

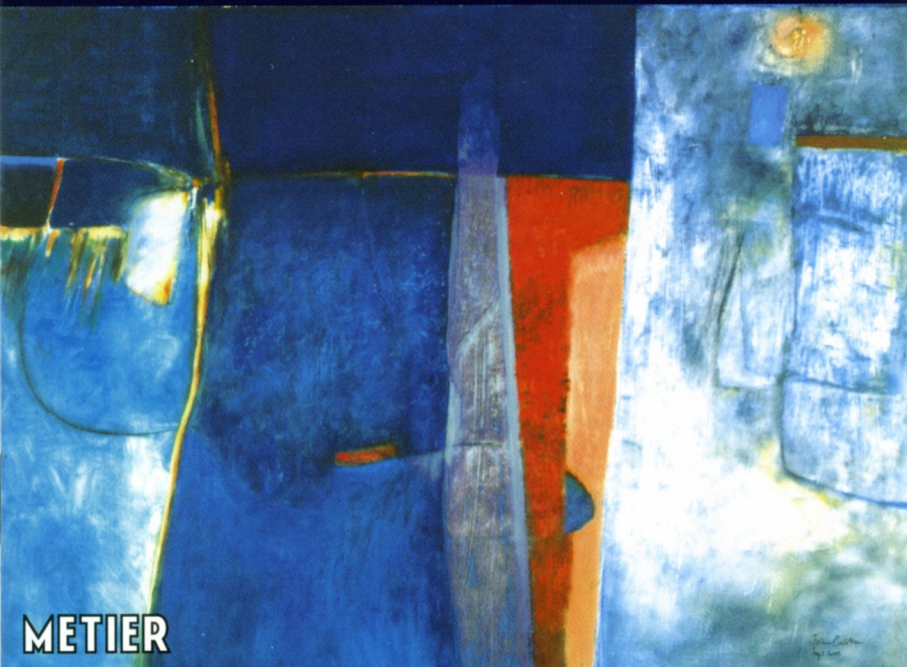
NIGHT

FIRE

SUN

SILENCE

music by JOHN CASKEN



METIER



John Casken
(photo: Tom Bangala)

INFANTA MARINA

'Infanta' is the Spanish and Portuguese word for Princess: Marina was the daughter of Pericles who, in Shakespeare's play, was born at sea in a fierce storm. She grew up in a hostile land at the hands of malevolent guardians and brigands until reunited with her lost father. 'Infanta Marina' is the title of a short, delicate poem by Wallace Stevens which dwells on the image of a shore-line and the figure of a young woman, "this creature of the evening", roaming the sand between land and sea, between past and present.

These ideas form the basis of my concertante work for small ensemble in which a single instrument (cor anglais) is situated between two trios of flute/viola/harp on the left, and clarinet/horn/double-bass on the right: a lone voice between two different forces. Through this musical landscape of contrasts and contradictions passes an imaginary Princess, affected now by this side, now by that; now reluctant to respond, now calming all before her.

The two groups are at times sharply differentiated, and at times they share material. In the final stages, the soloist and the two groups come together, firstly in a dreamy waltz-chorale, and then in a dance, gentle at first, but then increasingly abandoned.

Infanta Marina was commissioned by the Nash Ensemble and first performed by them in the Purcell Room in March 1994, conducted by Lionel Friend.

APRÈS UN SILENCE

Après un silence was originally written as a work for violin and piano for Lesley Hatfield. But it also exists in an orchestral version for violin and chamber orchestra, or for violin and large ensemble (as the chamber orchestra version, but with single strings). The reason for orchestrating the original work came as a result of wanting to present the Northern Sinfonia with a gift in their 40th anniversary year at a time when I was Composer in Association with the orchestra.

The work was begun in September 1997, after almost a year of not composing. As I started to write the new work, I considered a number of questions relating to our experience of silence. Is the silence a result of circumstance, an enforced silence, a confinement or imprisonment (real or imagined), or is it perhaps an inability to express things? And, how does one speak, sing, or announce one's presence after a period of silence, in what kind of tone – with confidence, anger, or timidity? What range of emotions is released as those first sounds are

freed into the air? Music cannot set out to answer these questions, but the questions themselves could form (as they did in the case of this work) the poetic and dramatic framework that helps to shape the musical ideas.

The work is in one movement and falls into a number of linked sections:

Prélude – Récit 1 – Chant 1 – Récit 2 – Chant 2 – Récit 3 – Courante – Postlude

After a spirited *Prélude*, *Récit* sections (meaning both recitative and commentary) alternate with *Chant* (song) sections. The three *Récit* sections are characterized by an agitated solo line accompanied by persistent chords and a low pedal, while the two *Chant* sections are more lyrical and relaxed. The third *Récit* leads into a flowing *Courante* that pushes *Chant* material towards a confident but turbulent *Postlude*.

The title alludes to Fauré's *Après un rêve*, and the section headings are in French for consistency.

Après un silence is dedicated to Lesley Hatfield who had been leader of the Northern Sinfonia during my Association with the orchestra. She gave the first performance of the original work at the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin with William Lloyd in February 1999. The first performance of the orchestral version was given by the Northern Sinfonia with Kyra Humphreys, the orchestra's Co-Leader, conducted by Nicholas Kraemer, in March 1999.

FIREWHIRL

Firewhirl is a setting of 'A Revel' for soprano and an ensemble of flute, clarinet, horn, bassoon, violin, viola and cello. This poem is the second of two poems by George Macbeth entitled *In the North*, and paints a midsummer scene in Finland, where the villagers are enjoying night-time revelry around a bonfire: "the sun burned late....The fire-dance raged...Girls dressed in blinding frocks....whirled and screamed." One girl dances alone, "Whirling in separate fire", a girl with remarkable hair who casts a spell over the men watching her. The language of the poem is highly charged, and from the beginnings of her slow erotic dance, the tension increases to an unbearable level, as the girl, "Uncoiling, scaled like silver,swayed in sickening flame Up the rough bark of bodies mailed with need Whose eyes were paired shears." At the height of the dance, one of the men pulls the whirling hair, which suddenly brings it "burning from her barren crown And showed her naked." The hair is false, and for this betrayal, "In one clear swoop, she scarred the lake with blood."

Although the poem shares similarities with Finno-Ugric folk myths, particularly that of the *Va-kul*, the harmful spirit with long hair who haunted the lakes, George Macbeth did in fact base this poem on a true story. The title of my work is an invented word that embodies the recurrent images of fire and whirling, but it could also serve as the name of the girl whose menacing presence has such a disturbing effect on the party. The Finish folk-tunes, some going on at the same time, the opening sound of the 'fiddler' tuning up, and his snatches of folk-tune, are intended to enhance the sense of place and the atmosphere of the villagers' spontaneous merry-making.

Firewhirl was commissioned by the Bath Festival for its first performance at the 1980 Festival. It was sung by Teresa Cahill, with the ensemble Capricorn conducted by the composer.

PIANO QUARTET

Completed in May 1990, my Piano Quartet was written in response to a commission for a new work for Domus from the Birmingham Chamber Music Society, and co-funded by West Midlands Arts.

This is a virtuosic work, both in terms of the parts for individual players, and also for the challenges it poses for chamber music playing. Some of the material relates very closely to ideas from my opera *Golem*, performed for the first time in 1989. Not only did I want to take some of the opera's ideas further, and explore them in a different medium, I wanted to see how far the extremes of fragility and intensity could be pushed in different ways from in the opera. At the heart of the work lies song, and it is on a unison song that the three stringed instruments come together to end the work.

The work was given its first performance by Domus in the Sir Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham, in November 1990.

SALAMANDRA

fire-haunt for two pianos

'Salamandra' is the Greek form of salamander, the name for a lizard-like creature, and for an elemental spirit, both of which are supposed to live in fire. *Salamandra* continues the theme of fire that had appeared in several other works of mine, in particular through the flaming canvases of Gauguin which had inspired *la Orana*, *Gauguin* (1979), and in *Firewhirl*. The

fire-imagery in *Salamandra* is perhaps more literal, and was suggested initially by seeing small lizards darting between the rocks at the mouth of a volcano. The sub-title, 'fire-haunt', is intentionally ambiguous: the creature both inhabits this place, and is a spirit of the volcanic landscape.

These visual stimuli were to play a decisive role in helping to create the sound-world for the work, from the eruptive opening, to the shimmering intensity of some of the figuration, and the 'quiet heat' of the central episode. The musical material is derived from an ascending scalic fragment – D, E flat, F, G A flat in piano 1, and its inversion D, C sharp, B, A, A flat in piano 2. The ascending version can be heard most clearly at the very end of the work where it is hammered out and shared between the two pianos. Elsewhere it is expanded into non-symmetrical scales which are used in an exposed way, or are embodied in the texture.

Salamandra was commissioned by Andrew Ball and Julian Jacobson for the 1986 Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, where they gave the first performance, with funds provided by Yorkshire Arts Association.

AMARANTOS

Amarantos is a one-movement work for an ensemble of nine players. The Greek word 'amarantos' means 'everlasting' or 'unfading', and the title was suggested by the amaranthine flowers in e.e.cummings' sonnet "this is the garden", where the flowers stand "enraptured" when, "in other lands.....and on Death's blade lie many a flower curled". Another important image is that of "pursed lips [blowing] upon cool flutes within wide glooms", a remarkable idea that was responsible for the work's coda in which the alto flute plays a prominent role.

For this recording, I seized the opportunity to make some long-awaited revisions in order to address what I felt was a structural imbalance, removing a number of pages from the original score, and making some necessary adjustments. The work was commissioned by the BBC and first performed by members of The London Sinfonietta conducted by Peter Eötvös in December 1978.

DISTANT VARIATIONS

In the mid-1990s Timothy Reynish, who was then Head of Wind and Percussion at The Royal Northern College of Music, wanted to commission me to write a work for the RNCM Wind Orchestra. I was already thinking of writing a saxophone quartet, and *Distant Variations* is the result of combining that idea with Tim's commission. The work is a *concerto grosso* for saxophone quartet and wind orchestra, where the two groups constantly interact and provoke one other, and where there is little distinction between the levels of virtuosity demanded of each.

The title suggests that the material unfolds as a set of variations, although the idea is only distantly related to the classical model. But the score is also prefaced by the following lines:

Sunrise in the silent canyon: the clear, sharp line between blackened rim and inky sky is shattered by the sun's first rays. Fortresses of rock come to life in distant variations, carved by time, enflamed for all eternity.

Janek Schon

(Variations on a distant rim)

A key moment in the composition was being present at sunrise in the Grand Canyon while on holiday in the USA. The "Fortresses of rock" coming to life were to prove to be a useful starting point, even though the subsequent jazzy elements are a long way from the almost sacred moment when the sun's rays first come above the Canyon's rim.

Distant Variations was commissioned by the Royal Northern College of Music, and the first performance was given by the Apollo Saxophone Quartet with the Royal Northern College of Music Wind Orchestra, conducted by Timothy Reynish, at the Barbican in March 1997.

© 2004 programme notes by John Casken

The **APOLLO SAXOPHONE QUARTET** was established at the Royal Northern College of Music in 1985. The group set out to develop an original repertoire, drawing upon influences from a wide variety of cultures and disciplines, combining contemporary classical, jazz, folk and world music. Dedicated to a policy of commissioning and performing new works by today's leading composers, the Quartet has become defined by its unique repertoire and has firmly established its position at the forefront of contemporary performance.

The Apollo Saxophone Quartet maintains a high profile at many leading UK Festivals and venues throughout the UK, Europe and Japan, as well as giving regular radio and TV broadcasts. Their highly successful debut CD "First & Foremost" for Decca's Argo label reached no.3 in the UK classical music charts within one month of release. They have since featured on a CD by Django Bates' on Decca (Argo), recorded a CD exclusively of

music by Quartet members, "Words & Pictures", and in 2001 recorded a disc of new commissions, "Works for Us". 2004 saw two new CDs, "Three Quartets" featuring the music of Barbara Thompson, and a concertos CD featuring newly-commissioned concertos for Saxophone Quartet and Strings.

2005 is the group's 20th Anniversary, and to commemorate this, the ASQ are commissioning several new works, touring in the UK, throughout Europe and Japan, and releasing a commemorative CD.

ANDREW BALL studied with Kendall Taylor at the Royal College of Music, and read music at Queen's College, Oxford. Regarded as one of the foremost British pianists of his generation, a busy career has taken him all over the world. He has a reputation for innovative and imaginative programmes, and chamber music and contemporary music have always constituted a large part of his repertoire. He has given countless premieres (including the first British performance of Sofia Gubaidulina's Piano Sonata at the Bath Festival), made his Proms debut playing Messiaen and studied Tippett's sonatas with the composer. Ives and Busoni are also special interests. He has played with the Nash Ensemble, London Sinfonietta, Villiers Piano Quartet and Gemini. Many acclaimed CDs range from the complete Tippett song-cycles to Billy Mayerl's works for piano and orchestra. He has recently played in Stravinsky's *Les Noces* for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, given a series of chamber concerts at Symphony Hall in Birmingham with the Bell'Arte Ensemble, and appeared at the Aldeburgh Festival playing 2 Piano music with Rolf Hind.

Formerly a sought-after teacher at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Andrew Ball then held the post of Head of Keyboard at the Royal College of Music from 1999 until 2005. He regularly gives masterclasses, most recently in Berlin, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and Japan.

Since its first concert on 10.10.1997 at 10.10pm, **ENSEMBLE 10/10** has established itself as a significant part of cultural life of the north-west, and Liverpool in particular. Founded by clarinetist Nicholas Cox and cellist Hilary Browning to address a gap in programming new music at the Liverpool Philharmonic, 10/10 made its debut as a new music ensemble outside Liverpool at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival in 2000.

10/10's first few seasons included masterworks of the 20th Century by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Kagel, Berio and Lutoslawski as well as major British composers such as MacMillan, Casken, Turnage, Adès and Benjamin.

They have worked closely with students of composition at the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts, and, amongst others, have commissioned new works by several ex-LIPA musicians. They have given first British performances of works by Aaron J Kernis, Christopher Rouse, Bernard Rands, Joseph Schwanter, Carlos Chavez, Stephen Albert, and David Rakowski.

Conductors working with 10/10 have included Gerard Schwarz, Clark Rundell, Baldur Brönnimann, Garry Walker and Matthew Coorey; 10/10 has also worked with Joanna Macgregor, Valdine Anderson, David Horne, and Rejects Revenge Theatre Group.

Ensemble 10/10 has received financial support from the Arts Council of England through the New Audiences

Fund and Millennium Festival, as well as assistance from the Holst Foundation, the Performing Rights Society, the Musicians Union, Reidmark Marketing Co. and partnership funding, support and encouragement of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic.

LESLEY HATFIELD has established a distinguished career as orchestral leader, chamber musician and soloist, and has led the Northern Sinfonia and Ulster Orchestra. She has appeared as soloist with the Philharmonia, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Ulster Orchestra, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Northern Sinfonia – with whom she was soloist in a BBC Proms concert at the Royal Albert Hall, and in the Suntory Hall, Tokyo. Her solo recordings for Chandos and Naxos have received critical acclaim, and she has broadcast frequently on BBC Radio 3.

Lesley Hatfield is an active exponent of contemporary music, and works have been written for her by Philip Cashian and John Casken, whose *Après un silence* she premiered in Dublin in 1999, and subsequently performed in the version for violin and large ensemble with the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall.

Her chamber music commitments include the Gaudier Ensemble, with whom she has made a number of highly acclaimed recordings. She also plays with the Hebrides Ensemble and is regularly invited to appear with other ensembles and at international festivals.

Currently Leader of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, she is also in demand as guest leader and director with other UK orchestras.

KYRA HUMPHREYS is currently the Co-Leader of the Northern Sinfonia with whom she regularly appears as director and soloist. Recent performances include director/soloist in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, soloist in Kurt Weill's Violin Concerto and a much praised Mendelssohn Octet with violinist Thomas Zehetmair. Her world premiere of John Casken's *Après un silence* (in the orchestral version) was broadcast live on Radio 3 and described as 'authoritatively dramatic' by *The Times*.

Kyra was born and brought up in London, and her early enthusiasm for ensemble music making was encouraged by a musical family, and her first teacher Sheila Nelson. In 1989, after graduating in Mathematics from Oxford University, she went on to study the violin at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Simon Fischer, and at the Cleveland Institute of Music with Donald Weilerstein.

Kyra was professor of violin at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama until 2002 and enjoys an active teaching career. She performs on a J. B. Guadagnini violin from 1779.

JULIAN JACOBSON enjoys a wide-ranging career as soloist, duo and chamber music partner and teacher. He has performed with the London Symphony, Royal Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, City of Birmingham and English Chamber Orchestras, London Mozart Players, London Sinfonietta and Bournemouth Sinfonietta with conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle, Tamas Vasary and Jane Glover. An extensive discography includes the complete sonatas of Weber, albums of Schumann, Dvořák and Balakirev, the violin and piano sonatas

of Enesco and much 20th century music. His duo and ensemble partners include legendary figures such as Sandor Vegh, Zara Nelsova and Ivry Gitlis, as well as many leading soloists of today.

Julian was Head of Keyboard Studies at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from 1992 to 1996. He is currently professor of piano and chamber music at the Royal College of Music and Artistic Director of the Paxos Festival, Greece. He is increasingly in demand as a judge at international competitions, and gives frequent masterclasses.

The **NEW ENSEMBLE** is the contemporary music group of the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, and is directed by Clark Rundell. With the enviable resources of 'one of the finest music colleges in Europe' (Daily Telegraph), the New Ensemble is able to programme concerts of tremendous variety and musical integrity by drawing on the exceptional talents of senior RNCM students. The New Ensemble also provides unique laboratory sessions for RNCM composers, allowing them to experiment musically with performers on a regular basis.

They have made several broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and in 2000 they released their first CD on the NMC label performing music by Anthony Gilbert. Recent highlights include sharing the platform with the BBC Philharmonic for the MacMillan in Manchester concerts in which the composer conducted the second performances of his major works *Raising Sparks* and *Parthenogenesis*, and participation in the RNCM's major composer festivals exploring the works of Henze, Birtwistle, Gruber, Lindberg, Maxwell Davies and many others.

An integral part of the New Ensemble's work is the performance of music by the RNCM's talented student composers. Composers such as Ian Vine, Paul Clay and Larry Goves, all subsequently featured at the London Sinfonietta's State of the Nation event, first had their works played by the New Ensemble.

RACHAEL PANKHURST joined the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra as Principal Cor Anglais in April 2001. Born in Wiltshire in 1976, Rachael was a student at the Junior Royal Academy of Music before attending Wells Cathedral School on a music scholarship. Rachael won Radio 2 Young Musician of the Year in 1999, the year she graduated from the Joint Degree Course between The University of Manchester and the Royal Northern College of Music. This led to several solo appearances with the BBC Concert Orchestra. Rachael spent a year of postgraduate study at the Musikhochschule in Basel, Switzerland and on returning to the UK in 2000, freelanced with a number of orchestras including the Hallé Orchestra, Opera North, Northern Sinfonia and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. She is a keen chamber musician and is a member of the Lynton Ensemble and the wind quintet Fusion.

PSAPPHA is one of the leading contemporary music and music-theatre ensembles in the North of England. Formed in 1991 by its Artistic Director, Tim Williams, it has built up a repertoire of over 200 works and a reputation for outstanding technical and interpretative ability.

Psappha has promoted an annual series of concerts in its home city of Manchester since 1991, and in Liver-

pool since 1998. The ensemble has also performed at many leading UK music festivals, notably Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, Buxton, Oxford, St. Magnus Festival in Orkney, the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, the ISCM World Music Days in Manchester, and the Henze Festival at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank. Psappha also gave the first ever public performance at Stormont Castle in Belfast.

Since its inception Psappha has commissioned works and given the first performance of works by numerous composers including, not least, Peter Maxwell Davies and Gordon McPherson (Psappha's CD of works by McPherson, *Detours*, is available on METIER - MSV CD92073). In June 2000 Psappha gave the highly acclaimed premiere of a new music-theatre work *Mr. Emmet Takes a Walk* by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies with direction and libretto by David Pountney. The production won the Manchester Evening News Theatre Award for Opera 2000.

Psappha has toured to Australia, North America, Argentina, France, Belgium, Holland, Ireland and Spain. Future plans include tours to Venezuela, Portugal, Czech Republic, Switzerland and France.

Education projects are an important part of Psappha's schedule both in the UK and abroad – the ensemble has worked with a varied age range from secondary school to university post-graduate students and was awarded the Swatch City Life Award for the Best Concert Series and Education Work.

In September 2002 Psappha became Contemporary Ensemble-in-Association at The University of Manchester.

The **ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC WIND ORCHESTRA** was formed nearly thirty years ago and has been recognised for some time as one of the leading conservatoire ensembles in the world. The ensemble has given regular broadcasts on both Radio 3 and Radio 2. They have performed in numerous festivals throughout the UK and Europe including performances at Aldeburgh, Cambridge, Cheltenham, Lichfield, Malvern and the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, as well as in Holland, Poland and Switzerland. In 1995 they toured Japan. Their debut at the Royal Festival Hall was in 1989, when they joined the National Youth Choir in a programme of Holst, Stravinsky and Michael Ball, with the world premiere of Anthony Gilbert's *Dream Carousels*.

In their regular series of concerts at the RNCM, they have performed over 500 works and have led the field in commissioning new, and rescuing old works. The Orchestra has recorded a number of CDs for the Chandos, Doyen Records, Polyphonic Records and NMC labels.

In 2000 the College was awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize for 'Wind ensemble music: commissioning, training and performance'. The citation for the Prize reads: "Through a unique series of commissions, broadcasts, professional recordings and worldwide performances by staff and students, the College has transformed the repertoire and performance standards of wind ensemble music in this country. Its outstanding achievements in this field have brought international acclaim."

In the UK **PATRICIA ROZARIO** makes regular appearances at the Aldeburgh, Bath, Cheltenham, Edinburgh, Harrogate and City of London festivals, and at London's Wigmore Hall & South Bank Centre. She

has appeared in recital at the Royal Opera House, many times in concert for the BBC Proms, and has made extensive recordings for BBC Radio 3.

Travels abroad have taken her from Sydney Opera House, to Moscow with the Russian National Orchestra, to New York's Lincoln Center, and all over Europe.

On the operatic stage, she has appeared with English National Opera, Opera North, Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Nederlandse Opera Stichting, Aix-en-Provence, Antwerp, Bremen, Stuttgart Opera, and Opéra de Lyon.

Her large discography includes *Songs of the Auvergne*, Haydn's *Stabat Mater*, Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, Casken's *Golem* (a Gramophone award-winner), recordings with Graham Johnson for the Hyperion Schubert Series, and several major works of John Tavener.

Patricia Rozario was awarded the OBE in the New Year's Honours List in 2001.

CLARK RUNDELL is Director of Contemporary Music and Head of Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, and Artistic Director of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic's new music group, Ensemble 10/10. He studied at Northwestern University, Chicago, USA, studying conducting with John P Paynter and trombone with Frank Crisafulli of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and was subsequently awarded a Junior Fellowship to study conducting with Timothy Reynish at the RNCM. He regularly conducts the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, with whom he made his debut in 1987, as well as the BBC Philharmonic, Northern Sinfonia, BBC Concert Orchestra, Hallé and the Philharmonia Orchestra, with whom he recently performed at the Royal Albert Hall. Future engagements include his Netherlands debut with the Residentie Orchestra in the Hague in a programme which includes the world premiere of the suite he made in collaboration with Louis Andriessen of the composer's recent opera *Writing to Vermeer*. Clark also worked with composer Mark-Anthony Turnage on an expanded version of Turnage's *Invention on Solitude* and is currently collaborating with Dutch latin jazz group Zuco 103 on a joint concert with the Residentie Orchestra.

A highly versatile musician, Clark served for fourteen years as Director of Jazz Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, and has performed with artists such as John Dankworth, Bob Brookmeyer, Victor Mendoza, Guy Barker, Julian Argüelles, Ed Thigpen, Cleo Laine, Andy Sheppard, Lew Tabakin and Mike Gibbs.

JOHN CASKEN

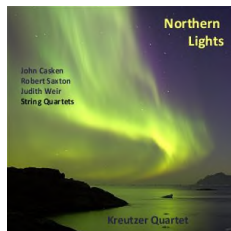
John Casken was born in Barnsley, South Yorkshire in 1949. He read Music at the University of Birmingham, studying Composition and Contemporary Music under John Joubert and Peter Dickinson. From 1971-72 he studied in Warsaw with Andrzej Dobrowolski, and began to have regular consultations with Witold Lutoslawski, with whom he formed a close association and friendship. John Casken returned to Birmingham as a Lecturer in 1973, and after a Fellowship at Huddersfield Polytechnic in 1980, he was appointed as a Lecturer at the University of Durham in 1981. In 1992 he was appointed Professor of Music at The University of Manchester.

His works have been featured at major international festivals, and his first opera *Golem* won the First Britten Award in 1990 and the 1991 Gramophone Award for Best Contemporary recording (on Virgin Classics, and re-issued on NMC's Ancora label). Since its premiere at the Almeida Theatre in London in 1989 the opera has seen six different productions in the UK, Germany and the USA. Sir Thomas Allen and the BBC Symphony Orchestra premiered the orchestral song-cycle *Still Mine* at the 1992 Proms, and this work subsequently won the Prince Pierre de Monaco prize for Musical Composition in 1993. From 1990-2001 John Casken was Composer-in-Association with the Northern Sinfonia, who gave the premiere of his Cello Concerto with Heinrich Schiff in 1991 and recorded it for Collins Classics. This work, along with *Maharal Dreaming*, *Darting the Skiff* and *Vaganza* (performed by the Northern Sinfonia and conducted by the composer) was recently re-released on the NMC Ancora label. Dmitry Sitkovetsky premiered his Violin Concerto at the 1995 Proms, and his second opera *God's Liar*, based on Tolstoy's short story *Father Sergius*, was premiered in 2001 by Almeida Opera in London and Brussels. This work received its Austrian premiere by Neue Oper Wien in the Klangbogen Festival in Vienna in the summer of 2004. In 2002 The Florestan Piano Trio gave the first performance of his Piano Trio, and *Symphony (Broken Consort)* was given its premiere in the 2004 BBC Proms by the BBC Philharmonic conducted by Gianandrea Noseda.

The works recorded here were written over a period of about twenty years from 1978. As with much of John Casken's music, they draw on dramatic scenarios, visual images, poetry and landscape. All the works included in this release, with the exception of *Firewhirl*, are recorded for the first time.

John Casken's works are published and promoted by:
Schott Music Publishers, 48 Great Marlborough Street, London, W1F 7BB
promotions@schott-music.com

More music by John Casken



String Quartet No. 2

and quartets by Judith Weir and Robert Saxton

Kreutzer Quartet

Métier MSV 28507

"Outstanding release of three relatively recent string quartets by British composers. Very strongly recommended." - Musical Opinion

"John Casken's quartet stands out on an excellent disc...touch and timbre beautifully captured by the Kreutzer Quartet." – The Wire



Choses en Moi

and quartets by Camden Reeves, Richard Whalley and Philip Grange

Quatuor Danel

Métier MSV 28546

"Each of the composers presented here has a distinctive and attractive musical personality. String-quartet playing of the first order ... impeccable precision and conviction. The disc receives a high recommendation accordingly" – (Fanfare)



Colloque Sentimental

and songs on French texts by 19 other leading British composers

Alison Smart (soprano); Katharine Durran (piano)

Métier MSVCD 92100

"excellent CD" - Iain Cameron



DIVINE ART RECORDINGS GROUP

INNOVATIVE | ECLECTIC | FASCINATING | INSPIRATIONAL

Over 500 titles, with full track details, reviews, artist profiles and audio samples, can be browsed on our website. All our recordings are available at any good record store or download provider or direct from our secure online shopping website:

www.divineartrecords.com
(CD, 24-bit HD, FLAC and MP3)

Diversions LLC (Divine Art USA) email: sales@divineartrecords.com

Divine Art Ltd. (UK) email: uksales@divineartrecords.com

Printed catalogue sent on request

Also available in digital download through Primephonic, Qobuz, iTunes, Amazon, Spotify and many other platforms

follow us on facebook, youtube and twitter



WARNING: Copyright subsists in all recordings issued under this label. Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording thereof in any manner whatsoever will constitute an infringement of such copyright. In the United Kingdom, licences for the use of recordings for public performance may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd, 1, Upper James Street, London W1R 3HG.

NIGHT

FIRE

SUN

SILENCE

music by JOHN CASKEN



METIER

msvcd 92076

© 15631

John Casken
1992