

# Scoring for the ladies: the women composers of music for brass bands

Gavin Holman – October 2018

At the beginning of 2017 the Harrogate Band began a campaign to raise the profile of female composers and arrangers of music for brass bands.

Brass bands wouldn't exist without women and their support, and yet rarely any music is ever performed that has been written by a woman, very few female conductors exist, hardly any women adjudicate brass band competitions. It's a situation that persists largely without question. The Harrogate Band has a proud tradition of regularly performing contemporary original music for brass and it began to address this gender by increasing the amount of music it played composed and arranged by women. It was not much, but someone had to start somewhere. It also offered female composers and students the opportunity to hear their music performed by the Band. Every concert performance of the Band during 2017 included at least one piece of music by a female composer.



Why do this?

A member of the Band commented: *"I can't really see the problem, no one's stopping women writing music are they?"*. Reading the evidence from the Performing Right's Society (PRS) report into why female representation in music composition is so low gives us an insight:

*"The perception of most interviewed artists is that the music industry is still very male dominated. This is particularly the case 'behind the scenes' in production, where women creators are often working in all male environments. This can mean needing to work and push much harder to get your voice heard. Linked to this, the lack of strong female role models and recognition of what women do and have achieved in music in the past, is a real issue in terms of shaping the ambitions and confidence of young women entering the industry."* - PRS Women Make Music Evaluation Report 2011 - 2016 [<http://www.prsfoundation.com>]

The Band didn't actually know if the brass band movement mirrors the music industry as a whole but a cursory review of its own experience showed it probably does. Until recently the Band committee was never led by a women, all its adjudicators for all its contests had been male, it had only ever performed one piece in competition written by a woman, virtually all the panels that pick competition pieces were male, the two main media outlets for brass bands were run exclusively by men and there were very few women conductors. Looking through the Band's music pads and there would have been almost no music written by a woman; listen to brass band music programmes and women's voices are rarely heard.

Women are well represented in brass banding but their contribution is rarely recognised, visible and celebrated. Most bands wouldn't function without the work of women committee members, brass band competitions are kept going by women nearly always tucked away out




of the limelight behind the scenes doing vital administrative jobs, women are looking after children whilst their husbands play and 50% of the audiences are female. Indeed many bands today have significant proportions of female players – some exceeding 50%.

But it's much more than trying to reduce a gender imbalance. The reason is that we're wasting the talent of so many people who could be composing brilliant music for brass bands - our audiences are losing out and so is the brass band movement.

The Band's initiative had two objectives: to give women the confidence to compose brilliant music for brass band, and to showcase compositions by female composers to its audiences.

As part of the launch for the Band's "Women Making Music" initiative, a list of female composers and arrangers for brass bands was established. This list is by no means comprehensive, but does give an indication of the breadth of music available from the pens of women.



### **Some women composers and arrangers for brass band with their works**





<p><b>Elaine Agnew</b> - <a href="http://elaineagnew.com">http://elaineagnew.com</a></p> <p>Little Christmas</p>	
<p><b>Katie Bell</b></p> <p>On the Move arr: Simple Gifts (Lord of the Dance) arr: Christmas Compendium</p>	
<p><b>Judith Bingham</b> (1952-)</p> <p>Prague Brazil - A Souvenir Four Minute Mile Stars Above: the Earth Below These are our Footsteps</p>	

<p><b>Evangeline Booth</b> (1865-1950)</p> <p>Streams in the Desert, arr. Eric Ball  Love is All  Songs of the Evangel  Woman</p>	
<p><b>Anne Boyd</b> (1946-)</p> <p>Missa Pacifica : for soprano, large choir, brass band and organ (2008)</p>	
<p><b>May H. Brahe</b> (1884-1956)</p> <p>Down Here  I Passed by your Window  Bless This House, arr. Helen Taylor</p>	
<p><b>Helen May Butler</b> (1867-1957)</p> <p>Cosmopolitan America March</p>	
<p><b>Cheryl Camm</b> - <a href="https://cherylcamm.co.uk">https://cherylcamm.co.uk</a></p> <p>Destination 6574 (1984)</p>	

<p><b>Anita Cocker-Hunt</b></p> <p>I Do Believe</p>	
<p><b>Barbara Croall</b> - <a href="http://barbaracroall.ca">http://barbaracroall.ca</a></p> <p><i>Zaagi 'idiwin Nagamon (Love Song) - A singing landscape for brass band and pipigwan soloist</i></p>	
<p><b>Jessica Curry</b></p> <p>The Durham Hymns</p>	
<p><b>Kirsty Devaney</b></p> <p>Fanfare for Gosport</p>	
<p><b>Helen Douthwaite</b></p> <p>Celtic Lullaby  Dynamite!  Flourish  Song for Malik - Tenor Horn Solo  arr. Flow Gently Sweet Afton (A. Hume)</p>	






<p><b>Alice G. Edwards</b> (1878-1958)</p> <p>The Lord Will Be Gracious</p>	
<p><b>Estelle Flood</b></p> <p>Somewhere in Time  arr: Karelia (Sibelius)  arr. Brown Bird Singing (H. Wood)  arr. Dies Irae (G. Verdi)  arr. Dream of Olwyn (Charles Williams)  arr. Just The Way You Are  ef</p>	
<p><b>Dorothy Freed</b> (1919-2000) -  <a href="http://www.dorothyfreed.com">http://www.dorothyfreed.com</a></p> <p>Aquarius March for Brass Band (1971)</p>	
<p><b>Nancy Galbraith</b> - <a href="http://www.nancygalbraith.com">http://www.nancygalbraith.com</a></p> <p>with brightness round about it (2002)  Washington's Landing (2006)  Luminosity (2008)  Euphonic Blues for Brass (2013)</p>	
<p>Dorothy Gates (1966-)</p> <p>Anointing  Breathe  Cantad a Jehova  Feliz Navidad  Festive Preludium on Falcon Street  Give me Jesus  Gloria in Excelsis Deo  Hallelujah Variations  Hope</p>	






<p>I'm Pressing On  Jesus is my Lord  Jesus paid it all  Lord, Reign in Me  Sleep Little Jesus  Sweet Communion  Take the Name of Jesus with you  War Cry  Wexford Carol  arr. America the Beautiful (S.A. Ward)  arr. At the name of Jesus (J.M. Brierley)  arr. Find us Faithfull (John Mohr)  arr. Hallelujah (G.F. Handel)  arr. I'm in His Hands (Stanley Ditmer)  arr. Our God Reigns (Leonard Smith)  arr. Philippians 4:6 (Bobby McFerrin)  arr. See What a Morning (Keith Getty)  arr. Shepherd's Pipe Carol (J. Rutter)  arr. Silent Night (Franz Gruber)  arr. Ye Merry Gentlemen (Thomas Mack)</p>	
<p><b>Evelyn Glennie</b> - <a href="https://www.evelyn.co.uk">https://www.evelyn.co.uk</a>   A Little Prayer</p>	
<p><b>Sally Greenaway</b> - <a href="http://www.sallygreenaway.com.au">http://www.sallygreenaway.com.au</a>   Cirque du Brasse'air (2011)</p>	
<p>Irena Grieg (1962-)   Lux Aeterna</p>	



<p><b>Emily Hall</b></p> <p><i>Inframundo - A manuscript copy exists in the library of the Bedford Town Band</i></p>	
<p><b>Judith Hayes</b> - <a href="http://www.judithhayesmusic.co.uk">http://www.judithhayesmusic.co.uk</a></p> <p>arr. Gesu Bambino (Pietro Yon)  arr. Forres Cradle Song (James Scott Skinner)  arr. Meditation from Thais (horn solo)  Mongolian Folk Tune  arr, Gabriella's Song from "As it is in Heaven" (Stefan Nilsson)  Brazilian Festival  Irish Lament and Jig  arr. How Far is it to Bethlehem?  arr. I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In  Up on the House Top</p>	
<p><b>Agnes Heathcote</b> (1862-?)</p> <p>Jesus come with Peace  Jesus is near, burdens to bear  I'll Follow Thee</p>	
<p><b>Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel</b> (1805-47)</p> <p>Gartenlieder op.3</p>	

<p><b>Imogen Holst</b> (1907-1984)</p> <p>The Unfortunate Traveller (1930)</p>	
<p><b>Emily Howard</b> - <a href="http://www.emilyhoward.com">http://www.emilyhoward.com</a></p> <p>Obsidian</p>	
<p><b>Pimpanit Karoonyavanich</b>  <a href="https://plus.google.com/103167287842526364050">https://plus.google.com/103167287842526364050</a></p> <p>A Journey to The Bermuda Triangle</p>	
<p><b>Liz Lane</b> - <a href="http://www.lizlane.co.uk">http://www.lizlane.co.uk</a></p> <p>Tide and Time (2018)  Surtaal Symphony (2017) - for brass band, bhangra band and soprano  Diamond Fanfare II (2017)  Grand Union Waltz (2017)  Innovation 216 (2016)  Slate, Sea and Sky (2016)  Their Songs of Freedom (2015)  Silver Rose (2014)  Antiphonary (2013)  Diamond Fanfare (2012)  arr. The Lord's Prayer from African Sanctus, by David Fanshawe (2006)</p>	











<p><b>Libby Larsen</b> - <a href="https://libbylarsen.com">https://libbylarsen.com</a></p> <p>Fanfare for a Learned Man (arr. Judson Scott)</p>	
<p><b>Rebecca Lundberg</b></p> <p>Pater Noster (Our Father) - cornet/flugel solo</p>	
<p><b>Anne McGinty</b> (1945-) - <a href="http://mcgintymusic.com">http://mcgintymusic.com</a></p> <p>Arlington Overture Spectrum American Folk Songs Suite Motivations</p>	
<p><b>Eileen Mehegan</b></p> <p>Dream Waltz: Lovely Lucerne (c.1920)</p>	
<p><b>Ruth Mellor</b></p> <p>arr. Hymn of Acxiom (by Vienna Teng)</p>	

<p><b>Katie Moss</b> (1881-1947)</p> <p>The Floral Dance, arr: Derek Broadbent</p>	
<p><b>Kelly Marie Murphy</b> - <a href="http://kellymariemurphy.com">http://kellymariemurphy.com</a></p> <p>Drumming the Plain, the Horseman is Coming (1992)  Hartford Accident and Indemnity (2004)  The Reanimation of Forsters Corpse</p>	
<p><b>Thea Musgrave</b> (1928-) - <a href="http://www.theamusgrave.com">http://www.theamusgrave.com</a></p> <p>Variations for Brass Band</p>	
<p>Lynda Nicholson</p> <p>arr. Christmas Lullaby (French traditional)  arr. The Sleigh Race (Alfred Caldicott)</p>	
<p>Celestine Oliphant (1863-1941)</p> <p>O Far Whiter than the Snow  All the Waters of the Sea</p>	





<p><b>Lucy Pankhurst</b>  <a href="http://www.lucypankhurst.moonfruit.com">http://www.lucypankhurst.moonfruit.com</a></p> <p>Abrazo - cornet solo  Alchemists' Fire  Aria - His Depth, part of "<i>Diversions After Benjamin Britten: Four Centenary Tributes for Brass Band</i>"  Ascension  Broken Mantra  Buffoon  Concerto for Tenor Horn  Dance, Dance  Dreamer  Frost  Go!  Heed The Word!  In Pitch Black  Journey Home  Legacy  Marilyn  Midnight (euph solo)  Mischief  Mr Sonneman's Unusual Solution  Once in Never  Oubliette  Petrichor  Resplendence - cornet solo  Roots  Sheihellion  Shining Stars  Storm  Th'owfen Raconteurs  3 Minute Warning  Voices in Memoriam  Wicked  Wired  + various arrangements</p>	
<p><b>Chelsea Pascoe</b></p> <p>Light Song  The Living Water!  Prayer Gently Lifts Me  arr. Spirit Song (John Wimber)  arr. Through the Fair (flugel solo)</p>	

<p>Lynsey Paterson</p> <p>A Caledonian Fanfare</p>	
<p><b>Emily Peasgood</b> - <a href="http://emilypeasgood.com">http://emilypeasgood.com</a></p> <p>Collective Spirit - The Boat Project</p>	
<p>Helen Perkin (1909-1996)</p> <p>Carnival Cordell Suite Island Heritage Three Pieces</p>	
<p><b>Laura Pettigrew</b> - <a href="http://www.laurapettigrew.com">http://www.laurapettigrew.com</a></p> <p>Tranquillitas Amini A Terra</p>	
<p>Andrea Price</p> <p>March - Spirit of Victory Eire Time (euphonium solo) Enter The Dance (tenor horn solo) Out of Shadows (euphonium solo) Scarborough Fair (marimba/xylophone solo) Fling (xylophone solo) A New Day (baritone solo)</p>	

<p><b>Lauren Redhead</b> - <a href="http://laurenredhead.eu">http://laurenredhead.eu</a></p> <p>Dalton, Retold (2013)</p>	
<p><b>Teresa del Riego</b> (1876-1968)</p> <p>O Dry Those Tears, arr: William Moore</p>	
<p><b>Rhian Samuel</b> - <a href="http://www.rhiansamuel.com">http://www.rhiansamuel.com</a></p> <p>Taliesin</p>	
<p><b>Elena Ruehr</b> - <a href="http://www.eleнарuehr.org/">http://www.eleнарuehr.org/</a></p> <p>The Voyage Out (1995) (arr. Judson Scott)</p>	
<p><b>Amanda Sandberg</b> (1873-1961)</p> <p>Fronten Kallar!</p>	

<p><b>Alex Shapiro</b> - <a href="http://www.alexshapiro.org">http://www.alexshapiro.org</a></p> <p>Papercut (arr. Judson Scott)</p>	
<p><b>Liz Sharma</b> - <a href="http://lizsharmamusic.co.uk">http://lizsharmamusic.co.uk</a></p> <p>Dance of the Blessed Spirits (Gluck)  Dance of the Groovy Spirits  Fanfare for a Celebration  Finale of Concerto Grosso  Memories and Myths  Night Spirits  Stormy Weather  Summer Journey  The Oak and the Ash  Water Birds</p>	
<p><b>Naomi Styles</b>  <a href="http://carternaomi.wixsite.com/brass-arrangements">http://carternaomi.wixsite.com/brass-arrangements</a></p> <p>Dance of the Troglodytes  Pachamama (Mother Earth)  Cyanobacteria  Suenora  arr. Libertango (by Piazzolla)  arr. Christmas Jig  arr. Infant King  arr. Merry Christmas Everyone (Shakin' Stevens)  arr. Sing Lullaby (by Herbert Howells)  arr. Let it Snow (cornet solo)  arr. For those in Peril on the Sea  arr. Have I told you Lately (by Van Morrison)  arr. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas  arr. Ol' Man River (by Jerome Kern)  arr. If I were a rich man  arr. One for my Baby (and one more for the Road)  arr. God Save the Queen  arr. What's This? (by Danny Elfman)  arr. When Santa Got Stuck Up the Chimney  arr. The Lamb (by John Tavener)  arr. "Tum-te-tum" Cameron</p>	

<p><b>Hilary Tann</b> - <a href="http://hilarytann.com">http://hilarytann.com</a></p> <p>All the Moon Long</p>	
<p><b>Phyllis Tate</b> (1911-1987)</p> <p>Illustrations for Brass Band</p>	
<p><b>Louisa Trewartha</b> - <a href="http://louisatrewartha.com.au">http://louisatrewartha.com.au</a></p> <p>You Stood and Watched Me Trembling Bass Tuba Concerto Heuristic Brassing</p>	
<p><b>Joan Trimble</b> (1915-2000)</p> <p>Erin Go Bragh (1943)</p>	
<p><b>Joy Webb</b> (1932-)</p> <p>Share My Yoke (arr. Bosanko)</p>	

<p><b>Maude Valerie White</b> (1855-1937)</p> <p>To Mary (cornet solo)</p>	
<p><b>Margaret Lucy Wilkins</b>  <a href="http://margaretlucywilkins.musicaneo.com">http://margaretlucywilkins.musicaneo.com</a></p> <p>Epistola da San Marco (1987)</p>	
<p><b>Amanda Wilkinson</b></p> <p>Elements of Fire</p>	
<p><b>Amy Woodforde-Finden</b> (1860-1919)</p> <p>Four Indian Love Lyrics  Pagoda Of Flowers - arr. Sydney Herbert  Temple Bells - arr. M. Williams</p>	

Note: Some male composers have used female pseudonyms for some of their works. E.g. "Heather Dene" was William Rimmer, and "Lilian Raymond" was James Ord Hume



## Further information

The Harrogate Band - <http://www.harrogateband.org>

IAWM: International Alliance for Women in Music - <http://iawm.org>

International Women's Brass Conference [which also sponsors composition projects] - <https://www.myiwbc.org>

Margaret Zach International Women Composers Library - <https://www.iwclub.org>

Women of Note [celebrating 300 years of music by women] - <http://www.womenofnote.co.uk>

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