



signum  
CLASSICS



Joanna Marsh  
A Plastic Theatre

JENNIFER JOHNSTON | ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
| FAGIOLINI | THE LYONS MOUTH | STILE ANTICO

## A PLASTIC THEATRE

Selected Choral Works by Joanna Marsh

01	BATTER MY HEART	04.52
02	NOW I LAY	04.58
03	ALL SHALL BE WELL	05.08
04	GEOCENTRIC	03.00
05	EVENING PRAYER	03.32
06	METACHORAL IN BLUE	01.47
07	O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM	04.50
08	IN WINTER'S HOUSE	04.58
09	THE WORLD IS CHARGED	06.49
10	DIALOGO AND QUODLIBET	05.15

### A PLASTIC THEATRE

11	ACT I	03.10
12	ACT II	07.01
13	ACT III	03.05
14	ACT IV	03.25
15	ACT V	05.26
TOTAL		1.07.15

JENNIFER JOHNSTON | ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
I FAGIOLINI | THE LYONS MOUTH | STILE ANTICO

**A PLASTIC THEATRE** takes its name from a text by Katie Schaag which I set for a commission for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Youth Company in 2023, a 20-minute work for the orchestra, mezzo soloist Jennifer Johnston and the RLPO Youth Choir and Children's Choir. The live world premiere performance of this work is the centrepiece of this album which also provides an opportunity to feature some of my recent commissions, notably those I wrote for I Fagiolini in 2021. Their four pieces were commissioned for a programme called *Rewilding the Wasteland* which thanks to renowned ensemble VOCES8, who hosted an online concert series during the Covid pandemic, was viewed globally. VOCES8 also join forces with I Fagiolini in one of these tracks, *Now I Lay*.

I'm thrilled to introduce The Lyons Mouth, a remarkable choir (and solo consort) of singers who studied at the University of York with Robert Hollingworth before turning professional. Their exceptional understanding of tuning and attention to text brings a fresh and vibrant quality to some of my newest works that are receiving their recording premieres on this album, including my Ivor Novello Composer Award winning work, *All Shall Be Well*. It is a delight to be able to feature another renowned ensemble that I have recently worked with, Stile Antico who commissioned *Dialogo and Quodlibet*, a parody piece based on mansplaining, repurposing texts from the 16th century.

It is a joy to share this collection of my latest works with you, and I hope you find as much pleasure in listening to them as I found in creating them.

## 001 Batter My Heart (September 2023)

John Donne  
SSAATTBB I Fagiolini

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you  
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend  
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.  
I, like an usurp'd town to another due,  
Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end;  
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.  
Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain,  
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;  
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,  
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,  
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

### Composer's Note

*Batter My Heart aims to capture something of its emotive power in an eight part texture that required an almost forensic alignment of text and music. Each phrase is crafted to reflect the emotional journey of the text, which surges forward with rhythmic energy, consonants and vowel colours smashing into each other: I make the same demands in the part writing. The vocal lines vie for precedence, pushing each other aside as they surge forward imploringly within this tightly compressed landscape.*

'Batter My Heart' was commissioned by the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn for the 400th anniversary of the dedication of New Chapel. Its premiere was on 18th October 2023 by The Choir of Lincoln's Inn Chapel, London, directed by Nicholas Shaw.

## 002 now i lay (with everywhere around) (March 2021)

e.e. cummings  
SSAATBarB I Fagiolini & Voces8 / Robert Hollingworth

now i lay (with everywhere around)  
me (the great dim deep sound  
of rain; and of always and of nowhere) and

what a gently welcoming darkestness —

now i lay me down (in a most steep  
more than music) feeling that sunlight is  
(life and day are) only loaned: whereas  
night is given (night and death and the rain  
are given; and given is how beautifully snow)

now i lay me down to dream of (nothing  
i or any somebody or you  
can begin to begin to imagine)

something which nobody may keep.  
now i lay me down to dream of Spring

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### Composer's note

*'now i lay' is a setting of an EE Cummings' poem that meditates on themes of life, death and the interconnectedness of things. Using a rhythmic motif derived from the words in the opening line 'the dim deep sound of rain' I have created a serene but contemplative atmosphere with harmonic movement that gradually increases in tension before resolving in a hopeful way with the poem's reference to dreaming of spring.*

'now i lay' is one of a short collection of pieces called Rewildings that were co-commissioned by Norfolk & Norwich Festival and I Fagiolini Charitable Trust for I Fagiolini's programme, ReWilding The Waste Land in 2021.

### 003 All Shall Be Well (June 2021)

Julian of Norwich

ATB / SSATB I Fagiolini & The Lyons Mouth / Robert Hollingworth

Without love we may not live.

And in this love our life is everlasting.

Love was without beginning, is and shall be without ending.

All shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well.

Ah! Good Lord how might it all be well?

For wickedness hath been suffered to rise contrary to the Goodness.

I it am, the Might and the Goodness of the Fatherhood;

I it am, the Wisdom of the Motherhood;

I it am, the Light and the Grace that is all blessed Love.

#### **Composer's note**

*All Shall Be Well is a setting of a selection of quotes from 14th century mystic Julian of Norwich's, 'Revelations of Divine Love'. In the composition I have incorporated a three-part vocal "Rondellus," from 1300 which forms a kind of cantus firmus providing both a backbone and a rhythmic engine for the piece. This cantus firmus enables waves of slower moving harmony to develop luminously around it while anchoring the piece in a musical language and idiom of the mediaeval period.*

'All Shall Be Well' was commissioned by ORA Singers by the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt. Its premiere was given on 11th July 2021 under the direction of Suzi Digby at the Gresham Centre as part of the Live from London series. Many thanks to Gareth Curtis who kindly gave me his edition of the three part Stella Maris Nuncuparis from c.1300 to use as the basis for this composition.

### 004 Geocentric (March 2021)

Pattiann Rogers

SSAATBarB I Fagiolini

Indecent, self-soiled, bilious  
reek of turnip and toadstool  
decay, dribbling the black oil  
of wilted succulents, the brown  
fester of rotting orchids,  
in plain view, that stain  
of stinkhorn down your front,  
that leaking roil of bracket  
fungi down your back, you  
purple-haired, grainy-fuzzed  
smolder of refuse, fathering  
fumes and boils and powdery  
mildews, enduring the constant  
interruption of sink-mire  
flatulence, contagious  
with ear wax, corn smut,  
blister rust, backwash  
and graveyard debris, rich  
with manure bog and dry-rot  
harboring not only egg-added  
garbage and wrinkled lip  
of orange-peel mold but also  
the clotted breath of overripe  
radish and burnt leek, bearing  
every dank, malodorous rut  
and scarp, all sulphur fissures  
and fetid hillside seepages, old,  
old dependable, engendering  
forever the stench and stretch

and warm seethe of inevitable  
putrefaction, nobody  
loves you as I do.

Text printed with permission of  
Pattiann Rogers

#### **Composer's Note**

*The challenge of setting Geocentric, Pattiann Rogers' wonderfully grotesque and highly unusual text to music was irresistible. The piece leans into the humourous descriptions of decay and detritus with phrases like "sink-mire flatulence" and "contagious with earwax".*

*I found ways to amplify this playful imagery with an opening that contrasts spare vocal lines with sound effects—sighs, groans, and 'ugh' noises. The piece gradually ratchets up, playing with the absurdity of the visceral descriptions through contrasts of texture propelled along by rising harmony and finally finds a strange kind of affection in the punchline, "nobody loves you as I do."*

'Geocentric' is part of the ReWildings set (see p.5).

### 005 Evening Prayer (January 2019)

Lancelot Andrewes translated by John Henry Newman  
SSATBB **The Lyons Mouth / Robert Hollingworth**

The day is gone, and I give Thee thanks, O Lord.  
Evening is at hand, make it bright unto us.  
As day has its evening so also has life; make it bright unto us. Cast me not away in the  
time of age;  
forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

Abide with me, Lord, for it is toward evening,  
and the day is far spent of this fretful life.  
Let Thy strength be made perfect in my weakness.

#### **Composer's Note**

*Evening Prayer is a setting of a prayer by Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626) from his Preces Privatae translated by John Henry Newman.*

*My piece was inspired by Rhineberger's Abendlied, a work with strong harmonic propulsion and luminosity that is very well-loved by choirs. I have reflected this harmonic world in the opening of my piece where the chordal texture shifts between high and low registers. This gives the feeling that it is part of the same family as the earlier work, as well as using a similar 6 part line-up.*

'Evening Prayer' was commissioned by Sonoro for the Choral Inspirations project with the generous support of Monica Darnborough.

### 006 metachoral in blue (May 2022)

Tim Early  
SSAATBarB I **Fagiolini**

metachoral in blue. sliderule. torsion true and slake it through. kindheart past and lesson-dressed. a porg of sugar. dundle flue. muslin anchor. green bean snapped. ruerusted trailer, deported clap. blessing rake, spindle flared, suspiring lake, thicket air. clothesline fiddle, snake in tow, machine trembles, timeworn plow. a rick of jam, bumblebee dare, extortion lordly, amen hair. grace in shortly, tresses rapt, nonchalance surely, a springworn vow. bearded trestle, overwine star, strow blessings, about the yard. bilious ecstasy, grass spire rancor, lye soap clotted, several rats. a nib of germ, egress of crowlings, soretuned berm, God made them ornery. sunspun drethers, wing and row, furrows roaring, metachoral in blue, flick and thimble, eternal hue.

Text printed with permission of Tim Early

#### **Composer's note**

*Tim Early's poem metachoral from 'Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery' is a fragmented tableau that weaves together images of rural life, mechanical sounds and pastoral landscapes all bathed in a sense of nostalgia and surrealism. To compliment it musically I have created a little scherzetto movement which fits not just the playful imagery but also the rhyme and assonance that imbue his text. The form allows for nimble shifts in dynamic, giving the poem's irregularity and twists and turns a kind of natural grace.*

'metachoral' is part of the ReWildings set (see p.5).

### 007 O Magnum Mysterium (December 2019)

Text from the Liber Usualis: Responsory of the Second Nocturn

SATB **The Lyons Mouth / Robert Hollingworth**

O magnum mysterium,  
et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, jacentem in praesepio!  
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera  
meruerunt portare  
Dominum Jesum Christum.  
Alleluia!

*O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear  
the Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!*

#### **Composer's Note**

*O Magnum Mysterium, a Latin text traditionally used in the liturgy of Christmas, speaks of the great mystery of the birth of Christ, marvelling at the humility of the animals witnessing the newborn Christ in the manger. It is a text frequently chosen by composers, especially those writing for the church.*

*My piece is an evolving journey from polyphonic textures with long languid melodic lines through sections where the text is articulated syllabically with greater rhythmic clarity, to final jubilant hallelujahs of praise and celebration.*

'O Magnum Mysterium' was commissioned for the choir of Westminster Cathedral by Martin Baker, Master of Music and premiered by the choir at a concert at the Cadogan Hall on 3rd December 2019.

### 008 In Winter's House (2019)

Jane Draycott

SATBarB **The Lyons Mouth / Robert Hollingworth**

In winter's house there's a room  
that's pale and still as mist in a field  
while outside in the street every gate's shut firm,  
every face as cold as steel.

In winter's house there's a bed  
that's spread with frost and feathers, that gleams  
in the half-light like rain in a disused yard  
or a pearl in a choked-up stream.

In winter's house there's a child  
asleep in a dream, of light that grows out  
of the dark, a flame you can hold in your hand  
like a flower or a torch on the street.

In winter's house there's a tale  
that's told, of a great chandelier in a garden,  
of fire that catches and travels for miles,  
of windows and gates flung open.

*In winter's house there's a flame  
being dreamt by a child in the night,  
in the small quiet house at the turn in the lane  
where the darkness gives way to light.*

Text from The Occupant, Jane Draycott. Printed with permission from Carcanet Press 2017, ([www.carcanet.co.uk](http://www.carcanet.co.uk))

#### **Composer's note**

*In Winter's House is a setting of a poem by Jane Draycott that paints a fairy-tale winter's landscape using the imagery of darkness and light, renewal, and rebirth.*

*My piece grows from a simple, lilting motive that gives the words the resonance of an old folk song. This idea gradually evolves across the five verses, each time unwinds in a new direction, growing in importance as the piece progresses. I was particularly drawn to the structure of her verses, especially the stretched final verse, which gives a sense of finality reminiscent of a carol in a hymnal.*

'In Winter's House' was originally commissioned for the tenors and basses of Tenebrae for their concert at Wigmore Hall on 1st December 2019 but due to its popularity I made this version for SATB choirs in 2023.

## 009 The World Is Charged (March 2021)

John F Deane

SSAATBarB I Fagiolini

I was startled by the squawk, the simultaneous  
long-tailed and spread-winged half-spectacular half-dive  
of the cock-pheasant, his wattles, his bronzed body  
up over the hedge; and see! there! the Japanese anemone,  
pea-green heart within a scatter-ring of gold; and here –  
humbler still, and local – see the mare’s-tail weed  
and the quick reaching of the briars, note, too, how the tiny  
pimpernel persist along the driveway, from the red gate  
to the front door. Astonishment, from heart to eye to ragwort,  
from there to woodlouse, eucalyptus, owl, and on to Sirius  
and the Plough... And we have been, years, she and I,  
walking by fields where generations lived and loved,  
have laboured and have disappeared – with their sheds  
and implements and cattle – into the deep, where they stay  
resonant in their silence, their poorer cottages crumbled  
into liqueur of rose hip, dust of nettle, knowing that we too  
will be with them, alive and loving in the warm light  
that still persists, hereabouts, and everywhere, and forever.

Text by John F. Deane from Dear Pilgrims printed with permission from Carcanet Press.

### Composer’s Note

*The World Is Charged is an eight part polyphonic setting of John F. Deane’s evocative poem that paints a vivid landscape of nature’s fleeting yet enduring beauty. The poem’s title is taken from the first line of Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poem, God’s Grandeur. As a nod to*

*this connection, I have woven into the fabric of my composition a two-bar musical quotation from near the final cadence of Kenneth Leighton’s setting of Hopkins’ poem. This quotation serves as the core material for the piece, gradually evolving: sometimes heard in its original form, other times adapted and transformed, creating a sense of continuity and growth.*

*The interplay of these unfolding repetitions mirrors the poem’s journey through scenes of natural wonder and reflections on time, memorial, and legacy. As the music progresses, the recurring motif becomes a thread binding together the imagery of pheasants, briars, and constellations, culminating in a resonant central meditation on the persistence of life and love. The result is a tapestry of sound that being rooted in an older musical work, serves as a reminder of the enduring nature of beauty in our world..*

‘The World Is Charged’ is part of the ReWildings set (see p.5).

## 010 Dialogo and Quodlibet (April 2019)

Antonfrancesco Doni and Maddalena Casaluna

SSSAAATTTBBB **Stile Antico**

You would certainly hear such harmony that it would seem to you either that you had been carried off to Helicon or that Helicon, together with all the chorus of Muses singing and playing, had been transported here

*You see that one can do with music whatever one wants; I’ll show you that if a person decides against doing things the right way, can simply produce a hodge-podge.*

I desire to show the world as much as possible in the profession of music...

*Look – two rests are missing. And here – put six where there are four. This Bass is wrong, or you are singing it wrong! Here you have one piece with the Soprano part completely at odds with the words before. Here is another in which the words once belonged to a different piece. And this piece has different words and you see the pieces go better than they did before.*

*Of course, the fifth and the octave are perfect, the seventh and second imperfect; it is the forcefulness of a composer's style that makes imperfect seem perfect, though if he were to have three or four successive fifths, it would make for an ugly composition.*

...the vain error of men that they alone possess the intellectual gifts, and who appear to believe that the same gifts are not possible for women.

*This piece changes clefs more often than I can tell you. A pox upon these clefs and these fantastical brains that think them up! You should know that there are some who talk well about music but have bad musical inventiveness and worse practical skill others have good practical skill but no knowledge; others still have little musical sense for all their practical accomplishments.*

Our wish is to entertain each other, not to hold school!

You would certainly hear such harmony that it would seem to you either that you had been carried off to Helicon. You would hear...

*The octave and fifth are perfect, the seventh and second imperfect; A pox upon these clefs; this piece has different words you see; the discourse of a good musician, talk well of music.*

### **Composer's Note**

*Dialogo and Quodlibet is a parody piece based on the conversations found in the 'Dialogo della Musica' of Antonfrancesco Doni of 1544. The Dialogo is a sizable volume containing a selection of contemporary pieces that Doni uses as a schema for analysing music and commenting on its performance. With a light conversational tone an assemblage of characters rehearse the works and talk about them, supposedly in the manner of an Academia.*

*My composition splits the choir into 12 parts divided into two choruses, one of tenors and basses, and the other of altos and sopranos. The sopranos and altos represent the Muses of Helicon singing extracts of text from the dedication of Maddalena Casaluna's first book of madrigals. The tenors and basses, characters from the Dialogo who are absorbed in their discussion of music theory and unaware of the Muses. The entire text of the piece is constructed from either quotes from the Dialogo or letters about music written*

*by Antonfrancesco Doni himself. The music references motives from 16th century music, gradually disrupting them throughout the piece. The final section of the piece could be called a quasi Quodlibet, where chopped up musical and textual quotes from earlier in the work are mashed together.*

'Dialogo and Quodlibet' was commissioned by the Stile Antico Foundation. Premiered at the Venus Unwrapped Festival, Kings Place by Stile Antico on 27th April 2019.

### **011-015 A Plastic Theatre (September 2023)**

Katie Schaag

Mezzo soprano, SATB choir and orchestra

Ellie Slorach conductor

Jennifer Johnston mezzo soprano

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

Thelma Handy leader

Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Choir

Liverpool Philharmonic Children's Choirs

Simon Emery artistic director

### **A Plastic Theatre**

#### **ACT I**

In the end there is not nothing. In the end there is endless everything. The silence a deafening roar of white noise, the landscape a bottomless oasis of plasticine deathlessness. Abandoned plastic objects longing for a home.

#### **ACT II**

Plastic snaps its fingers. Plastic doesn't have time for your considered reservations, your platitudes. Plastic has business to do. Plastic believes in the ABC ethos, and plastic is always selling, always closing. Plastic is sinister and sexy, enamored of its own slick planes and glittering prisms. Believes in its own myths. Doesn't believe in yours. Don't blame plastic, blame its instrumentalizers. Plastic wants what it wants. Plastic wants what you



want: utopia. Infinity. Plenitude for all. Ownership of a finely hewn bubblesphere, a delicately patterned cube, a deceptively minor key. What do we talk about when we talk about plastic? Climate of synthesizers and wax. Ecology of vinyl and bubble wrap. Dinosaur fossil fuels and robotics. Squeaky clean death. Flesh transmuted into silicone. Sophisticated preservative, bright and fresh. Its vision exceeds our attempts to restrain it. The material becomes its own promise, sliming into the horizon, blossoming onto the screen, ballooning into our hearts. Sticky it resonates. Stickily it moans. Sturdily it propogates. Silently it roams. Be still, oh dream plastic of our very own image, oh nightmare plastic of our very own dawn. Sampling a densely layered sequence, a pattern of deathly echoes.

### **ACT III**

Just before it falls asleep, plastic has been said to make a sound that is nearly human. The horns in unison, cue the strings. Cue the rubber duckies, now the storage bins. Cue the packing peanuts, now the vegan pleather shoes. Saran-wrapped ocean waves, screeching polyethylene pill bottle seagulls, styrofoaming wind. Polymer clay starfish belly up, its soft middle, its sensitive touch.

### **ACT IV**

A shiny plastic animal spawns a soft fleshy animal. A sinuous textured animal spawns a fleshy plastic animal. The study of animal behavior includes the recognition of diverse characteristics embedded within perceptual fields. Plastic spawns a bewildering variety of aquatic life. From one spawn to another: the progeny too great. The brood too vast. Infinite in its swaying hopefulness. Embarrassing in its persistent largess. Reverberating echo buried deep within the monstrous child. Birth as a grim oath to escape the deafening mesh. Being alive an exercise in forgetting the body, remembering the image. Being alive an exercise in remembering how to die.

### **ACT V**

We the spurned animals full of sensations. We the spawned animals eating our fill. We the mutant mineral-vegetable-plastic-animals building our kingdom. Waiting to be called beautiful. Smooth pebbles massaging our aching limbs, sun warming our grotesque faces. No terrestrial zone is bounded by fixed geographical coordinates. When we stretch our toes, the web imperceptibly opens. We leap into the rushing current. We fix our gaze on the depths.

“A PLASTIC THEATRE” by Katie Schaag is printed with the kind permission of *Imagined Theatres*.

### **Composer’s note**

*There are two possible ways of reading the word ‘plastic’. It can be that material we all once found so useful and which is now wreaking havoc in the natural world. But it can also mean ‘adaptable’, ‘fluid’, ‘malleable’. What attracted me most about Katie Schaag’s text, a five part poem scripted as a drama written out as a drama, was the way she explores both possibilities: one alarming (our destructive potential), the other affirming (the amazing adaptability of nature, and of our own minds – ‘neuroplasticity’), but without either preachiness or exaggerated ‘positivity’.*

*In keeping with Katie Schaag’s theatrical conception, A Plastic Theatre is divided into five distinct ‘acts’. The first plays with the idea of plastic objects as ‘abandoned’ – hazardous, but also strangely poignant. In Act II it becomes an emblem of our own dreams, longings, and greed, in music which both pushes forward restlessly yet seems trapped in its own endlessly repeating cycle. A disturbing pathos emerges in Act III in which plastic seems almost human, while human beings lose themselves ever more in the synthetic. In Act IV the libretto’s parody of academic verbosity is balanced by my music in which I take the tone of a child’s bed-time story. Finally, Act V explores the increasingly confused states of our relationship with nature. I felt that the ending needed to be exciting but ambiguous: does the final ‘plunge into the rushing current’ hold out the possibility of adventure, discovery? Or is it much more ominous?*

‘A Plastic Theatre’ was co-commissioned by Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society and Trondheim Symphony Orchestra and Opera with the Australian premiere with VOX, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs sponsored by Peter McCreanor.

## I FAGIOLINI

I Fagiolini's large-scale recording projects include world premieres of Striggio 'Mass in 40 Parts', Viadana Vespers, works by the Gabrielis and now Benevoli's 'Colossal Baroque' multi-choir masses. Consort premieres include Byrd, Tomkins, Croce, Striggio, Francaix, Milhaud and Joanna Marsh.

The ensemble's innovative work is now as much online as it is live, including collaborative cross-art projects on stages around the world and short (multi award-winning) music videos with Polyphonic Films. Search: Goosed! and The Stag Hunt. The group's YouTube series, SingTheScore, combines serious analysis with off-the-wall humour while Choral Chihuahua, presented by Robert Hollingworth, Nicholas Mulroy and Eamonn Dougan, is the top UK choral podcast and is now in its ninth season.

Signature projects include the fully immersive The Full Monteverdi and Betrayal (dir. John La Bouchardière); Tallis in Wonderland (with live and recorded voice); Simunye, the South African collaboration; and How Like An Angel with Australian contemporary circus company CIRCA for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad and also at Perth International Arts Festival, Lincoln Center, New York, and in cathedrals across Europe. The group's French 20th-century Amuse-Bouche included the first recording of Jean Francaix's 12-voice Ode a la Gastronomie (also on YouTube). Monteverdi programmes from L'Orfeo (dir. Tom Guthrie) with masks and puppets and 1610 & 1641 Vespers; and Leonardo - Shaping The Invisible, with Prof. Martin Kemp and projections of Leonardo's art and designs.

I Fagiolini is an Associate Ensemble at the University of York and celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2026 with, 'We're Not Dead Yet'. I Fagiolini is managed worldwide by Percius.

[www.ifagiolini.com](http://www.ifagiolini.com)

### Batter My Heart - I Fagiolini

Rebecca Lea  
Anna Crookes  
Martha McLorinan  
Peter Gritton  
Jacob Ewens  
Matthew Long  
Greg Skidmore  
Frederick Long

### Geocentric & metachoral in blue - I Fagiolini

Rebecca Lea  
Anna Crookes  
Martha McLorinan  
Robert Hollingworth  
Matthew Long  
Greg Skidmore  
Frederick Long

### All shall be well - I Fagiolini (solo trio)

Nicholas Mulroy  
Matthew Long  
Frederick Long

### The World is charged - I Fagiolini

Rebecca Lea  
Anna Crookes  
Martha McLorinan  
Peter Gritton  
Matthew Long  
Greg Skidmore  
Thomas Lowen

### now i lay - I Fagiolini + VOCES8

S1 Rebecca Lea + Molly Noon  
S2 Anna Crookes + Andrea Haines  
A1 Peter Gritton + Katie Jeffries-Harris  
A2 Barney Smith + Blake Morgan  
T Nicholas Mulroy + Euan Williamson  
B1 Greg Skidmore + Chris Moore  
B2 Charles Gibbs + Jonathan Pacey  
Robert Hollingworth (Conductor)

## THE LYONS MOUTH

The Lyons Mouth is both a vocal consort and a full choir of young professional singers who initially studied at the University of York with Robert Hollingworth, giving concerts in the Sir Jack Lyons concert hall. These singers already work with the top vocal ensembles in the UK and Europe, such as the Monteverdi Choir, I Fagiolini, Voces8, and The Marian Consort. Many of the group have been through the National Youth Choir Fellowship training programme.

The Lyons Mouth has performed at Stour Festival 2024, with Cappella Cracoviensis in Cracow 2024, and Rachel Podger's Brecon Baroque Festival 2022. They have also been selected as Stoller Hall Emerging Artists 2024/25. This season will see the release of their own professional film recordings of choice repertoire, with music by Monteverdi, Wilbye and D'India. In a unique approach, the group is also curating a series of performances in art galleries, where they use music to enhance the stories and emotions depicted in the paintings or directly relate to their historical background.

As the group is in its early stages, it would be delighted to hear from anyone considering supporting it.

[thelyonsmouth@gmail.com](mailto:thelyonsmouth@gmail.com)

Eleanor Bray  
Elspeth Piggott  
Sarah Keating  
Ailsa Campbell  
Eleanor Hunt  
Isabelle Palmer

Helena Cooke  
Caroline McCartney  
Luthien Brackett

Jacob Ewens  
James Botcher  
James Wells

Stuart O'Hara  
Patrick Osborne  
Frederick Long  
Thomas Lowen  
David Valsamidis  
Jonty Ward

## VOCES8

The 2023 Grammy-nominated British vocal ensemble VOCES8 is proud to inspire people through music and share the joy of singing. Touring globally, the group performs an extensive repertoire both in its a cappella concerts and in collaborations with leading musicians, orchestras and conductors. Versatility and a celebration of diverse musical expression are central to the ensemble's performance and education ethos which is shared both online and in person. VOCES8 is the flagship ensemble of the VOCES8 Foundation which actively promotes 'Music Education For All', reaching up to 40,000 people annually.

VOCES8 has performed at many notable venues from Wigmore Hall to Sydney Opera House. This season they perform over 100 concerts globally. Online the VOCES8 Digital Academy and the LIVE From London digital festival continue. They publish music and educational material with VOCES8 Publishing, E.C. Schirmer and Edition Peters, including The VOCES8 Method written by Paul Smith. Ken Burton is Composer-in-Residence with Jim Clements as Arranger-in-Residence. Their new album "Nightfall" is released in September 2024, joining previous releases "A Choral Christmas", Christopher Tin's "The Lost Birds" (a Grammy-Award nominee), "Home" conducted by Eric Whitacre, featuring "The Sacred Veil" and "Seven Psalms" by Paul Simon.

[www.voces8.com](http://www.voces8.com)

[www.voces8.foundation](http://www.voces8.foundation)

## STILE ANTICO

Stile Antico, which celebrates its twentieth anniversary in 2025, is firmly established as one of the world's most accomplished and innovative vocal ensembles. Working without a conductor, its twelve members have thrilled audiences on four continents with their colourful and vibrant performances of Renaissance polyphony. Its numerous recordings have earned accolades including the Gramophone Award for Early Music, Diapason d'or de l'année, Edison Klassiek Award, and Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. The group has received three Grammy® nominations, and performed live at the 60th Grammy® Awards at Madison Square Garden.

Stile Antico has appeared at many of Europe's most important venues, including Wigmore Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus and Madrid's Auditorio Nacional, and regularly features at such prestigious festivals as the BBC Proms, Laus Polyphoniae Antwerp, and the Boston, Utrecht and York Early Music festivals. The group frequently tours to the US and Canada, and has appeared in Mexico, Colombia, Hong Kong and South Korea. In addition to its core repertoire, Stile Antico has premiered works by Joanna Marsh, John McCabe, Nico Muhly, Giles Swayne, and Huw Watkins, and collaborated with Fretwork, the Folger Consort, Marino Formenti, Lemn Sissay, B'Rock, Rihab Azar, and Sting.

[www.stileantico.co.uk](http://www.stileantico.co.uk)

Helen Ashby

Kate Ashby

Rebecca Hickey

Emma Ashby

Cara Curran

Rosie Parker

Andrew Griffiths

Jonathan Hanley

Benedict Hymas

James Arthur

Will Dawes

Nathan Harrison

## JENNIFER JOHNSTON

Esteemed mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnston is recognised as one of the most important voices of her generation and celebrated for her performances of works by Mahler, Wagner, Britten, Beethoven, Schumann and Elgar among others. She was awarded Royal Philharmonic Society's Singer Award in 2021 in recognition of her "commitment and emotional force" to both performance and education.

In huge demand on the concert platform, Jennifer Johnston has collaborated with many of the world's leading orchestras and conductors and enjoys a special relationship with the orchestra of her home town, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, where she has been Artist in Residence and with whom she recorded her first solo recording, *A Love Letter to Liverpool* (Rubicon Classics). Recent highlights have included Judith (*Bluebeard's Castle*) with Oslo Filharmonien under Klaus Mäkelä, Ravel's *Schééhérazade* with BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sakari Oramo, Mahler's Symphony No.8 with Wiener Philharmoniker under Franz Welser-Möst, Bayerisches Staatsorchester under Kirill Petrenko, and with NDR Radio Philharmonic Orchestra under Semyon Bychkov, Jocasta in Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* under Sir John Eliot Gardiner with both Berliner Philharmoniker and London Symphony Orchestra, Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with Hallé Orchestra under Gergely Madaras, Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* with BBC Symphony Orchestra and Sakari Oramo as part of the First Night of the BBC Proms, Schumann's *Faustszenen* with Daniel Harding and Gewandhausorchester, and Britten's *Phaedra* with Martyn Brabbins and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

A former BBC New Generation Artist, and a graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music, Jennifer Johnston has an extensive discography including the Grammy-nominated Vaughan Williams's *Four Last Songs* (Albion Records), Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* (LSO Live), Wagner's *Die Walküre* (Waltraute) with Sir Simon Rattle and Bayerischer Rundfunk Orchester and, Gramophone Awards' 2022 Recording of the Year, Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* from Bayerische Staatsoper.

## RLPO

The award-winning Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra. The origins of the Orchestra's concert series date back to the formation of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic by a group of Liverpool music lovers in 1840. The Orchestra gives over seventy concerts each season in its home, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, and has long been a unique ambassador for Liverpool through an extensive touring schedule throughout the UK and internationally, and through broadcasts, streamed concerts and recordings. Domingo Hindoyan became Chief Conductor of the Orchestra in 2021, and Andrew Manze continues as Principal Guest Conductor. Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Choir is Youth Company's flagship choir for local young people aged 13-19, and the Liverpool Philharmonic Children's Choir is the non-auditioned mixed choir, bringing together 75 of the most enthusiastic young singers from Merseyside and beyond.

In 1957, the Liverpool Philharmonic Society and Orchestra, as they were called then, acquired the title 'Royal'. A year later, Her Majesty the Queen became Patron – a role she retained until her death. The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir were given Royal patronage in 1990 to celebrate the society's 150th anniversary. In 2024 it was confirmed that King Charles will continue as Patron of the organisation.

Liverpool Philharmonic has been working with schools and the community through its orchestral programme since the 1940s, when Sir Malcolm Sargent first introduced a concert series for schools. Today, our Learning programme offers a range of inspirational lifelong learning opportunities to enjoy and take part in live music making of the highest quality. Flagship learning programmes include annual Schools' Concerts, performed to over 23,000 children from across the North West; leadership of In Harmony Liverpool, the El Sistema-inspired music and social change programme; and a Musician in Residence programme delivered in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust.

## JOANNA MARSH

Joanna Marsh, the award-winning British composer who, since 2007, has divided her time between the UK and Dubai, has been hailed by *The Guardian* as 'one of today's leading composers for the voice'. She has an extensive catalogue of music which includes *In Winter's House*, which she wrote to a commission for Tenebrae, and a celebrated triptych of anthems composed for The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge.

Joanna's Dubai Opera commission, *Flare*, was performed at the BBC Proms Dubai in 2019 by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and her BBC Radio 3 commission *SEEN*, for choir and electronics, was performed by the BBC Singers as part of the 2023 BBC Proms. Her 2020 solo album, *Flare*, features music performed by the BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, and The Choir of Royal Holloway, University of London. In 2021 The Choir of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, released an album of her choral music 'Sanctifica Nos' on the conclusion of her five year composer residency. In 2022 she won the prestigious Ivor Novello Composer Award for Choral Music with *All Shall Be Well* and *Batter My Heart* was nominated for the same award in 2024.

Joanna Marsh's life in the Middle East has led to a number of unique musical opportunities including composing an orchestral work to celebrate the opening of the Burj Khalifa, a fanfare for the late Queen Elizabeth's visit to Abu Dhabi, and the commission of *Flare* for the BBC Proms' first visit to Dubai in 2017.

Joanna Marsh studied at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where she was an organ scholar, and at the Royal Academy of Music. She studied composition with Richard Blackford and Judith Bingham.



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### *Tracks 1 and 3-10*

14-15th November 2023 St Alban's Church, Holborn.  
Engineer, Producer and Editor - Adam Binks

### *Track 2*

Recorded live 9th August 2021 Voces8 Centre, London  
Engineer, Producer and Editor - Barnaby Smith  
Engineers - Dave Hinitt and Tom Mungall  
Assistant Producer - Paul Smith

### *Tracks 11-15*

Recorded live Liverpool Philharmonic Hall in concert 24 March 2024  
Producer - Andrew Cornall  
Recording Engineer and Editor - Christopher Tann  
Recording Facilities - Liverpool Philharmonic.

Cover Image – Solution Group

Thanks to I Fagiolini Charitable Trust for contributing to the costs of this recording.

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