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# David BLAKE

(b. 1936)



**David Blake** was born in London in 1936. He read music at Cambridge, where his teachers included Patrick Hadley and Peter Tranchell. In 1960 he was awarded the Mendelssohn Scholarship and studied with Hanns Eisler in East Berlin. After three years as a school teacher, during which time he composed a highly

successful schools musical *It's a Small War* (OUP), he moved to the new University of York as its first Granada Arts Fellow. In 1964 he was a founder member with Wilfrid Mellers and Peter Aston of the York Department of Music. He was made Professor in 1976 and Head of Department from 1980-1983. He retired in 2001.

David Blake's first commission was from the York Festival for his *Chamber Symphony* (1966) and subsequent important ones were from English National Opera for two operas - *Toussaint* (1976) and *The Plumber's Gift* (1988); from the Leeds Festival Lumina (1969); from the BBC for two concertos - for violin (Proms) and for cello (Cheltenham Festival 1993) - and for *Rise Dove* (1983). He has composed several song cycles, five string quartets, works for young performers and for solo instruments. He has collaborated on three stage works with Keith Warner - *Scoring a Century* (1999), *Fanny and Alexander* (2013) and *Icarus* (2015) and four monodramas. He is also published by OUP, Schott, Novello and Josef Weinberger.

One of the hallmarks of Blake's rich and varied output has been its consistent commitment to high technical standards and beliefs which are fundamental to his ethos as an artist, and which transcend passing trends.

## PRESS QUOTES

*"David Blake is an example of an increasingly rare breed of creator; he has a technical range and command covering every aspect of composition; he is one of the very few contemporary composers who still write powerfully expressive counterpoint and his melodic invention, ability to characterise musical ideas and his gift for music drama combine to make him a very complete artist..."* Robert Saxton

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## List of Works

### THEATRE

#### The Fabulous Adventures of Alexander the Great (1996) 60'

words by John Birtwhistle (Greek version also available)  
for narrator, baritone, bass, various solo children's voices,  
chorus (SAB)  
2.1.2.1 / 2.2.1.0 / pf.5perc / str  
first performance: the Castle Theatre, Mitiline, Lesvos on  
11 July 1998, conducted by composer  
UK premiere: University of York, November 1999  
ISMN M 57020 073 3 score: £64.00  
performance materials for hire

#### Scoring a Century (1999) 130'

an entertainment for 10 singers/actors and small  
orchestra  
2(all+picc).1(+ca).2(2<sup>nd</sup>+bcl).1 / asax / 2.2.1.1 /  
pf.gtr(+bnj).perc / 4.4.2.2.2 (minimum size)  
text: Keith Warner  
commissioned by Opera 2000  
ISMN M 57020 075 7 score: £64.00  
ISMN M 57036 308 7 vocal score: £50.00  
ISMN M 57036 869 3 libretto: £10.00  
performance materials for hire

#### The Lonely Wife (I) (2003) 16'

for soprano, flute (+afl), percussion  
concert performance also possible  
texts: Chinese poetry, English versions by the composer  
ISMN M 57020 731 2 score and parts: £13.00

#### ICARUS (2015) 90'

an opera for 11 singers/actors and orchestra  
1(+picc).1(+ca).2(2<sup>nd</sup>+bcl).1(=cbn) / 1.1.1.0 / pf.2perc /  
strings  
text: Keith Warner  
ISMN M 57036 693 4 A3 conductor's score: £47.95  
ISMN M 57036 695 8 B4 vocal score: £37.95  
ISMN M 57036 704 7 libretto: £6.00  
ISMN M 57036 694 1 performance materials for hire

#### Medea's Cell (2018) 30'

A monodrama  
For female voice, alto sax (doubling tenor sax), trumpet,  
violin (doubling viola) and piano  
text: Keith Warner  
ISMN M 57036 808 2 score: £17.95  
ISMN M 57036 309 9 vocal score: £14.95  
ISMN M 57036 310 5 performance materials for hire

#### The Twin Trials of Heracles (2021) 35'

A monodrama  
For female voice, clarinet in Bb, trumpet in Bb, violin,  
cello, and piano.  
text: Keith Warner  
ISMN M 57036 966 9 score: £21.95  
ISMN M 57036 967 6 vocal score: £15.95  
ISMN M 1 performance materials for hire

#### SOMETHING ABOUT LOVE (2023)

A Music Drama in Two acts  
for 8 singers and small orchestra  
2(+picc.+afl).2(2<sup>nd</sup>+cor).2.2 / 2.1(in c).1.0 / pf.2perc/ strings  
/ tape  
text: Keith Warner  
ISMN M 57080 106 0 score: £60.95  
ISMN M 57080 107 7 vocal score: £45.95  
ISMN M 57080 108 4 libretto: £14.95

### WIND ORCHESTRA

#### Winelands (1997) 9'

for symphonic wind ensemble  
4(+picc).2.4(+bcl).2(+cbn) / sax: 1.1.1 / 4.4.3.1, euph / 5perc  
/ bass  
composed for the University of Stellenbosch Wind  
Ensemble, conductor Mervyn Solomon.  
first performance: City Hall, Bellville, Cape Town, 15  
October 1997, conducted by the composer  
ISMN M 57020 081 8 score: £23.00  
performance materials for hire

### SMALL ENSEMBLE (4-7 PLAYERS)

#### String Quartet No. 4 (2004) 16'

commissioned by the Northern Aldborough Festival for  
the Sorrel Quartet  
first performance: Aldborough Church on 8 July 2004  
ISMN M 57020 742 8 score: £18.00  
ISMN M 57020 743 5 parts: £12.00

#### Piece for Luis and Justin (2006)

for 2 flutes and clarinet  
part of 'On Track', UYMP's Grade 4-level Education  
Volume  
ISMN M 57020 908 8 score and parts: £19.95

#### String Quartet No. 5 (2009) 7-8'

ISMN M 57036 063 5 score and parts: £34.00

## SOLOS, DUOS AND TRIOS

### Diversions on Themes of Hanns Eisler (1995)

10'

for alto saxophone and piano

composed for John-Edward Kelly

first performance: Sarah James and Grace Huang at the Royal Academy of Music, London on 22 October 1998

ISMN M 57020 086 3

score & part (version 1): £10.95

ISMN M 57020 085 6

score & part (version 2): £10.95

### Four Intermezzi (1995)

10'

for violin and piano

first performance: Adrian Varela and Daniel Vaiman at the Royal Academy of Music, London, 22 October 1998

ISMN M 57020 083 2

score & part: £24.00

### On the Autumn Air (2010)

for oboe

featured in Signals, new music for solo oboe

ISMN M 57036 215 8

score: £12.95

## VOICE AND 0-3 INSTRUMENTS

### Morning Sea (2000)

for bass and piano

featured in Songs for the Twenty-First Century

ISMN M 57036 192 2

score: £17.95

### The Lonely Wife (II) (2003)

8'

for soprano/mezzo & guitar

texts: Chinese poetry, English versions by the composer

ISMN M 57020 734 3

two performing scores: £13.00

### A Swallow (2008)

3'

for mezzo soprano and piano

texts: John Birtwhistle

ISMN M 57036 043 7

score: £7.00

### Four Cabaret Songs (2008)

13'

for female voice and piano

texts: Keith Warner

ISMN M 57036 059 8

score: £17.00

### Du Bist Mein (2010)

2'

for voice and piano

ISMN M 57036 174 8

score: £7.00

### Ten Gallows Songs (2010)

20'

for voice and piano

ISMN M 57036 172 4

score: £20.00

## Songs and Epigrams (2014)

35'

for voice and piano

composed/compiled in 2014, includes:

**A Swallow** - John Birtwhistle

**Morning Sea** - C.P. Cavafy

**Voices** - Cavafy

**Seven Epigrams** - Johann Wolfgang Goethe

**Comme un dernier Rayon** - André Chénier

**Wiegenlied** - Christian Morgenstern

**Two Poems for the Chinese** - Juan Chi

**Die Ratten** - Georg Trakl

**Verfall** - Trakl

**Du bist mein** - Goethe

**It's the Modern World** - Keith Warner

ISMN M 57036 547 0

score: £16.95

### The Mulberry Road (2024)

20'

for soprano and treble recorder

ISMN M 57080 128 2

full score and part: £7.70

## VOICE(S) AND 4-7 INSTRUMENTS

### Epilogue to a tetralogy (2022)

10'

for soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, bass, flute, clarinet in Bb, trumpet in C, violin, cello and Piano

texts: Keith Warner

ISMN M 1

vocal score: £8.95

ISMN M 57080 048 3

score: £10.95

performance materials for hire

## VOICE AND ORCHESTRA

### The Griffin's Tale (1994)

32'

legend for baritone and orchestra

2(2<sup>nd</sup>+picc).1.2(2<sup>nd</sup>=bcl).1 / 2.1.1.0 / pf.2perc / 6.6.4.4.2

text: John Birtwhistle

commissioned by Northern Sinfonia

first performance: Adrian Clarke and the Northern Sinfonia conducted by Lionel Friend, Central Hall, York, 3 February 1995

ISMN M 57020 077 1

score: £50.00

performance materials for hire

### I Skies tis Agapis (The Shades of Love) (2000)

27'

for bass baritone and small orchestra

1.1(+ca).2(2<sup>nd</sup>=bcl).1 / 1.0.0.0 / 2perc / str

six songs to poems by C P Cavafy (also English version by the composer)

first performance: Akis Lalousis and the Orchestra of the State Conservatoire, Thessaloniki, conducted by the composer, 10 November 2000

ISMN M 57020 079 5

score: £45.00

ISMN M 57036 582 1

vocal score: £16.95

performance materials for hire

## Rings of Jade (2005)

24'

Poems from the Prison Diary of Ho Chi Minh  
for medium voice and orchestra  
3(3<sup>rd</sup>+picc).2.3(3<sup>rd</sup>=bcl).2 / 4.2.3.1 / hp.3perc / str  
English text: John Birtwhistle  
first performance: Sally Burgess and the York Symphony  
Orchestra, Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, conducted by the  
composer, 2 July 2005

ISMN M 57020 835 7

score: £30.00

performance materials for hire

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## Choir, accompanied

### Searching the Skies (1994)

11'

for unison children's voices and strings (or with piano)  
six poems of Jessica George (1984-94)  
first performance: Jessica's friends, St Olave's Church,  
York, 22 October 1994

ISMN M 57020 087 0

piano score (with voice): £18.00

ISMN M 57020 088 7

full score (voices & strings): £18.00

ISMN M 57036 275 2

choral score: £2.00

ISMN M 57036 089 4

parts: £18.00

### The Coming of the Year (2006)

3'

for SATB chorus and piano

ISMN M 57020 129 9

choral score: £2.25

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## ARRANGEMENTS

### Janáček – On an Overgrown Path (2002) 19'

seven pieces for string orchestra and optional flute,  
clarinet and horn

ISMN M 57020 870 8

score: £25.00

performance materials for hire

### Mozart – 'Ah taci, ingiusto core!' (1997) 5'

Terzetto — Don Giovanni Act 2 Scene 2  
for 12 wind instruments and double bass  
0.2.2.2, 2 basset horns / 4.0.0.0 / cb

ISMN M 57020 090 0

score: £13.00

performance materials for hire

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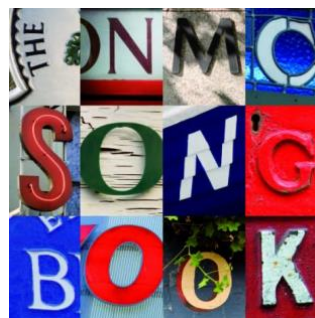
## MUSIC FOR CHILDREN AND AMATEURS

The Fabulous Adventures of Alexander the Great Theatre  
Piece for Luis and Justin Small Ensemble

Searching the Skies

Choir, Accompanied

## SELECTED RECORDINGS



### The NMC Songbook

#### Includes: *A Swallow*

Jean Rigby, mezzo-soprano

Huw Watkins, piano

Label: NMC Recordings, NMC D150