

Lines Spun

Music by Jennifer Fowler

1	Line Spun with Stars (flute, cello, piano)	15:34
2	Lady Maisry (soprano & piano)	12:30
3	Letter from Haworth (mezzo-soprano, clarinet, cello, piano)	13:23
4	Streaming Up (flute, oboe, clarinet, cello, piano)	7:31
5	From the Cave Mouth (soprano, clarinet, violin)	15:18
6	Lament (oboe, clarinet, bassoon)	8:36
Total duration:		72:54

Raphaela Papadakis soprano Lauren Easton mezzo-soprano

Lontano

directed by Odaline de la Martinez

The composer

Jennifer Fowler was born in Bunbury, Western Australia in 1939. She studied at the University of Western Australia, where she won composition prizes and the University's Convocation Award. In 1968 she spent a year in Holland at the University of Utrecht on a Dutch Government Scholarship. Since 1969, she has been living in London where she works as a free-lance composer.

Her international prizes for composition include:

Academy of Arts, Berlin, 1970; Radcliffe Award of Great Britain, 1971; International Competition GEDOK, Mannheim, 1975; Miriam Gideon Prize, (USA) 2003; Bodman Memorial Competition, (UK) 2006; Sylvia Glickman Memorial Prize, (USA) 2009 and Goleminov Contest, Bulgaria, 2009.

Her output includes orchestral works, chamber pieces, solo music and vocal ensembles of all kinds. Performances of works including some on this album have taken place recently in Australia, Hong Kong, Austria and the UK and her new work *Bassoon Solo* was given its premiere at the London Festival of New Wind Music in October, 2018.

Her music has been included in such prestigious international festivals as the ISCM World Music Days; the Gaudeamus Music Week, Holland; the Huddersfield Festival of Contemporary Music, UK; the International Sydney Spring Festival; the Perth International Arts Festival, Australia; City of London Festival; Women in Music festivals in London, Atlanta, Alaska, Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Rome, and Beijing; and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music.

Further information: www.impulse-music.co.uk/jenniferfowler

The music 1

Line Spun With Stars

In view of the vast choice of notes which one can use in a particular work, I like to set some limits. In this piece I have limited myself to drawing a line; i.e. the piece is almost entirely monophonic (one note at a time).

There are episodes which have a characteristic pattern: a cluster of notes which revolve around a central note; a kind of "star" pattern, in which the central note exerts a gravitational pull on the surrounding notes. Leading from one "star" pattern to another are lines with a strong sense of direction. They pull the stream of notes downwards or upwards, until encountering another star pattern.

The impetus generated propels the piece either towards faster movement, reaching a burst of rapid notes; or towards slower movement, with longer notes. These cycles themselves vary in length and expand and contract.

Because of these limits, the single stream of notes allows the patterns of tempo and direction to be etched out more distinctly.

Lady Maisry

This is a setting of a traditional English verse, scored for soprano and piano. The setting was originally one of a group of four compositions which capture significant aspects of a woman's life, the kind of aspects which have always occurred and always will. In this verse, Lady Maisry is dying, possibly in childbirth.

Lady Maisry

Oh she called her little page boy Who was her mother's son. She told him as quick as he could go To bring the lord safe home.

Now the first mile he would walk, And the second he would run, And when he came to the broken bridge, He would bend his breast and swim.

When he came to the new castle, The lord was sat to meat, If you knew as much as me, How little, little would you eat.

Is my bower falling down, Or is my tower down? Or is my gay lady put to bed With a daughter, or a son?

No, your bower is not falling down, Nor is your tower down, We are afraid before you return, Your lady will be dead and gone. Come saddle, saddle my milk white steed, Come saddle my pony too, That I may neither eat nor drink Until I come to the castle new.

When he came to the new castle, He heard a big bell toll, And there he saw eight noble, noble men, A-bearing of a pall.

Lay down. lay down the gentle corpse As it lies fast asleep, That I may kiss her red ruby lips That I used to kiss so sweet.

Six times he kissed her red ruby lips, Nine times he kissed her chin, Ten times he kissed her snowy white breast Which love did enter in.

The lady was buried on Sunday, Before the prayer was end. And the lord he died on the Sunday next, Before the prayer begun.

Letter from Haworth

The text of *Letter from Haworth* comes from a letter which Charlotte Bronte wrote in January 1845, to her friend and teacher, Monsieur Heger. During 1842/3, Charlotte had studied languages at a school in Brussels run by Madame Heger. Her stay there was fraught with loneliness and homesickness so that her friendship with Monsieur Heger – a lively and gifted teacher – assumed great importance.

When she returned to Yorkshire, M. Heger corresponded with her for a time, as he did with other ex-pupils, but it is obvious that a note of intensity in Charlotte Bronte's replies, put him in a difficult position and his letters became more and more infrequent. At the end of 1844 she had had no word for 6 months. When she found that Mr Joe Taylor was planning to visit the continent to escort home his sister Mary – a close friend – she asked him to carry a letter and place it personally into M. Heger's own hands, and to be the bearer of his reply.

It was some months before the Taylors returned and when they did there was no reply from her "master". She wrote, in an outburst of grief, the letter which I have set. It begins without the customary "Dear Monsieur"; without any greeting at all:

Mr Taylor has returned. I asked him if he had a letter for me. "No, nothing" ...

I found the idea of setting these words interesting, because of the tension between the extremity of emotion conveyed, and the balance and control in the actual use of words. The letter is obsessed, but the intensity is contained in a controlled rise and fall. Here is rhythm, and phrasing, and a limpid simplicity which belongs to the great writer that C.B. was to become.

The piece was originally written in 1984, and revised in 2005.

Letter from Haworth

Mr Taylor has returned. I asked him if he had a letter for me. "No; nothing." "Patience", said I – "his sister will be here soon." Miss Taylor has returned. "I have nothing for you from Monsieur Heger" said she, "Neither letter nor message."

Having realised the meaning of these words, I said to myself what I should say to another similarly placed: "You must be resigned, and above all do not grieve at a misfortune which you have not deserved." I strove to restrain my tears, to utter no complaint.

But when one does not complain, when one seeks to dominate oneself with a tyrant's grip, the faculties start into rebellion and one pays for external calm with an internal struggle that is almost unbearable.

Day and night I find neither rest nor peace. If I sleep I am disturbed by tormenting dreams in which I see you, always severe, always grave, always incensed against me.

Forgive me then, Monsieur, if I adopt the course of writing to you again. How can I endure life if I make to effort to ease its sufferings?

I know you will be irritated when you read this letter. You will say once more that I am hysterical – I have black thoughts, et cetera. So be it, Monsieur, I do not seek to justify myself; I submit to every sort of reproach. All I know is, that I cannot, that I will not, resign myself to lose wholly the friendship of my master. I would rather suffer the greatest physical pain than always have my heart lacerated by smarting regrets. If my master withdraws his friendship from me entirely I shall be altogether without hope; if he gives me a little – just a little – I shall be satisfied – happy; I shall have a reason for living on, for working.

I shall not re-read this letter. I send it as I have written it. Nevertheless, I have a hidden consciousness that some people, cold and commonsense, in reading it would say — "She is talking nonsense." I would avenge myself on such persons in no other way than by wishing them one single day of the torments which I have suffered for eight months. We should then see if they would not talk nonsense too.

The music 3

Streaming Up

The title refers to the continuous stream of energy flowing between the five instruments, mostly streaming upwards. The piece was originally written for an ensemble called Asparas. In Buddhist mythology, asparas are female spirits of nature. Sometimes they are water nymphs and I was imagining them as foam from the sea waves flying upwards. They are symbols of the exuberance and changing variety of nature.

The rhythm is in groups of 5, with hiccupping accents on different parts of these groups. There is a slower, more melancholy middle section which has quiet intertwining lines disturbed by more aggressive interjections. The mood then returns to that of the beginning.

From the Cave Mouth

The title refers to a voice or message which seems to convey something highly charged, but enigmatic. It could be the prophecies of an oracle, or refer to something found in a cave needing interpretation, such as ancient scrolls or a pile of bones. "Cave" also implies echoes.

The music issues as three lines of similar range which intertwine. At any moment the choice of notes is restricted and the voices circle around each other, echoing the chosen notes, but not the exact phrasing. When new notes are introduced the phrases expand and become more complex while older notes can be silenced. Overall, this method of proceeding results in an impression of gradual change which can expand or contract.

The text (by the composer) is made up of repeating syllables in different order, sometimes making recognisable words and phrases in English, and sometimes only implying a meaning. The limited number of syllables reflects the limited number of notes in any part of the music.

From the Cave Mouth

Earth all enfold,

otherly wane evening. waning.

Early lie far, Orfell drown Warning en-tho.

furling, in ferloh where through veilen hung.

Other winding, On the vaulten flay, Volume fallten high, over the whelming thaw, thought in veiling eve-ing.

Only wighten through, arlen twiloh fire

Where ere all ending.

Quailing and forming throng Eerie all whelloh rounding

Wound inter-twine, Wind after hollow Veil the mystery

Veil the myster Overall, night.

Even,

Our ending,

Wing rung, darken follow quite in shawl now, Sound it right, over awning, over hollow,

Shroud all now.

Further, further re-sounding
Out in boundary oh hollow cry quail-loring
All winding in vaulten rung.

Oracle, hark oh hark Hover, foreboding.

Darken, dreary hover over-lay

Surrounding thorn lay clamour

Bleak leaven cord on shroud Pall now wait resounding chime

Oh, clangor recall

Befall us flung, spark further, hurl it down Twi-loh the cry out-throw, re-stain.

Throwing shadow round us ring, Shout chasm rung. Earl star calling

Early echo towring hang

Hurl fire blazing dome volume unstrung,

Shrill voices sing

Vaulted earl-oh gray in hollow dome Boundless all, towering in fetter

Striking stone.

Orfell now overhang,

Half wafting echo

Hang Round it rung orfelloh wane

So ending song.

Ending ...

Jennifer Fowler

The music 4

Lament

Lament was written in response to the death of a friend.

In this piece I wanted to spin a long line of wordless lamentation. I was aiming to explore what one could say within quite strict limitations: spinning out a few notes at a time; twisting and turning; keeping up a sense of momentum and a sense of progression. Underneath, and entwined with it, the other instruments are used to underpin the main line, but they also unsettle it with uneasy independent movement.



Rehearsal: Rowland Sutherland, Natalie Bleicher & Clare O'Connell of Lontano



Jennifer Fowler

The musicians

London-born soprano Raphaela Papadakis, winner of the National Mozart Competition, made her professional début at Garsington Opera whilst still a student at the Guildhall School, for which she was praised by the Financial Times as giving "the most attractive solo performance" of the show. Since then, she has gone on to perform roles with Independent Opera and Bury Court Opera, and covered at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, the Royal Opera House and the Berlin Staatsoper.

A passionate recitalist and concert singer, Raphaela made her début at Carnegie Hall in 2014, and this year has appeared at the Oxford Lieder Festival, the Beethoven Woche in Bonn, Musicfest Aberystwyth, St Johns Smiths Square and Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, with collaborators such as Tom Poster, Sholto Kynoch, James Cheung and the Meta4 Quartet.

Raphaela's other awards include the York Early Music Festival Prize at the London Handel Festival, 1st Prize and Audience Prize at the Clonter Opera Competition, and 1st Prize at the Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards. She is a Samling, IMA, and City Music Foundation Artist, and a winner of the Making Music Award for Young Concert Artists. She is also a Selected Artist for Making Music's brochure 2019/20. Raphaela studied at Clare College, Cambridge, graduating with a first-class degree in English Literature.

For more information, please see her website raphaelapapadakis.com

Australian mezzo-soprano **Lauren Easton** is currently establishing an exciting young career firmly centred in the UK. A highlight of her career has been her ongoing relationship with the Glyndebourne Festival, which began in 2011 when she made her Festival debut as Magdalena in Sir David McVicar's new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Further roles with the Festival and its Touring Opera include Amarella in Julian Phillips' *The Yellow Sofa*,

Sandman (Hänsel und Gretel), Bat/Chair (L'enfant et les Sortilèges), Dryade in Katharina Thoma's new production of Ariadne auf Naxos, Flora (La Traviata – Tom Cairns' new production), and Lucretia in Rape of Lucretia. In 2016 Ms. Easton made her rôle debut as Dalila in Samson et Dalila for Bury Port Opera and performed one of the Leerbubers (apprentices) in the revival of Sir David McVicar's Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, and in 2017 performed Siegrune in Die Walkure at Grange Park Opera. Lauren is currently represented by Robert Guilder & Co www.robertguilder.com and further information may be found at www.laureneaston.com

Lontano's impact on the perception of new music has been profound and enduring. Since its inception in 1976 by conductor/composer **Odaline de la Martinez** and flautist Ingrid Culliford, Lontano has established an international reputation as one of the most exciting and versatile exponents of 20th and 21st century music.

Lontano commissions, produces, performs and records with the primary aim of bringing to the fore the work of contemporary British and American composers, women composers and Latin American classical repertoire. The ensemble's sphere of activity includes contemporary opera, music theatre, concerts, workshops, education projects, tours, broadcasts and recordings. Performances feature some of the most noted, inventive and radical names in contemporary composition.

Lontano regularly broadcasts on television and radio and enjoys a close relationship with the British Broadcasting Corporation. In 1984 Odaline was the first woman to conduct a complete evening in the BBC Proms season.

An education and community program is integral to Lontano's performing activity. The ensemble undertakes a diverse range of projects involving a broad spectrum of ages, cultures and social backgrounds. In 2002 Lontano was invited to become ensemble in residence at Kings College, London University. Here, they interact with young composers offering unparalleled opportunity for compositions to be rehearsed and performed by professional musicians.



Raphaela Papadakis



Lauren Easton

Lontano / Odaline de la Martinez



LONTANO personnel on this recording: Rowland Sutherland flute/piccolo | Janey Miller oboe Andrew Sparling clarinet | Julie Andrew bassoon Caroline Balding violin | Clare O'Connell cello | Natalie Bleicher piano

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Chalmers at Eastern Desert Art (Central Australia): www.easterndesertart.com.au

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A few years ago, in London, I was able to buy a painting by an artist working in the central desert area of Australia: "Rainbow Dreaming". It has pride of place on my living room wall. and I never tire of looking at it. When it came to wondering what image I would like on the cover of this album, I wondered if it would be possible to contact the artist to arrange her permission. It turned out to be simple to find the website of her agent, Eastern Desert Art (well worth looking at). Contact with them was made and the reply was that yes, they could give permission, but the sad news was that the artist had died just the week before! I had been meaning to use the contact to send a message to Sarah, saying how much I was continuing to enjoy her painting. Too late! So I am taking this opportunity to express, publicly, thanks for her art.

Jennifer Fowler

LONTANO on two other Métier recordings:

MSV 28501 - Brian Ferneyhough: choral works (with The BBC Singers) MSVCD 92084 - Sadie Harrison: The Light Garden









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