

CHERYL FRANCES-HOAD - COMPOSER

A prodigious talent, Cheryl Frances-Hoad won the BBC Young Composer Competition in 1996 at the age of 15 and since then her works have garnered numerous prizes and awards, including the first Robert Helps International Composition Prize (2005), the Cambridge Composer's Competition, the Birmingham Conservatoire Composition Competition, and the International String Orchestra Composition Competition. Recent awards include, in 2007, the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize, resulting in the premiere of "My day in Hell" at the Cheltenham Music Festival by the Dante Quartet (broadcast by Radio 3), and, in 2008, a Leverhulme Trust Artists in Residence Fellowship, and the Wicklow County Council Per Cent for Arts Commission (Ireland), which allowed her to compose her first piano concerto, premiered by Bobby Chen and the Greystones Orchestra in May 2009. Her debut CD of chamber works is due to be released in 2010, and other major commissions include works for the Almeida Festival, St Magnus Festival, Tête à Tête Opera, and the Spitalfields Festival and her compositions have been heard at the Wigmore Hall and the Purcell Room. Her latest work, a 28 minute soprano and piano setting of excerpts of Seamus Heaney's translation of Beowulf, (commissioned by the BBC for the renowned soprano Elizabeth Watts) will be premiered in the Wigmore Hall in January 2011, and in September 2010 Cheryl will become the first DARE Cultural Fellow at Opera North and Leeds University in September 2010. www.cherylfranceshoad.co.uk

WORKLIST

Orchestra

Many Moons (2007) - 12 minutes

Orchestration: 3 (pic, afl), 2+ca, 2+bcl, 2+cbn/22/2perc/pf.hp/str(10.10.8.8.6)

Rhapsody on a Theme by Ralph Vaughan Williams (2000) - 10 minutes

Orchestration: 3, 3, 3, 3/2, 2, 2, 2/2 perc/str (16,14,12,10,8)

Soloist(s) and Orchestra

Piano Concerto (2009) - 25 minutes

Soloist(s): Piano

Orchestration: 3,2,2,2/2,2/timp./str(16,14,12,10,8)

The dreams that fly from me (2003)

Soloists(s): 2 vlns, vla, vc

Orchestration: str(6,6,4,4,2)

A Refusal to Mourn (2000) - 12 minutes

Soloist(s): Oboe

Orchestration: str(12,10,8,6,4)

Concertino (1996) - 15 minutes

Soloists: 'Cello, Piano, Percussion

Orchestration: 2,2,2/2,2,2/str.(16,14,12,10,12)

Large Ensemble (6 or more players)

Triptych for Six (2010) - 9 minutes

Orchestration: flute, trumpet, alto sax, drum kit, tabla, bass guitar

Invocation (2010) - 4 minutes
Orchestration: solo 'cello, 6 tutti 'celli, double bass

Tread Softly (2000) - 6 minutes
Orchestration: fl (picc., alto), clar (bass), vln, vla, vc, pno and perc.)

Fantasia (1996) 6 minutes
Orchestration: str(4 vln, 2 vla, 2 vc, db)

Small Ensemble Works

Piano Trio no.3 (after Beethoven Archduke Trio (working title)) (2010) - 10 minutes
Orchestration: vln, vc, pno

Stapleton Castle (2010) - 3 minutes
Orchestration: fl, ob, cl, hn, bsn

Pay Close Attention (2009) - 4 minutes
Orchestration: vln, vla, vc, pno (or 2 vln, vc, pno)

My day in Hell (2008) - 10 minutes
Orchestration: 2 vln, vla, vc

The Ogre Lover (2007) - 9 minutes
Orchestration: vln, vla, vc

My Fleeting Angel (2005) - 9 minutes
Orchestration: vln, vc, pno

Memoria (2002) - 17 minutes
Orchestration: ob/Cor, vln, vla, vc, pno

Melancholia (2002) - 12 minutes
Orchestration: vln, vc, pno

Kontakion (2000) - 7 minutes
Orchestration: 4 db

Three Fragments (2000) - 5 minute
Orchestration: 4db

Solo and Duo Works

Stolen Rhythm (2009) - 3 minutes
Orchestration: pno

Song without words (2009) - 4 minutes
Orchestration: pno

Bouloumeta (2008) - 4 minutes
Orchestration: cl

The Snowwoman (2007) - 7 minutes
Orchestration: vln

Invocation (2007) - 4 minutes

Orchestration: vc, pno (+ arrangements for db, pno and vla, pno)

The Ogre's Chamber (2008) - 3 minutes

Orchestration: db

Champs Hill (2009) - 3 minutes

Orchestration: pno

Excelsus (2002) - 17 minutes

Orchestration: vc

Star Falling (2002) - 2 minutes

Orchestration: pno

In Glass Houses (2002) - 3 minutes

Orchestration: 2 pnos 8 hands

Stone Angel (1999) - 6 minutes

Orchestration: db, pno

The Prophecy (1998) - 15 minutes

Orchestration: vc, pno

Chorus a cappella/Chorus plus one instrument

Psalm No.1 (2009) - 7 minutes

Chorus: SATB

Nunc Dimittis (2000) - 4 minutes

Chorus: SATB

The Dawn is Breaking (1998) - 4 minutes

Chorus: SATB

There is no Rose (1995) - 3 minutes

Chorus: SATB

Solo voice and up to 6 players

Song Cycle after Frauenliebe und leben (working title) (2010) - 20 minutes

Orchestration: mezzo soprano, pno

Beowulf (2010) - 28 minutes

Orchestration: soprano, pno

Don't - (2009) - 3 minutes

Orchestration: soprano, pic, bcl

Lament (2009) - 2 minutes

Orchestration: mezzo soprano, pno

Plankton (2009) - 3 minutes

Orchestration: soprano, pno

The Glory Tree (2005) - 15 minutes
Orchestration: soprano, cl (bcl), vln, vc, pno)

Vocalise (1993) - 7 minutes
Orchestration: sop, fl, hp

Opera and Music Theatre

Passing Afflictions (2009) - 20 minutes
Soloist(s): soprano
Orchestration: cl, bsn, vc

The Singing Mountain Picture Show (2007) - 20 minutes
Soloist(s): soprano, mezzo soprano, 2 tenors, bariton

Family Matters (2004) - 25 minutes
Soloist(s): soprano, tenor, bariton, bass
Orchestration: cl (bcl), perc,pno, vc

Broken lines: sonata for opera (2001) - 25 minutes
Soloist(s): soprano, tenor, bass baritone
Orchestration: 1 (picc,af),1(ca),1(bcl)/1,1/perc/pno (4 hands)/str.(1.1.1.1.1)

Dance

Diptych (2010) - 10 minutes
Orchestration: vc, electronics
Choreography: Jane Turner

String Quartet No. 2 (1996) - 15 minutes
Orchestration: 2 vln, vla, vc
Choreography: Geoffrey Cauley

Ballet Suite No. 1 (1995) - 25 minutes
Orchestration: str(10,8,6,6,4)
Choreography: Lynn Seymour C.B.E.

Radio/Theatre

Interior Traces (2009) - 90 minutes
(A radio and stage play with four actors)
Orchestration: fl (alt, bass), vc

COMPETITIONS/PRIZES/SCHOLARSHIPS

- 2008** Awarded funding from the Arts Council, the RVW Foundation, the Nicholas Boas Trust, and the Elias Fawcett Trust to produce a debut CD in September 2008.
- 2007** Winner of the Cheltenham Festival Commission in the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize 2007 (the prize was to write a string quartet to be premiered in the Cheltenham Festival 2008)
- Winner of the Wicklow County Council Per Cent for Arts Scheme Music Commission (the prize was to write a piano concerto)
- 2006** Winner of the International String Orchestra Festival Composition Competition 2006, Malta
Winner of the 1st Robert Helps International Composition Competition
Finalist in the ALEA III International Composition Competition
Awarded a Bliss Trust Composer Bursary from the P.R.S. Foundation
- 2004** Winner of the Birmingham Conservatoire Composition Competition
- 2002** Awarded the Bliss Prize (from Cambridge University), the Harriet Cohen Award, and the Mendelssohn Scholarship 2002.
- 2002-2005** Awarded a four-year A.H.R.C. grant (for an Mphil in Composition at Cambridge University and a PhD in Composition at King's College London)
- 2001** Winner of the Cambridge Composer's Competition.
Awarded the Sir Rudolph Peters' Prize for Music and The Master's Prize (both from Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge)
Received awards from the the Newby Trust, the Earls Colne Educational trust and the Sidney Perry Foundation.
- 2000** Elected into a College Senior Scholarship, awarded a College Essay Prize, and the Master's Prize (all from Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge)
- 1999** Elected into a College Scholarship (Gonville and Caius College)
- 1996** Winner of the BBC Young Composer's Competition
- 1995** Winner of the Bach Choir Carol Composition Competition
- 1993** Winner of the Purcell Composition Prize (under 25's Section)

EDUCATION

- 2006-7** Creative Music Technology.
- 2002-2006** King's College London - PhD in Musical Composition, awarded April 2007. Studied with Silvina Milstein and George Benjamin
- 2005** Awarded an MA from Gonville and Caius College Cambridge
- 2001-2002** Awarded a Distinction: Mphil in Composition at Gonville and Caius College Cambridge. Studied with Robin Holloway.
- 1998-2001** Awarded a Triple 1st: BA (Hons) in Music at Gonville and Caius College Cambridge.
- 1989-1998** Studied 'Cello, Piano and Composition at the Yehudi Menuhin School, Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey.

CHERYL FRANCES-HOAD REVIEWS

Theatricality has always been Jane Manning's forte, and the best of the songs played up to her histrionic gift. At one end of the spectrum was David Sawyer's *Caravan*, a setting of a nonsense poem by Dada poet Hugo Ball, at the other was Cheryl Frances-Hoad's entertaining 'Don't!', full of pert advice to housewives taken from an etiquette guide of 1913. They were great fun, and performed with lip-smacking relish by Manning and her minstrels.

Ivan Hewitt, The Telegraph, 1st March 2010

On Wednesday night the Purcell Room hosted a concert to mark 10 years of Chamber Music 2000, the scheme started by the Schubert Ensemble to commission and propagate new chamber music for student ensembles. The aim has been to create a body of new music by leading composers which is technically accessible to learner players.

Although there was not a weak piece on display, I did feel at times that everything was a bit too polite: a leaning towards slow and quiet music at the expense of the loud and rhythmical – although Cheryl Frances Hoad's *Pay Close Attention* bucked the trend enjoyably. **Sound and Music, February 2010**

Six Cambridge composers were commissioned to write new Psalm settings for this concert. The problem with writing for an English church choir is that such a task requires real skill and imagination not to lapse into either staid hymnody or grave cerebrality. For the most part, these settings fell into the latter, dryly and uningratiatingly chromatic, lacking colour or contrast, and in the end sounding curiously old-fashioned and inhibited..

The notable exception was Cheryl Frances-Hoad's eclectic and beautiful setting of Psalm 1, imaginatively written in its disavowal of any one particular harmonic scheme, its use of light and shade and extraordinary final organ chord glissandoed into the heights and depths of the instrument's range, as if the entire building was exhaling a final breath. Perhaps it was. **Guido Martin-Brandis, Varsity, 27th November 2009**

Frances-Hoad reverts to the organ for her setting of Ps. 1, beginning in lyric commendation for the man of Good Life, reversing halfway to condemn the Bad in a long unaccompanied passage seething with mounting turbulence till, at the prophecy that they shall all perish, the organ re-enters on a corruscating dissonance; after which the mighty brute is instructed to de-clutch (even as the voices rise 'to a virtual scream'), and expires as ignominiously as the Jabberwocky. **Robin Holloway, The Spectator, 25th November 2009**

The novelty was *My Day in Hell* by Cheryl Frances-Hoad, who won a Royal Philharmonic Society composition prize last year and this commission for the Dante Quartet was the result. Based on her first reading of the *Divine Comedy*, it is a 10-minute, single-movement piece, apparently structured according to the numerology of Dante's descriptions of hell and purgatory, but coming across as an almost nostalgic essay in writing expressive melody. The music is highly wrought, yet piled high with emotional content, and in a curious way it is very English-sounding too...

Andrew Clements, The Guardian, 18th July 2008

It was another soprano, Natalie Raybould, who stole the show at Saturday lunchtime [at the 2007 St. Magnus Festival] performing with the Kreisler Ensemble under Matilda Hofman...The centrepiece was an astonishing tour de force written for her by Cheryl Frances-Hoad and sung entirely in Old English. The *Glory Tree* had remarkable scoring, stratospheric singing and was performed with shamanic authority, her final scream reverberating through the cloisters. With Sally Beamish's *Commedia* and Maxwell Davies's early landscape piece, *The Bairs of Brugh*, this was a concert of the essence of St Magnus clearly safe in young hands. **Keith Bruce, The Herald, 25th June 2007**

"The most striking event in the concert at Spitalfields on 12th June was yet another quintet, this time a mixed consort of oboe (Nicholas Daniel), string trio and piano (Schubert Ensemble), commissioned specially from the 23-year-old Cheryl Frances-Hoad. A tricky combination, particularly in the acoustic of Christ Church (more spectacular and Piranesi-esque than ever at the moment, the galleries stripped down to their skeleton, preparatory to restoration). Frances-Hoad has solved both problems by luminous textures and plentiful doublings, often producing an uncanny effect of more instruments than the five in play. More inexplicable still, how such care for pellucidity should have been compatible with such sophisticated formal and procedural content, often intricate in argument, sometimes impassioned, sometimes mercurial, always compelling in its authority."

Robin Holloway, The Spectator, 29th June 2002

The World Premier performance of Cheryl Frances-Hoad's *Melancholia Trio* drew a remarkable intensity from the string writing, whilst the piano soured the mood with dissonances that protracted the dour imaginings of a work based on *Melancholy* from Edvard Munch's *Frieze of Life*. The London Mozart Trio's performance at the Wigmore Hall on 26 June proved a strong case for its inclusion in the canon of music for such ensembles. The intensity set out in

Melancholia was a useful springboard into the serene opening of Shostakovich's Second Trio...
David Alker, Musical Opinion, November 2002

"...to open proceedings, we were treated to a wonderfully heady aperitif from Cheryl Frances-Hoad, an Mphil composition student at Caius. *Broken Lines* takes three Pinter 'sketches' in which everyday situations are given characteristically surreal twists. Dramatically, this prepared us well for *The Turn of the Screw* [which was to follow] and I also felt that Britten's (benevolent!) spirit was palpable in the astute word-setting and fastidiously stylish instrumentation...Jon Saunders, as a delightfully odious manager, coped admirably with his high-lying part and Rebecca Rudge was well cast both as vicious secretary and sexy mystery-woman. It was perhaps most rewarding, at this first hearing, simply to tune into the score: in turn lush, mercurial, obsessive and endlessly inventive. It is no mean feat to write an opera in your early twenties and *Broken Lines* will enjoy, I hope, a long life and many friends."
John Reid, The Cambridge Student, 22nd November 2001

...Fifteen year old Cheryl Frances-Hoad won the commission at a Lloyds Bank Young Composer Workshop in Manchester at which the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra gave the first performance of her concertino for 'cello, piano and percussion. The piece, written when she was fourteen and blending deep melancholy and exuberant syncopation, won almost universal adulation, with orchestra members thumping music stands with their bows and applause from conductor Maryn Brabbins... "I think the concertino is wonderful," said a wide-eyed John Casken, a composer and professor of music at the University of Manchester who was Ms Frances-Hoad's tutor during the four-day workshop. "In the final chorale she adds blue notes to tighten the emotional screw and make the end more heart-rending." The concertino took a month to write and was finished the day before the workshop entries were due in. "It was my first orchestral work," admitted Ms Frances-Hoad, a cellist and pupil at the Yehudi Menuhin School for seven years. "I'd never written for percussion and had to get all the information I wanted out of a book." The information was accurate enough to send the Philharmonic's percussion section dancing round their bongos in an extrovert passage that would set Copland or Bernstein smiling." "**Young blue notes writer scores BBC hit**" by David Ward, **The Guardian, 27th February 1996**