

Michael Ball

(b. 1946)

‘I believe that the composer has an implicit duty to serve the society he or she lives in by providing well-crafted music which is both grateful and stimulating to play or sing and hopefully uplifting to the imagination and the spirit, both for the player(s) and the listener. In short, my concern is to be useful and to communicate.’

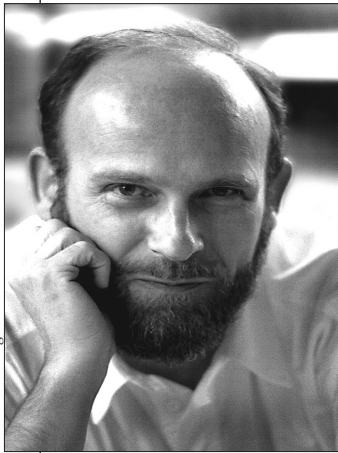


Photo: Tom Bangbala

Michael Ball was born in Manchester and studied at the Royal College of Music in London, principally with Herbert Howells, also with Humphrey Searle and John Lambert. He was one of four students selected to take part in masterclasses with Nadia Boulanger on her visit to the College in 1970. After winning the College's major composition awards including the Cobbett Prize during his final year, he was

awarded the Octavia Travelling Scholarship to study with Franco Donatoni in Italy during the summers of 1972 and 1973 and whilst there he also participated in masterclasses with György Ligeti and Luciano Berio. His music spans most major genres, although writing for chorus, for wind, and for brass have been a particular interest from the 1980's onwards. Ball has shown himself a versatile composer, clearly relishing the demands of writing to commission and thereby the opportunity to tailor his imagination to specific performers or occasions. He has fulfilled many major commissions, including six for the BBC. *Pageant* for chorus and wind instruments, based on the *Harrowing of Hell* legend, made a tremendous impact at its premiere, and led to the commissioning of what is arguably his most internationally acclaimed work, *Omaggio*, for the 1987 Congress of the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles in Boston, Massachusetts. The energy, virtuosic flair and freshness of its invention is impressive and led to the eminent position which Ball now occupies in the wind and brass band worlds. His work is published mainly by Novello, a number of other works are also published by Forsyth, Kirklees, Maecenas and Studio.

Selected Works

ORCHESTRAL

Farnesong (1990)

2222 2200 timp 2 perc cel hrp str [incl. 4 vn, va, 4 vc]
Novello & Co. Ltd 12'
Commissioned by Chetham's School of Music,
Manchester.
Premiere: 18 October 1990. Evesham Arts Centre,
England. Chetham's School of Music Chamber Orchestra.

Danses Vitales: Danses Macabres (1987)

2222 4331 timp 4 perc pf+cel hrp str
Novello & Co. Ltd 22'
Commissioned by the BBC.
Premiere: 6 October 1987. Free Trade Hall, Manchester.
BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Sir Edward
Downes.

Resurrection Symphonies (1982)

3333 4331 timp 4 perc hrp pf+cel str [14.12.10.8.6]
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 36

ENSEMBLE

Strawberry Jam (1998)

vn pf
Contemporary Music Centre Editions / CMC 2102 7'
Commissioned by Contemporary Music Centre for
publication in the SoundWorks series.

Concertino (1997)

cl choir [ecl, 6 cl, a cl, bcl, cbcl]
Studio Music Ltd 5'
Commissioned by Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust.
Premiere: 5 September 1998. Reading, England. Berkshire
Young Musicians' Trust, conductor Charles Henwood.

Music for an Island (1989)

2 gui
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 120776 10'
Commissioned by the Hand/Dupré Duo with funds
provided by North West Arts and music societies in
Bury, Holmes Chapel, Lytham St Anne's, Northwich and
Stockport.
Premiere: 24 January 1990. New Arts Theatre, Royal
Grammar School, Clitheroe, Lancashire. Hand/Dupré
Guitar Duo: Richard Hand (gui), Tom Dupré (gui).

Prospero's Music (1984 - 1985 rev. 1994)

arec, pf
Forsyth Brothers 10'
Premiere: 13 August 1985. Lake District Summer Music,
England. John Turner (arec), Neil Smith (gui).

Danserye (1983)

srec, pf
Forsyth Brothers 14'
Premiere: 21 October 1983. Baronial Hall, Chetham's
School of Music, Manchester. John Turner (srec), Peter
Lawson (pf).

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Miriam's Music (1991)

pf
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 100337 10'

Kabuki (1987)

pf
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 360007 13'
Commissioned by William Howard with funds provided
by South West Arts. Premiere: 10 July 1987. Cheltenham
Festival. William Howard.

VOCAL AND CHORAL

Nocturns (1990)

satb with solo, 2 perc, 2 pf
Novello & Co. Ltd 17'
Commissioned by Manchester Chorale with funds provided by the Holst Foundation and North West Arts.
Premiere: 3 March 1991. Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Manchester Chorale, Raymond Lomax, Paul Patrick (perc), Keith Swallow, John Wilson (pf), conductor Jeffrey Wynn Davies.

A Maide so bright (1986)

satb [div. with soli]
Text: Anon
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 070502 11'
Premiere: 6 December 1987. Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. William Byrd Singers of Manchester, conductor Stephen Wilkinson.

Pageant (1985)

satb, 2 ob, ca, 2 bn, 2 tpt, 3 trb
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 070487 22'
Commissioned by the Hale Barns Festival with funds provided by North West Arts. Premiere: 11 May 1985. Hale Barns, Cheshire. Hale Barns Festival Chorus, Royal Northern College of Music Wind Ensemble, conductor John Powell.

A Hymne to God my God (1984)

satb [div.]
Text: John Donne
Novello & Co. Ltd 28'
Commissioned by the BBC for Stephen Wilkinson and the BBC Northern Singers on the occasion of their thirtieth birthday. Premiere: 8 August 1985. Ripon Cathedral, England. BBC Northern Singers, conductor Stephen Wilkinson.

Sainte Marye Virgine (1979)

s s a a t t b b
Novello & Co. Ltd 29'
Commissioned by Stephen Wilkinson for the William Byrd Singers of Manchester with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain. Premiere: 5 March 1980. Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. William Byrd Singers of Manchester, conductor Stephen Wilkinson.

BAND

Euphonium Concerto (2002)

euph-solo, brass Band / euph-solo, 3332 4321 timp perc str
Kirklees Music 19'
Commissioned by Park & Dare Band Welsh Brass Arts Festival with the support of 'Arts for All' Lottery Grant from the Arts Council of Wales. Premiere: 15 June 2002. Parc and Dare Theatre, Treorchy, South Wales. David Childs (euph-solo), Parc and Dare Band, conductor Craig Roberts.

...all the flowers of the mountain (2004)

Brass band
Kirklees Music 15'
Commissioned by BBC for the 2004 Besson National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain.
Premiere: 16 October 2004. UK National Brass Band Championships, Royal Albert Hall, London, England.

A Cambrian Suite (2001)

Brass band
Studio Music Ltd. 9'
Commissioned by Black Dyke Band and the Brass Band Heritage Trust. Premiere: 18 January 2002. Royal Northern College of Music Festival of Brass, Manchester, England. Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J Childs. Recording: The Brass Music of Michael Ball. Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J. Childs. Doyen 2002. DOYCD135.

Ceremony (2000)

Brass band
Novello & Co. Ltd 12'
Commissioned by the British Open Brass Band Championship. Premiere: 9 September 2000. Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

An English Suite (1999)

Brass band
Studio Music Ltd. 10'
Commissioned by Brass Band Heritage Trust and the Fodens (Courtois) Band. Premiere: 5 February 2000. British National Youth Brass Band Championships, Peel Hall, The University of Salford, England. Recording: The Brass Music of Michael Ball. Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J. Childs. Doyen 2002. DOYCD135.

Whitsun Wakes (1997)

Brass band
Novello & Co. Ltd 17'
Commissioned by the BBC.
Premiere: 26 May 1997. BBC 'Music Live!' Festival, Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Black Dyke Mills Band, conductor James Watson. Recording: The Brass Music of Michael Ball. Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J. Childs. Doyen 2002. DOYCD135.

Three Processionals (1997)

fl, ob, 3 cl, a cl, bcl, bn, 2 asax, tsax, barsax, 3 tpt, 2 hn, 3 trb, euph, tuba, timp, 3 perc
Studio Music Ltd 7'
Commissioned by the British Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles. Premiere: 6 April 1998. Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust Wind Orchestra and Sefton Youth Wind Orchestra, conductor Timothy Reynish.

Intrada, Chaconne and Chorale (1995)

picc, 2 fl, 2 ob, 4 cl, bcl, cbcl, 2 bn, 2 asax, tsax, barsax, 4 hn, 4 tpt, 3 trb, euph, 2 tuba, timp, xyl+glock, 3 perc [vib, tbells, tam tam], db
Maecenas Music 8'
Commissioned by the Farnham Festival.
Premiere: 25 March 1995. The Maltings, Farnham, England. Surrey County Youth Wind Orchestra, conductor Hugh Craig.

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Band (1994)

asax solo, picc, 2 fl, ob, 4 cl, bcl, bn, asax, tsax, barsax, 4 hn, 3 tpt, 3 trb, tuba, timp, 3 perc [xyl, glock, vib], db
Maecenas Music 15'
Commissioned by Timothy Reynish.
Premiere: 17 September 1994. BASBWE Conference, St Paul's Hall, Huddersfield, England. Rob Buckland (asax), Northamptonshire County Youth Concert Band, conductor Alan Suttie.

Chaucer's Tunes (1993)

picc, 2 fl, 2 ob, 4 cl, bcl, bn, 2 asax, tsax, barsax, 4 hn, 3 tpt, 3 trb, euph, tuba, timp, 3 perc, db
Version also available for brass band
Novello & Co. Ltd 11'
Commissioned by the British Association of Symphonic Bands and Wind Ensembles. Premiere: 19 September 1993. Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Stockport Grammar School Wind Band, conductor Michael Ball. Recording: *Recommended Wind Works from the 1993 BASBWE Conference*. BASBWE/01C.

Cortège (1992)

In memoriam Herbert Howells
supt-solo, brass band
Forsyth Brothers Ltd. 7'
Commissioned by the BBC.
Premiere: March 1993. New Broadcasting House, Manchester. Mark Walters (hn), Grimethorpe Colliery Band. Recording: The Brass Music of Michael Ball. Roger Webster (hn), Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J. Childs. Doyen 2002. DOYCD135.

Midsummer Music (1991 rev. 1997)

Sonata for Brass
Brass band
Novello & Co. Ltd 13'
Commissioned by Paul Hindmarsh for Besses o' th' Barn Band, with funds provided by Yorkshire Arts.
Premiere: 4 November 1991. St Paul's Hall, Huddersfield, England. Besses o' th' Barn Band, conductor Paul Hindmarsh. Recording: The Brass Music of Michael Ball. Black Dyke Band, conductor Nicholas J. Childs. Doyen 2002. DOYCD135.

Omaggio (1986)

3 fl 2 ob 4 cl bcl 2 bn 2 asax tsax barsax 4 thn 3 cnt 2 tpt 3 trb euph 2 tuba timp 4 perc
Novello & Co. Ltd / No. 090589 17'
Commissioned by Timothy Reynish with funds provided by North West Arts and the Royal Northern College of Music School of Wind and Percussion. Premiere: 31 October 1987. BASBWE Conference, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Royal Northern College of Music Wind Ensemble, conductor Timothy Reynish.

Frontier! (1984)

Brass band
Novello & Co. Ltd 13'
Premiere: 2 May 1987. European Brass Band Championship, Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham, England.