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by José Ángel García Landa

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**Benjamin Britten** (1913-1976)

(Modern classical British composer; st. Royal College of Music, London; controlled by overbearing mother; homosexual, active pacifist, socialist, friend of W. H. Auden, lived all his life with Peter Pears, in Long Island 1939-42, gave recitals together)

**Works**

Britten, Benjamin. *Sinfonietta* op. 1. In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Our Hunting Fathers* op. 8 (devised by W. H. Auden). In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Quatre Chansons Françaises.* 1928. (I. Nuits de Juin. II. Sagesse. III. L'Enfance. IV. Chanson d'automne). Ed. Colin Matthews. In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *French folksongs* (arr. Britten). ("Quand j'étais chez mon père"; "Eho! Eho!"). In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Nursery rhyme from Suffolk ('Oliver Cromwell')." Arr. Britten. In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge.* 1937.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ceremony of Carols.*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Hymn to Saint Cecilia." On poems by W. H. Auden. In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Paul Bunyan.* Operetta. Text by W. H. Auden. 1941.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Peter Grimes.* Opera. 1945.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Peter Grimes.* With Peter Pears.

\_\_\_\_\_. From *Peter Grimes.* In Bernstein, *The Final Concert: Beethoven: Symphony no. 7. Britten: 4 Sea Interludes from "Peter Grimes."* Boston Symphony Orchestra/ Leonard Bernstein.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Peter Grimes – 4 Sea Interludes.* André Prévin.Extracts. In *A Celebration of Defining Moments in Recording History: 150 Legendary Recordings. Complete Catalogue, Including Two Bonus CDs.*  (EMI Classics - Great Recordings of the Century). Booklet + 2 CDs. EMI Records, 2004.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Rape of Lucretia.* Opera. 1946.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Albert Herring.* Opera. 1947.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Beggar's Opera.* Libretto by John Gay, music by Pepusch. New musical version realised from the original airs by Benjamin Britten. 1948.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Beggar's Opera.* Philip Langridge, Anne Collins, Robert Lloyd, Ann Murray, John Rawnsley, Yvonne Kenny, Nuala Willis, Christopher Gillett, Declan Mulholland. Chorus (Harry Christophers). Orchestra / Steuart Bedford. 2 CDs. London: Decca-Argo, 1993.\* (Notes by Donald Mitchell and Philip Reed; libretto in English, French, German and Italian).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Death in Venice.* Opera.

\_\_\_\_\_. *String Quartet No. 2,* op. 36. In *A Way A Lone.* Tokyo String Quartet. (With:) Toru Takemitsu, *A Way A Lone;* Samuel Barber, *String Quartet, Op. 11.* Rec. Princeton U, 1992. CD. BMG-RCA Red Seal, 1995.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Opera in three acts, op. 64. Libretto by Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears, based on William Shakespeare's play. 1960. (Sung by Peter Pears).

\_\_\_\_\_. A Midsummer Night's Dream. Sylvia McNair, Brian Asawa, Robert Lloyd, Carl Ferguson, Brian Bannatyne Scott, Hilary Summers, John Mark Ainsley, Paul Whelan, Ruby Philogene, Janice Watson, Gwynne Howell, Ian Bostridge. New London Children's Choir. London Symphony Orchestra / Sir Colin Davis. 2 CDs. Philips Digital Classics.

\_\_\_\_\_. A Midsummer Night's Dream / Ein Sommernachtstraum / Le Songe d'une nuit d'été. James Bowman, Lillian Watson, Dexter Fletcher, Norman Bailey, Penelope Walker, John Graham Hall, Henry Herford, Della Jones, Jill Gomez, Donald Maxwell, Roger Bryson, Adrian Thompson, Adrew Gallacher, Robert Horn, Richard Suart. Trinity Boys Choir. City of London Sinfonia / Richard Hickox. 2 CDs. London: Virgin Classics, 1993.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *War Requiem, opus 66.* Galina Vishnevskaya, soprano; peter Pears, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone. The Bach Chorus and London Symphony Orchestra Chorus (David Willcocks); Highgate School Choir (Edward Chapman); Simon Preston, organ. Melos Ensemble. London Symphony Orchestra / Benjamin Britten. Prod. Decca, 1963. 2 CDs. London: Decca, 1985.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Beggar's Opera.* Libretto by John Gay. Realized from the original airs by Benjamin Britten, as it was acted at the Theatre Royal, Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1728. The English Opera Group: Roger Jerome (The Beggar), David Hartley (The Manager of the Company), Brian Handley (The Stage Manager), David Kelly (Peachum), Bernard Dickerson (Filch), Anna Pollak (Mrs Peachum), Janet Baker (Polly Peachum), Kenneth McKellar (Captain Macheath), Bryan Drake (Lockit), Heather Harper (Lucy Lockit), Edith Coates (Mrs Trapes), Joan Edwards (Jenny Diver), Philip May (Ben Budge), David Hartley (Man of the Mint), Jack Irons (Tom Tipple), John Gibbs (Crook-Finger'd Jack), Bernard Dickerson (Wat Dreary), Andrew Snarski (Harry Paddington), Brian Handley (Slippery Sam), Patricia Brigenshaw (Mrs Coaxer), Sally Langford (Dolly Trull), Carolyn Maia (Mrs Vixen), Angela Jenkins (Betty Doxy), Joan Clarkson (Mrs Slammekin), Alice Hynd (Suky Tawdry), Sheila Amit (Molly Brazen). The English Chamber Orchestra / Meredeth Davies. Prod. and des. Colin Graham. TV film from The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, dir. Charles R. Rogers. BBC TV, 1963. Online at *YouTube (Oliver Drake)* 26 Dec. 2012.\*

<https://youtu.be/TW2GIYQTtIY>

2015

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Prince of the Pagodas.*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Curlew River.* Opera. (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, 1998). *YouTube*

<http://youtu.be/InBawPCqN1c>

2014

\_\_\_\_\_. *Gloriana.*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Four Sea Interludes.*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings,* op. 31. Peter Pears.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings, op. 31.* Robert Tear, tenor. Dale Clevenger, horn. Chicago Symph. / Carlo Maria Giulini. Prod. Polydor International, 1979*.* In Samuel Barber, *Adagio for Strings.* [With] Aaron Copland, *Quiet City;* Benjamin Britten, *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings, op. 31;* Arnold Schoenberg, *A Survivor from Warsaw, op. 46,* Richard Strauss, *Vier letzte Lieder.* (Historia Deutsche Grammophon de la música). Madrid: Polygram / Club Internacional del Libro, 1997.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Turn of the Screw.* Opera. Libretto by Myfanwy Piper, based on the story by Henry James. Premiere at La Fenice, Venice, 14 Sept. 1954.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Turn of the Screw / Le Tour d'écrou.* Helen Donath, Heather Harper, Robert Tear, Ava June. Members of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden / Sir Colin Davis. Recorded 1981. Philips Clasics, 1983. CD.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Billy Budd.* Opera. Libretto by E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier, based on Herman Melville's novel.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Billy Budd.* With Peter Pears.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Cello Symphony.* In Barber, *Cello Concerto.* [With] Britten, *Cello Symphony.* Yo-Yo Ma. Baltimore Symphony Orchestra / David Zinman. CD. CBS, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Folksong from Somerset ('O Waly Waly')" arr. Britten. In Britten, *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Hymn to the Virgin." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Hymn of Saint Columba." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Hymn to Saint Peter." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Antiphon." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Te Deum in C." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Jubilate Deo." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. "Festival Te Deum." In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_.  *Rejoice in the Lamb.* In *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Our Hunting Fathers. Quatre Chansons Françaises. Folksongs. Sinfonietta.* Ian Bostridge. Britten Sinfonia / Daniel Harding. CD. EMI Classics, 1998.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Folksongs.* With Vaughan Williams, *Folksongs.* Robert Tear. Philip Ledger. CD. (HMV Classics). EU: EMI, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Blest Cecilia: Britten Choral Works 1.* The Sixteen / Harry Christophers. CD. CORO The Sixteen Edition, 2002.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Boy Was Born.* Alexander Main-Ian, treble. Trinity Boys Choir. BBC Symphony Chorus / Stephen Jackson. Rec. 2002. In *Christmas Music: Respighi, Britten & Honegger.* (BBC Music Magazine 236). CD. UK: BBC, 2003.\*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Death in Venice.* With Peter Pears.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Noye's Fludde.*

\_\_\_\_\_. *Albert Herring.* Opera.

Brightman, Sarah. *The Trees They Grow So High: Folksongs Arranged by Benjamin Britten 1913-1976.* Geoffrey Parsons, piano. Recorded 1988. CD. EMI Records, 1998.\*

Purcell, Henry. *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation.* Arr. Benjamin Britten. In Kiri Te Kanawa, *Kiri in Recital: Liszt, Obradors, Ravel.* Roger Vignoles, piano. CD. London: Decca, 1990.\*

**Works: Writings**

Britten, Benjamin. *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters of Benjamin Britten, 1913-1976: Volume Six, 1966-1976.* Ed. Philip Reed and Mervyn Cooke. Boydell/Britten-Pears Foundation, 2013.

**Biography**

Kildea, Paul. *Benjamin Britten: A Life in the Twentieth Century.* London: Penguin, 2013.

**Criticism**

Carey, Leo. "The Battle of Britten." *New York Review of Books* 15 Aug. 2013.\*

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2013/aug/15/battle-britten/>

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Kennedy, Michael. "Corruption et innocence." Jacket notes in Britten, *The Turn of the Screw / Le Tour d'écrou.* Philips Clasics CD, 1983.\*

Mellers, Wilfrid. "The Springs of Life: A Theme in the Operas of Britten and Tippett." In *The Present.* Vol. 8 of *The New Pelican Guide to English Literature.* Ed. Boris Ford. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983. 535-50.\*

Mitchell, Donald. *"The Beggar's Opera:* An Introduction." Notes to Gay/Britten, *The Beggar's Opera.* 2 CDs. London: Decca-Argo, 1993.\*

Mitchell, Donald, and Philip Reed. "A Commentary on the Music" Notes to Gay/Britten, *The Beggar's Opera.* 2 CDs. London: Decca-Argo, 1993.\* (With additional documents edited by Mitchell and Reed).

Morra, Irene. "Britten's National Opera: *Gloriana* and the Shakespeare Problem." (Kingston Shakespeare Seminars, 20 Nov. 2014). Online audio at *Backdoor Broadcasting Company*

<http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2014/11/irene-morra-brittens-national-opera-gloriana-and-the-shakespeare-problem/>

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Tambling, Jeremy. "Civilization and Natural Depravity: On Forster, Melville, Lawrence, and Britten." In *Only Connect: E. M. Forster's Legacies in British Fiction.* Ed. Elsa Cavalié and Laurent Mellet. Bern: Peter Lang, 2017. 27-46.\*

Wiebe, Heather. *Britten's Unquiet Pasts: Sound and Memory in Postwar Reconstruction.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013.

Anthologies

Albright, Daniel, ed. *Great Shakespeareans, Volume XI: Berlioz, Verdi, Wagner, Britten.* (Great Shakespeareans, set III). London: Bloomsbury, 2012.\*

Institutions and societies

Britten Sinfonia

Music

Pärt, Arvo. *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten.* 1977. BBC Philharmonic / Paavo Järvi. In *Music from Estonia / Baltic Voyage: Heroic Symphonies from Estonia.* (BBC Music Magazine10.2). UK: BBC, 2001.\*