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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.

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 '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

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directly by way of its invention, its imagination and its vitality."

Hubert Culot, *MusicWeb*

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*

"...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**
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**
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**
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**
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**
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

ISMN M 57020 065 9

parts: £60

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

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

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

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

ISMN M 57036 314 8

parts: £15

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

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

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

ISMN M 57020 282 9

parts: £18

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

ISMN M 57020 284 3

parts: £12

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

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

ISMN M 57020 296 6

parts: £10

- Sonant formant morph (2006)** 15'
bass clarinet, violin, viola, violoncello
first performance by Gemini, 20 September, 2006 at the University of Surrey
ISMN M 57020 943 9 score: £25
ISMN M 57020 944 6 parts: £24
- 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
ISMN M 57020 290 4 parts: £12
- 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
ISMN M 57020 292 8 parts: £8
- 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
ISMN M 57020 294 2 parts: £20
- 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
- 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
- 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
ISMN M 57020 298 0 parts: £9
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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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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

Further Than Guess (2010) 10'
tenor and cello
ISMN M 57036 191 5 score: £18

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

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

Mots Justes (1988-97) 32'
five inventions for piano
1. *Impromptu*
first performance: George Nicholson, Morley College,
London, 17 June 1988
2. *All systems go*
first performance: George Nicholson, Darlington Arts
Centre, 25 November 1989
3. *For Miles*
first performance: George Nicholson, Keele University,
27 February 1992
4. *Sung without words*
5. *In accord*
first performance: Peter Lawson, Firth Hall, Sheffield, 20
March 2001
ISMN M 57020 304 8 score: £24

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

Nodus (1979) 10'
clarinet in A and piano
ISMN M 57036 971 3 score and part: £15.95

Pas seul (2011) 7'30'''
for solo piano
first performance given by Leo Nicholson at Trinity
College of Music, June 9th, 2011
ISMN M 57020 289 9 score £10

Piano Sonata (1983) 22'
for solo piano
ISMN M 57020 976 8 score £16.95

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

Shadow Play (2016) 12'
flute and clarinet in A.
premiered by Simon Desorgher and Phillip Edwards,
London New Wind Festival, 20th 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

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

Soundings (2013) 19'
solo bass clarinet
ISMN M 57036 462 6 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

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: £26

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

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
ISMN M 57020 302 4 parts: £15

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
ISMN M 57036 120 5 parts: £21

Embers (2004) 8'

soprano, ob, cl, hn, vib, vn, va, vc

ISMN M 57020 852 4 score: £20
ISMN M 57020 855 5 parts: £14

Idyll (2003) 8'

soprano, flute, bass clarinet, piano, viola, cello

ISMN M 57020 852 4 score: £20
ISMN M 57020 853 1 parts: £10

Volte-face (2009) 3'30"

soprano, flute, oboe, violin

ISMN M 57036 125 0 score: £10
ISMN M 57036 126 7 parts: £6

VOICE AND 8 OR MORE INSTRUMENTS

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
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
performance materials for hire

CHOIR, UNACCOMPANIED

A World of Imagination (1984) 3'

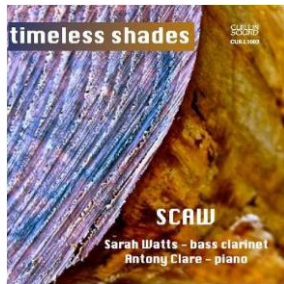
for SATB choir

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



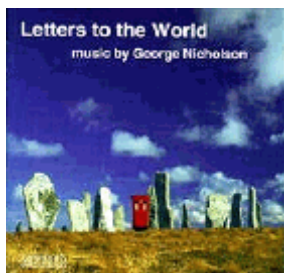
timeless shades

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