

Grace- Evangeline Mason

COMPOSER

Boosey & Hawkes is the exclusive publisher of Grace-Evangeline Mason's music.

More information about each piece as well as information about rental and sales materials can be found at:

www.boosey.com/Mason



Photo: Mark Mason



Photo: Juri Hiensch



Photo: Chris Christodoulou



Photo: Mark Mason



Long Biography (885 words)

Born in 1994, Grace-Evangeline Mason grew up in the West Midlands, learning trombone, clarinet and piano. She studied music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and the University of Oxford, and is currently pursuing her Doctorate in composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Her breakthrough as a composer came as an 18-year-old in 2013 when she won the BBC Young Composer of the Year, the first of a series of awards and prizes - including the Rosamond Prize, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's Christopher Brooks Prize (2017) and the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize (2018) - that has 'brought Grace-Evangeline Mason to national attention as a composer of striking candour.' [Richard Powell] This saw her working with leading ensembles and artists including members of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, the Aurora Orchestra and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, with works presented by leading UK arts organisations including the Cheltenham Festival, Southbank Centre, the Three Choirs Festival, and the BBC Proms.

2016 brought *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Mason's first operatic work, a compact 20-minute chamber opera for three singers and five instrumentalists, based on the pioneering short story of the same name by American novelist Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935). The drama is centred on a nameless young woman's descent into psychosis as her mental health issues, namely post-natal depression, are left misunderstood; her spiralling despair matched by the opera's chilling sonic disintegration. The opera was premiered successfully by the Helios Collective at English National Opera's Lilian Baylis Studios and received its first North American staging in 2019 by 23Degree Theatre in Montreal.

Mason made her BBC Proms debut as a composer in 2017 with the chamber orchestra work *RIVER*, commissioned by the BBC Proms and BBC Radio 4 Front Row to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Handel's *Water Music*. 'RIVER' was premiered live on BBC Radio 4 by London Early Opera on a boat on the River Thames, reenacting the premiere of Handel's *Water Music*, followed by three performances at the 2017 BBC Proms by the Royal Northern Sinfonia under Nicholas McGegan, who subsequently gave the US premiere of the work at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Connecticut, by the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. In 2018 she composed *Upon Weightless Wings* for large chamber ensemble, commissioned by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society to mark the 21st birthday of Ensemble 10:10. The 12-minute work was premiered under the baton of Clark Rundell in 2018 and performed by The Sound Ensemble in Seattle in 2020.

Other recent works include the string trio *Into the Abyss, I throw Roses*, which was commissioned by the Park Lane Group and has received multiple performances in the UK, US and Canada since its premiere in 2019 at the Southbank Centre's SoundState festival. *My thoughts fly in at your window* for wind and string octet was commissioned by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to mark its centenary year and premiered by members of the orchestra in 2020. Her orchestral score *The Imagined Forest*, described as being 'drawn with pen-and-ink precision and filled with vivid orchestral colour' [The Times], was premiered at the BBC Proms by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Domingo Hindoyan in 2021 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Royal Albert Hall, London, and has become her most internationally programmed work, travelling to Norway, Italy, Finland, Germany, the USA, and Australia, by orchestras such as the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Lahti, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and the Magdeburgische Philharmonie, as well as by the Operaorkestret at the Oslo Opera House, and the Philharmonia Orchestra at Teatro alla Scala, Milano, as part of MiTo SettembreMusica, with further performances scheduled by Chattanooga Symphony, Oulu Sinfonia, and Amarillo Symphony, amongst others. *The Water Garden* for harp and wind dectet was premiered in 2023 at the Southbank Centre in the Philharmonia Orchestra's Music of Today series and was described as 'An intricate, luxuriant parade of aqueous imagery' by The Guardian in a five-star review. Her latest orchestral work, *ABLAZE THE MOON*, 'carefully coloured and cannily orchestrated, a love poem with a starry dimension' [The Times], continues her decade-long relationship with the BBC Proms and was premiered in 2023 by the BBC Philharmonic under Mark Wigglesworth.

Writing for voice continues to play a significant role in Mason's output, with recent commissions from the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society resulting in the youth choir cantata *In Her Own Valley* (2019) and *Mahler's Letters* for choir (2020). Her choral pieces have been performed by the BBC Singers, Commotio, the Sarum Consort, the Philharmonia Baroque Chorale, the LSO Community Choir, and college chapel choirs of Oxford and Cambridge University, amongst others. The RPS co-commissioned *A Memory of the Ocean* for choir, piano and cello (2023) with support from the Vaughan Williams Foundation and the Netherlands Broadcasting Organization AVROTROS, which was premiered and recorded for album release on Delphian Records by the Bristol Choral Society, with the Dutch premiere given by the Netherlands Radio Choir in October 2023.

Mason was named as the 'face to watch' for classical music in The Times 2020 Calendar of the Arts and in 2021 the newspaper selected her as one of five young stars featured at the BBC Proms.

Grace-Evangeline Mason's music is published by Boosey & Hawkes.

April 2024

Short Biography (307 words)

Named as the 'Face to Watch' for Classical Music in The Times 2020 Calendar of the Arts, Grace-Evangeline Mason is a British composer of orchestral, chamber, choral, electronic and operatic music, described as a 'supreme painter in sound' [Seen and Heard International] and as having a 'keen ear for musical texture - from dreamy hazes of electronic sound to sumptuous choral writing.' [BBC] Mason creates ethereal sound-worlds often inspired by art, poetry and literature to take a listener on a narrative journey.

Her music has been performed by ensembles such as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Lahti, Oslo Opera House's Operaorkestret, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Aurora Orchestra, in venues across the UK and internationally, including European countries, USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and South Africa. Her music has been performed at festivals such as the Cheltenham Music Festival, Southbank SoundState Festival, LFCCM, and MiTo SettembreMusica at Teatro Alla Scala. Her BBC Proms debut was in 2017 with her work 'RIVER' co-commissioned with BBC Radio 4's Front Row programme, followed by the premiere of her orchestral work 'The Imagined Forest' at the 2021 BBC Proms by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Domingo Hindoyan, described as being 'drawn with pen-and-ink precision and filled with vivid orchestral colour' [The Times] and co-commissioned to mark the 150th anniversary of the Royal Albert Hall. Her most recent orchestral work 'ABLAZE THE MOON' was premiered by the BBC Philharmonic under Mark Wigglesworth at the BBC Proms in September 2023.

Mason is the recipient of awards including BBC Young Composer of the Year (2013) and the prestigious Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize (2018). She has studied at the RNCM, the University of Oxford, and the Royal Academy of Music, London.

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Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GraceEvangelineMason>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/grace_evangeline

Soundcloud: <https://soundcloud.com/grace-evangeline-mason>



Twitter: https://twitter.com/G_E_Mason

Youtube: www.youtube.com/@grace-evangelinemason

Website: www.graceevangelinemason.com

“Mason is a supreme painter in sound.”

— Colin Clarke, *Seen and Heard International*

“

“Mason burst onto the scene in 2013 with a piece called Convergence, an intensely wrought work for soprano, violin and cello. Now in her early 20s and still at college, Mason has a keen ear for musical texture - from dreamy hazes of electronic sound to sumptuous choral writing.”

— Andrew Dickson, *BBC*

“

“Grace-Evangeline Mason’s Into the Abyss, I Throw Roses was a beautiful and muscular piece for a string trio”

— *The Guardian* ★★★★★ on ‘Into the Abyss, I Throw Roses’

“

“Grace-Evangeline Mason, a composer barely out of her teens, who already seemed to me to show a strong theatrical flair in her piece, The Yellow Wallpaper, which made an immediate impact on us all. I was not the only one to find it the most mature and persuasive”

— Brian Dickie, *Opera Artistic Consultant* on ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’

“

Mason knows how to move symphonically, and there’s even an organically-evolved dance sequence before the music shifts back to its opening trumpet note... I certainly want to hear more of this composer.

— *The Arts Desk* on ‘The Imagined Forest’

“Short, but highly charged” — *The Times* ★★★★★ on ‘RIVER’

“

“The piece explores a realm of imagination coloured by the natural world... Mason skilfully shapes her attractive material to ensure we experience the sense of a transforming encounter with the imaginary forest”

— *Evening Standard* ★★★★★ on ‘The Imagined Forest’

“

“River, given its first concert performance at the water-themed dockside Prom in Hull, is a lushly scored work, in which liquid washes of string sound contrast with icy stabs of woodwind and brass.”

— Andrew Dickson, *BBC Proms* on ‘RIVER’

“

“Straight from the gossamer opening, it was clear that this evocation of enchantment would be sonically seductive; Mason also has a fine grasp of structure...The match of emotion and intellect with highly skilful orchestration in Mason’s piece is a winning one. A most memorable work.”

— *Seen and Heard International* on ‘The Imagined Forest’

“

“The Imagined Forest, was drawn with pen-and-ink precision and filled with vivid orchestral colour... Glittering surfaces gave way to music of greater emotional power as we drew deeper into the forest. The young British composer, 26, is a name to watch.”

— *The Times* ★★★★★ on ‘The Imagined Forest’

PRESS PACK: QUOTES

GRACE-EVANGELINE MASON

“Mason projects a formidable presence”

— Rodney Smith, *The Advertiser*, South Australia

“

“An intricate, luxuriant parade of aqueous imagery.”

— Andrew Clements, *The Guardian* on ‘The Water Garden’

“

“Perfect at translating water-poetry into music...beautiful writing for the harp perfectly realised.”

— David Nice, *The Arts Desk* on ‘The Water Garden’

“

“It was as delicate as a pressed flower in an album.”

— Ivan Hewett, *The Telegraph* on ‘The Water Garden’

“

“The birds were indeed singing in the complex fingering on the top manual – a pétillant passage of music. The birds were singing even more clearly from the middle manual. The music grew in contrapuntal complexity with a fine melody on the pedals. Here again the organ achieved an orchestral richness in this heartfelt music.”

— Alan Cooper, *Willis Organ Recitals*, on ‘Where the Birds Sing’

“

“Delightful...ethereal” — Stuart Sampson, *Lichfield Live*, on ‘Where the Birds Sing’

“

“Very well received by the audience...this piece is skilfully constructed, sensitive to its subject matter and engaging to listen to.”

— Penelope Young, *Wayfarer Magazine* on ‘Mahler’s Letters’

“A wonderful contrast with a real lightness and delicacy of sound that portrayed the poetry behind it so convincingly.”

— Richmondshire Concerts, on ‘My thoughts fly in at your window..’

“

“Deft, intricate and concise, Grace-Evangeline Mason’s new chamber piece suited the intimacy of the venue and its delicate tracery and shimmering gestures elicited a first performance of considerable poetry and emotional commitment”

— Paul Conway, *Musical Opinion* on ‘My thoughts fly in at your window..’

“

“Tonal, sensuous, and sounds glorious, conveying the idea of ‘fleeting, temporary splendour’ – just like it says on the tin.”

— Robert Beale, *The Arts Desk* ★★★★★ on ‘Glass Cathedrals’

“

“Do not miss Grace-Evangeline Mason’s glinting Glass Cathedrals for solo harp”

— Richard Fairman, *The Financial Times* on ‘Glass Cathedrals’

“

“A gorgeous, emotionally charged piece of music, sensitively performed by the trio of musicians, it had an other-worldly, almost filmic quality which was extremely appealing and drew the listener in.”

— *The Yorkshire Times* on ‘Into the Abyss, I Throw Roses’

“

“The music is beguiling, and evokes the changing nature of the ocean”

— David Dewar, *Bristol Post* ★★★★★ on ‘A Memory of the Ocean’

PRESS PACK: QUOTES

GRACE-EVANGELINE MASON

“Impressionist string phrases hovering over penumbral dissonances suggest moonlight in darkness. It’s quietly effective, and was beautifully done.”

— Tim Ashley, *The Guardian* ★★★★★ on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

“The curtain raiser was Grace-Evangeline Mason’s carefully coloured and cannily orchestrated Ablaze the Moon, a love poem with a starry dimension.”

— Neil Fisher, *The Times* ★★★★★ on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

“It crystallises enormous textures into something that is entirely persuasive”

— Marc Bridle, *Seen and Heard International* on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

“Sensuous and intriguing”

— Fiona Maddocks, *The Observer* ★★★★★ on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

*“Mason’s *The Imagined Forest* cleverly maintained momentum while simultaneously allowing listeners to appreciate its greenery. Mason projects a formidable presence through the composition’s tensile strength and sensitive beauty.”*

— Rodney Smith, *The Advertiser, South Australia* on ‘*The Imagined Forest*’

“

“It is a skilfully written, glistening score of delicacy and restraint.”

— Graham Strahle, *In Review, Australia* on ‘*The Imagined Forest*’

“It is picturesque work, creating a landscape of picnics and mountain hikes, fairy tales and fancies.”

— Dr Diana Carroll, *Arts Hub Australia* ★★★★★ on ‘*The Imagined Forest*’

“

“Mason’s 13-minute delight might be described as a musically-guided meditation or a kind of aural virtual reality, as it places the audience in a state of relaxed attentiveness and takes us for a walk through a wonderland of colourful forms evoked by solo instrumental passages amid vivid orchestral interplay. One can even imagine the delicate aromas of a verdant forest wafting in the air... The music rises in power and then settles again in the latter stages. The composition’s lightness belies its complex and finely balanced orchestration, and the absence of rhythmic drive heightens the dreaminess.”

— Chris Reid, *Limelight Magazine, Australia* ★★★★★ on ‘*The Imagined Forest*’

“

“With lush strings cocooning flowing woodwind lines, this five-minute evocation of love and the night sky has charm in spades. Woozy trombone glissandi and a delicate stippling of tuned percussion pierce an iridescent soundscape rich in nocturnal romance.”

— *Musical America* on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

“Atmospheric and expressive” — *Colin's Column* on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

“

“Well-crafted” — Mark Pullinger, *Bachtrack* ★★★★★ on ‘ABLAZE THE MOON’

SELECTED PRESS FEATURES

The Guardian: 'My first night of the Proms: meet the young stars making their festival debuts'

Interview by Imogen Tilden, 2017

https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/jul/16/my-first-night-of-the-proms-young-stars-festival-debuts?CMP=twl_a-music_b-gdnmusic

BBC: '30 and under: Meet the young stars of the Proms 2017'

Feature by Andrew Dickson, 2017

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/music/articles/95f54624-8305-4304-a354-f0da1f5ee99e>

Royal Philharmonic Society: 'AFTER THE MIDNIGHT HOUR: MUSIC, PAINTING AND POETRY'

Feature written by Grace-Evangeline Mason, 2019

https://royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk/rps_today/news/grace-evangeline-mason?fbclid=IwARoeB98TN30V5MwVApEbXhiX5p72aQaoTEio2uM2h07YxUKeWErg5U7BoI8

The Times: 'Calendar of the Arts 2020'

Grace-Evangeline Mason named as The Times Classical Music 'Face to Watch' 2020, written by Richard Morrison 2020

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/calendars-at-the-ready-what-to-see-and-hear-this-year-8mrbjmm3l?fbclid=IwAR3AIOTjyNuZAuOoTDGCLBQXfcMjsEkO4lWgxyIEmTX-LCQvHzY5zKov4KI>

The Times: 'The Proms must go on! Meet the young stars of this year's classical music festival'

Grace-Evangeline Mason featured as one of 5 young stars of The Proms 2021, written by Richard Morrison and Neil Fisher, 2021

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-proms-must-go-on-meet-the-young-stars-of-this-years-classical-music-festival-hzdqhg8rv?fbclid=IwAR332LKX5mSBul5wwdZGjGye-4wnhEi7WYrreqhUd2w7_20UmAR4XOUUpQ84

The Proms must go on! Meet the young stars of this year's classical music festival

Neil Fisher and Richard Morrison talk to the young performers at this year's classical music bonanza



ORCHESTRA

ABLAZE THE MOON (2023) | 5'

for orchestra

2.picc.2.corA.3(III=bcl).2.dbn-4.3.2.btrbn.1-timp-perc(2):I-vib(with bow)/BD/tom-t(5);II-tam-t(with metal brushes),glsp/snare dr-harp-strings

The Imagined Forest (2021) | 12'

for orchestra

2.picc.3(III=corA).3.3(III=dbn)-4.2.2.btrbn.1-timp.perc(3):glsp/BD/4tom-t;susp.cyms/marimba/vib/4tom-t;t.bells/glsp/whip-harp-strings

KINTSUKUROI (Golden Repair) (2016) | 8'

for orchestra

3(III=picc.)-c.3.3.3(III=dbn)-4.3.2.btrbn.1-timp.perc(3):BD/crot./glsp/tam-t/4tom-t/vib/-organ ped.(optional)-celeste-harp-strings

ORCHESTRA WITH SOLOIST

FIREWORKS (2018) | 8'

For soprano voice and orchestra

Sop-2.2.2.2(II=contra.)-4.3.2.btrbn.1-timp-perc(2):whip/vib./BD/tom-t(4)/tam-t/-harp-celeste-strings

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

To Breathe Now (From 'Upon Weightless Wings') (2018 arr. 2019) | 5'

For chamber orchestra

2(II=picc).2.2.2-2.2.0.0-timp.perc:glsp/BD-strings

Pale Fires (2017) | 5'

For chamber orchestra

1.0.1.1-2.0.0.0-str(3.0.3.2.2.)

RIVER (2017) | 3'

For chamber orchestra

1.2.0.1-2.2.0.0-strings

WIND BAND

The Safe-Kept Memory (2021) | 5'

For concert band

2.picc.1.3.1-alto.sax(2)-t.sax.-bar.sax.-1.3.3.1-str.bass-timp-perc:glsp,sus.cyms

LARGE CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

The Water Garden (2022) | 10'

For wind dectet and harp

2fl(II=picc).2ob.2cl.2bn-2hn-harp

The Beauty of Decay (2020) | 8'

For chamber ensemble

fl.cl-perc-pft-str(1.1.1.1.1)

My thoughts fly in at your window (2020) | 10'

For chamber ensemble

cl.bn-hn-str(1.1.1.1.1)

Upon Weightless Wings (2018) | 12'

For chamber ensemble

1.1.1.1-1.1.1.0-perc-pft-str(1.1.1.1.1)

SMALL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

In the Fragrant Air (2022) | 5'

For saxophone quartet

Sop.sax/alto.sax/t.sax/bar.sax

PRESS PACK: WORKS LIST

SMALL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE cont.

...as a flock of wild birds (II. From 'My thoughts fly in at your window') (2020) | 2'

For string quintet
str(1.1.1.1.1)

Midnight Spires (2019) | 7'

For string quartet
Vln(2)/vla/vc

As Bronze (2018) | 3'

For brass quintet
Tpt(2)/hrn/tbn/tba

Into the Abyss, I Throw Roses (2018) | 7'

For string trio
Vln/vla/vc

KEYBOARD(S)

Where the Birds Sing (2021) | 6'

For solo organ

Light, Revealing (2021) | 3'

For solo organ

Pinhole Planetarium, Seeing Stars (2018) | 5'

For piano duo

PRESS PACK: WORKS LIST

SOLO/DUO

Whirl Up, Sea— (2022) | 3’

For cello

The Butterfly and the Stone (2021) | 3’

For flute and piano

Glass Cathedrals (2019) | 4’

For harp

Amongst the Cinders (2017) | 4’

For soprano saxophone and piano

Diamond Dust II (2015) | 6’

For clarinet in Bb and piano

Let the Rain Kiss You (2015) | 4’

For trombone and electronics

VOCAL

Blinding, Burning, Lovely (2017) | 7’

For soprano and ensemble

Sop/vlin/vla/vc/pno

The Rosy Hearth (2016) | 4’

For tenor and piano

PRESS PACK: WORKS LIST

CHORAL - SECULAR

A Memory of the Ocean (complete) (2023) | 20'

For choir, piano concertante and 'cello SSAATTBB/pno/vc

A Memory of the Ocean (I. From 'A Memory of the Ocean') (2023) | 7'

For choir, piano concertante and 'cello SSAATTBB/pno/vc

I am a pool (II. From 'A Memory of the Ocean') (2023) | 7'

For choir, piano concertante and 'cello SSAATTBB/pno/vc

Sea of Amethyst (III. From 'A Memory of the Ocean') (2023) | 4'

For choir, piano concertante and 'cello SSAATTBB/pno/vc

A Winter Carol (2021) | 3'

For choir (unaccompanied) SATB

Mahler's Letters (2020) | 18'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

Stars Above, Earth Below (2019) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

Fafaia (2018) | 3'30"

For choir and piano SATB

Faint Flight (2014) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SATB

PRESS PACK: WORKS LIST

CHORAL – SACRED

O Sapientia (2023) | 3'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

Magnificat (2019) | 6'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

A Song of Christ's Glory (2019) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTB

Tenebrae Factae Sunt (2018) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTB

The Lord Is (2015) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

Hodie Christus Natus Est (2015) | 4'

For choir (unaccompanied) SSAATTBB

PRESS PACK: WORKS LIST

OPERA/CANTATA

In her Own Valley (2019) | 17'

Cantata for combined youth/children's choirs

Children's choir (SSA), Youth choir(SSAABar), pno, perc.(3);anvil, glsp, BD,tom-t(4), susp.cyms, snare dr, Tam-t

Text: Lila Palmer

The Yellow Wallpaper (2016) | 20'

Chamber opera in one act

S,M,Bar, fl(=picc).cl(=bcl)-vln.vla.vlc

Text: Grace-Evangeline Mason after Charlotte Perkins Gilman

ARRANGEMENTS

I Saw Three Ships (Trad. arr.2019) | 3'

For soprano and piano

Sop/pno

L'altra notte in fondo al mare (Boito 1867 arr.2020) | 6'

For soprano and chamber orchestra

brass(2.1.1.1)-perc:crotales, sus.cyms-Sop-celeste-strings