

# Stephen Gardner

(b. 1958)

“The most important advice I was given as a composer was “Don’t push your granny when she’s shaving.” If only we all followed that principle.”



Born in Belfast, Stephen Gardner studied at the University of Ulster and the University of Wales from 1984 to 1989, gaining the degrees of BA in music and MMus in composition. He has been the recipient of a Vaughan Williams Scholarship and a Draper’s Fellowship and has received commissions from Concorde, the

Sculptors’ Society of Ireland, Gerard McChrystal, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Music Network, BBC Radio Ulster, the Belfast Festival at Queen’s and the Sonorities festival, Belfast. In 1998-99 he was composer-in-residence with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, the first such position with a local authority in Ireland.

His orchestral works have been performed by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the Ulster Orchestra, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and the Ulster Youth Orchestra. Recent works include *Never... never...never* (2004), a commission from RTÉ for the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra; *More Pricks than Kicks* (2004), premiered by the European Union Chamber Orchestra in 2004; and *Blue Poles* (2002), commissioned by the BBC for the Ulster Orchestra and premiered in 2003.

Stephen Gardner was elected to Aosdána, Ireland’s state-sponsored academy of creative artists, in 2003.

## Selected Works

### ORCHESTRAL

#### *Never...never...never* (2004)

3333 3431 timp perc hrp str

MS 20’

Commissioned by RTÉ.

Premiere: 6 February 2004. National Concert Hall, Dublin.

RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, conductor Gerhard

Markson. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### *More Pricks than Kicks* (2004)

str

MS 8’

Commissioned by European Union Chamber Orchestra with

funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Premiere: 5 May 2004. Chelmsford Cathedral, England.

European Union Chamber Orchestra.

#### *The Ship Yard* (2002)

pf-solo, 2221 3431 timp 3 perc str

MS 7’

Commissioned by Belfast Festival at Queen’s with funds

provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National

Lottery Unit. Premiere: 25 October 2002. Waterfront

Hall, Belfast. Finghín Collins (pf-solo), Ulster Orchestra,

conductor Thierry Fisher. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### *Blue Poles* (2002)

Blue Poles

2222 2431 timp 2 perc str

MS 15’

Commissioned by BBC.

Premiere: 17 January 2003. Ulster Hall. Ulster Orchestra,

conductor Nicholas Braithwaite.

#### *SO* (2001)

str [4.3.2 .2 .1]

MS 10’

Commissioned by the Sonorities Festival with funds

provided by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland National

Lottery Unit.

Premiere: 7 May 2001. Sonorities Festival, Harty Room,

Queen’s University Belfast. BT Scottish Ensemble.

#### *Wallop* (1996)

3222 4231 str

MS 12’

Premiere: 11 October 1996. Ulster Hall, Belfast. Ulster

Orchestra, conductor John Lubbock.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### *Prána* (1994)

3333 4321 timp 2 perc str

MS 10’

Commissioned by the Ulster Youth Orchestra for their

inaugural concerts with funds provided by the Arts Council

of Northern Ireland.

Premiere: 19 August 1994. Guildhall, Derry. Ulster Youth

Orchestra, conductor En Shao.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

#### *Wanting, Not Wanting* (1992)

2222 4131 timp 2 perc str [2 solo vn, 7.4.4.3]

MS 11’

Commissioned by BBC Radio Ulster with funds provided by

the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Premiere: 17 March 1992. Ulster Hall, Belfast. Ulster

Orchestra, conductor John Lubbock.

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Sound Chaser (1990)**

2222 2330 timp perc cel hrp str  
MS 14'

Premiere: 12 September 1991. Royal Hibernian Academy  
Gallagher Gallery, Dublin. RTE Concert Orchestra,  
conductor Proinnsias Ó Duinn.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Lapis Lazuli (1989)**

1111 0110 2 perc hrp str  
MS 6'

Premiere: 7 October 1989. Sligo, Ireland. RTE Concert  
Orchestra, conductor Proinnsias Ó Duinn.

## ENSEMBLE

**Don't push your granny when she's shavin' (2005)**

2 vn va vc  
MS 15'

Commissioned by West Cork Chamber Music Festival in  
association with RTE.  
Premiere: 26 June 2005. West Cork Chamber Music  
Festival, Bantry House, Cork. RTE Vanbrugh Quartet.

**You can beat an egg (2005)**

fl cl vn vc db pf  
MS 10'

Commissioned by National Concert Hall as part of the  
Composer's Choice Series 2005.  
Premiere: 27 September 2005. Composer's Choice Series  
2005, John Field Room, National Concert Hall, Dublin.  
Lontano, conductor Odaline de la Martinez.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**May you live to you die (2001)**

2 vn va vc  
MS 20'

Commissioned by the ESB Vogler Spring Festival with funds  
provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

**Tallaght [Chiaroscuro] (2000)**

2 vn va vc  
MS 19'

Commissioned by South Dublin County Council.  
Premiere: 16 November 2000. South Dublin County  
Council Civic Offices, Tallaght, Co. Dublin. Michael d'Arcy  
(vn), Hibernia String Trio. Recording: *Tallaght [Chiaroscuro]*.  
Michael d'Arcy (vn), Hibernia String Trio. Stephen Gardner.  
SG01.

**Stretch (2000)**

fl, cl, bcl, pf, vn, vc  
MS 8'

Commissioned by Concorde with funds provided by the  
Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 18 February 2001. Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery  
of Modern Art, Dublin. Harry Sparnaay (bcl), Concorde.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**You Never Know What's Round the Corner (1999)**

fl cl perc [tom] pf vn vc  
MS 15'

Commissioned by Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County  
Council with funds provided by the Arts Council / An  
Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 21 April 1999. Church of Ireland, Monkstown,  
Dublin. Concorde. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Mutable Sea (1999)**

fl, ssax+cl, 2 kbd, vn, vc, db  
MS 15'

Commissioned by Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County  
Council with funds provided by the Arts Council / An  
Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 9 December 1999. Dalkey Castle and Heritage  
Centre, Dublin. Crash Ensemble, conductor Andrew  
Synnott.

**Trane (1996)**

cl+bcl, vn, vc, pf  
MS 11'

Commissioned by Concorde with funds provided by RTE.  
Premiere: 24 January 1997. John Field Room, National  
Concert Hall, Dublin. Concorde: Paul Roe (cl+bcl), Alan  
Smale (vn), David James (vc), Jane O'Leary (pf).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**They think it's all over (1995 rev. 1996)**

ssax+asax, asax+tsax, tsax, vn, vc, egui, ebass, 2 pf  
MS 6'

Premiere: 6 May 1995. Whitla Hall, Queen's University  
Belfast. Icebreaker Ensemble.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**Strange Fish (1993 rev. 1994)**

fl+afl, vn, vc, pf, perc [mar, suspended cym and bow]  
MS 18'

Commissioned by Concorde with funds provided by the  
Arts Council of Northern Ireland.  
Premiere: 20 February 1994. National Concert Hall, Dublin.  
Concorde, director Jane O'Leary.  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

**The Milesian Equation (1993)**

cl vn va vc  
MS 8'

Commissioned by The Sculptors' Society of Ireland with  
funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle  
Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 26 September 1993. See-through Art Exhibition,  
Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin.  
Concorde. Recording: *Contemporary Music from Ireland,*  
*Volume One.* CMC CD01.

**String Quartet (1990)**

A Dream of Thaw  
2 vn va vc  
MS 9'

## SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

**The Ill-Tempered Klavier (2000)**

pf  
MS 8'

Commissioned by Music Network with funds provided by  
the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.  
Premiere: 2 December 2000. State Apartments, Dublin  
Castle. Barry Douglas (pf).

**Hold on (1997 - 1998)**

pf  
MS 8'

Premiere: 14 March 1998. Aula Maxima, University College  
Cork. Andrew Zolinsky (pf). Recording: CMC Sound  
Archive.

**Tightrope (1991)**

pf  
MS 10'

Premiere: 12 March 1992. Waterford Regional Technical  
College, Ireland. Ian Wilson (pf).  
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

## VOCAL AND CHORAL

**Supremum est Mortalibus (2002)**

satb [div.]  
Text: Anon  
MS 8'

Premiere: 5 December 2002. Shaw Room, National Gallery  
of Ireland, Dublin. National Chamber Choir, conductor  
Celso Antunes.

**Crécht Mór (1996)**

satb [div.], uilpipes, speaker  
Text: Bill Hughes  
MS 55'

Commissioned by the Famine Commemorative Group.  
Premiere: 1 November 1996. St Maur's, Rush, Dublin.  
Cantique, Martin Nolan (uilpipes), Bill Hughes (speaker),  
conductor Blánaid Murphy.