

emv: PACIFIC BAROQUE SERIES | 201920

A series of concerts co-presented by the Pacific Baroque Festival, Christ Church Cathedral and EMV

PURCELL & NYMAN: MUSIC AFTER A WHILE

- IESTYN DAVIES & FRETWORK -

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 30 AT 7:30 PM

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
VICTORIA BC



Iestyn Davies

After graduating from St John's College, Cambridge, Iestyn Davies studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

In 2017 Iestyn received an Olivier Award nomination for singing the role of Farinelli in *Farinelli and the King* opposite Mark Rylance, a Globe Theatre production that had successful runs on the West End and Broadway.

On the opera stage he has appeared at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera, La Scala, Milan, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the Chicago Lyric Opera and in Munich, Vienna and Zurich. Recent highlights include returns to the Bayerische Staatsoper for *Ottone/Agrippina*, *Terry/Marnie* at the Metropolitan Opera and *Polinesso/Ariodante* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. This season he reprises the role of *Ottone/Agrippina* at the Royal Opera House and at the Metropolitan Opera.

Celebrated on the concert platform, he has performed at La Scala, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Tonhalle in Zurich, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, at the Barbican in London and Lincoln Centre New York. Recent highlights include concerts with William Christie / Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bernard Labadie / Les Violons du Roy and the Handel & Haydn Society, Jonathan Cohen / Arcangelo at the BBC Proms and a tour with the Britten Sinfonia. This season he joins Laurence Cummings / Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in Bucharest for *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Harry Bicket / New York Philharmonic for *Messiah* and he joins Emmanuel Haim / NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra for a series of concerts of the *St. John Passion* at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg.

A committed recitalist, with repertoire ranges from Dowland to Clapton, he is a regular guest at Carnegie Hall, New York and enjoys a successful relationship with both the Wigmore Hall and Saffron Hall where he has curated residencies. At the start of the season, Iestyn celebrated his 40th birthday with a special concert at the Wigmore Hall, where he was presented their prestigious Gold Medal.

Iestyn has twice been awarded the Gramophone Recital Award, and in 2017 won the Gramophone Baroque Vocal Award for his Bach Cantatas disc with Arcangelo and Jonathan Cohen. In 2017 Iestyn was awarded an MBE for his services to music.

Fretwork

In 2016, Fretwork celebrated its 30th anniversary. In these last three decades, they have explored the core repertory of great English consort music, from Taverner to Purcell, and made classic recordings against which others are judged.

In addition to this, Fretwork have become known as pioneers of contemporary music for viols, having commissioned over 40 new works. The list of composers is like the roll call of the most prominent writers of our time: George Benjamin, Michael Nyman, Sir John Tavener, Gavin Bryars, Elvis Costello, Alexander Goehr, John Woolrich, Orlando Gough, Fabrice Fitch, Peter Sculthorpe, Sally Beamish, Tan Dun, Barry Guy, Andrew Keeling, Thea Musgrave, Simon Bainbridge, Poul Ruders, John Joubert, Duncan Druce & Nico Muhly.

The group now frequently presents programmes consisting entirely of contemporary music.

They made their Carnegie Hall debut in February of 2010, and now tour the United States most years.

In that year, they also curated a week-long concert series of concerts at Kings Place. The culmination of this week was the world premiere of 'The World Encompassed' by Orlando Gough, a 70-minute piece describing in musical terms Drake's circumnavigation of the globe in 1577-80.

In 2011, The National Centre for Early Music, in collaboration with the BBC, hosted a competition for young composers to create a four-minute piece for Fretwork. They workshopped the shortlisted pieces at the NCEM in York in October, and then the winning entries were premiered in Kings Place in December 2011.

The following year, they premiered 'My Days' for The Hilliard Ensemble & Fretwork by one of today's most exciting young composers - Nico Muhly - in Wigmore Hall; while 2013 was their busiest year for a decade: they played no fewer than ten concerts in London's major chamber music halls: Wigmore Hall, Kings Place, Cadogan Hall & the Royal College of Music.

In 2014 they concentrated on the music of John Dowland with a major tour of the UK with one of today's greatest tenors: Ian Bostridge. They also spent a week in the Britten Studio in Aldeburgh re-working Orlando Gough's 'The World Encompassed', to incorporate a spoken narrative drawn from contemporary accounts.

'Slow: an In Nomine' by Nico Muhly was premiered in 2015 at Kings Place in London, and they collaborated with celebrated actor Simon Callow in the revised version of *The World Encompassed* and recorded it for Signum Classics.

They celebrated their 30th anniversary with a star-studded concert at Kings Place in June of 2016; and recorded four new albums, including *The World Encompassed*, and later that year they made their longest tour of America, taking in the USA, Canada & Colombia.

In 2018 they performed and recorded a programme celebrating the music of Michael Nyman - who was 75 in 2019 - with the exceptional counter-tenor, Iestyn Davies; and in 2019 they tour North America with this programme.

Also in 2019, they begin a series of concerts at Wigmore Hall presenting the greatest English consort music from the Golden Age - six concerts ranging from Cornyshe to Purcell.

Their recordings with Signum Classics has resulted in several notable releases: *The World Encompassed*, John Jenkins Four Part Fantasies, *If* (with Iestyn Davies) & *In Chains of Gold: Orlando Gibbons' consort anthems*. In 2019 a further two discs will be released: *The Silken Tent*, with Clare Wilkinson, including the music of Debussy, Grieg, Byrd, Purcell, Nyman, Goehr, Wolf, Britten, Shostakovich and Stephen Wilkinson; and then *In Nomine II*, concluding a survey of English In Nomines started with their first released disc in 1987, including Nico Muhly's 'Slow' and music by Ferrabosco, Bull, Tye, Baldwin, Parsons and Purcell.

2020 will see further releases on Signum, Schütz's *Auferstehungs-historia* with Charles Daniels at Wigmore Hall, two further visits to Wigmore Hall in its 'Musick's Recreation' series, an extended European tour, Dartington International Summer School again, and the world premiere of a new work written for them by John Paul Jones, bassist/keyboardist with Led Zeppelin.

WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 30 AT 7:30 PM
CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
VICTORIA

THE ARTISTS

Iestyn Davies

COUNTERTENOR

Fretwork:

Asako Morikawa

TREBLE VIOL

Emily Ashton

TREBLE VIOL

Joanna Levine

TENOR VIOL

Sam Stadlen

BASS VIOL

Richard Boothby

BASS VIOL

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Pre-concert interview with
host Ian Alexander at 6:45:

Richard Boothby

PACIFIC BAROQUE SERIES 2019-2020

A SERIES OF CONCERTS CO-PRESENTED BY
THE PACIFIC BAROQUE FESTIVAL, CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL AND EMV

PURCELL & NYMAN: MUSIC AFTER A WHILE

Michael Nyman (1944-):

No Time in Eternity (2016)

Henry Purcell (1659-1695):

Fantasy No. 7 in C minor (1680)

Fantasy No. 11 in G major (1680)

Music for a while

Nyman:

Music after a While (2018)

Purcell:

The Evening Hymn

INTERVAL

Nyman:

Balancing the books (1999)

If (1995)

Why (1995)

Purcell:

Fantasy No. 6 in F major (1680)

Fantasy upon one note (1680)

Nyman:

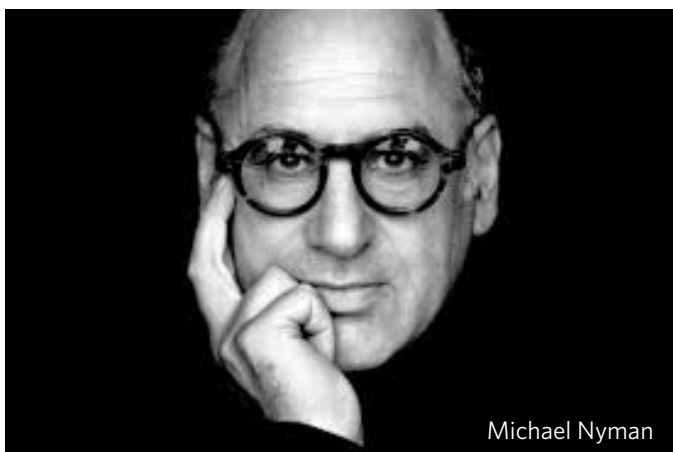
The Self-Laudatory Hymn of Innanna and her Omnipotence (1992)



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PROGRAMME NOTES

MICHAEL NYMAN AT 75



Michael Nyman

Is there a contemporary composer whose music is more immediately recognisable than Michael Nyman? I can't think of one: the insistent ostinati, the bold, yet simply conceived harmony, the driving rhythms, the aggressive instrumentation, the heavy bass-line; all have combined to make his music instantly recognisable. He has been endlessly imitated, particularly by composers for moving images – film, TV, adverts and so on; yet these are pale imitations, not the real thing.

While he might be known now more for the music he wrote for Jane Campion's award-winning film from 1993, *The Piano*, he initially shot to fame a decade earlier with the music for Peter Greenaway's film *The Draughtsman's Contract*, set in 17th-century England. This lurid tale was filmed with striking originality, and Nyman mirrored this with his music, most of it derived from one of England's greatest composers, Henry Purcell. Purcell's music was well known to Nyman, as he had studied under the great musicologist Thurston Dart at King's College in London in the 1960s, and had then produced the first modern edition of Purcell's *Catches* in 1967.

So it was a natural choice to combine Nyman and Purcell on this disc. Purcell never composed vocal music with an accompaniment of viols, but his magnificent set of *Fantazias* and *In Nomines* for viols demonstrated his interest in the instrument; so it was but a short step to realising Purcell's original bass line and completing the harmonies with parts for four or five viols. While all three on this disc are on ground basses – that is the same bass line repeated over and over again – each song presented different challenges.

O Solitude is a setting of the first and last stanzas (plus half of the third) of the poem *La Solitude* by Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant, translated by Katherine Philips, who was a remarkable literary figure in 17th-century Wales and England.

Its ground bass is unvarying, yet Purcell's implied harmonies are exceptionally inventive.

The Evening Hymn is a setting of the poem by Bishop William Fuller, friend of the diarists Pepys and Evelyn. The arrangement for viols was made by Silas Wolston. The sound bass here moves to accommodate modulations to different keys, as does that of *Music for a While*, which is from the incidental music to Dryden and Lee's translation of Sophocles' play *Oedipus*, revived in 1692. Alecto is one of the Greek furies, with snakes for hair, whose work is to castigate mortals for their moral crimes.

In 2017, Fretwork commissioned Michael Nyman (with funds generously donated by Mark Reed) to write a new instrumental work for them, and he responded with *Music After a While*, which is based upon Purcell's song, or more particularly upon its strikingly original bass-line, with its insidious rising chromatics. It was premiered in Milton Court, in London's Barbican Centre in May 2018, just before this disc was recorded.

We had previously commissioned Nyman in 1992 to write a work for James Bowman and us for the Spitalfields Festival. Nyman described the remarkable chance encounter that led to the choice of text:

The text of the Self-Laudatory Hymn came to light while I was browsing among the bookshelves of an Armenian acquaintance in February 1992. Opening, for no apparent reason, a fat anthology entitled Ancient Near-Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, edited by James B. Pritchard, I found S N Kramer's translation of this Hymn. I was immediately taken with its tone of unashamed self-congratulation (very suitable, I thought, for James Bowman's voice) and its repetitive structure (very suitable for my music).

In conversation with another friend I learned that Inanna was not an obscure goddess known only to me and a few experts on Sumerian civilisation, but a central focus of that civilisation and a figure highly esteemed by feminists. In Kramer's works: 'Female deities were worshipped and adored all though Sumerian history...but the goddess who outweighed, overshadowed, and outlasted them all was a deity known to the Sumerians by the name of Inanna, 'Queen of Heaven', and to the Semites who lived in Sumer by the name of Ishtar. Inanna played a greater role in myth, epic, and hymn than any other deity, male or female.'

In the Self-Laudatory Hymn I have made no attempt to evoke Sumerian music (or music of any other period). The opportunity to work with the viols of Fretwork recalls my

use of early instruments in the first Michael Nyman Band, which uses rebecs rather than viols; and also my studies in the 1960s with Thurston Dart (and his memorable *Musica Britannica* edition of Jacobean consort music) and the finest book ever written on English music, *English Chamber Music* by E H Meyer.

Some time during the 2000s, I came across Nyman's song *If*, scored for piano and strings and thought it could work for viols – I made an arrangement and sent it to the composer, who approved. The calm simplicity of the harmonic pattern and melody makes for a compelling work, which expresses the child-like naïveté of the text. It was written, together with *Why*, to texts by Roger Pulvers as part of an animated film by Seiya Araki, *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

And then, having seen my arrangement, Nyman suggested I look at a work he had written for the Swingle Singers, *Balancing the Books*, a wordless vocal work in 8 parts. I arranged this, but we didn't find an opportunity to perform it until we were invited to take part in the Minimalism Unwrapped festival at Kings Place in London in 2015.

No Time in Eternity was commissioned by the French counter-tenor Paulin Bündgen with Ensemble Celadon in 2016 and first performed by them in Lyon in March of that year. It is a setting of several poems by the great 17th-century poet Robert Herrick: *To Music*, *No Time in Eternity*, *Fortune*, *The Definition of Beauty*, *Things mortal still mutable*, *The Watch*, *To Music*. All are from his *Hesperides*, published in 1648. His most famous verse is 'To the Virgins to make much of time', espousing the sentiment to seize the day, or *carpe diem*; and we see similar sentiments in these epigrammatical works that Nyman has chosen to set. He was highly sensitive to music and a close friend of the Lawes brothers, Henry & William.

Michael Nyman was born in Stratford, in the east end of London on 23rd March 1944. In addition to his current work as a composer, he is also a film maker, conductor, pianist, musicologist, writer & photographer. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music and, after his Ph.D. studies with Thurston Dart, he went to Romania to collect folk music.

While working as music critic for *The Spectator*, he coined the term 'minimalism' in 1968. He also wrote for *The New Statesman*, *The Listener* and *Studio International*. His seminal work on new music – *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* – was published in 1974 and has recently been reprinted.

His preferred musical form is opera, and he has written several notable works in this form: *The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat*, *Facing Goya* and *Many and Boy: Dada*.

More recently he has focused on composing soundtracks for silent films from the late 1920s: Jean Vigo's *A Propos de Nice*, Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* and new soundtracks for three Dziga Vertov films- *Man with a Movie Camera*, *The Eleventh Year* and *A Sixth Part of the World*.

– Richard Boothby



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Michael Nyman

No Time in Eternity

1.
To Music

Begin to Charm, and as thou strok'st mine ears
With thy enchantment, melt me into tears.

Then let thy active hand scud o'er thy lyre.
And make my spirits frantic with fire.

That done, sink down into a silvery strain,
And make me smooth as balm and oil again.

2.
No Time in Eternity

By hours we all live here; in Heaven is known
No spring of time or time's succession.

3.
Fortune

Fortune's a blind profuse of her own,
Too much she gives to some enough to none.

4.
The Definition of Beauty

Beauty no other thing is than a beam
Flashed out between the middle and extreme.

5.
Things mortal still mutable

Things are uncertain and the more we get,
The more on icy pavements we are set.

6.
The Watch

Man is a watch wound up at first, but never
Wound up again: once down he's down for ever.
The watch once down, all motions then do cease;
And man's pulse stopp'd, all passions sleep in peace.

7.
To Music (ii)

Music, thou queen of heaven, care-charming spell,
That strik'st a stillness into hell:
Thou that tam'st tigers, and fierce storms that rise,
With thy soul-melting lullabies,
Fall down from those chiming spheres
To charm our souls as thou enchant'st our ears.

Henry Purcell

Fantazy No. 7 in C minor

Fantazy No. 11 in G major

Music for a while

Music for a while
Shall all your cares beguile.
Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd
And disdain to be pleas'd
Till Alecto free the dead
From their eternal bands,
Till the snakes drop from her head,
And the whip from out her hands.

Nyman

Music after a While

Purcell

The Evening Hymn

Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world good night
To the soft bed, my body I dispose,
But where, where shall my soul repose?
Dear God, even in Thy arms,
And can there be any so sweet security!
Then-to-thy-rest, O my soul
And singing, praise the mercy that pro longs thy days.
Hallelujah!

INTERVAL

Nyman

Balancing the books

If

If at the sound of a wish, the summer sun would shine,
And if just a smile would do to brush all the clouds
form the sky.

If at the blink of an eye the autumn leaves would fall;
And if you could sigh a deep sigh to scatter them
over the earth,

I'd blink my eyes and wave my arm,
I'd wish a wish to stop all harm.

If at the wave of a hand the winter snows would start
And if you could just light a candle to change people's
feelings and hearts,

I'd whisper love in every land,
To every child, woman and man;

That's what I'd do if my wishes come true.

- Roger Pulvers

Why

We ask our father why,
Why people cannot love,
Why people hate all day and night,
Spoiling children's dreams.

We ask our mother why,
Why people cannot live,
Why they won't let the children be,
Crushing their belief.

Tell us why, Papa, your children want to know:
"Some day you'll find out"
Leave us lonely and cold.
Tell us why, Mama, your children want to know:
"You shouldn't ask such things"
Leaves us no room to grow.

We ask our parents why,
Why children cannot grow.
Don't look away from us,
Don't lie, please don't lie,
Your children need to know.

Tell me why, somebody,
We children need an answer
Why adults fight over God,
Why adults fight over colour,
Why adults go to war.

- Roger Pulvers

Purcell

Fantasy No. 6 in F major

Fantasy upon one note

Nyman

The Self-Laudatory Hymn of Innanna and her Omnipotence

My father gave me Heaven, gave me earth.
I the Queen of Heaven am I.
Is there one God who can vie with me?
Enlil gave me Heaven, gave me earth,
I the Queen of Heaven am I.

He has given me lordship,
He has given me queenship.
He has given me battle, given me combat
And he gave me flood and tempest.

He has placed Heaven as a crown.
He has tied the earth as a sandal.
He has fastened the holy me garment
About my body.

The Gods are my vassals:
I, a Queen am I.
The Anuna scurry about.
I, a life-giving wild cow am I,
The life-giving wild cow of father Enlil am I,
His life-giving wild cow that walks at the head.

When I enter the Ekur, the house of Enlil,
The gate-keeper puts not his hand against my breast,
The vizier says not to me: stop!

Heaven is mine, earth is mine.

In Erech, the Eanna is mine,
In Zabalom, the Giguna is mine.

In Nippur, the Duranki is mine,
In Ur, the Edilman is mine.

In Girsu the Eshdam is mine,
In Adab, the Emdara is mine.

In Kish, the Hursag Kalama is mine,
In Dev, the Amashkuga is mine.

In Akshak, the Anzaka is mine,
In Agada, the Ulmash is mine.

Is there one god who can vie with me?

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SERIES

| 2019/20



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► **TOMORROW:** Thursday, OCTOBER 31 12:15pm at Christ Church Cathedral
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