



CELEBRATION CONCERT



WITH FRANCESCA MASSEY
& ONYX BRASS

19 OCTOBER 2021
ST BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET

JAMCONCERT.ORG

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME



In 1998, I had various conversations with my late father, John Armitage, regarding how we could support composition in the UK. In August of that year, my wife Sarah and I were married here at St Bride's, and the service included music for choir, brass and organ. It sounded stunning in this amazing building; the beginning of an idea formed. In December of the same year, my father died after a short battle with cancer. The John Armitage Memorial (or JAM) was formed in 2000 and its first concert took place in March 2021, here in St. Bride's, with choir, brass and organ as its forces.

St. Bride's is the spiritual home of the JAM charity. We have performed here annually since 2001. March 2020 would have been a celebration of 20 years since the formation of JAM, and March 2021 a chance to mark 20 years since our first concert.

In 2014, JAM took its most adventurous step to date: JAM on the Marsh, a multi-arts festival based on Kent's glorious Romney Marsh, with music and education at its core. Over its eight seasons, the festival has become a vibrant hub of arts, music and theatre in one of the UK's most arts-deprived areas. The last two years have been disastrous for many festivals, but JAM on the Marsh is a chameleon, reinventing itself as JAM on the Marsh: VIRTUAL. We filmed nine concerts and three exhibitions, releasing them for free to everyone. Over 17,000 people from around the

world enjoyed the virtual festival last year. This year, we welcomed small, socially-distanced audiences back to the festival. These events were filmed and the 2nd JAM on the Marsh: VIRTUAL will be released this Friday, 22nd October via jamconcert.org. The first concert features the London Mozart Players, James Gilchrist and Ben Goldscheider, conducted by Michael Bawtree filmed in St. Nicholas Church, New Romney. The programme includes Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, the world premiere of Cecilia McDowall's *Off the Ground* and music by Elgar and Peter Avis.

Tonight feels like a 'Welcome Home' for JAM after more than two silent years in London. The evening will include a short concert featuring six world premieres from our ongoing Masterclass Series. At the end of the concert, the first President's Commission will be awarded to one of the six featured composers by Paul Mealor, President of JAM. The resulting new work will be premiered in March 2022 during JAM's *Music of Our Time* concert, here at St. Bride's.

Thank you for supporting JAM this evening. I very much hope you will join us for a drink at the back of the church after the concert.

Edward Armitage
Chairman of JAM

PRESIDENT'S GREETING

I am delighted to welcome you to, and be with you for, tonight's very special concert. I have a long and happy relationship with JAM that stretches back nearly 20 years.

In 2002, I successfully submitted to JAM's annual Call for Music leading to my first performance in St. Bride's Church. Following another successful submission in 2004, I received a commission from JAM in 2010 for the choral cycle, *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal*. The cycle is dedicated to Ed and Sarah Armitage. *Petals* was to receive its 10th anniversary performance last year as part of JAM's annual *Music of Our Time* concert, but this performance, along with so much, was thwarted by Covid-19. It was this cycle that Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge heard which prompted them to invite me to adapt the first movement into *Ubi caritas*, which was subsequently performed at their wedding in 2011. Over the next decade, I have received several JAM commissions: *The Farthest Shore* (2013), *Shadows of War* (2015), *To Seek Where Shadows Are* (2016) and *Piano Concerto* (2020).

Earlier this year I was delighted to 'lead' JAM's first Masterclass Series, working alongside Onyx Brass and Francesca Massey. Having whittled down the 50+

submissions we had a wonderful day working with six composers on their sketches. Six of these have been delivered, and we hear them here this evening. It has been a truly fulfilling project to have been part of. Bravo to all the composers that have been involved.

My international success as a composer can be traced back to when I began studying with the great Welsh composer, William Mathias, as a young boy. Walking to his house each week and studying with him illuminated my future. Giving back to the young and emerging composers is extremely important to me.

I was absolutely thrilled to become President of JAM in 2020, and as such, to set up the President's Commission, offering an annual commission to emerging composers. It was an honour to lead the first Masterclass Series and I look forward to being involved again in the future. Tonight's performance of 6 world premieres is the culmination of this first series.

Paul Mealar OSJ CLJ OSS FRSA
President of JAM

Masterclass Series Workshop in JAM on the Marsh 2021



WHAT IS THE MASTERCLASS SERIES?

Since 2000, JAM has been nurturing composition in the UK. JAM's Masterclass Series began as a way to help composers better understand how to compose for certain forces. Our aim was to make this series an inspirational, interactive composition course aimed at emerging UK-based composers of any age.

For 2021, JAM chose to encourage writing for either brass quintet or organ. As we wanted the composers to work with and learn from the best tutors possible, we collaborated with international composer Paul Mealor, Onyx Brass and Francesca Massey, Organist and Director of Music at Rochester Cathedral.

This past March, JAM created a series of masterclass videos, led by our collaborators, covering the 'dos and don'ts' of writing for their instruments. These are freely available to

view via JAM's website. We then opened a *Call for Sketches*, with a maximum limit of 50 bars of music. From these sketches six composers were given the opportunity of having their compositional ideas workshopped by Onyx Brass and Francesca Massey in JAM on the Marsh as well as working on their pieces with Paul Mealor.

The six finished pieces that we hear tonight are the culmination of this Masterclass Series. Tonight's performances will be filmed and released on 19th November as part of JAM on the Marsh: VIRTUAL.

Tonight, one of the composers will be awarded the first **President's Commission** from Paul Mealor. The resulting commission will be premiered here, at St. Bride's, in JAM's season-launching *Music of Our Time* concert on Wednesday 23rd March 2022.

Masterclass Series Workshop in JAM on the Marsh 2021



PROGRAMME

FEATURING 6 WORLD PREMIERES

Francesca Massey · organ

Onyx Brass

Alan Thomas · trumpet

Niall Keatley · trumpet

Andy Sutton · horn

Amos Miller · trombone

David Gordon-Shute · tuba

Christopher Cook

Antediluvian Fanfare

Welcome: Edward Armitage

David Ho-yi Chan

Fantasia after Auld Lang Syne

Angela Slater

Light Dispelled

John Sturt

When the world seems beyond reason...

Masterclass Series Introduction:
Paul Mealor

Graham Harris

Luce Prima

Janet Wheeler

Film Noir

JAM, the next 20 years: Edward Armitage

Presentation of President's Commission:
Paul Mealor

Drinks reception

PROGRAMME NOTES

Antediluvian Fanfare

Christopher Cook

'Antediluvian' often refers to a period of ancient religious history but can also be used as a somewhat derogatory term for something 'outdated' or 'old fashioned'. This piece was written to be a reaction to what is often heard in modern contemporary classical music in terms of both aesthetics and choice of style.

From the offset, the harmonic language and texture initially forms an aural world not completely removed from a composer such as Sir Malcolm Arnold. However, as the piece continues, the harmony starts to distort and eventually multi-phonics and growls begin to transform the texture. The structure finally gives way to a return to the initial style of the opening.

The clear use of long melodic fragments throughout this piece which evolve and are repurposed in a traditional manner were deliberately included to emphasise the conceptual ideas present.

About Christopher Cook

Christopher Cook is a 26-year-old composer based in Manchester, UK. He is an alumnus of The University of Nottingham where he achieved a first-class bachelor's degree in music alongside the final-year prize for composition. He has had works performed and workshopped by professional ensembles such as the Villiers Quartet and Sacconi Quartet.

Christopher is now studying for a master's degree in composition at The Royal Northern College of Music with support from a scholarship from the Richard Newitt Foundation under the tutelage of Professors Adam Gorb and Emily Howard.

Fantasia after Auld Lang Syne

David Ho-yi Chan

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to gather and a time to farewell, a time to love and a time to hate....."

During such an exceptionally tough and challenging period of time, there is nothing more important than to treasure our beloved ones purely. In homage to Langlais and Britten, this organ fantasia subtly recalls fragments from *Auld Lang Syne*, the tune of friendship, brotherhood and other relationships in life, along each division of the organ often in antiphonal setting that symbolises dialogue and interaction between human beings.

Hopefully, that may thrill our soul, lift up our heart, and carry on with hope and blessing. Let passion for life within us brighten this world again together with beauty, warmth, and above all, love.

About David Ho-yi Chan

Born in British Hong Kong, David Ho-yi Chan (b.1992) is a London-based composer, conductor and organist. Recent commission projects include the IGNITE by C4: The Choral Composer/Conductor Collective (2020-21) in New York, the Postcards from Composers (2020) by BBC Radio 3 and the Polyphonos by the Estoerics in Seattle as their annual International Composer (2018/19).

In 2014, Chan presented his work at the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) World Music Days in Poland, and turned out to be the youngest Hong Kong composer representative in this prestigious forum to date. He also attained 3rd place in the Freundeskreis Brauweiler Prize at the Musica Sacra Nova: 14th International Composers Competition (2018) in Germany. The awarded work is published by Schott Music.

Masterclass Series Workshop in JAM on the Marsh 2021



Light Dispelled

Angela Slater

Light Dispelled takes inspiration from the Walt Whitman's poem, *Twilight*. The piece explores the different colours and shades of light through a variety of timbral techniques created through same note tremolos, mutes and harmonics. These delicate, almost fragile, timbral sounds are punctuated by bursts of colour that eventually take over into seeming chaos. Explosive passages of wild, fully-notated material are juxtaposed with aleatoric moments to evoke a sense of the push and pull of waves of differing intensity.

TWILIGHT.

*The soft voluptuous opiate shades,
The sun just gone, the eager light dispell'd—(I too will soon be
gone, dispell'd,)
A haze—nirwana—rest and night—oblivion.*

by Walt Whitman

About Angela Slater

Angela Elizabeth Slater is a UK-based composer and Illuminate Women's Music Director. She has an interest in musically mapping different aspects of the natural world into the fabric of her music. Recent significant achievements include becoming a RPS Composer for 2021-22, 2020-22 Tanglewood Composition-Fellow, and a 2017-18 Britten-Pears Young Artist working with Oliver Knussen, Colin Matthews and Michael Gandolfi. Angela was the 2019 Mendelssohn Scholar at NEC (Boston) resulting in many US performances, including the world premiere of *Roil in Stillness* by the New England Philharmonic.

In 2021 she wrote two works for Royal Scottish National Orchestra and six solo works for the Connected Skies project funded by Arts Council England. In Autumn 2021/22 Angela is looking forward to developing an accordion concerto with accordionist Kamila Olas and composing works for the RPS Composers and LPO Young Composers programme.

For more information, please visit: angelaslatercomposer.co.uk

When the world seems beyond reason...

John Sturt

This piece is an attempt to communicate what it is like to view things through my perspective: that of a sensitive young man living with autism.

Part of my experience with autism is that my brain works far faster than I can string sentences together, which sometimes leaves me tripping over my own words. This leaves me flustered and frustrated that I cannot get my message across properly, and left behind in the conversation.

This idea of material starting to run away from itself, to be drowned, out is the central principle of this particular piece. Here, a somewhat hesitant musical phrase starts to build, but gets faster until it is a blur, then it is drowned out by far more prominent sounds.

The other key feature of this piece is some quotations from a song that I have written to the words of Oscar Wilde's "The True Knowledge". As have many people who are neurodivergent, I have a long relationship with mental health difficulties. Therefore, I have a lot of sympathy for the poem's persona, where they treat with a higher entity that knows all, while one "[seeks] in vain what lands to till or sow with seed."

About John Sturt

John Sturt is an English composer, born in 1995 in East Sussex, UK. He took up the violin in 2001 at the age of six, and started composing and singing in 2009. Sturt graduated from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in 2020 with a master's degree in composition. He is currently working as a freelance composer and copyist, and has been appointed as a Bass Lay Clerk at Peterborough Cathedral.

John's career highlights include winning joint prize in the 2017 Ludlow English Song Weekend Composition Competition, being featured in the 2018 Talis Festival, winning the Trinity Laban Silver Medal for Composition in 2018, and having his work featured in the 2019 Leeds Lieder Festival. His latest work is a collaboration with the Librettist Sophia Chapadjiev on an opera called "Minutes before Midnight", which tackles themes of nuclear standoff, crushing responsibility and moral dilemmas.

PROGRAMME NOTES CONT.

Luce Prima

Graham Harris

Luce Prima (first light) is an epic, symphonic movement for organ. The piece opens with a short, soft episode of just a few bars depicting dawn, just before light begins to fully break in Rome. This quickly leads to the loud main introduction (in 3 short sections), which is characterised by fanfare-like chordal writing interspersed with virtuosic toccata-like music depicting when the sun breaks over the city, plus a chromatic baroque-like passage incorporating trills.

After this introduction, another short fanfare introduces the main bulk of the work's material. In summary, this material is often characterised by highly rhythmic passages (and again, fanfare-type figuration), but is constantly interspersed with lighter, more intimate contrasting episodes or short rhythmic ones, including a fast toccata-like cadenza later in the work. There is sometimes use of short gestural motivic fanfare-like material that repeats.

Note that two sections of the main introduction return later, but at different points in the work (indeed when the fanfare-type music returns it is in a different key and is briefly developed). The work ends with exuberant rhythmic music leading to an affirmative E major chord.

About **Grahame Harris**

Graham Harris is based in London and has studied composition at LCM, Royal Holloway and Surrey University. He gained MMus Composition with distinction in 2020.

He became a Soundhub associate composer of the London Symphony Orchestra in 2017. He has had professional performances from concert pianist Nicola Meecham and the organist Kevin Bowyer, and interest from leading performers.

He is a prolific composer, and has written solo and chamber, and orchestral works. He also has composed electronic music. Recent works in 2019-21 include: *Piano Concerto*, *Trumpet Concerto*, *Bucolics* for ensemble, *2 Passions* for piano, two works for amplified piano, church organ and strings, *Don Quixote* for piano and string orchestra, and *Midsummer* for trumpet and string orchestra.

Film Noir

Janet Wheeler

This piece is based around two contrasting musical characters – one nervous and chase-like, the other slower and moodier. My initial sketch combining these was described at the JAM Masterclass Series as 'filmic' and I embraced that as I fleshed out the piece. It could suggest numerous scenarios, but, preferring not to limit the imagination of players or audience, *Film Noir* seemed a suitably open-ended title. The piece is more based on the mood of film noir than on its musical conventions.

The fast irregular music of the outer sections grows from rapidly tongued chords leading to a jumpy melody against staccato chords. These proceed through the instruments with various interruptions, comments and overlappings. This music disintegrates gradually into the slower central section. Here the two trumpets share soulful unfolding melodies over a muted rocking accompaniment mostly in 9/8. After accelerating back to the chase and a further soulful retrospective section, it could easily have ended there - but I could not resist adding a surprise dénouement!

As a composer and conductor working largely in the choral world, I mainly write for brass within an orchestra. I am very grateful to JAM for this opportunity to explore brass chamber music with the wonderful Onyx Brass.

About **Janet Wheeler**

Throughout her career Janet Wheeler has worn various musical hats: teacher, music producer for BBC Schools Radio, and MD of choirs from choral societies to small ensembles. Though continually writing and arranging music in all these roles, it is only over the last ten years that she has reached a wider audience. Her music has been performed at Wigmore Hall by I Fagiolini, at Saffron Hall, in cathedrals and college chapels across the UK and abroad, at the Three Choirs Festival, and broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Recent commissions include pieces for ORA Singers, NYCGB, Sonoro, Papagena, and the London International Choral Conducting Competition. Her larger choral/orchestral works include *The Ceaseless Round of Circling Planets*, commissioned for Thaxted Festival.

ONYX BRASS

Celebrating its 30th anniversary season in 2023, Onyx Brass continues to be the leading light in establishing the brass quintet as a medium for serious chamber music, combining “staggering virtuosity” (Sarah Walker, BBC Radio 3) with the entertaining and articulate style that has become the group’s trademark.

The group’s extensive discography (16 albums, and counting!) is regularly featured on BBC Radio 3 and has received huge critical acclaim, Gramophone hailing “some of the most thrilling chamber brass-playing of its kind” and Record Review describing the group as a “wonderful, virtuosic brass quintet”.

New music and education are both at the heart of the ensemble’s remit: it has commissioned and premièred over 200 new works, and has led workshops and masterclasses from primary schools through to the Juilliard School; Onyx has held several residencies, including 15 years at Imperial College, London. The group also specialises in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for professional musicians, and has led several sessions for British Army Music in this area.

Work with singers also forms a central part of Onyx’s work, often under the auspices of JAM, with whom Onyx Brass has been affiliated since its inception.

FRANCESCA MASSEY

Francesca Massey has been Director of Music and Organist at Rochester Cathedral since September 2019. Born in Birmingham, Francesca was educated at Cambridge University and the Royal Northern College of Music (on a prestigious ABRSM Scholarship). She has held Organ Scholarships at St George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and Manchester Cathedral, and was Assistant Organist at Great St Mary’s Church, Cambridge, Assistant Director of Music at Peterborough Cathedral and Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral before moving to Rochester.

Francesca performs regularly as a recitalist throughout the UK. Her first two solo recordings (Bravura! and The Forgotten Gem, on the Priory Records label) both received excellent reviews and were Editor’s Choice in Organists’ Review. A third Priory disc of the complete works of Maurice Duruflé has recently been released. Francesca has performed widely as an accompanist, as well as recording a number of acclaimed CDs with various choirs; Gramophone Magazine describing her as a ‘hugely gifted accompanist.’ Francesca has also worked extensively as a choral conductor, organ teacher, continuo player, pianist and singer.

Photo taken during the Masterclass Series Workshop in JAM on the Marsh 2021





JAM on the Marsh: VIRTUAL

A Free Virtual Celebration of Music & Art @ jamconcert.org

Oct

22

London Mozart Players

featuring Britten *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings*
with James Gilchrist & Ben Goldscheider
Cecilia McDowall *Off the Ground* (world premiere)
7:30pm • Friday @ jamconcert.org

25

Messiaen *Quartet for the End of Time*

Michael Collins (clarinet), Simon Blendis (violin),
Sally Pendlebury (cello) & Anna Tilbrook (piano)
7:30pm • Monday @ jamconcert.org

29

Kosmos Ensemble

Classical music meets world music
7:30pm • Friday @ jamconcert.org

Nov

01

Caritas Choir with Paul Mealor

Paul Mealor *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal*
Jack Oades *Between the Stormclouds and the Sea*
with text by Grahame Davies
(*Festival Commission* and world premiere)
7:30pm • Monday @ jamconcert.org

Nov

05

Onyx Brass & Francesca Massey

from Duruflé & Arnold to contemporary British
7:30pm • Friday @ jamconcert.org

08

That Latin Temperament

A musical journey through South America
Michał Rogalski (oboe) & Fábio Fernandes (guitar)
7:30pm • Monday @ jamconcert.org

12

Elgar *Piano Quintet in A minor*

Simon Blendis (violin), Harriet Mackenzie (violin),
Philip Dukes (viola), Sally Pendlebury (cello) &
Anna Tilbrook (piano)
7:30pm • Friday @ jamconcert.org

15

Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*

Canterbury Cathedral Choir & David Newsholme
7:30pm • Monday @ jamconcert.org

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Masterclass Series concert

with Onyx Brass & Francesca Massey
featuring six world premieres
7:30pm • Friday @ jamconcert.org

JAM 2022

MUSIC OF OUR TIME

23 MARCH 2022

ST BRIDE'S CHURCH, FLEET STREET

After a two-year hiatus, JAM returns to the unperformed programme from March 2020, including the London premiere of Jack Oades' Festival Commission, *Between the Stormclouds and the Sea*, with text by Grahame Davies.

MASTERCLASS SERIES IN CHORAL COMPOSITION

MARCH TO OCTOBER 2022

For the second Masterclass Series, JAM will focus on choral writing involving international performers and composers in this engaging composition course, aimed at emerging UK-based composers of any age.

JAM ON THE MARSH

7-17 JULY 2022

ROMNEY MARSH, KENT

In its 9th festival season, Anna Tilbrook curates her second year celebrating Michael Collins' 60th birthday and Judith Bingham's 70th birthday with artists ranging from VOCES8 to the London Mozart Players.

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