



**Wednesday 19 May 2021, 7.30pm**

# **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra and Jazz Choir with Iain Ballamy**

## **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra**

**Scott Stroman** director

## **Guildhall Jazz Choir**

**Kevin Fox** director

**Iain Ballamy** saxophone/composer

*All Men Amen*

*Serendipity*

*Emmeline*

*Cockles & Mussels* (Iain Ballamy, arr. Iain Ballamy orch. Malcolm Edmonstone)

*Tamil Devotional Song* (Trad., arr. Iain Ballamy, orch. Malcolm Edmonstone)

*The Chant*

*Floater*

*Not In The Mood*

*Chantries* (reprise)

All composed by Iain Ballamy and arranged by Malcolm Edmonstone, unless otherwise stated.

This performance took place on Thursday 6 May 2021 in Milton Court Concert Hall and was recorded and produced live by Guildhall School's Recording & Audio Visual department.

# **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra and Jazz Choir**

## **Flute**

Ruta Sipola

## **Violin**

Annalise Lam

## **Saxophones**

Jess Bullen (alto)

Thomas Fletcher (alto/soprano)

Nat Philipps (tenor)

Kaidi Akinnibi (tenor)

Toby Lee (baritone)

## **Trumpets**

Finn Bradley

Marco Natale-Miles

Jack Ross

Oli Arnold

Joseph Oti-Akenteng

## **Trombones**

William King

Felix Fardell

Sam Gale

Simon Chorley (bass)

## **Guitar**

Nathan Brown

## **Piano**

Sam Davies

## **Bass**

Harry Pearce

## **Drums**

Dave Adsett

## **Choir**

Martha Abrahamson-Ball

Michelle Burton

Emily Grace Daniels

Sam Davies

Marta Gornicka

Milena Graci

Marianne Green

Kianja Harvey-Elliott

Lucy Hayes

Marlon Hibbert

Lois Kelly

Silvia Leonzio

Ryan MacKenzie

Martina Mihulkova

Georgina Naluyange

Issy Owen

Jo Rotunno

Presented collectively as *21st Century Pastoral* this concert of works written by Iain Ballamy, and arranged by Malcolm Edmondstone, is a retrospective of his compositions covering 35 years, some well-documented and un-recorded until now.

They were premiered in 2015 by NYJOS (National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Scotland) and the following year at the Royal Albert Hall for the 2016 BBC Proms.

## Composer notes

### *Chantries*

Along the ancient route known as the Pilgrims Way, which runs between Canterbury and Winchester, is a place near Guildford known as the Chantries. This is near the river Wey, not far from where I grew up.

*Wind through trees that whisper songs of voices past  
Bracken chalk and flint  
Outline an ancient path  
From St Martha's Church and onwards to St Catherine's spring  
Pilgrims pause to drink the holy water from the stream  
Through the chantries  
You can hear them  
Sing this song that  
Takes you there too*

### *All Men Amen*

This is the title track from my second album (c.1992). It has a hymn-like quality, which reflects my early musical influences of church music. The choir creates a cycling, looping introduction, out of which comes a big melody played with unbridled expression. The title itself is word play and a call for humanity and equality.

### *Serendipity*

The opening motif to this piece was discovered quite by chance hence the title. There is something about this piece that in my mind evokes the music and personality of Sir John Dankworth. It also resonates strongly with my life-long passion for metal detecting where everything is somehow a luck chance discovery.

### *Emmeline*

A love song from *An Ape's Progress*, a large piece co-commissioned by the Manchester Jazz and Literature Festivals in 2015. This is a song about a monkey who has a crush on the suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst. He wishes he could travel back in time on a bus to Moss Side and meet her for tea to talk about her life, but realises it is a foolish dream that can never be...

*Emmeline, Emmeline, you were some lady  
I took the bus to Moss Side but you were gone.  
I looked for a bus that could take me back to 1903  
But it didn't run anymore  
I wondered if we might meet for coffee  
To talk about the things you've seen and done  
Oh we could pass the time of day so well!  
But it's just a silly dream, never mind  
I just want you to know that if we could have met  
I know that I would fall in love with  
You you you you you*

### *Cockles & Mussels*

Also known as 'Molly Malone' this lovely and, seemingly now rarely heard, old folk song is sometimes called the unofficial anthem of Dublin city. Again, the arrangement of the piece has stretched and deviated greatly from the original, with odd bar lengths altering the scan and phrasing and interesting re-harmonisations throughout. This is a song I always wanted to play!

### *Lavender eyes*

An unashamedly calm and romantic piece and word play inspired by the way dogs sometimes look at their owners with "love in their eyes"

### *Tamil Devotional Song (Varkala) and The Chant*

These are two personal interpretations of the Tamil devotional chants I heard drifting through the woods late at night whilst in Kerala, South India, during festival season in Varkala. *Varkala*, the opening folk song, is introduced by the choir and becomes increasingly uplifting as the music grows. *The Chant*, in contrast, has a mesmeric effect as the bar lengths gradually decrease and the pace quickens, with the repeated motif building to a climax with more horns added and rising energy to a peak before trailing away.

### *Floater*

This melody was written in Oslo in 2000. As I walked through the city late at night this song started playing in my head so strongly that I wondered if it had been simply floating in the air for centuries just waiting for anyone who could tune into it to hear and enjoy. It is like a folk song – timeless, simple and hard to forget once heard.

### *Not In The Mood*

The only thing this piece has in common with Glen Miller's classic is a repetitive looping phrase at the beginning. The rest of the piece is a tipping of the hat to one of my favourite musicians and composers of all time – Hermeto Pascoal – the great Brazilian multi-instrumentalist. There are some tricky melody passages and groovy blowing in this piece, which sums up everything I love about Hermeto's music.