

Roger May – Biography

Roger May is an established composer and orchestrator in the fields of both concert and media music. His compositions have been performed by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of Opera North, the National Symphony Orchestra, Jersey Symphony Orchestra, New Bristol Sinfonia, Reading Symphony Orchestra and the National Saxophone Choir of Great Britain. His music has featured in concerts globally, reaching Asia and Australia, and including major US states such as New York, California, Texas and Florida. Additionally, it has been included in Lesley Garrett's gala concerts, being performed to thousands in the dramatic setting of the grounds of Arundel Castle, as well as being heard in the UK's major concert venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Purcell Room, Barbican, St. John's Smith Square, St Georges Brandon Hill and CBSO Centre, and on national and local radio. Roger was appointed Composer-in-Residence with the National Saxophone Choir, a position that led to a number of new works for the medium. These included *Sax Circus*, which was first performed at the 2009 World Sax Congress in Bangkok and was used as the principal work and overall title of a series of educational workshops and performances by the group, as well as a CD release.

On screen, Roger orchestrated on the soundtrack to the ANNIE nominated score to the DreamWorks Animation film *Bee Movie*, and has worked on numerous projects for television, including the BBC's *Robin Hood*, *Francesco's Mediterranean Voyage*, Jeremy Paxman's *The Victorians* and David Dimbleby's *The 7 Ages of Britain*. His work as an orchestrator encompasses production music for KPM Musichouse and scores for Norwegian TV. Furthermore he composed the score to *Time with Nyenne*, winner of the Narcisse Award for Best Swiss Short Film at the Neuchâtel International Fantasy Film Festival.

His interest in composition was sparked at the age of 13 by the selection of a short orchestral work of his for performance by the London Symphony Orchestra at a music education day. Roger went on to study Music at the University of Bristol, and Composing for Film and Television at the London College of Music and Media, where he won the Wilfred Josephs prize for his orchestral epic, *Bariolage*. During this period he studied with Raymond Warren, Adrian Beaumont and Cecilia McDowall, and has recently received mentoring from eminent Scottish composer James MacMillan (CBE). His work *Flight to the Iolite* was selected for performance by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and he has won further awards for his compositions including several from Vox Novus (New York), the West Forest Sinfonia, Aldworth Philharmonic, National Saxophone Choir, Brass Initiative and Humboldt Chamber Brass, and had two works selected for a project to release orchestral compositions on the Vine app. Roger has been a featured composer at the British Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles (BASBWE) annual conference and his music was performed as part of BBC Music Nation, a high profile programme of events that took place nationally in 2012, the UK Olympic year.

In other disciplines, Roger studied conducting under Alan Rump and Patrick Bailey, and has worked as a guest conductor with the NSC, and for several years was regular conductor of a local amateur choir. He has also directed a range of big bands, wind bands and theatre productions, including his own stage musical at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and was invited to conduct his own music at Blackheath Halls as part of the 2012 British Sax Congress. He is a visiting lecturer in composition and orchestration, both within tertiary and secondary education, and this area of his work also includes mentoring student composers and assisting the Aldworth Philharmonic in their education programme. Roger also presents pre-concert talks and interviews for Reading Arts, which have recently encompassed the film music of both John Barry and Shostakovich.

Roger is published by Saxtet Publications, Just Music, Bandleader Publications and Reynard Music, which cover a range of works for various wind, brass and percussion ensembles. *The Three Towers Suite* for wind orchestra has been recorded and released by the Taunton Concert Band, who originally commissioned the work, and other compositions have been recorded by Mardi Brass, the Bergersen Quartet, the choir of Lincoln's Inn Chapel, Sax Shades, and by the National Saxophone Choir, including *Sax Circus*, the title track of their third CD.

