

Peter Seabourne

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“A composer of immense emotional clout.” [The Classical Reviewer]

To begin at the beginning...

Peter Seabourne was born in 1960. At the age of ten he moved to a large farmhouse to live with his grandmother - the isolation and her support fostered a love of music and a passion for composing.

In 1980 he won a place to read Music at Clare College, Cambridge, studying composition with Robin Holloway, an inspirational figure. Though initially there was little common ground, some of his teacher's idiosyncratic single-mindedness was already reflected in the student pieces produced. He moved to York University in 1983 to take a doctorate in composition with Prof. David Blake.

Two prizes were won in national competitions and performances took place on London's South Bank, and in many festivals. Five pieces were selected by the Society for the Promotion of New Music, with the last of these given at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London in 1993.

Silence

Even by this time, however, he had already abandoned writing, disowning all his work to this point; this partly due to a growing dissatisfaction with it, but also to an intensifying feeling of alienation from the prevailing wider contemporary music scene. 12 years passed...

Re-awakening

In 2001 a series of encounters contrived to "draw up the veil", revealing music to be beautiful once more and to remind the composer of what had been neglected for too long. There followed an intense outpouring of work. Almost in a single package a fully formed 'voice' arrived, with a cohesive sound world and a highly individual musical landscape. This was tonally referenced, rhythmically inventive, somewhat eclectic, and often overtly emotional. Alongside came a wonderful sense of freedom from the constraints of external approval. His path was found.

Prizes, commissions and recent work

Recognition followed. In 2004 his *Piano Concerto no. 1* was awarded two prizes in the 1st International Uuno Klami Composition Competition in Finland. His *Soaring* (oboe and piano) won awards in the 3rd International Ivan Spassov Composition Competition in Bulgaria in 2004 and subsequently in the IMRO International Composers' Competition in 2006 in Ireland. The septet *My River*, was chosen in anonymous submission from over 200 scores submitted by the North/South Consonance Ensemble, and was played in New York in June 2006 under Max Lifchitz.

Commissions have come from the Rio 'Cello Festival (Brazil); Vestfold Festival (Norway); Paul Klee Zentrum (Switzerland); Rheinische Philharmonie and Deutsche Kammerakademie (Germany); Moravská filharmonie (Czech Republic); Coull Quartet, Norfolk Concerts and Spalding Festival (UK).

Performances in recent years have taken place in Beijing, Budapest, London, Chicago, Lahti, Bologna, Reutlingen, Bern, Olomouc, Lviv, Koblenz, Tübingen, Mainz, Neuss, Biel-Bienne, Yerevan, Minnesota, Seoul, Boulder, Brussels, Leeds, Lucca, Casalmaggiore etc..

Broadcasts have taken place in Germany, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Austria, Estonia and Portugal.

Currently twelve CDs exist of the composer's work. These have had positive reviews in many leading journals (Gramophone, BBC Music Magazine, The Strad, The Independent, Musical Opinion, The Classical Reviewer, Pizzicato, Österreichische Musikzeitschrift, Neue Musikzeitung, Klassik, Hudebni Rozledy, Classical Music Sentinel etc.).

After a predominance of chamber music, in recent years the composer has focussed his attention more on orchestral projects with a cycle of symphonies underway (the 4th near to completion). The large-scale piano series *Steps*, now into seven volumes, has drawn extensive praise.

Peer recognition has been especially warming, with great names such as Sir Charles Mackerras, Jiri Belohlavek, Stephen Hough, Steven Isserlis, Lydia Artymiw, Raphael Wallfisch, Ralf Gothoni, Jura Margulis and many others commenting generously.

“Your music is remarkable, imaginative, beautiful, and original. Finding an inner voice that speaks to the world is a precious gift. I congratulate you for your successes and your journey.” [Jura Margulis]