


INSTRUMENTAL

A portrait of Thea Musgrave, an elderly woman with short, wavy, light-colored hair, looking off to the right. She is wearing a dark, possibly black, jacket. The background is a textured, teal-green color. A dark green diagonal shape is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

THEA  
MUSGRAVE

A Catalogue of Instrumental Music

NOVELLO



*The music of Thea Musgrave is of unique beauty and dramatic energy. It is a great honour and pleasure to publish the oeuvre of one of the most original and independently minded composers.*

Wiebke Busch  
Managing Director, Novello & Co Ltd

# THEA MUSGRAVE

at NINETY FIVE

On May 27, 2023 one of Britain's most distinguished composers, Thea Musgrave, celebrates her ninety fifth birthday. In this booklet we have brought together tributes, in-depth programme notes and photos highlighting a truly wonderful career spanning almost seventy five years.

Today, Musgrave maintains a very active composing schedule, writing with amazing energy and passion, each work informed by a lifetime of intellect, craftsmanship and experience.

An Appreciation by Nick Daniel	1
Biography	4
An Interview	9
Orchestral Selections	12
Autumn Sonata	13
Concerto for Clarinet	15
Horn Concerto	16
Loch Ness	18
Trumpet Concerto	19
The Seasons	21
Songs for a Winter's Evening	22
Turbulent Landscapes	23
Two's Company	25
Works for Orchestra	26
Works for Soloist & Orchestra	28
Works for Large & Chamber Ensembles	30

# AN APPRECIATION

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by NICK DANIEL

**I**t is a great honour and a privilege that my warm and much treasured friendship with Thea has resulted in a brilliant series of pieces written for me, showing her absolute mastery and total professionalism in writing for the oboe, which flows from her deep understanding of my playing and what I want to say with the instrument.

Thea was first suggested to me by Peter Maxwell Davies as an ideal composer to write a concerto for his 1994 St Magnus Festival. He wanted specifically a woman and a Scot. Thea produced *Helios*, one of the most original oboe concertos ever written, which requires a mixture of virtuosity, sound painting, movement, theatre and dramatic presentation. It also contains a spine tingling musical sunrise, a summer storm and a moonrise. The oboe plays the Sun-God, and I delighted Thea by wearing a bright red Nehru collar jacket at the premiere, which happened with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in the cinema in Kirkwall with a force 10 gale regularly intruding into the performance! I remember meeting Thea for the first time at Heathrow Airport and discussing *Helios*. She had drawn a 'map' of the piece, showing dramatic intention, key relationships and structure, and already, without seeing a note of written music, her highly creative and fertile imagination got me very excited. Seeing these maps of hers is always a thrill as they give me an early view into what's going to be involved. Very generously she has given me some of them. *Helios* was the first in a series of pieces for different settings of the instrument. This forms an important body of work for the oboe and the cor anglais, and I was delighted when the recording

company Harmonia Mundi agreed to release almost all of Thea's chamber music for oboe on my first album with them. When you play a piece of Thea's it's almost impossible to believe she doesn't play the instrument herself, so fluid and natural is her instrumental and vocal understanding and her complete professionalism. I've heard many people say this about her writing, but at the same time, this fluidity of technique is used at the service of great inspiration and ideas. Discipline and inspiration in perfect balance.



Left: Thea Musgrave and Nick Daniel following the world premiere of *Helios* in Orkney, 1995.  
Right: Thea and Nick, 2016.

Like many great opera composers Musgrave has brought dramatic elements from the stage to her concerto forms and chamber music. These elements may be visual, involving the artists to move or communicate visually in some way, or they may be purely musical. Being coached by her in how to present these aspects is a wonderful lesson in stagecraft. In her masterpiece for oboe and piano, *Night Windows*, inspired by Edward Hopper paintings, the drama is distilled into pure music with no diminishing of the dramatic effect of the music on the listener, and yet her oboe quartet, *Cantilena*, placed the oboe as an outsider and the string trio gradually, although at first suspiciously, welcome him into the group on stage. Thea asked for me to enter the hall some minutes after the piece had begun playing a top A!

Similarly in *Two's Company* for Dame Evelyn Glennie and me, she asked me to bow normally with Evelyn on entering, then immediately leave the stage, only to re-enter playing from memory on the opposite side of the Albert Hall. Quite a trot round I discovered! These motion and gestural aspects of the pieces bring the music to life in 3D for the audience and it's why, when Thea ascends the stage to bow and opens her arms in that warm way of hers, the same way she greets those of us lucky enough to be her friends, the audience's warmth is both audible and palpable. Yet Thea is as likely to drop an unexpected F Bomb as any composer I know, and in the next breath she will be telling us how she turned down a request from Tolkien to write a Lord of the Rings opera because there were just too many overtones of Wagner!



# THEA MUSGRAVE

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## BIOGRAPHY

**R**ich and powerful musical language and a strong sense of drama have made Scottish-American composer Thea Musgrave one of the most respected and exciting contemporary composers in the Western world. Her compositions were first performed under the auspices of the British Broadcasting Corporation and at the Edinburgh International Festival. As a result, her works have been widely performed in Britain, Europe and the USA, and at the major music festivals, such as Edinburgh, Warsaw Autumn, Florence Maggio Musicale, Venice Biennale, Aldeburgh, Cheltenham and Zagreb; on most of the European and American broadcasting stations; and on many regular symphony concert series.

From time to time she has conducted her own works: the premiere performance of *Mary, Queen of Scots* at the 1977 Edinburgh International Festival and later with the San Francisco Spring Opera; the premiere performances of *The Voice of Ariadne* in Britain and again in New York and Los Angeles for the New York City Opera; and many orchestral concerts (Philadelphia, San Francisco, St Paul Chamber, Los Angeles Chamber, BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Scottish National, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Jerusalem Philharmonic, etc.). It is a measure of her talent and determination that Thea Musgrave has earned great respect for her work both as a composer and conductor at a time when these were still rather uncommon professions for a woman.

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland on 27 May 1928, she studied first at the University of Edinburgh and later at the Conservatoire in Paris, where she spent four years as a pupil of Nadia Boulanger, before establishing herself back in London as a prominent personality of British musical life. In 1970 she became Guest Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, which anchored her increasing involvement with the musical life of the United States. In 1971 she married the American opera conductor Peter Mark, and has resided in the U.S. since 1972. In 1974 she received the Koussevitzky Award, resulting in the composition of *Space Play*, which after its London premiere was performed in New York by the Lincoln Center Chamber Players. She has also been awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, in 1974-75, and again in 1982-83, and was recognised with honorary degrees by Old Dominion University (Virginia), Smith College, Glasgow University and in May 2004, the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. She was awarded a CBE on the Queen's New Year's Honour List in January 2002. As Distinguished Professor at Queens College, City University of New York from September 1987-2002, Musgrave has guided and interacted with many new and gifted young student composers.

Musgrave has consistently explored new means of projecting essentially dramatic situations in her music, frequently altering and extending the conventional boundaries of instrumental performance by incorporating physical movement to enhance the musical and dramatic impact of her works. As she once put it, she wanted to explore dramatic musical forms: some works are 'dramatic-abstract', that is without programmatic content (such as the *Concerto for Clarinet*, the *Horn Concerto*, the *Viola Concerto*, and *Space Play*), and others project specific programmatic ideas (such as the paintings in *The Seasons* and *Turbulent Landscapes*, the poems in *Ring Out Wild Bells*, *Journey through a Japanese Landscape*, and *Autumn Sonata*, and the famous Greek legends in *Orfeo*, *Narcissus*, *Helios*, and *Voices from the Ancient World*), all extensions of concerto principles. In some of these, to enhance the dramatic effect, the sonic possibilities of spatial acoustics have been incorporated: in the *Clarinet Concerto* the soloist moves around the different sections of the orchestra, and in the *Horn Concerto* the orchestral horns are stationed around the concert hall. Thus the players are not only the conversants in an abstract musical dialogue, but also very much the living (and frequently peripatetic) embodiment of its *dramatis personae*.

It was therefore not surprising that her focus on the lyric and dramatic potential of music should have led to Musgrave's fluency in the field of opera, and it is interesting to see that her large-scale operas of the past thirty years, beginning with *The Voice of Ariadne* (1972) and followed by *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1977), *A Christmas Carol* (1979), and *Harriet, the Woman Called Moses* (1984), are in every sense the true successors to the instrumental concertos. *Simón Bolívar* (1993), like many of her operas, focuses on a historic figure whose life takes on an epic or archetypal dimension.





Top: Thea conducts violist and husband Peter Mark in a rehearsal of her *Viola Concerto* in the Royal Albert Hall for the BBC Proms, 1973 . Bottom: Thea Musgrave with Finnish Composer Kaija Saariaho following a performance by The Juilliard School's Axiom Ensemble in New York, December 2016.



Top: (left to right) Peter Mark, Thea Musgrave, David Farrar, Fred Burchinal (Scrooge in the world premiere of Musgrave's *A Christmas Carol*) in Central Park, New York, 1981 . Bottom: Paris, 1953: The class of Nadia Boulanger (centre) at the conservatoire with Thea Musgrave standing in the back row.



Top left: (left to right) Elizabeth Maconchy, Aaron Copland and Thea Musgrave on Aldeburgh beach, 1960.

Top right: HRH Prince Charles presenting Thea with her Honorary Doctorate of Music. Bottom Right: Conductor Paul Goodwin, Thea Musgrave and soprano Carolyn Sampson at a rehearsal for the premiere performance of *Journey Into Light*, 2005.

# AN INTERVIEW

————— with THOMAS LE BROCCQ

***What was studying music like in Paris like right after the war?***

There was such a positive feeling of hope and freedom in Paris right after the war that I have always considered myself to be lucky to be there at that specific moment. Coming after the horrors of the war and the occupation, it was easier to speak about important things and form lifelong friends.

***What are your memories of Nadia Boulanger?***

I have so many that it is hard to single them out. Her amazing focus on detail proved the importance of music on a daily basis to me, and her personal warmth and encouragement of me gave me the courage to pursue my own individual musical ideas.

***It seems, looking back, that composing music in the twentieth century was a battleground for ideas, each artist looking to plant their flag as prominently as possible; was that important to you?***

What was important to me at the time was hearing other people's music and understanding the ideas that were behind the music. I was never part of an ideological group of composers, but was close to a few composers who are very important to me personally. Richard Rodney Bennett and Iain Hamilton were lifelong friends from the early years.

***What inspires you to write? Art, poetry, everyday life?***

I need to focus on an idea to write music. That idea can come from poetry such as *Songs for a Winter's Evening* to poems of Robert Burns, or *The Voices of our Ancestors* to poems from the ancient world: or paintings such as the Turners in *Turbulent Landscapes*: the inherent variety of percussion instruments in my *Journey through a Japanese Landscape* for Evelyn Glennie: or simply a dramatic idea for programme music – such as *Orfeo*, *Pierrot*, *Narcissus*: or even an abstract idea which then works itself into a ‘dramatic-abstract’ colloquy such as my *Concerto for Orchestra*, as well the concertos for clarinet, horn, viola, and oboe.

***To what extent does the work of other composers influence your writing?***

I am drawn to composers who really have their own voice and something to say. I feel I can learn from the way they say it, but I feel I am always true to my own voice.

***Has there been a performance of your work which has particularly struck you or taken on a new life that you didn't expect?***

Well, there hasn't been a performance yet...but the piece I am writing on commission just now – a song for solo baritone and piano based on the famous soliloquy of Calderón, has literally transformed itself into a dramatic monologue similar to a full opera scene. It has gripped me increasingly, revealing more of its breadth and its depth and significance as I daily try to live up to its challenges and do it justice musically.

***You have ten operas to your name, would you say that's the form of music you are most comfortable writing? How important is 'theatre' in your concert works?***

I tend to think of music as drama - moving from one place to another and usually through some kind of conflict. That is why I feel opera is so natural for me. But I also have always seen and felt the inherent drama of instrumental music which, as you know, has created in my catalogue a whole genre of ‘dramatic-abstract’ works without singers.

***You have written such a large body of works but as yet no symphony, is there something about that form which does not appeal to you?***

Although never a symphony and that kind of formal structure, I have written many orchestral works, though usually with a dramatic element.

*You've recently made a new reduction of your opera Mary Queen of Scots. What was it like returning to your score, you're first grand opera, now?*

I loved reliving my acquaintance with this watershed opera of mine. Of course it is an entirely different process to reconceive a work you've already written to composing it in the first place. But I admit to loving every minute of it and finding new solutions for the new version with reduced forces – which means reconsidering the proportions of scenes as well as the continuity of the story.

*Over a long career, unsurprisingly, your compositional style has evolved. But do you see elements of your early work in what you are creating now, or was it different work for a different era?*

If I look carefully from one early work to another I can see how I got to where I am now. However, I would never have seen this from where I stood looking forward from my early works. And yet the progression matches that of my own growth and development in life, where there are always new influences and the one constant is change. Whereas the form and notes my works take might have changed over the years, I feel that what I have to say has only become clearer and truer.

*Where do you compose?*

In a room of one's own – as Virginia Woolf said!

*You've written so much for all types of ensembles, is there anything left to write? Is there piece of music you are burning to compose?*

I truly have not really contemplated this issue – being involved even these days in three commissions that loom in front of me. I always take my deadlines seriously, and know myself well enough to know that I must stretch my commitments out even more now to avoid pressure.





# ORCHESTRAL SELECTIONS

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Chosen by THEA MUSGRAVE

# AUTUMN SONATA

(1993)

Duration: 20 Minutes

Soloist(s): bass clarinet

Orchestration: 2222/3220/timp.perc/str

As I started work on this concerto, the I found myself haunted by the poetry of Georg Trakl, the Austrian poet who died just after the onset of World War I. I had set one of his poems *Wild Winter*, the work written immediately before this one. Accordingly, I returned to his poems and chose several short fragments to preface the major sections of this autumnal dream landscape. As the piece opens, (I: Oscuro e misterioso) a dreamer approaches a dark menacing forest, where “crows scatter” at the sound of “black footsteps”, where (II: Svegliato) mysterious dark forces are awakening and bells toll the alarm. The echoing sound of deadly weapons now erupts (III. Alla marcia, con furore), and culminates in a pounding march, the major climax of the work. Eventually the march subsides and the “dark flutes of Autumn” greet the ghosts of heroes (IV: Lamentoso). Here the ancient chant, *Dies irae*, is embodied in the musical texture in much the same way as it was in the setting of the Trakl poem in *Wild Winter*.

A reprise of the opening section follows, (V: Oscuro e misterioso). The “black footsteps” now become the “Steps of madness in black rooms, Shadows of old men under open doors” and an offstage bass clarinet shadows the music of the soloist. The crows once again scatter, but now “their flight is like a sonata, full of fading chords and manly despair” (VI: Adagio sostenuto): this is the Coda, where both the music and the descriptive words culminate in a quotation from Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata* and we hear the three musical elements that open this famous sonata (the dotted rhythm of the melody, the accompanying triplet figure and the low resonant bass), which have all been individually hinted at throughout the concerto. The accompanying soft chordal clusters in the muted brass veil this quotation so that it is like a memory, a dream. At the final cadence violas, cellos and basses retune, and play a series of natural harmonics on the resulting open C-sharp string - the key of the Beethoven *Sonata* - and the music softly dissolves “in a golden cloud”. *Autumn Sonata* is thus a sequel to *Wild Winter*, a work written to commemorate the Siege of Lichfield. Neither work is intended as a direct description of war, but rather a memory, alternating between dream and nightmare.

T.M.



To Victoria Soames  
**Autumn Sonata**  
 A concerto for Bass Clarinet & Orchestra  
 Thea Musgrave

$\text{♩} = 40$  *Oscuro e misterioso*

2 Flutes  
 Oboe & Cor Anglais  
 2 Clarinets in Bb  
 Bassoon & Contrabassoon  
 3 Horns in F  
 2 Trumpets in C  
 2 Trombones  
 Timpani  
 Percussion (1 player)  
 Solo Bass Clarinet

$\text{♩} = 40$  *Oscuro e misterioso*

Herbst: schwarzes Schreiten am Waldsaum...  
 Autumn: black footsteps at the forest's edge.

Violins I & II  
 Violas  
 Cellos  
 Double Basses

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1

\* from *Verwandlung des Bösen*.

# CONCERTO FOR CLARINET

(1968)

Duration: 24 Minutes

Soloist(s): clarinet

Orchestration: 2+afl.2+ca.1(bcl).2+cbn/4331/timp.3perc/hp.pf.acn/str

The Concerto for Clarinet was written in 1968 in response to a commission from the Royal Philharmonic Society (in association with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation). It was first performed at the Royal Festival Hall, London in February 1969 by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Colin Davis, with Gervase de Peyer as soloist.

The Concerto for Clarinet is one of a series of works where I have explored certain 'dramatic-abstract' ideas: that is, dramatic in presentation but abstract because there is no programme or 'story'. In this work, the dramatic idea is basically a simple one and arises out of the original meaning of the word 'concertare' - that is, struggle or conflict in the sense of balancing unequal forces; solo versus tutti, or individual(s) versus crowd.

The solo clarinetist, as well as having a virtuosic role, also here has another function in that he moves around the orchestra to play with various smaller 'concertante' groups. The groups in turn are set against the rest of the orchestra. At these moments the solo clarinet is usually independent of the conductor and leads the other members of the group.

Many notational problems had to be solved to be able to write down these ideas in a clear and practical way without losing general harmonic control.

The work is in one continuous movement and is a kind of concerto grosso; a recurring tutti section, easily recognizable with its fast rhythmic figurations, and then the various contrasting episodes sandwiched in between with a different concertino each time.

T.M.

# HORN CONCERTO

(1971)

Duration: 22 Minutes

Soloist(s): horn

Orchestration: 1+pic.1+ca.1+bcl.1+cbn/4[+3]210/3perchp.pf(cel)/str

The Horn Concerto was composed in 1970-71, a commission from Mario di Bonaventura for the Hopkins Center Congregation of the Arts Festival at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. It is dedicated to Barry Tuckwell. It belongs to the series of my 'dramatic-abstract' works (following the Concerto for Clarinet, Night Music and Memento Vitae); that is, dramatic in presentation, yet abstract because it contains no programme.

Here the dramatic idea concerns the relationship of the solo horn to the orchestral brass (2 trumpets, 1 trombone and 4 horns) which form a kind of concertante group set against the rest of the orchestra. When they play it is to interrupt, distort and, as it were, to mock. Thus they break up the mood of the opening *Misterioso, como un sogno* with their *Parodia, con violenza* and later overwhelm the *Capriccioso* section with wild fanfares. (The percussion spread around the back of the orchestra also help to build this climax.) For this the trumpets take up new positions. Later the orchestral horns explore greater stereophonic possibilities, when, in the last section, they move into the hall and 'confront' the soloist, who mostly directs how they should play. This division of the control between solo horn and conductor allows for ideas to be superimposed in many different ways.

The idea of superimposing musical ideas that are contrasted both in substance and tempo comes naturally to me as one result of having worked in the electronic field. Other tape procedures are imitated in the *Parody* sections: slowing down, distortion (prepared piano, harp, muted brass, flutter-tongue, clusters), feedback effects, and, of course, the stereophonic possibilities of moving players to different positions in the hall.

T.M.



# LOCH NESS

A POSTCARD FROM SCOTLAND (2012)

Duration: 8 Minutes

Orchestration: 3(pic).3(ca).2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/timp.3perc/hp/str

This Scottish Loch Ness is famous for its monster - only very occasionally seen.

In this lighthearted work he, the monster (a tuba), emerges from the depths (E-flat) to find the sun (A major) coming out from a thick mist (string clusters, made up of an octatonic scale built from the triads of E-flat and A major and minor). As he plays he is warmed by the sparkling sun (trumpets) and by the strains of an ancient Scottish melody.

As the sun goes down, he dives back into the deep waters with a big splash. Then a cool moon rises, a light breeze ruffles the surface of the waters, and all is at peace.

T.M.

# TRUMPET CONCERTO

(2019)

Duration: 20 Minutes

Soloist(s): Trumpet

Orchestration: 2222/2100/timp.3perc/str

Unlike most other commissions where I have had more time to ruminate about the subject and the form that the music would take, the inspiration for this piece came from two distinct but immediate “light bulb” visions. The first came at my initial meeting last summer with the uniquely virtuosic trumpet soloist who triggered the commission—Alison Balsom—when in an off the cuff remark she said she loved to ‘sing’ with her instrument. I have, of course, written many works using the trumpet but never as a solo instrument in a concerto. This idea of using the trumpet as a ‘singing’ instrument immediately captured my imagination. The second revelation occurred a month later when I was in Edinburgh for the Festival. I happened to attend an exhibition by the magnificent painter Victoria Crowe, who I first met when she painted my portrait. This particular exhibition (‘A Certain Light’) was all of still life trees—which I found mesmerising and evocative.

I was immediately grabbed by the image of the very first painting I looked at—Opening Out—with the energy of the tree reaching from the roots upwards and outwards. I felt it could be a metaphor for the journey of life: reaching out to find colleagues, friends, lovers, but also ideas and projects – all those things that make life meaningful and fulfilling. I thought that this painting along with several others that I saw could form an overall shape to the work as well as the right environment for the trumpet’s singing. Vicky, who has long since become a friend as well as a colleague, generously agreed to support this musical work with her masterful images.

In the first movement the trumpet interacts just with the strings, harp and percussion, and relationships begin to form. One of these moments is where the trumpet incites the strings to introduce an ascending melodic theme which will reappear several times during the work. At the very end of the movement the horns appear but it is a solo clarinet that the trumpet turns to.

In the following movement, *How The Snow Fell*, the music begins before snow falls. A pizzicato theme on the cellos playfully accompanies the clarinet. The snow, a big string chordal cluster which grows bigger and bigger represents the gradual arrival of the snow. A dramatic interchange between trumpet and orchestra depicts the frustration of the trumpet who can no longer be playful because of the deep snow!

The trumpet then turns to the horns to begin the next movement *Between Two Windows*. This is a triple picture with trees on each side. Energized by the horns the musical tree motives reappear and then suddenly a beautiful bowl of luminous flowers arrive... woodwinds and percussion making the musical depiction. At the end of the movement, the tree motives reappear and then incited by the solo clarinet the trumpet recalls the theme which was introduced by the strings in the first movement.

In the fourth movement titled *White Nights of a Northern Summer* I decided to return to my Scottish heritage and have the trumpet play a wonderful Scottish tune called 'The Bonnie Earl of Moray' with a simple accompaniment.

The last movement *Landscape with Hidden Moon* is a wonderful painting of trees in the darkness with the flickering of hidden life in the distance. I imagined it to be early dawn, and at first the trumpet is rather reluctant to wake up. Suddenly in the distance the sound of an off-stage trumpet... immediately the solo trumpet reacts to this with excitement. After a momentary disappointment when the offstage sound seems to go mute, the offstage trumpet enters and stands upstage beside the percussion. The two trumpets engage in an increasingly excited duet which builds to a big climax. A two-trumpet cadenza follows, along with a few other instruments which leads to another big climax. The coda *Sonorous Tree* which follows is quiet and marked 'serene'. Though this relationship is certainly intended to be exciting and fulfilling, it is also grounded in an inherent quietness and solidity—which means that it can last.

T.M.

# THE SEASONS

(1988)

Duration: 22 Minutes

Orchestration: 2(pic)2(ca)2(bcl)2(cbn)/2200/timp.perc/pf/str

The idea for the work crystallised after a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Piero di Cosimo's *Caccia Primitiva* – a frightening image of fire and destruction built around a wild and gory hunt scene – gave rise to the idea that various pictures related to the four seasons could become a metaphor for the cycles in the life of man. In this way the first movement, Autumn, violent and destructive, stands for an impending storm, be it literal or metaphorical. One of the main musical motives includes hunting horns set against a restless background. They are eventually swallowed up by a violent tempest. In mourning, bells ring out the *Dies irae*. Here the mood is depicted by Picasso's *The End of the Road*.

In Winter, all is a frozen wasteland of ice and despair, but one single voice - a solo oboe - keeps a small flame of hope alive. A painting by Leutze, *Washington Crossing the Frozen Delaware*, prompts a distant, brief quote of *The Star Spangled Banner*. In Spring the rains come, the snow melts and a 'dawn chorus' of birds heralds the moment of re-birth. The movement builds to a romantic climax, culminating in two massive chords (a quotation of the 'freedom chords' from the composer's opera *Harriet, the Woman Called Moses*). This dissolves to a serene cadence, where the voice of the cuckoo can be heard, Van Gogh's *The Sower* comes to mind.

Summer is fulfilment and celebration. Inspired by Van Gogh's *Le 14 juillet à Paris*, Jasper Johns's *Flag* and Monet's *Rue St Denis, Festivities of June 30, 1878*, the scene of season, place and rejoicing is reinforced in the music by the layering of the national anthems of the USA and France. And finally, the Johns painting represents George Washington's success in negotiating the River Delaware, and here, "fulfilment" acquires another dimension: the liberation from tyranny. Although each season clearly has its own distinct themes and mood, there are some harmonic elements that run through the entire work, tying it together. One is a single chord (C, E-flat, G, B) which appears in every movement but each time at a different octave. Eventually, this chord is incorporated into the 'freedom chords' mentioned earlier. Yet another chord, an augmented one (B-flat, D, F-sharp) also has an important role and appears in each movement.

T.M.



# SONGS FOR A WINTER'S EVENING

(1995)

Duration: 21 Minutes

Soloist(s): soprano

Orchestration: 2222/3210/perc/hp/str

This work was commissioned by the seventeenth Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival and the first Burns International Festival. The premiere took place on 1 June 1996

at Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries, Scotland by Marie McLaughlin and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Joseph Swenson.

This commission, to celebrate Robert Burns on the occasion of the two hundred years since his death, has caused me to revisit my Scottish heritage. As much as this heritage is inevitably part of my life, so, in this work, the tunes to which Burns wrote his inimitable poems are embedded in the musical texture – sometimes in the foreground, sometimes in the background.

The poems were carefully chosen with a view to creating a song cycle describing the 'events' in the life of a woman, from the flirtatious young girl, to the young woman betrayed, to her eventual fulfilment in the mature love which has lasted many a year.

The challenge was how to integrate Burns's eighteenth-century world with our own, both emotionally and musically. Musically this meant finding a melodic and harmonic language that, though recognising and incorporating the original tunes, would nevertheless be heard from a contemporary viewpoint. The past can only ever be revisited with our own contemporary imagination and sensibility.

T.M.

# TURBULENT LANDSCAPES

(2003)

Duration: 26 Minutes

Orchestration: 3.2+ca.2+bcl.2+cbn/4.3.3.1/timp.3perc/hp/str

The turbulence of the title represents some kind of ‘event’ that is wonderfully depicted in the various paintings of Turner that have been chosen for this work. Since music exists in time, there can be a ‘before’ and an ‘after’: so, in these movements the ‘event’ sometimes effects a major change and sometimes not. To heighten the drama, in each of the movements the protagonist is characterized by a solo player from the orchestra. There are six quite independent movements, though they share some of the same musical material. Each movement is represented by one picture of Turner except for the second movement, which has three pictures. This work was commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and is dedicated to my friends in America.

## I. Sunrise with Sea Monsters

The calm sea of the early morning is ruffled by the arrival of a sea monster (tuba solo) in a playful mood. Eventually the sun rises (trumpets, an A major chord) and the monster swims off with a swish of the tail. The calm returns.

## II. The Shipwreck

This movement is based on three pictures: the first one, Staffa, Fingal’s Cave (1832, Yale Center for British Art) seemed an appropriate opening for this movement. The gathering storm thus has a location, and a hint of Mendelssohn was not to be resisted! The movement builds gradually and inexorably to a violent storm depicted in the picture of the title and the ship goes down.

## III. Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army crossing the Alps

A barely seen Hannibal (solo horn) urges his army (strings) forward despite the developing snow storm (percussion and flutter-tongued flutes). The journey is increasingly arduous as the snow thickens, but at last the storm clears and a distant sunny (A major) Italy is seen in the distance.

## IV. War. The Exile and the Rock Limpet

In a desolate landscape the exiled Napoleon stands pensive, behind him a guard stands on alert. Here the turbulence is internal. As Napoleon (solo trumpet) contemplates a rock limpet (muted horn chord always at the same pitch) he remembers some of the events of his charismatic life and downfall: like Hannibal, the joy of his successful crossing of the Alps with his army (distant sound of La Marseillaise); later the interminable snow and the disastrous retreat from Moscow; then his thoughts turn to despair with the memory of his defeat at the battle of Trafalgar (distant sound of the British National Anthem, *God Save The King*) and finally his exile.

## V. The Burning of the Houses of Parliament, 16th October, 1834

There are several paintings of this event and that is no wonder since it must have been spectacular to behold. As the movement begins, the scene is set: a quiet, peaceful night evoked by the bass clarinet, cor anglais and solo viola. Softly, the horns intone the British National Anthem, alluding to the location. Then, suddenly a singular flame shoots up into the sky (solo piccolo). More flames (woodwind and percussion) build to a terrible climax in which one can imagine the buildings collapsing. However, after a moment, one hears the horns very quietly resuming the National Anthem. We know that the buildings will be rebuilt. e

## VI. Sunrise, with a Boat between Headlands

A thick fog (big string cluster) envelops the landscape - the huge looming cliffs (muted brass chords) are hardly visible and a foghorn (2 horns) alerts a ship to the danger of collision. A lonely clarinet summons the morning sun which eventually appears (trumpets and woodwinds) and the fog evaporates. The ship is now fully revealed (strings) and sails between the cliffs (brass now unmuted) towards the open sea. The mood is tranquil as the ship disappears into the distance. There is a brief reminiscence of the sea monster.

T.M.

# TWO'S COMPANY

(2005)

Duration: 21 Minutes

Soloists: oboe, percussion

Orchestration: 2.1+ca.2.2/3.2.2.1/hrp/str

This work was commissioned by the BBC for Evelyn Glennie and Nicholas Daniel. It was an exciting challenge to write a dramatic work for such dissimilar instruments. I decided that I would strongly dramatize this difference before bringing them harmoniously together. Thus, at the beginning of the work, the two soloists are standing as far apart as possible: the solo percussion to the conductor's right, behind the cellos, and the oboe on the opposite side behind the first violins. For each of the four ensuing sections the soloists move around the orchestra to different positions, changes that are always dramatically motivated. Throughout, the two soloists are aware of each other and play to get each other's attention, only coming together musically and physically in the very last section.

The slow first section is marked *Desolate, lonely*. When the oboe first enters, it responds initially to the cor anglais, and then later to a solo clarinet. This encourages the oboeist to go on stage and take a position near his fellow woodwinds, precipitating the second movement. The solo percussion, hoping to attract the oboe's attention moves to the vibraphone, which is set closer at hand.

The second section is a jaunty scherzo, mostly in 5/4 time, and for a while, it seems that the oboe responds favourably to the percussion, but then the horns attract its attention and the oboeist eventually moves so as to be close to them and the harp.

In frustration the solo percussion moves to the drums (congas, tomtoms and bongos). The third section *Dramatic: furioso/espressivo* is a series of confrontations. Aggressive music for the percussion (supported by strings and brass) alternates with an expressive solo oboe (accompanied by horns and harp). These alternations come ever closer together ending in a big climax. The oboe finally turns to the percussion and 'invites' the player to listen. The percussion responds and so sets the scene for both soloists to come down stage centre, bonding for the final section: *Warm*, leading to *Passionate* and finally, *Exultant*, a whirling coda.

T.M.

## WORKS FOR ORCHESTRA

**Aurora** (1999)

Duration: 10 minutes

Orchestration: string orchestra

*Commissioned by The Colburn School of Performing Arts***Concerto for Orchestra** (1967)

Duration: 23 minutes

Orchestration:

3(pic).2+ca.2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/

timp.3perc/hp/str

*Commissioned by the Feeney Trust***Festival Overture** (1965)

Duration: 11 minutes

Orchestration: 2(pic)222/4230/

timp.perc/str

*Commissioned by the City of Glasgow for the Commonwealth Arts Festival***Green** (2008)

Duration: 14 minutes

Orchestration: string ensemble (43221)

Alternative Orchestration: string orchestra (86644)

*Commissioned by the Scottish Ensemble***Largo in Homage to B.A.C.H.** (2013)

Duration: 6 minutes

Orchestration: string ensemble (54321)

*Commissioned by the Carmel Bach Festival 2013 and Music Director Paul Goodwin***Loch Ness - A postcard from Scotland**

(2012)

Duration: 8 minutes

Orchestration:

3(pic).3(ca).2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/

timp.3perc/hp/str

*Commissioned BBC Radio 3 for the BBC Proms 2012***Memento vitae** (1970)

Duration: 18 minutes

Orchestration: 2(pic)222/4331/timp/str

*Commissioned by BBC Scotland and the Saltire Society to celebrate the bicentenary of Beethoven's birth***Moving into Aquarius** (1984) Duration:

14 minutes

Orchestration: 2(pic)2(ca)22/4331/

timp.3perc/hp.pf/str

*Commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Society. Written jointly with Richard Rodney Bennett in honour of Sir Michael Tippett's 80th birthday***Night Music** (1969)

Duration: 18 minutes

Orchestration: 1(pic)201/2000/str

*Commissioned by the BBC*

**Nocturnes and Arias** (1965) Duration:

21 minutes

Orchestration:

2(pic).2.2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/

timp.2perc/hp/str

*A suite taken from the opera The Decision dedicated to Norman Del Mar***Obliques** (1958)

Duration: 8 minutes

Orchestration: 222(bcl)2/4331/

timp.2perc/hp.cel/str

*First performed by the BBC SSO, conducted by Colin Davis***Peripeteia** (1981)

Duration: 15 minutes

Orchestration: 2222/4231/

timp.2perc/hp/str

*Commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with funds from the Arts Council of Great Britain***Phoenix Rising** (1997)

Duration: 23 minutes

Orchestration:

2+pic.2+ca.2+bcl.2+cbn/4331/

timp.4perc/2hp/str

*Commissioned by BBC Symphony Orchestra***Points of View** (2007)

Duration: 13 minutes

Orchestration: 1.1+ca.0.1/1100/

str(54321)

*Commissioned by the Manchester Camerata and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra***Rainbow** (1990)

Duration: 12 minutes

Orchestration: 2222/4331/

timp.3perc/hp.syn/str

*Commissioned by the City of Glasgow to celebrate the city as Cultural Capital of Europe***Scottish Dance Suite** (1959)

Duration: 8 minutes

Orchestration: 2(pic)222/4230/

timp.perc/hp/str

*First performed by the BBC SSO and conducted by James Lockhart***The Seasons** (1988)

Duration: 22 minutes

Orchestration:

2(pic)2(ca)2(bcl)2(cbn)/2200/

timp.perc/pf/str

*Commissioned by The Academy of St Martin in the Fields***Song of the Enchanter** (1990)

Duration: 6 minutes

Orchestration: 2222/2230/

timp.2perc/hp.pf/str

*Commissioned by the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra to honour the 125th anniversary of Sibelius' birth***Theme and Interludes** (1962)

Duration: 11 minutes

Orchestration: 2131/2210/timp.6perc/str

*First performed by the BBC SSO, conducted by Norman del Mar***Turbulent Landscapes** (2003)

Duration: 26 minutes

Orchestration: 3.2+ca.2+bcl.2

+cbn/4331/timp.3perc/hp/str

*Commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra*

## WORKS FOR SOLOIST(S) & ORCHESTRA

**Autumn Sonata - Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra** (1993)  
Duration: 20 minutes  
Soloist(s): bass clarinet  
Orchestration: 2222/3220/timp.perc/str  
*Commissioned by Victoria Soames Samek, with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain and South West Arts*

**Concerto for Clarinet** (1968)  
Duration: 24 minutes  
Soloist(s): clarinet  
Orchestration: 2+afl.2+ca.1(bcl).2+cbn/4331/timp.3perc/hp.pf.acn/str  
*Commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Society in association with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation*

**Horn Concerto** (1971)  
Duration: 22 minutes  
Soloist(s): horn  
Orchestration: 1+pic.1+ca.1+bcl.1+cbn/4[+3]210/3perc/hp.pf(cel)/str

**Trumpet Concert** (2019)  
Duration: 20 minutes  
Soloist(s): trumpet  
Orchestration: 2222/2100/timp.3perc/str

**Echoes of Time Past** (1999)  
Duration: 15 minutes  
Soloist(s): cor anglais, trumpet  
Orchestration: string orchestra  
*Commissioned by Orchestra 2001 with support from the Philadelphia Music Project and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts*

**Five Songs for Spring** (2011)  
Duration: 13 minutes  
Soloist(s): baritone  
Orchestration: 2222/2000/strings  
*A private commission, in essence a companion piece to Songs for a Winter's Evening. Text writer: Robert Burns*

**From One to Another II** (1980)  
Duration: 10 minutes  
Soloist(s): viola  
Orchestration: string orchestra (54321)  
*An acoustic reimaging of From One to Another (1970)*

**Helios - Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra** (1994)  
Duration: 17 minutes  
Soloist(s): oboe  
Orchestration: 2.1+ca.2(II=bcl).2/2100/str(66432)  
Alternative Orchestration: 2.1+ca.2(II=bcl).2/2100/str(22221)  
*Commissioned by the St Magnus Festival*

**Journey Into Light** (2005)

Duration: 16 minutes

Soloist(s): soprano

Orchestration:

0.2(ca).0.1/0+2nathn.0.0.0/str(66432)

*Commissioned by the Academy of Ancient Music***Monologues of Mary, Queen of Scots**

(1986)

Duration: 22 minutes

Language: English

Soloist(s): soprano

Orchestration: 2322/3210/timp.2perc/

hp.ch org/str

Text writer: the composer, based on a work by Amalia Elguera

**Orfeo II: An Improvisation on a Theme**

(1975)

Duration: 14 minutes

Soloist(s): flute

Orchestration: string orchestra (54321)

*An acoustic reimagining of Orfeo I, originally commissioned by the BBC for James Galway***Songs for a Winter's Evening** (1995)

Duration: 21 minutes

Soloist(s): soprano

Orchestration: 2222/3210/perc/hp/str

*Comissioned by the seventeenth Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and the first Burns International Festival. Text writer: Robert Burns***Three Women** (1997)

Duration: 40 minutes

Soloist(s): soprano, narrator

Orchestration: 2222/3330/2perc.timp/

pf(syn)/hp/str

Alternative Orchestration:

1+pic.1.0.0/1000/perc/

pf(syn)/str(10110)

*Based on excerpts from the three historical operas***Triptych** (1959)

Duration: 11 minutes

Language: English

Soloist(s): tenor

Orchestration: 1+pic.1+ca.1.1/

3200/2perc/hp.pf(cel)/str

*Commissioned by the Saltire Society***Two's Company** (2005)

Duration: 21 minutes

Soloist(s): oboe, percussion

Orchestration: 2.1+ca.2.2/3221/hp/str

*Commissioned by the BBC***Viola Concerto** (1973)

Duration: 23 minutes

Soloist(s): viola

Orchestration: 1221/3210/perc/hp/str

*Commissioned by the BBC Proms***Wood, Metal and Skin** (2004)

Duration: 17 minutes

Soloist(s): percussion

Orchestration: 2222/4331/timp.4perc/str

*Commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland*



## LARGE ENSEMBLE

### **Chamber Concerto No 1** (1962)

Duration: 11 minutes

Orchestration: 0111/1110/vn.va.vc

*Commissioned by the University Court,  
Glasgow*

### **Chamber Concerto No 3** (1966)

Duration: 24 minutes

Orchestration: cl.bn/hn/2vn.va.vc.db

*Commissioned by the Anglo-Austrian  
Music Society for the Melos Ensemble*

### **Lamenting with Ariadne** (1999)

Duration: 16 minutes

Orchestration: 101(bcl)0/0100/hp/perc/  
str(10110)

*Commissioned by Birmingham  
Contemporary Music Group*

### **Power Play** (2015)

Duration: 7 minutes

Orchestration: 1.1.1(bcl).1/1100/  
pf[syn]/vn.va.vc

*Commissioned by NMC Recordings to  
mark its 25th anniversary and first  
performed by the Aurora Orchestra*

### **Space Play** (1974)

Duration: 19 minutes

Orchestration: 1111/1000/str(10111)

*Commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music  
Foundation in the Library of Congress*

## SOLOIST & LARGE ENSEMBLE

### **Soliloquy II** (1980)

Duration: 10 minutes

Soloist: guitar

Orchestration: fl(pic).2ob.bn/str

*First performed by the Bournemouth  
Sinfonia*

### **Soliloquy III** (1980)

Duration: 10 minutes

Soloist: guitar

Orchestration: 1111/0000/  
str(11111)

*First performed by James Smith at  
the Schoenberg Institute, USC, USA*

### **Towards the Blue** (2010)

Duration: 13 minutes

Soloist: clarinet

Orchestration: 1101/1000/  
str(11110)

*Commissioned by the Wigmore Hall*

# WORKS FOR CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

## **Canta Canta** (1997)

Duration: 4 minutes

Ensemble: cl.pf.vc

*Written for Victoria Soames Samek*

## **Cantilena** (2008)

Duration: 11 minutes

Soloist(s): oboe

Ensemble: vn.va.vc

*Commissioned by the London Chamber Music Society to celebrate their move to King's Place in October 2008*

## **Chamber Concerto No 2** (1966)

Duration: 14 minutes

Ensemble:

fl(pic.af).cl(bcl)/pf/vn(va).vc

*Commissioned by the Dartington*

*Summer School of Music for the Vesuvius Ensemble*

## **Circe** (1996)

Duration: 2 Minutes

Ensemble: 3 flutes

*Dedicated to Sam Byron and Robert Willoughby*

## **Colloquy** (1960)

Duration: 10 minutes

Ensemble: violin, piano

*Written for Manoug Parikian and Lamar Crowson*

## **The Egrets have landed** (2007)

Duration: 2 minutes

Ensemble: violin, piano

*Commissioned by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music*

## **Elegy** (1970)

Duration: 8 minutes

Ensemble: viola, cello

*Written for Peter Mark and Geoffrey Rutkowski*

## **Fanfare** (1982)

Duration: 3 Minutes

Orchestration: hn.2tpt.tbn.tba

*Commissioned by the City of Norfolk Tricentennial Commission*

## **Fanfare for a New Hall** (1990)

Duration: 1 minute

Ensemble: 2 trumpets

*Written for the opening of the new recital hall at Queens College, City University of New York*

## **Impromptu No 1** (1967)

Duration: 4 minutes

Ensemble: flute, oboe

*Written for Douglas Whittaker and Janet Craxton*

**Impromptu No 2** (1970)

Duration: 9 Minutes

Ensemble: fl.ob.cl

*Commissioned by Department of Music,  
University College, Cardiff***Music for Horn and Piano** (1967)

Duration: 9 minutes

Ensemble: horn, piano

*Written for Barry Tuckwell and  
Margaret Kitchin***Night Windows** (2007)

Duration: 13 minutes

Ensemble: oboe, piano

*Commissioned by the International  
Double Reed Society***Orfeo III** (1993)

Duration: 14 minutes

Soloist(s): flute

Ensemble: str(11111)

*Originally commissioned by the BBC for  
James Galway***Piccolo Play** (1989)

Duration: 14 minutes

Ensemble: piccolo, piano

*Commissioned by the Piccolo  
Committee of the National Flute  
Association***Pierrot** (1985)

Duration: 17 minutes

Ensemble: cl.vn/pf

*Commissioned by the Verdehr Trio***Ring Out Wild Bells** (2000)

Duration: 14 minutes

Ensemble: cl/vn.vc/pf

*Commissioned by Franklin and Marshall  
College***Serenade** (1961)

Duration: 13 minutes

Ensemble: fl.cl/hp/va.vc

*Commissioned by the John Lewis  
Partnership for the Melos Ensemble***Sonata for Three** (1966)

Duration: 7 minutes

Ensemble: fl/gtr/vn

*Commissioned by Donald McLachlan***String Quartet** (1958)

Duration: 16 minutes

Ensemble: string quartet

*Commissioned by the University Court,  
Glasgow***Sunrise** (2009)

Duration: 10 minutes

Ensemble: fl(afl)/hp/va

*Commissioned by Backshore Artists  
Project*

**Take Two Bassoons** (2011)

Duration: 7 minutes  
Ensemble: 2 bassoons  
*For Marc Goldberg*

**Take Two Oboes** (2008)

Duration: 5 minutes  
Ensemble: 2 oboes  
*First performed in the Northern Sinfonia's 'All eyes on... Thea Musgrave' concert, 2008*

**Taking Turns** (2008)

Duration: 10 minutes  
Ensemble: 3 flutes  
*Commissioned by the Sound Festival for the Scottish Flute Trio*

**Threnody** (1997)

Duration: 8 minutes  
Ensemble: clarinet, piano  
*Alternative arrangement: cor anglais/pf*  
*Commissioned by Victoria Soames Samek*

**Trio** (1960)

Duration: 10 minutes  
Ensemble: fl.ob/pf  
*Commissioned by the Mabillon Trio*

**Voices from the Ancient World** (1998)

Duration: 15 minutes  
Ensemble: 3fl(2pic:af)/perc  
*Commissioned by the Scottish Flute Trio*

**Wind Quintet** (1992)

Ensemble: 12 minutes  
Orchestration: fl.ob.cl.bsn/hn  
*Commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition, Brigham Young University*

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For information about Thea Musgrave's operas, choral & vocal works visit [theamusgrave.com](http://theamusgrave.com) & [wisemusicclassical.com](http://wisemusicclassical.com)

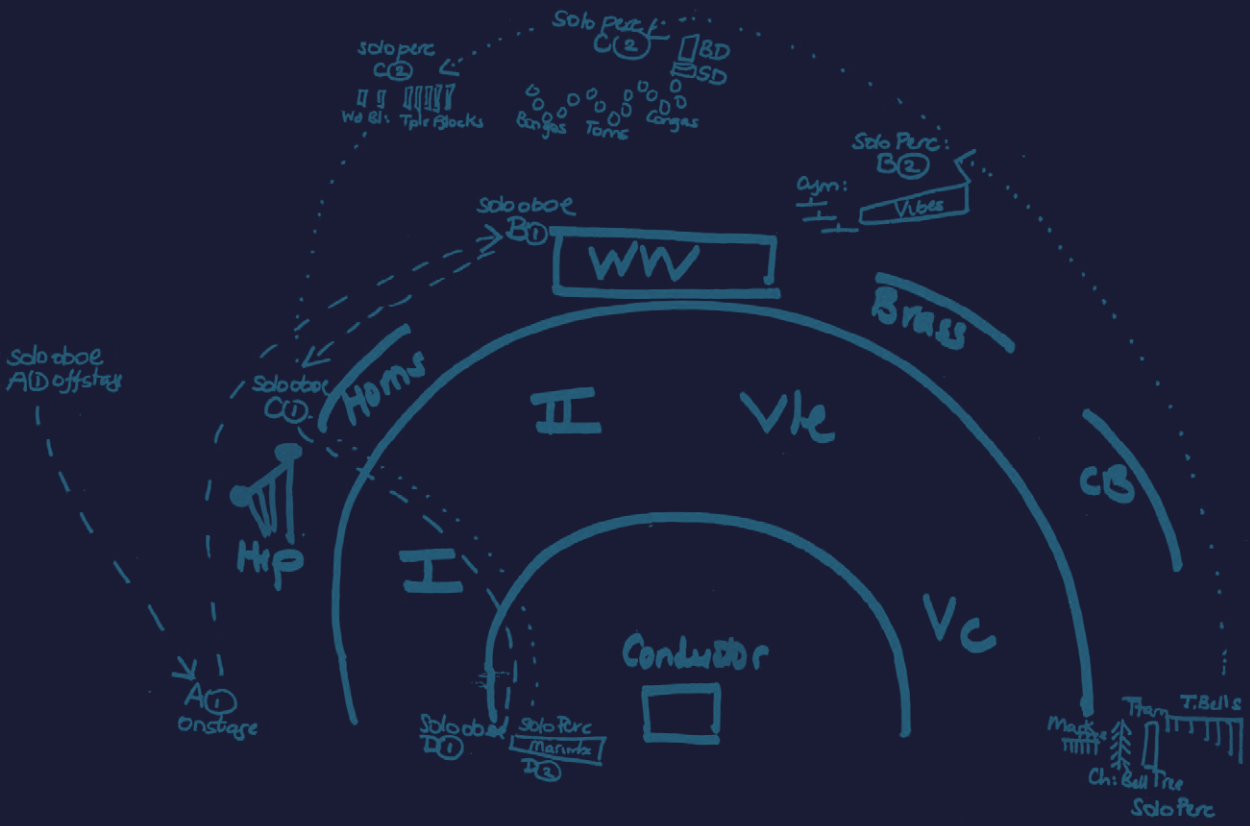


Thea Musgrave rehearsing her *Viola Concerto*, 1973.

Your work is truly admired the world over for you are one of the world's most prolific, influential, and important composers of our day. However it is your infectious enthusiasm for life, endearing personality, and your need to share your art that has affected us so profoundly.

Thank you Thea for all you have given us.

Evelyn Glennie



Staging map sketch from the full score of *Two's Company* as drawn by Thea Musgrave

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