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George NICHOLSON

(b. 1949)



George Nicholson was born in County Durham in 1949 and studied at the University of York with David Blake and Bernard Rands. Following a freelance career in London he was appointed Lecturer in Music and Director of Composition at Keele University in 1988. In 1996 he began working at Sheffield University, and became Emeritus Professor in Composition in 2020. He has always been actively engaged in practical music making, both as pianist and conductor; his repertoire extends from the Renaissance to the present day.

His music has been performed by the London Sinfonietta, the BBC Philharmonic, the Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and many other ensembles. He has received several BBC commissions, including a *Cello Concerto*, which was premiered by Moray Welsh. Nicholson's *Flute Concerto* was

commissioned by James Galway and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra. Other compositions include five string quartets and a variety of other chamber pieces, as well as vocal and piano music. His work is available on the record labels Metier, Oboe Classics, Cuillin Sound, Unknown Public and the British Music Label.

George's personal website can be found [here](#).

PRESS QUOTES

On *Darkness Visible*:

"The idea of flames without light derives from John Milton's Paradise Lost. Nicholson translates it into correspondingly lugubrious patterns, alleviating the gloom through wind multiphonics and keyboard harmonics – smoke and fire, as it were."

Peter Palmer – *Tempo*, October 2013

"Written in memory of the great clarinettist Alan Hacker, George Nicholson's Darkness Visible takes its play of tonal shades from an image of John Milton's ... Warmly recommended."

Nottingham Post review, 10th June 2013

On Metier Records Bochmann Quartet CD:

"These are quartets of substance from two British composers... Dedicated playing from the Bochmann Quartet, with suitably close, focused sound."

Richard Whitehouse – *Gramophone*

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On Metier Records 'Letters to the World' CD:

"[Nicholson's] music, as heard here, is always beautifully crafted, technically demanding, certainly not easy to play but eminently accessible for the composer always sees to it that it communicates directly by way of its invention, its imagination and its vitality."

Hubert Culot – *MusicWeb*

"...both quartets are works of a rare and distinctive quality and the Bochmann Quartet's performances are convincing. I would not want to be without this disc."

David Wright – *MusicWeb*

LIST OF WORKS

ORCHESTRA

Cello Concerto (1990) 30'
cello and orchestra
3(2nd+afl, 3rd+picc).3(3rd+ca).3(3rd+bcl).3(3rd+cbn) / 4.3.3.1 / 4perc.pf(+cel).hp / strings
commissioned by the BBC
first performance: Moray Welsh and the BBC Philharmonic, Sir Edward Downes (cond.), Free Trade Hall, Manchester, 25 January 1991
ISMN M 57020 275 1 score: £45.00
performance materials for hire

Concerto for Orchestra (2005) 37'
3.3.3.3 / 2sax: SA / 4.3.3.1 / hp.cel.2perc / strings
first performance: University of Sheffield Symphony Orchestra, George Nicholson (cond), City Hall, Sheffield, 11 December 2005
ISMN M 57020 877 7 score: £60.00
performance materials for hire

The Convergence of the Twain (1978) 17'
2(2nd+picc).2(2nd+ca).2(2nd+bcl).2 / 2.2.0.0 / timp / 6.6.4.4.2
first performance: London Sinfonietta, Dominic Muldowney (cond.), St.John's Smith Square, 2 April 1981
ISMN M 57020 273 7 score: £40.00
performance materials for hire

Flute Concerto (1993) 30'
flute and orchestra
3(2nd+picc, 3rd+afl).3(3rd+ca).3(2nd+Ebcl, 3rd+bcl). 3(3rd+cbn) / 4.3.3.1 / 3perc.hp / strings
commissioned by James Galway and the Zürich Tonhalle Orchestra
first performance: James Galway and the Zürich Tonhalle Orchestra, Zuohuang Chen (cond), Tonhalle, Zürich, 7 October 1994
ISMN M 57020 277 5 score: £60.00
performance materials for hire

Sea-Change (1988) 21'
string orchestra (5.4.2.2.1)
commissioned by John Lubbock and the Orchestra of St John's for the 21st anniversary of the orchestra
first performance: conducted by John Lubbock, Norwich Cathedral, 27 May 1988
ISMN M 57020 285 0 score: £37.00
performance materials for hire

WIND ORCHESTRA

Short Stories (2009) 21'
wind orchestra
written for and premiered by the Sheffield University Wind Orchestra, conducted by Anthony Houghton, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 21st March 2009
ISMN M 57020 064 2 score: £25.00
ISMN M 57020 065 9 parts: £60.00

LARGE ENSEMBLE (8 OR MORE PLAYERS)

Chamber Concerto (1979-80) 20'
1(+picc,afl).1(+ca).1(+bcl).1 / 1.1.0.0 / perc.pf(+cel).hp / 1.0.1.1.1
commissioned by the BBC
first performance: the London Sinfonietta, Lionel Friend (cond), BBC 'Music in Our Time' broadcast, 27 May 1982
ISMN M 57020 279 9 score: £50.00
performance materials for hire

Fenestrae (1998) 11'
1(+afl).1.1.1 / 1.1.1.0 / vib(+mar).pf(+cel).gtr / 1.1.1.1.1
first performance: the University of Sheffield New Music Ensemble, George Nicholson (cond.), Firth Hall, Sheffield, 3 November 1998
ISMN M 57020 287 4 score: £21.00
performance materials for hire

Groundswell (2009) 5'
for 10 players (cl, hn in f, perc x3, vib, pno, vln, vla, vlc)
ISMN M 57036 123 6 score: £21.00
performance materials for hire

Harmonica (2011) 11'
 for clarinet choir (Eb cl, 7 Bb cls, alto cl in Eb (or basset horn), 2 bass cls, contra alto cl in Bb
 first performance: University of Sheffield Clarinet Choir, cond. Anthony Houghton, Sheffield Cathedral, 2 December 2011
 ISMN M 57036 313 1 score: £15.00
 ISMN M 57036 314 8 parts: £15.00

Salve Regina (2008) 11'
 afl, oboe d'amore (or oboe), alto clarinet (or bcl), hn, vib, vln, va, vc
 first performance: the University of Sheffield New Music Ensemble, George Nicholson (cond.), St. Mark's Church, Broomhill, 8 June 2008
 ISMN M 57036 050 5 score: £17.00
 performance materials for hire

Tableaux Vivants (2007) 9'
 sop sax, hn, tpt, hp, gtr, perc / 1.1.1.1
 ISMN M 57036 000 0 score: £32.00
 performance materials for hire

SMALL ENSEMBLE (4-7 PLAYERS)

Ancient Lights (1982) 17'
 1(+picc).0.2(both+bcl).0 / 0.0.0.0 / pf / 1.0.1.1.0
 commissioned by Lumina for the 1982 Huddersfield Festival with funds made available by Yorkshire Arts
 first performance: Lumina, David Blake (cond.), St. Paul's Church, Huddersfield, 24 November 1982
 ISMN M 57020 281 2 score: £30.00
 ISMN M 57020 282 9 parts: £18.00

Launch (2018) 1'
 bass clarinet, string quartet and piano
 ISMN M 57036 831 0 score: £7.95
 ISMN M 57020 832 7 parts: £9.95

La Dame à la Licorne (2018) 38'
 flute (= piccolo), harp and string quartet
 This piece was composed to mark the inauguration of the Centre for New Music at Sheffield (CeNMAS).
 ISMN M 57036 873 0 score: £44.95
 ISMN M 57020 872 3 parts: £23.95

Movements (1982-3) 18'
 cl(+Ebcl, bcl), bn, hn, 2 vn, va
 commissioned by the Koenig Ensemble with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain
 first performance: the Koenig Ensemble and conducted by Jan Latham-Koenig, New Metropole Arts Centre, Folkestone, 11 March 1983
 ISMN M 57020 283 6 score: £25.00
 ISMN M 57020 284 3 parts: £12.00

Recueillement (2008) 10'30"
 flute (alto flute), horn, viola and harp
 for Arpège
 first performance: Arpège, 26 February, Firth Hall, Sheffield
 ISMN M 57036 021 5 score: £21.00
 ISMN M 57036 232 5 parts: £34.95

Stilleven (1985) 13'
 flute, bass clarinet, flugelhorn, violin, double bass
 commissioned by Lysis with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain
 first performance: Lysis, Purcell Room, London, 14 January 1986
 ISMN M 57020 295 9 score: £18.00
 ISMN M 57020 296 6 parts: £10.00

Sonant formant morph (2006) 15'
 bass clarinet, violin, viola, violoncello
 for performance by Gemini, 20 September, 2006 at the University of Surrey
 ISMN M 57020 943 9 score: £25.00
 ISMN M 57020 944 6 parts: £24.00

String Quartet No.1 (1976-7) 14'
 first performance: the Medici Quartet, Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, York, 15 June 1977
 ISMN M 57020 289 8 study score: £21.00
 ISMN M 57020 290 4 parts: £12.00

String Quartet No. 2 (1984-5) 20'
 commissioned by Wolfson College, Oxford with funds from Southern Arts
 first performance: the Fairfield Quartet, Wolfson College, Oxford, 2 March 1985
 ISMN M 57020 291 1 score: £20.00
 ISMN M 57020 292 8 parts: £8.00

String Quartet No.3 (1995) 21'
 commissioned by Keele Concerts Society with funds from West Midland Arts
 first performance: the Bochmann Quartet, Keele University, 5 February 1996
 ISMN M 57020 293 5 score: £36.00
 ISMN M 57020 294 2 parts: £20.00

String Quartet No.4 (2013) 30'
 written for the Ligeti Quartet
 first performance: the Ligeti Quartet, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, London, 7 March 2014
 ISMN 57036 470 1 score: £30.95
 ISMN 57036 471 8 parts: £20.00

String Quartet No.5 (2017) 22'
 first performance: the Ligeti Quartet, Saint Stephen's Church, 21 St Stephen's St, Bristol,, 31st October 2017
 ISMN 57036 805 1 score: £22.95
 ISMN 57036 806 8 parts: £22.95

Summer Music (2024) 10'30"
 first performance: London New Wind Festival, Burgh House, October 2024
 ISMN 57080 133 6 score: £13.95
 ISMN 57080 134 3 parts: £13.75

Three Nocturnes (1986) 20'
 clarinet in A (+Ebcl, bcl), violin, cello, piano
 commissioned by Quorum with funds provided by Greater London Arts
 first performance: Quorum, Purcell Room, London, 17 November 1986
 ISMN M 57020 297 3 score: £25.00
 ISMN M 57020 298 0 parts: £9.00

SOLOS, DUOS AND TRIOS

Autumn Journey (2005) 8'
 horn and harp
 first performance: Stephen Stirling and Christina Rhys, St James Piccadilly, London, 11 November 2005
 ISMN M 57020 906 2 score and part: £24.00

Ave atque vale (1994) 6'
 flute and piano
 first performance: Ben Pateman and George Nicholson, St Cyprian's Church, London, 4 November 1995
 ISMN M 57020 306 2 score and part: £16.00

Bagatelles (2007) 20'
 oboe (= oboe d'amore and cor anglais) and percussion
 commissioned by New Noise
 first performance: 13 February, Firth Hall, University of Sheffield
 ISMN M 57020 306 2 score: £18.00

Blood Moon (2022) 10'
 clarinet in Bb and piano
 ISMN M 570380 035 3 score and part: £14.95

Caesura (2007) 2'
 horn, violin and piano
 written for the 'Crossing Continents' exchange between The Universities of Sheffield and Western Australia
 first performance: 20 March, Firth Hall, University of Sheffield
 ISMN M 57020 960 6 score: £11.95
 ISMN M 57036 231 8 score and parts: £29.95

Cascade (1985) 8'
 solo piano
 commissioned by Brighton Festival
 first performance: George Nichols, Brighton Festival, 24 May 1985
 ISMN M 570380 141 1 score and part: £8.95

Catch (2001) 5'
 flute, clarinet and vibraphone
 first performance: University of Sheffield New Music Ensemble, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 27 November 2001
 ISMN M 57020 669 8 score and parts: £18.00

Chiaroscuro (2012) 6'30"
 solo piano
 first performance: Ruth Nicholson, Royal Holloway College, London, 24 May 2012
 ISMN M 57036 380 3 score: £8.95

Darkening Green (2008) 4'
 oboe and piano
 in memory of Wilfrid Mellers
 first performance: the University of Sheffield New Music Ensemble, St. Mark's Church, Broomhill, 8 June 2008
 ISMN M 57036 049 9 score: £7.00

Darkness Visible (2012) 9'
 bass clarinet and piano
 first performance: Djanogly Recital Hall, Nottingham University, Sarah Watts (bass clarinet) and Antony Clare (piano), 23rd November 2012
 ISMN M 57036 461 9 score and part: £10.95

Dedans (2010) 17'
 trombone, midi keyboard and electronics
 ISMN M 57036 348 3 score and part: £18.95

Far Cry (2016) 17'
 alto saxophone and piano
 ISMN M 57036 705 4 score and part: £27.95

Fills (2000) 13'
 clarinet solo
 first performance: Philip Edwards, The Warehouse, London, 7 November 2000
 ISMN M 57020 303 1 score: £14.00

Further Than Guess (2010) 10'
 tenor and cello
 ISMN M 57036 191 5 score: £18.00

Mister Biberian His Dompe (2004) 20'
 solo guitar
 first performance: Gilbert Biberian, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 9 March 2004
 ISMN M 57020 746 6 score: £17.00

Moonlight over Albion (2012) 5'30"
 clarinet in A, viola, piano
 ISMN M 57036 395 7 score: £10.95
 ISMN M 57036 392 6 set of three performing scores: £21.95

Mots Justes (1988-97)	32'
five inventions for piano	
1. <i>Impromptu</i>	
first performance: George Nicholson, Morley College, London, 17 June 1988	
2. <i>All systems go</i>	
first performance: George Nicholson, Darlington Arts Centre, 25 November 1989	
3. <i>For Miles</i>	
first performance: George Nicholson, Keele University, 27 February 1992	
4. <i>Sung without words</i>	
5. <i>In accord</i>	
first performance: Peter Lawson, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 20 March 2001	
ISMN M 57020 304 8	score: £24.00
N'est-ce pas...? (1979)	8'
for solo violin	
first performance: Fiona Vanderspar, Purcell Room, 3 February, 1980.	
ISMN M 57020 986 6	score £13.00
Nodus (1979)	10'
clarinet in A and piano	
ISMN M 57036 971 3	score and part: £15.95
Omega for Gilbert (2023)	9'
for solo guitar	
ISMN M 57080 065 0	score:: £6.95
Pas seul (2011)	7'30''
for solo piano	
first performance given by Leo Nicholson at Trinity College of Music, June 9 th , 2011	
ISMN M 57020 289 9	score £10.00
Piano Sonata (1983)	22'
for solo piano	
ISMN M 57020 976 8	score £16.95
Piano Trio (2021)	30'
violin, cello, and piano	
ISMN M 57080 082 7	score £27.95
Romanza (1987)	13'
violin and piano	
commissioned by Miranda Fulleylove with funds provided by Greater London Arts	
first performance: BMIC, London, 13 April 1988	
ISMN M 57020 307 9	score and part: £24.00
The Seventh Seal (1977)	
for solo viola	
premiered by Garth Knox, Acquiterme, Italy, 12 September 1981	
ISMN M 57080 080 3	score: £6.95

Shadow Play (2016)	12'
flute and clarinet in A.	
premiered by Simon Desorgher and Phillip Edwards, London New Wind Festival, 20 th November 2015.	
ISMN M 57020 690 3	two performing scores: £19.95
Shailing and Wambling (2001)	9'
viola and cello	
ISMN M 57020 668 1	score and part: £16.00
So Low (1981)	9'
solo double bass	
commissioned by Roger Dean	
first performance: Stamford Arts Centre, 27 November, 1981	
ISMN M 57020 985 9	score: £18.00
Soundings (2013)	19'
solo bass clarinet	
ISMN M 57036 462 6	score: £9.95
Spindrift (2022)	23'
solo violin	
ISMN M 57090 088 9	score: £9.95
(termi)né (1995)	11'
two bass clarinets	
commissioned by Das Klarinettenduo Zelinsky/ Smeyers	
first performance: Alte Feuerwoche, Cologne, 26 October 1995	
ISMN M 57020 305 5	set of two performing scores: £31.00
Tronie (2013)	10'
solo piano	
ISMN M 57036 510 4	score: £8.95
Winter Music (2008)	15'
clarinet in Bb, harp and percussion	
ISMN M 57036 025 3	score and part: £20.00

VOICE AND 0-3 INSTRUMENTS

Alla Luna (1981)	12'
soprano, clarinet in Bb and piano	
commissioned by the GLAA Young Musicians' Scheme with funds provided by the Greater London Arts Association	
ISMN M 57036 980 5	scores and part: £22.95
Colloque Sentimental (1976)	8'
soprano and harp	
ISMN M 57036 026 0	study score: £18.00

Hallel (1979) 11'30"
 soprano and organ
 text Trad. Hebrew
 ISMN M 57080 094 0 score: £12.95
 ISMN M 57080 096 4 two performance scores: £20.95

Letters to the World (1997-9) 30'
 soprano, recorder, cello and harpsichord
 first performance: Alison Wells, John Turner, Keith Elcombe and Jonathan Price, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 12 March 2000
 ISMN M 57020 301 7 score: £36.00
 ISMN M 57020 302 4 parts: £15.00

Rondeau (1977) 3'
 for solo soprano
 text Anon. (13th century)
 first performance Jane Ginsborg, York Arts Centre, 8 November 1977
 ISMN M 57080 079 7 score: £5.95

Setting (1977) 16'
 soprano and piano
 text by Georg Trakl
 ISMN M 57080 095 7 score: £10.95
 ISMN M 57080 097 1 two performance scores: £18.95

Toward the Rainbow (2014) 14'
 soprano, recorders (treble, tenor, bass – one player)
 text by DH Lawrence
 ISMN M 57036 590 6 two performing scores: £18.95

Vignette (1984) 7'
 soprano and harp
 ISMN M 57036 977 5 score: £9.95

VOICE AND 4-7 INSTRUMENTS

Along upon (2009) 9'30"
 for soprano and 7 players - fl, cl, vib, pno, vn, va, vc -
 one of a series of eight chamber works inspired by the writings of Thomas Hardy and known collectively as *Wessex Heights*. The pieces may be performed separately or in any combination.
 ISMN M 57036 119 9 score: £20.00
 ISMN M 57036 120 5 parts: £21.00

Embers (2004) 8'
 soprano, ob, cl, hn, vib, vn, va, vc
 ISMN M 57020 852 4 score: £20.00
 ISMN M 57020 855 5 parts: £14.00

Idyll (2003) 8'
 soprano, flute, bass clarinet, piano, viola, cello
 ISMN M 57020 852 4 score: £20.00
 ISMN M 57020 853 1 parts: £10.00

Volte-face (2009) 3'30"
 soprano, flute, oboe, violin
 ISMN M 57036 125 0 score: £10.00
 ISMN M 57036 126 7 parts: £6.00

VOICE AND 8 OR MORE INSTRUMENTS

The Arrival of the Poet in the City (1983) 20'
 narrator and 7 instruments - clarinet, bassoon, cornet, trombone, percussion, violin, double bass, live electronics
 ISMN M 57080 114 2 score: £17.95
 performance materials for hire

Blisworth Tunnel Blues (1986-7) 38'
 soprano and large ensemble
 2(both+picc).2(1st+ob d'amr).3(all+bcl, 2nd+asax, 3rd+tsax).1(+cbn) / 2.0.1.0 / 2perc.pf(+cel).hp / 1.1.1.1.1
 commissioned by Paul Webster for the Orpheus Ensemble with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain
 first performance: Jane Ginsborg and the Orpheus Ensemble, conducted by Paul Webster, Almeida Festival, 27 June 1987
 ISMN M 57020 299 7 score: £60.00
 performance materials for hire

For Tess (2009) 6'
 soprano and 9 instruments - flute, oboe, clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), horn, vibraphone, piano, violin, viola, violoncello
 ISMN M 57036 121 2 score: £18.00
 performance materials for hire

CHOIR, ACCOMPANIED

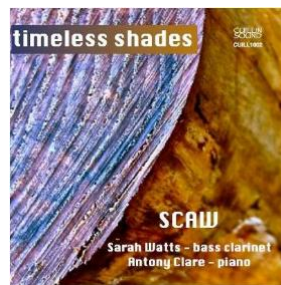
Behold O God (2023) 5'
 for SATB choir and organ
 text Psalm 84, commissioned by Sheffield Bach Choir
 first performance Sheffield Bach Choir, Darius Battiwala (org), cond. George Nicholson, St Mark's Church, Broomhill, Sheffield, 17 June 2023
 ISMN M 57080 037 7 choral score: £2.25

Dormi, Jesu! (2006) 5'30"
 for SATB choir and piano
 trad. Latin text (trans. Samuel Taylor Coleridge)
 ISMN M 57080 052 0 choral score: £2.55

CHOIR, UNACCOMPANIED

A World of Imagination (1984) 3'
for SATB choir
commissioned by the Choir of St James's, Piccadilly
first performance: the Choir of St James's Piccadilly,
Harry Bickett (cond), 11 May 1984
ISMN M 57020 667 4 choral score: £2.25

RECORDINGS



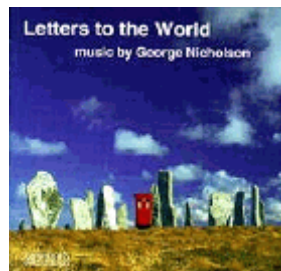
timeless shades

Includes: *Darkness Visible*

Performed by SCAW duo: Sarah Watts (bass clarinet) and
Antony Clare (piano)

Label: Cuillin Sound CUILL1002 (2013)

Released: 2013



Letters to the World

Includes: *Spring Songs*; three pieces from *Mots Justes*; *Nodus*; *Letters to the World*

Performed by Peter Lawson (pf), George Nicholson (pf),
Philip Edwards (cl), John Turner (rec), Alison Wells (sop),
Jonathan Price (vc), Keith Elcombe (hpch).

Label: Metier Records, MSV CD92062

Released: May 2007



Bochmann Quartet: Sackman and Nicholson

Includes: *String Quartet No.3*

Performed by the Bochmann Quartet

Label: Metier Records, MSV CD92016

Released: February 2000