber orchestra of 14 players

6 minutes

1111 – 1110 – perc(1): metallophone/tgl/hi-hat/susp.cym/tam-t/2 japanese temple bells – pno – strings (11111)

Commissioned by the London Sinfonietta with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

FP: 14.4.79, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, UK: London Sinfonietta/Simon Rattle

Score 0-571-50790-5 on sale, parts for hire ☺

Hums and Songs of Winnie the Pooh Op.6 (1970/83)

soprano and chamber ensemble of five players

Text (Eng): A. A. Milne

13 minutes

fl(=picc).ca.cl(=cbcl) – perc(1): ch.bar/vib/susp.cym/tam-t/bell tree/2 tgl/claves/2 tpl.bl/bamboo windchimes/cardboard box/balloon/pin – vlc

FP: 14.6.83, Aldeburgh Festival, Snape Maltings, Snape, UK: Dorothy Dorow/Aldeburgh Festival Ensemble/Oliver Knussen

The first version of this work under the title *Vocalise with Songs of Winnie the Pooh* was written for Poppy

Holden and first performed by her in a Park Lane Group Concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London on 18 May 1970.

Score 0-571-50885-5 on sale, parts for hire ☺

O Hototogisu! (2017)

fragment of a Japonisme

soprano, flute and large ensemble

Text (Eng): Adapted by the composer from Haiku poems of the 17th and 19th century

c.8 minutes

fl.ob(=ca).cl.bcl.bsn – 2 hn.tpt.trbn – perc(2): l: glsp/high and low cym/small claves/hyoshigi (large Japanese claves)/mokusho (very high wdbl)/large tam-t

ll: mar/rin/small Japanese drum/medium cym/2 whips (sprung)/3 tpbl/mcas/tgl/BD – pno(=cel) – harp – 4 vln/2 vla/2 vlc/db

Co-commissioned by Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Snape Maltings with financial assistance from Arts Council England, John Feeney Charitable Trust, BCMG's Sound Investors and the Jonathan Reekie Leaving Fund

FP: 23.6.2017, Aldeburgh Festival, Britten Studio, Snape, Suffolk, UK: Claire Booth/Marie-Christine Zupancic/Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/Oliver Knussen

Full score 0-571-54111-9 on sale, vocal score and parts for hire

Océan de Terre Op.10 (1972-73/76)

soprano and chamber ensemble of seven (or nine) players

Text (Fr): Guillaume Apollinaire

12 minutes

fl(=af).cl(=bcl) – perc(1/2): vib/glsp/t.bells/susp.cym/gong/2 tam-t/xyl/wdbl/tpl.bl/claves/whip/mcas/2 tom-t – pno(=cel+tpl.bl/mcas) 1 or 2 players – vln.vlc.db

Written for Collage Ensemble, Boston

FP: (original version) 2.3.73, Jordan Hall, Boston, USA: Joan Heller/Collage Ensemble /Jerome Rosen

FP: (revised version) 29.7.76, BBC Prom, Round House, London, UK: Mary Thomas/Fires of London/Peter

Maxwell Davies

Score 0-571-50583-X on sale, parts for hire ☺

Ophelia Dances Book 1 Op.13 (1975)

chamber ensemble of nine players

8 minutes

fl.ca.cl – hn – pno.cel – vln.vla.vlc

Commissioned by the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Serge Koussevitzky

FP: 9.5.75, Alice Tully Hall, New York, USA: Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center/Michael Tilson Thomas

FP: (revised) 10.1.80, BBC College Concert, Royal Academy of Music, London, UK: London Sinfonietta/Ronald Zollman

Score 0-571-50665-8 on sale, parts for hire ☺

Processionals Op.2 (1968/78)

chamber ensemble of nine players

10 minutes

1111 – 1000 – strings (11110)

Recomposition of *Pantomime* (1968) commissioned by the Melos Ensemble

FP: 15.12.78, Arncliffe, Bristol, UK: Lontano/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-55570-5 (fp) on sale, parts for hire

Coursing

'A brilliant little firecracker...'

Financial Times (David Murray),
19 June 2002

Hums and Songs of Winnie the Pooh

'Like all Knussen's music, *Hums and Songs* is written with a marvellously exact and imaginative ear... it is poised, charming, and amusing: a happy blend of miniature tone poem and tiny song cycle.'

The New Yorker (Andrew Porter),
14 May 1984

O Hototogisu!

'A birdsong-like flute, festooned with grace notes, frames and punctuates the tiny songs themselves, with their elaborately soaring vocal lines, while the ensemble is used with microscopic precision.'

The Guardian (Andrew Clements),
26 June 2017

'...Booth's soprano blossoming in duet with the flautist in the cracked porcelain soundworld of Knussen's exquisite *O Hototogisu!*'

The Times (Anna Picard),
20 September 2017

'Intricately scored... a tight, expressive showcase for soprano and flautist: the vocal part yearning and supplicatory, the instrument brittle and beaky.'

The Times (Neil Fisher), 26 June 2017

Océan de Terre

'Sumptuous... clotted with color, dense with incident, yet also transparent in its design.'

Boston Globe (Richard Dyer),
7 August 1991

Ophelia Dances Book 1

'The piece really dances... dazzling.'

The New York Times (Anthony Tommasini),
19 April 2013

'A tightly constructed work inspired by Shakespeare's description of Ophelia's madness, it blends wind, string and keyboard timbres superbly and moves easily between sprightliness and dreamy introspection.'

The New York Times (Allan Kozinn),
20 April 1991

Processionals

Excitingly dense, searching, completely uncluttered textures... The two movements, often suggesting a brittle Bergian style, were quite gripping...'

The Daily Telegraph (P.W.D.),
21 October 1981

Requiem

'Knussen's *Songs for Sue*, his recent requiem for his late wife, in which his strikingly honest, moving choice of poetry is fused with music of a confiding directness and beauty.'

The Guardian (Erica Jeal),
31 August 2007

'As touching in its restraint as personal in its harmony.'

The Independent (Bayan Northcott),
19 March 2007

'Miniatures are Knussen's trademark; here personal feelings rub away glitter, darkening textures, inserting sorrow.'

The Times (Geoff Brown),
15 March 2007

Songs without Voices

'There was a palpable sprinkle of magic in each "song". A ravishing cello line in the second; and elegantly melancholy one for cor anglais in the fourth, where the other seven players slip in, one by one, to extend it with tender discretion.'

Financial Times (David Murray),
26 January 1993

'Four small, magically lyrical ruminations'

Financial Times (Max Loppert),
16 June 1992

'Music as intricately and fastidiously wrought as any from the composer's hand. One longed for an immediate re-hearing.'

The Sunday Times (Paul Driver),
21 June 1992

Two Organa

'They balance the taut energy of a witty cascading first movement with something more complex and slow in the second, all brought to vivid life...'

The Times (John Allison),
17 October 2002

'A masterpiece of compactness even by his standards, offering a history of music from Pérotin to Elliott Carter in about six minutes.'

The Sunday Times (Paul Driver),
23 June 2002

'Its unwinding tune is immediately memorable. It is so shimmeringly coloured, so precisely made, so assured in the delivery of its climax that it always leaves my mood effervescent... instantly likeable, elegant, melancholy and exhilarating.'

The Guardian (Adam Foulds),
24 July 2010

Requiem – Songs for Sue Op.33 (2005-6)

soprano and ensemble of 15 players

Text (Eng/Spa/Ger): Emily Dickinson (selections), Antonio Machado, 'Los ojos', W. H. Auden, 'If I could tell you I would let you know', Rilke 'Requiem for a Friend'

12 minutes

Commissioned for MusicNOW, the new music chamber series of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

fl.afl.2 cl.bcl – 2 hn – perc(1): mar/tam-t – pno(=cel) – harp – 2 vla.2 vlc.db

FP: 3.4.06, MusicNOW, Chicago, USA: Claire Booth/Members of Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-53143-1 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Songs without Voices Op.26 (1991-2)

four pieces for eight players

11 minutes

fl.ca.cl – hn – pno – vln.vla.vlc

Commissioned by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center as part of the Elise L Stoecker Composer's Chair Award

FP: 26.4.92, Alice Tully Hall, New York, USA: Chamber Music Society of the Lincoln Center/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51350-6 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Two Organa Op.27 (1994-5)

I Notre Dame des Jouets – organum from a music box

large chamber ensemble

2 minutes

2.1.ca.2.1 – 2110 – perc(2): vib/glsp/mcas/vibraslap – cel/pno – harp – strings (11111)

FP: 7.2.95, Theatre aan de Parade, 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands: Members of Het Brabants Orkest/Oliver Knussen

Score 0-571-51624-6 on sale, parts for hire ☉

II Organum to honour the 20th anniversary of the Schönberg Ensemble

large chamber ensemble

4 minutes

2(II=afl).1.ca.2.1 – 0000 – perc(2): vib/glsp/t.bells/timp/BD/susp.cym/tgl/tam-t – harmonium – pno(=cel) – harp – strings (11111)

Written for the Schönberg Ensemble and their director Reinbert de Leeuw to honour the 20th anniversary of the Schönberg Ensemble

FP: 10.9.94, Vredenburg, Utrecht, The Netherlands: Schönberg Ensemble/Reinbert de Leeuw

Score 0-571-51624-6 on sale, parts for hire ☉

for Tamsin Waley-Cohen & Huw Watkins

REFLECTION

for violin and piano

op. 31a
August - September 2016

CHAMBER

...upon one note (1995)

after Henry Purcell

chamber ensemble of four players

3 minutes

cl.vln.vlc.pno

Score 0-571-51715-3 on sale, parts for hire ☉

Autumnal Op.14 (1976-77)

Triptych Part 1

violin and piano

7 minutes

Commissioned by Christopher Rowland and Giles Swayne with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain

FP: 10.7.80, St John's Wood Church, London, UK: Alan McNaught/George Nicholson

Autumnal is the first in a triptych of chamber works comprising of *Autumnal* Op.14, *Sonya's Lullaby* Op.16 and *Cantata* Op.15. These pieces may be performed together or separately.

Score and part 0-571-50584-8 on sale ☉

Cantata Op.15 (1977)

Triptych Part 3

oboe and string trio

10 minutes

Commissioned with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain

FP: 17.9.79, National Gallery, Athens ISCM, Greece: Janet Craxton/Nash Ensemble

Study score 0-571-50637-2 on sale, playing score on special sale from the hire library ☉

Elegiac Arabesques Op.26a (1991)

cor anglais and clarinet

4 minutes

FP: 7.11.91, Concert Hall, Broadcasting House, London, UK: Nicholas Daniel/Joy Farrall

Playing score 0-571-51481-2 on sale

Reflection Op.31a (2016)

violin and piano

8 minutes

Commissioned by Town Hall Symphony Hall (Birmingham) and the European Concert Hall Organisation, in memory of Lyndon Jenkins

FP: 3.10.2016, Town Hall, Birmingham, UK: Tamsin Waley-Cohen/Huw Watkins

Score and part 0-571-52056-1 on sale

Rosary Songs Op.9 (1972)

soprano, clarinet, viola and piano

Text (Ger): Georg Trakl

14 minutes

Commissioned by the Greater London Council for the South Bank Summer Workshop 1972

FP: 21.8.72, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, UK: Mary Thomas/Fires of London/Peter Maxwell Davies

Playing score 0-571-50540-6 on sale

Three Little Fantasies Op.6a (1970/83)

wind quintet

7 minutes

FP: (revised version) June 1983, Kingston Polytechnic, Kingston upon Thames, UK: Members of London

Sinfonietta

Score 0-571-50879-0 and parts 0-571-51377-8 on sale ☉

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Eccentric Melody (1998)

cello

2 minutes

FP: 11.2.99, Bargemusic, New York, USA: Fred Sherry

Score on special sale from the Hire Library

Masks Op.3 (1969)

flute with glass chimes ad lib

8 minutes

FP: January 1970, Northwestern University, Illinois, USA: Marjorie Shansky

Score 0-571-51106-6 on sale ☉

Autumnal

'Knussen wastes not a note, and though the work lasts only for seven minutes, its density of thought suggests something of sonata stature.'

Musical Times (Paul Griffiths),
1 August 1981

Cantata

'Its highly concentrated form, its clarity of ideas and its astute manipulation of harmony and texture make for something of real substance.'

The Daily Telegraph (Geoffrey Norris),
July 1997

'It was typical of this composer's music of the moment in saying a great deal within a succinct form. The intimacy of expression and relative modesty of its harmonies did not exclude... original thought.'

The Daily Telegraph (Alan Blyth),
7 March 1981

Reflection

'This beautifully crafted work is made of tiny aural brushstrokes suggesting water: ripples mirroring each other and bursting out in expression and ecstatic high lines.'

The Observer (Fiona Maddocks),
27 February 2017

'Much more substantial than its short duration might suggest... Knussen's writing has a marvellous fluidity.'

The Daily Telegraph (John Alison),
22 February 2017

'This short piece has it all... compelling concision.'

Die Welt, 1 February 2017

Masks

'Masks is a dramatic, arresting and ingenious composition in which the soloist's positions and perambulations as well as his notes are indicated'

The New Yorker (Andrew Porter),
11 November 1974

Ophelia's Last Dance

'A gorgeous, nostalgia-drenched, Scriabin-like waltz'

The Guardian (Andrew Clements),
28 May 2012

'It begins with a dash of light-textured sparkle and a gently chromatic line, and as it grows more emotionally charged, its language veers toward neo-Romanticism rather than the harmonic density of Mr. Knussen's earlier music.'

The New York Times (Allan Kozinn),
10 May 2010

Prayer Bell Sketch

'A hauntingly beautiful study in weight and measure, resonance and reverberation...'

The Times (Hilary Finch),
4 November 2001

'A little piece that says large things, a masterpiece of striving and achievement.'

Boston Globe (Richard Dyer),
27 July 1999

'It resonates outwards from a single chime, fragmented into its own overtones, pulsating through different rhythmic shapes, contained in quiet chords and, most eloquently, within silence itself.'

The Times (Hilary Finch), 16 June 1998

Sonya's Lullaby

'Immediately attractive because of its clarity of sound and shape. The magical opening chords give way to a rocking ostinato which develops texturally and dynamically under an increasingly embellished melodic strand....The piano writing is rich and inventive.'

Music and Letters (Jonathan Dunsby),
4 August 1981

Variations

'The most gripping piece on the programme was his Variations for Piano... among the densest six minutes of music ever written, as massive textures collapse into delicate gestures and tiny phrases transform into huge outbursts. Knussen's models when composing the piece were sets of variations by Webern, Stravinsky and Copland. His own set belongs in this company.'

The Guardian (Tom Service),
4 November 2002

Frammenti da "Chiara"

'Beautiful pieces, glowing with sensuous harmony and their impassioned spirituality and other-worldliness...'

The Listener (Martin Pacey),
21 August 1986

'Their musical imagery is fresh and evocative, and instantly appealing in the mellifluous fluidity of the choral writing.'

The Daily Telegraph (Robert Henderson),
24 June 1986

Four Late Poems

'Knussen's unerring ear for the relationships among the sounds, colours and rhythms of the words, patterns that generate poetic meaning.'

Boston Globe (Richard Dyer),
17 August 2001

Ophelia's Last Dance Op.32 (2009-10)

Ophelia Dances Book 2

piano

8 minutes

Commissioned by the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival for 2010 Gilmore Artist Kirill Gerstein, with funds from the Russell L. Gabier Fund

FP: 3.5.10, Gilmore International Keyboard Festival, Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA: Kirill Gerstein

Score 0-571-51930-X on sale ☺

Prayer Bell Sketch Op.29 (1997)

piano

5 minutes

Commissioned by Ms Masako Okamura and Mr Motoyuki Nakagawa in memory of Toru Takemitsu

FP: 22.9.97, Tokyo Opera City Takemitsu Memorial Concert Hall, Tokyo, Japan: Peter Serkin

Score 0-571-51952-0 on sale ☺

Secret Psalm (1990)

violin

5 minutes

Written in memory of Michael Vyner (1943–1989)

FP: 6.5.90, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, UK: Nona Liddell

Score 0-571-52531-8 on sale ☺

Sonya's Lullaby Op.16 (1977-78)

Triptych Part 2

piano

6 minutes

FP: (preliminary version) 10.10.77, Galerie Schwarzes Kloster, Freiburg-in-Breisgau, Germany: Michael Finnissy

FP: (final version) 6.1.79, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Michael Finnissy

Score 0-571-50568-6 on sale ☺

Study for "Metamorphosis" (1972 rev. 2018)

bassoon

c.5 minutes

Written at the request of the bassoonist Vincent Ellin for his recital at New England Conservatory in Boston, April 1972, the present version is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend of 40 years, the composer Alan Stout (26.11.1932 – 1.2.2018)

FP: April 1972, New England Conservatory, Boston, MA, USA: Vincent Ellin

Rev. version: 14.2.2018, Paul Sacher Auditorium, Basel, Switzerland: Patrick Gallois

Score 0-571-53657-3 on sale

Turba (1976)

double bass

6 minutes

Published by Margun Music Inc., publication no.MM4

Variations Op.24 (1989)

piano

7 minutes

Commissioned for Peter Serkin by the 92nd Street Y with funds partly provided by the Mary Flager Cary Charitable fund

FP: 11.11.89, 92nd Street Y, New York, USA: Peter Serkin

Score 0-571-51223-2 on sale ☺

CHORAL

Frammenti da "Chiara" Op.19a (1975/86)

2 antiphonal choirs of female voices a capella

Duration 8 minutes

(24 voices in all)

FP: 23.6.86, Almeida Festival, Union Chapel, London, UK: BBC Singers/Simon Joly

Vocal score 0-571-51109-0 on sale

VOCAL

Four Late Poems and an Epigram of Rainer Maria Rilke Op.23 (1988)

unaccompanied soprano

Text (Eng): Rainer Maria Rilke, trans. Stephen Mitchell

10 minutes

Commissioned by Jane Manning with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain

FP: 10.6.89, Aldeburgh Festival, Leiston Church, Leiston, UK: Jane Manning

Score 0-571-51096-5 on sale ☺

Hums and Songs of Winnie the Pooh Op.6 (1970/83)

soprano and chamber ensemble of five players

See ensemble

O Hototogisu! (2017)

fragment of a Japonisme for soprano, flute and large ensemble

See ensemble

Océan de Terre Op.10 (1972-73/76)

soprano and chamber ensemble of seven (or nine) players

See ensemble

Requiem – Songs for Sue Op.33 (2005-6)

soprano and ensemble of 15 players

See ensemble

Rosary Songs Op.9 (1972)

soprano, clarinet, viola and piano

See chamber

Trumpets Op.12 (1975)

soprano and three clarinets

Text (Ger): Georg Trakl

4 minutes

Written for Matrix

FP: 27.2.75, Camden Festival, The Place, London, UK: Jane Manning/Matrix

Study score 0-571-50541-4 on sale, playing score on special sale from the Hire Library ☉

Whitman Settings Op.25 (1991)

soprano and piano

Text (Eng): Walt Whitman

10 minutes

Commissioned by the Amphion Foundation

FP: (first three songs) 17.6.91, Aldeburgh Festival, Snape Maltings, Snape, UK: Lucy Shelton/Ian Brown

FP: (complete) 15.10.91, BBC Pebble Mill, Birmingham, UK: Lucy Shelton/John Constable

Score 0-571-51409-X on sale ☉

ARRANGEMENTS

Pérotin: Alleluia Nativitas

arr. Knussen (1987)

wind quintet

8 minutes

fl.ca.cl.bsn.hn

Written for a South Bank Summerscope concert

FP: 1.9.87, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, UK:

Endymion Ensemble/Rupert Bawden

A4 score 0-571-55568-3 (fp) and parts

0-571-55569-1 (fp) on sale

Berlioz: Deuxième prologue from

Roméo et Juliette

orch. Knussen (1995)

orchestration of the Deuxième prologue

c.4 minutes

2224 – 4030 – timp(2) – strings (15.15.10.11.9)

FP: 6.10.95, Teatro Comunale di Ferrara, Ferrara,

Emilia-Romagna, Italy: Monteverdi Choir/Orchestre

Révolutionnaire et Romantique/John Eliot Gardiner

Score and parts for hire

Mussorgsky: Marriage

orch. Oliver Knussen and Colin

Matthews (1981)

one-act opera in four scenes

chamber orchestra

Text (Eng): Nikolai Gogol trans. Stephen Oliver

35 minutes

Singers: Podkolyosin, a court councillor (Bar)/

Kochkaryov, his friend (T)/Fyokla Ivanovna, a

matchmaker (MS)/Stepan, Podkolyosin's valet (B)

2120 – 2000 – strings

FP: 12.12.81, Bloomsbury Theatre, London, UK:

Nexus Opera/Divertimenti/Lionel Friend

Full score, vocal score and parts for hire

Mussorgsky Miniatures

arr. Knussen (1978)

chamber orchestra

5 minutes

1121 – 2000 – strings

FP: 15.4.11, City Hall, Glasgow, UK: Scottish

Chamber Orchestra/Oliver Knussen

Score and parts for hire

National Anthem

arr. Knussen (1990)

orchestra

1 minute

2222 – 4230 – timp – perc(2): 2 susp.cym/SD/tam-t/

tgl/TD – harp – strings

Score and parts for hire

Scriabin Settings

arr. Knussen (1978)

five miniatures arranged for chamber orchestra

8 minutes

1121 – 2000 – cel – strings (min 22221)

Score and parts available from Music Sales Classical

☉

Published by GunMar Music, Inc.,

publication no.MG023

Rosary Songs

'Fantastical lunar beauty...'

The Times (Hilary Finch),

4 November 2002

'A rather beautiful, full-blown romantic response to the dark surreal swirl of Trakl's words, sustained by a lithe (in its litheness, almost Straussian) high-floating vocal line, and by a tightly-organised, but nonetheless heavily sensuous instrumental accompaniment.'

Financial Times (Dominic Gill),

13 November 1976

Trumpets

'Textures lurch precipitately between mysterious rustlings, mad gallops, cavernous echo-tones and shrieking, close-harmony fanfares in top clarinet register... beneath the harmonic surface there is a harmonic intelligence of rare cogency...'

New Statesman (Bayan Northcott),

7 March 1975

'A brilliantly imaginative response to the verbal world of Trakl. Always attentive both to the sound and sense of words Knussen super-imposes with tensile brilliance purely musical rhythms onto the rhythms of the poem.'

Boston Globe (Richard Dyer),

15 August 1975

Whitman Settings

'Intense miniatures of great beauty and technical accomplishment. The piano accompaniment is elaborate but always translucent.'

The Singer (Matthew Greenall),

March 1994

Scriabin Settings

'Jewel-like and delicate...'

The Guardian (Rowena Smith),

3 September 2008



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MUSIC EXTRACTS:
PG 3
SONGS WITHOUT VOICES
- LEGGIERO (FIRST
DANDELION)
PG 8
REFLECTION

DISCOGRAPHY

...upon one note

2003 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222

Autumnal

2012 Alexandra Wood/Huw Watkins
NMC Recordings D178

Cantata

1988 The Nash Ensemble
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010
2017 Nicholas Daniel/Britten Oboe Quartet
Harmonia Mundi HMM907672

Choral

2012 BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen
NMC Recordings D178

Coursing

1988 Elaine Barry/London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010

Flourish with Fireworks

1996 CBSO/Simon Rattle
EMI Classics 7243 5 66137 2
2002 Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra/Ingo Metzmacher
Sony 130081
2003 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222

Four Late Poems and an Epigram of Rainer Maria Rilke

2002 Lisa Saffer
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4

Higglety Pigglety Pop!

1984 Rosemary Hardy/Mary King/Hugh Hetherington/Stephen
Rhys-Williams/Andrew Gallacher/London Sinfonietta/Oliver
Knussen/dir. Christopher Swann
BBC broadcast 1984/ Castle Vision VHS 1985/Warner Music Vision +
Kultur Video DVD 2009
2001 Cynthia Buchan/Lisa Saffer/Rosemary Hardy/Christopher
Gillett/David Wilson-Johnson/Stephen Richardson/London
Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 469 5562

Horn Concerto

2003 Barry Tuckwell/London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222
2018 Félix Dervaux/Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam/
Ryan Wigglesworth
RCO 17004

Hums and Songs of Winnie-the-Pooh

2002 Lisa Saffer/Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center/Oliver
Knussen
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4

Masks

2011 Laurel Zucker/Christopher Cook
Cantilena Records 660222

Music for a Puppet Court

2003 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222

Notre Dame des Jouets

1994 Ron Ford
VPRO EW9413

Océan de Terre

2002 Lucy Shelton/Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center/Oliver
Knussen
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4

Ophelia Dances Book 1

1988 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010

Ophelia's Last Dance

2010 Kirill Gerstein
Myrios Classics MYR 005
2012 Huw Watkins
NMC Recordings D178

Prayer Bell Sketch

2000 Peter Serkin
Koch International Classics 3-7450-2
2012 Ryan Wigglesworth
NMC Recordings D178
2017 Florence Millet
Cybele Records 001

Requiem – Songs For Sue

2012 Claire Booth/Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/Oliver
Knussen
NMC Recordings D178

Scriabin Settings

2008 Gürzenich-Orchester Köln/Oliver Knussen
GOlive! 08/09

Secret Psalm

2012 Alexandra Wood
NMC Recordings D178

Songs without Voices

2002 Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center/Oliver Knussen
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4

Sonya's Lullaby

2002 Peter Serkin
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4

Symphony No.2

1988 Elaine Barry/London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010

Symphony No.3

1988 Philharmonia/Michael Tilson Thomas
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010
1990 Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Vladimir Ashkenazy
RPO 7015
2008 Gürzenich-Orchester Köln/Oliver Knussen
GOlive! 08/09

Three Little Fantasies

1991 Aspen Wind Quintet
Bay Cities BCD 1030
1993 Esbjerg Ensemble
Kontrapunkt 32002

Trumpets

1988 Linda Hirst/Michael Collins/Edward Pillinger/Ian Mitchell/
Oliver Knussen
Unicorn-Kanchana UKCD2010

Two Organa

2003 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222

Variations

1994 Ananda Sukarlan
Erasmus Muziekproducties WWH139
1996 Peter Serkin
RCA Victor Gold Seal 09026681892
2002 Peter Serkin
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4
2015 Benjamin Hochman
Avie AV2327

Violin Concerto

2012 Leila Josefowicz/BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen
NMC Recordings D178

The Way to Castle Yonder

2003 London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222

Where the Wild Things Are

1984 Rosemary Hardy/Mary King/Hugh Hetherington/Stephen
Rhys-Williams/Andrew Gallacher/London Sinfonietta/Oliver
Knussen/dir. Christopher Swann
BBC broadcast 1984/ Castle Vision VHS 1985/Unicorn-Kanchana LP
DKP 9044 1985/Warner Music Vision + Kultur Video DVD 2009
2001 Lisa Saffer/Mary King/Christopher Gillett/Quentin Hayes/
David Wilson-Johnson/Stephen Richardson/
London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 469 5562

Whitman Settings

2002 Lucy Shelton/Peter Serkin
EMI Classics 7243 5 75296 2 4
2012 Claire Booth/Ryan Wigglesworth
NMC Recordings D178

Whitman Settings (orchestral)

2003 Lucy Shelton/London Sinfonietta/Oliver Knussen
Deutsche Grammophon 474 3222