

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH (MUSIC COMPOSITION)

### Jonathan David Little



The atmospheric and evocative music of Jonathan David Little is notable for its beauty, intensity, richness of material, and intricate craftsmanship. On the strength of the excellence of both his music, and of his writings on music, he was the first Australian-born composer to be awarded the John Clementi Collard Fellowship (2011), one of the most prestigious awards of the City of London's ancient Worshipful Company of Musicians (est.1500) – and one of the most coveted musical awards in Britain. He was also the first composer of any nationality to receive a Professional Development Award from the UK music business's own charity, the Musicians' Benevolent Fund. In 2016 he won a Royal Philharmonic Society "ENCORE Choral" Award (UK), in 2017 Special Distinction in the Rudolf Nissim Prize (USA) - one of the concert music world's most esteemed awards (for orchestral music), and in January 2018 his polychoral Kyrie was nominated for "Best Classical Music Recording" at the inaugural RoundGlass Global Music Awards (USA-INDIA). *Choir & Organ* (UK) reported of his choral music that "*Little writes very much in the manner of the renaissance masters, creating what a modern sensibility would identify as 'immersive' music of strongly mystical aspect*".

His historically-informed compositional style has been variously described as "Ecstatic Minimalism", "Archaic Futurism", and "Picturesque Archaism" – blending art music, folk/Celtic, and other sacred and secular musical influences, from as far back as the fourteenth century, with new and innovative textures and orchestration (sometimes also including spatial effects).

Jonathan studied music at the University of Melbourne – winning the Lady Turner Exhibition for overall excellence – then undertook a PhD studying the development of "exotic" orchestration in 19th- and 20th-century music, alongside studies in church music and liturgy (through the Australian College of Theology), and conducting studies with Gerald Gentry, former Staff Conductor, BBC. A former Prefect of the Australian National Boys' Choir and member of the Australian Youth Orchestra (participating in the 1988 Grand Bicentennial European Tour), Jonathan performed with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and for new music workshops of the Australian Opera.

Jonathan's compositions have won multiple ASCAP and critics' choice awards in the USA, as well as PRS, Chagrin, Bliss and Leighton Trust Awards in the UK. His first major album, *Terpsichore*, was one of US *Fanfare* magazine's top recommended recordings for 2008 – acclaiming "*a major new, original and quite brilliant classical voice*" – while his 2012 album, *Polyhymnia*, featuring three European orchestras, was nominated in Spain for "Best Album of the Year". His 2017 choral album, *Woefully Arrayed*, featuring three choirs from the US & UK, was praised by leading record review magazines worldwide, and garnered a Best Recording nomination in New York in 2018.

During 2015-17, in response to a major Australian Government / Australia Council "Individual International Arts Project Award", Jonathan worked on the creation and recording of a new album of multi-part, *a cappella* polychoral music entitled *Secular and Sacred Choral and Polychoral Works of Jonathan David Little*. *Fanfare* called it "*a masterpiece ... radiant ... a superb disc*", *Gramophone* thought it "*masterly*" and "*luminous*", while *Audiophile Audition* felt it to be "*fantastically beautiful ... a delight on all fronts*" (Navona NV6113, 2017). In March 2016 he was invited to be "Featured Composer" at the CNU Contemporary Music Festival (USA) – including a showcase concert of his works in the Music and Theatre Hall, Ferguson Center for the Arts, in Virginia, and in October 2016, he was also invited to participate in a BBC Singers choral composition workshop at BBC Maida Vale studios with Judith Weir, Master of the Queen's Music.

Jonathan was one of only seven living composers whose work was selected by expert jury for the Royal Philharmonic Society's "ENCORE Choral" Programme – for creative development work, performance, and live broadcast on BBC Radio 3 during 2016-18. In June-July 2015, the Controller of BBC Radio 3, the RPS, and *Gramophone* announced that "ENCORE Choral" would be featuring "*exceptional contemporary choral works ... by some of the UK's most respected composers ... David Matthews; Robin Holloway; Robert Saxton; Jonathan Lloyd; Paul Patterson; Jonathan David Little and Oliver Knussen.*"

From 2001 to 2005, Jonathan was Principal of the UK's Academy of Contemporary Music, which was, at that time, Europe's leading institution for students of contemporary music and the first music education institution to win the Queen's Award for Enterprise (Innovation Category). Thereafter he moved to the University of Chichester, where he was latterly appointed to the inaugural dual role of Professor of Music Composition and Music History – and Professor Emeritus from 2019. For his entire body of polychoral music, in 2018 he was nominated for the AUSTRALIA PRIZE for Distinctive Work – the nation's premier and most distinguished award in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

#### WEBSITE AND AUDIO SAMPLES

<http://www.jonathanlittle.org/>

#### British Music Collection

<http://britishmusiccollection.org.uk/composer/jonathan-david-little>

#### Arkiv Music

[http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/albumList.jsp?name\\_id1=112858&name\\_role1=1&bcorder=1](http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/albumList.jsp?name_id1=112858&name_role1=1&bcorder=1)

#### AllMusic

<https://www.allmusic.com/artist/jonathan-little-mn0001671196/compositions>

#### LATEST CD RELEASE (CHORAL)

<http://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6113/>

## RESUMÉ OF COMPOSITIONAL ACTIVITY

### Jonathan David Little

*B.Mus.(Hons.)(Melb.), Th.A.(Aust.Coll.Theol.), Ph.D., F.L.C.M.(Music Comp), F.I.S.M., F.R.S.A.*

Former John Clementi Collard Fellow in Music of The Worshipful Company of Musicians (EST.1500)

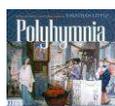
[www.JonathanLittle.org](http://www.JonathanLittle.org)



#### RECENT AWARDS:

- \* "AUSTRALIA PRIZE" NOMINATION, COUNCIL for the HUMANITIES, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES 2018 (AUSTRALIA)
- \* "BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC RECORDING" NOMINATION, ROUNDGLASS GLOBAL MUSIC AWARDS 2018 (USA/INDIA)
- \* SPECIAL DISTINCTION, RUDOLF NISSIM PRIZE (Orchestral Music) 2017 (USA)
- \* ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY / BBC RADIO 3 "ENCORE Choral" AWARD 2016-18 (UK)
- \* SOCIETY OF AUTHORS - AUTHORS' FOUNDATION AWARD 2016 (UK)
- \* AUSTRALIA COUNCIL "INDIVIDUAL INTERNATIONAL ARTS PROJECT AWARD" 2015-17 (Choral Music) (AUS/UK/USA)
- \* FELLOWSHIP of THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS 2014 (UK)
- \* "BEST ALBUM OF THE MONTH" AWARD & "BEST ALBUM OF THE YEAR" NOMINATION 2012 (SPAIN)
- \* BLISS TRUST COMPOSER BURSARY 2012 (UK)
- \* FELLOWSHIP of THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS 2012 (UK)
- \* COLLARD FELLOWSHIP of THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MUSICIANS 2011 (UK)

#### RECENT MAJOR RECORDINGS:



**POLYHYMNIA: STRING, ORCHESTRAL AND CHORAL WORKS OF JONATHAN LITTLE** [*Polyhymnia, etc.*] [CD]: Moravian, Kiev and Czech Philharmonic Orchestras & Tallis Chamber Choir / Petr Vronský, Robert Ian Winstin & Philip Simms (Release date: 28th Feb. 2012) *Navona* (a fine music label of PARMA Recordings), USA. Cat. No. NV5867; UPC: 896931-000673. **Recording supported by a Musicians Benevolent Fund Professional Development Award (UK), University of Chichester (UK) & ASCAP Plus Programme (USA).** ALBUM OF THE MONTH (Feb 2012); Nominated for 2012 "ALBUM OF THE YEAR", *Reviews New Age* (SPAIN).  
SEE: [http://myppk.com/Users/5816/PDFs/JDLittle\\_Ad\\_2-page\\_spread\\_Bleed\\_Fanfare-FINAL.pdf](http://myppk.com/Users/5816/PDFs/JDLittle_Ad_2-page_spread_Bleed_Fanfare-FINAL.pdf)



**WOEFULLY ARRAYED: SACRED AND SECULAR CHORAL AND POLYCHORAL WORKS OF JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE** [*Woefully Arrayed; Kyrie, Gloria; Wasted and Worn; That Time of Year; Woefully Arrayed (Reprise)*] [CD]: Vox Futura, directed by Dr. Andrew Shenton (Boston); Stanbery Singers, directed by Paul John Stanbery (Cincinnati); Thomas Tallis Society Choir, directed by Philip Simms (London). With an historical and contextual essay by Renaissance and Baroque scholar, Hugh Keyte – leading expert on early polychoralism. (Release date: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017) *Navona* (a fine music label of PARMA Recordings), USA. Cat. No. NV6113; UPC: 896931-004138. **Recording supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, and by the Royal Philharmonic Society (UK).** Nominated for "BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC RECORDING", RoundGlass Music Awards 2018 (USA/INDIA). SEE: <http://www.powerpresskits.com/Users/5816/PDFs/a241b094-99eb.pdf>

Important choral works include Kyrie for SATB double choir and soloists, first performed at the historic Tallis 500th Anniversary Concerts in 2005 in Waltham Abbey and St. Alfege Church, and subsequently in 2007 for the Wells Cathedral Easter Tenebrae service, and then poignantly featured in Thierry Donard's French film, "Nuit de la Glisse". More recently, the same work was chosen for the Royal Philharmonic Society's "ENCORE Choral" Programme (UK) – for workshop, performance and live broadcast on BBC Radio 3 during 2016-18, and its 2017 recording on the album *Woefully Arrayed* was nominated for "Best Classical Music Recording" at the 2018 RoundGlass Global Music Awards (USA/India). All Jonathan's polychoral music was nominated for the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize.

## JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE

### SELECTED COMPOSITIONS –

**PUBLISHED by WIRRIPIANG AND/OR THE AUSTRALIAN MUSIC CENTRE**

#### Symphonic and String Orchestra Works

**TERPSICHORE: "The Whirler" or Muse of Dance, Op.7** (from *The Nine Muses*, No.7) (Dance Poem for Large Orchestra), c.15'

**POLYHYMNIA: "She of Many Hymns" or Muse of Sacred Poetry, Op.10** (from *The Nine Muses*, No.6) (Lamentation for String Orchestra), c.21'

**SACRED PRELUDE, Opp.15 & 15A** (string orchestra versions), c.11'

#### Chamber and Instrumental Music

**SACRED PRELUDE, Op.1** (string quintet version), c.11'

**FANFARE, Op.3a** (brass & percussion), c.1'30

**DUO SONATA ON ELIZABETHAN THEMES, in 4 mvts., Op.4** (2 percussion soloists), ca.21'

**THE FEAST OF KINGS AND MARTYRS, Op.8** (dual for 2 percussionists), ca.5'

#### Choral and Vocal Music

**BASQUE LULLABY, Op.1a** (voice and piano), c.2'

**THAT TIME OF YEAR, Op.2** (a cappella SATB soloists or choir), c.5'

**KYRIE, Op.5** from *Missa Temporis Perditi* (a cappella SATB double choir and soloists), c.5'

**WASTED AND WORN, Op.6** (a cappella SSAATTBB choir), c.12'

**RECORDARE DOMINE (On Ixion's Wheel), Op.9** (a cappella SSSSAAAATTTTBBBB choir), c.21'

**WOEFULLY ARRAYED, Op.13** (Triple Choir à 12: I. AATTBB + II. SSA + III. SSA + Organ), c.24'

**GLORIA, Op.18** from *Missa Temporis Perditi* (a cappella SATB double choir and soloists), c.10-11'

**MISSA BREVIS, Op.23** (a cappella SATB double choir and soloists), c.15'



THE BLISS TRUST



# INTERNATIONAL RECORDED MUSIC REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS 2008-18

## WORLDWIDE CRITICAL REACTION

JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE

TERPSICHORE (2008) / POLYHYMNIA (2012) / WOEFULLY ARRAYED (2017):

*“luminous otherworldly beauty and colour”*

[www.JonathanLittle.org](http://www.JonathanLittle.org)

- *“resplendent ... luminous ... engaging”* – Gramophone (NORTH AMERICA)
- *“remarkable ... radiant ... the pure sonic joy is visceral”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“remarkable ... the first thing to strike one is the luminosity ... exhilarating”* – Kathodik (ITALY)
- *“incandescent ... a positively dynamic musical palette”* – Tempo (UK)
- *“yearningly lovely”* – Music OMH (UK)
- *“beautiful”* – Infodad (USA)
- *“arrestingly beautiful”* – La Scena Musicale (CANADA)
- *“so beautiful”* – Nova Express (FRANCE)
- *“beautiful ... stands out with its sincerity”* – American Record Guide (USA)
- *“trance-like ... well-crafted and original ... sheer beauty”* – Music & Vision (UK)
- *“a delight ... unique ... fantastically beautiful”* – Audiophile Audition (USA)
- *“beautiful and moving ... a truly sensory rich album”* – Review Graveyard (USA)
- *“beautiful colors ... stunning quality ... emotional depth”* – Cinemusical (USA)
- *“eloquent and expansive ... all the colors of the choral palette”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“exuberant ... fine command of atmosphere and orchestral color”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“an enormous tapestry of musical color”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“an exceptionally hypnotic array of musical colour”* – Tempo (UK)
- *“a richness of coloration, dynamic shading and melodic inventiveness”* – Classical Music (UK)
- *“an astonishing range of colors and moods”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“a whirling kaleidoscope of sounds ... An extraordinary range of sensations”* – Music OMH (UK)
- *“beautifully expansive ... voluptuous sonorities”* – Music & Vision (UK)
- *“opulent sonorities”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“intensely ethereal”* – Tempo (UK)
- *“shot through with spiritual light”* – Fanfare (USA)
- *“mysticism and muscularity”* – Choir and Organ (UK)
- *“masterly command of the choral idiom”* – Gramophone (NORTH AMERICA)
- *“lush ... the crafting of orchestration is finely honed”* – Music Forum (AUSTRALIA)
- *“bursting through the panorama he paints with sudden flashes of light or menacing thunderbolts, and so projects the past into the future”* – Kathodik (ITALY)
- *“a heart-rending panorama ... immensely poetic, almost otherworldly”* – Tempo (UK)
- *“other worldly ... ecstatic utterances ... carefully crafted”* – Limelight (AUSTRALIA)
- *“an elegant gift to the ears ... the beauty, the elegance, the intensity ... otherworldly”* – RNA (SPAIN)