
Helen Leach
WINDOW TO THE STARS
John Bradbury, clarinet
Benedict Holland, violin
Adrian Bradbury, cello
Simon Leach, piano

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1.	**OUT OF THE DEPTHS** Adrian Bradbury, cello; Simon Leach, piano	4:39
	AS THE FEET OF THE DEER John Bradbury, clarinet; Adrian Bradbury, cello; Simon Leach, piano	
2.	I. Through the Heather	4:59
3.	II. By the Waters	5:13
4.	III. Mountain Ballade	5:35
5.	**WHEREVER I WANDER** Benedict Holland, violin; John Bradbury, clarinet; Simon Leach, piano	5:51
	WHEN THE SEASON DANCED John Bradbury, clarinet; Simon Leach, piano	
6.	I. Spring: Catkins in the Breeze	3:21
7.	II. Summer: Old Roses	3:56
8.	III. Autumn: Salmon Tale	3:17
9.	IV. Winter: Window to the Stars	3:54

10.	**THE DOVE OF PEACE** John Bradbury, clarinet; Benedict Holland violin; Adrian Bradbury, cello; Simon Leach, piano	5:15
	HOMMAGE À EDGAR DEGAS Adrian Bradbury, cello; Simon Leach, piano	
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	BUTTERFLY GARDEN John Bradbury, clarinet; Simon Leach, piano	
14.	I. *Papilio emergentes* (Butterfly emerging)	1:18
15.	II. *Melodiam ad hortum* (Melody for the garden)	2:49
16.	III. *Dilectus aeternus* (Belovèd forever)	4:45
17.	IV. *Canticum renovationis* (Song of renewal)	2:27
18.	V. *Semita* (Path)	1:01
19.	VI. *Hortus gloriae* (Garden of glory)	2:19
20.	**PRELUDE FOR A ROYAL SWAN** Adrian Bradbury, cello; Simon Leach, piano	3:40

Total playing time 77:40

COMPOSER'S NOTES

Often inspired by the abundance and timeless beauty of the natural world here in Scotland, this new chamber collection invites you to sit a while in a musical landscape of rich romantic lyricism, bursts of harmonic colour and evocative textures. At times majestic and dramatic, elsewhere infused with deep peace and moments of light-heartedness, the music reflects my own inner world of yearning, emotional turbulence, prayerfulness, affection, together ultimately with joy and tranquillity.

I am beyond grateful for the extremely generous private sponsorship, given by a number of key individuals, which enabled the fulfilment of my dream: the privilege of recording all of these works in the state-of-the-art facilities of the McPherson Recital Room within the Laidlaw Music Centre at the historic University of St. Andrews in November 2025.

It was a sheer delight to collaborate there with my husband Simon Leach and our friends, Benedict Holland and the Bradbury twins, John and Adrian. I'll always be grateful not only for their supreme musicianship but also their wisdom, conviviality, and unending patience. I do hope you'll enjoy their beautiful blend of timbres, effortless virtuosity, and vivid musical dialogue.

Helen Leach
Scottish Borders
June 2026



OUT OF THE DEPTHS

Out of the Depths was composed in July 2022, immediately prior to a residency at Marchmont Estate when I wrote my suite for solo cello, *Letters from the Owl House*. Composed *in memoriam* of my dear cousin, cellist Mhairi Tessier-Thomson, in whose footsteps I so often walked, this elegy is one of my most personal works. Infused with many girlhood memories of her life which had been cut tragically short in 2004, the music, in its poignant beauty, is nevertheless uplifting in its expression and expansive in its lyricism.

Emerging from the depths of the cello and climbing upwards into the light, a long, expressive melodic line unfolds, soaring high and tenderly. Following a more playful middle section, the opening material returns, before a door opens into the mediant key, bringing a sense of heavenly peace to close.

AS THE FEET OF A DEER

As I began to inwardly connect with the sound world of clarinet, cello and piano, I felt inspired by the possibilities of the rich, expressive, almost earthen tones of the combination, and the potential for creating music which is alive with expansive lyricism, harmonic colour, and majestic strength and beauty. The sheer physicality, drama, and passion associated with the character of these instruments, fused with the emotional energy of deep yearning and rhapsody, touched with a sense of transcendental sublime spirituality began to stir within. It seemed to evoke a world similar to that captured by Edwin Landseer in his most famous painting, *The Monarch of the Glen*, with panoramic mountains, swirling mists, and the unspeakable wild and beautiful Scottish landscape where the stag portrayed with emblematic nobility.

The title itself, *As the Feet of a Deer*, comes from the bible. It is a phrase that speaks to me not only of the path to enter into the presence of the Divine, but, together with the poignant awareness of the fragility of life, also very much captures the swiftness, nimbleness, and poetic freedom of musical performance itself. The work was largely composed in the autumn of 2024 and the premiere was given on 19th January 2025 in Dunfermline by Trio Écossaise. In the summer of 2025, the score was revised in preparation for publication and recording. *As the Feet of a Deer* is dedicated to the memory of my beloved uncle, Gordon Shanks, who grew up as part of our household in Hawick following the early death of my grandparents. I was particularly thrilled that Gordon and my aunt Moira attended the premiere of the work.

I. *Through the Heather.* The music travels with melodious, roaming freedom, with shifting harmonies to depict the changing natural lights and scenic beauty. Listen out for the heather bells, which seem to call the listener to awaken into the freedom of the wilds.

II. *By the Waters.* Gentle and flowing, the cello and clarinet seem to sing of peace and healing, with pure running water depicted in the semiquavers of the piano accompaniment.

III. *Mountain Ballade.* An epic story of mystery, drama, and passion unfolds, with the middle section given to a majestic, almost euphoric melody shared among the instruments, expressing the grandeur and nobility of the landscape. The work ends quietly and evocatively, bringing a sense of deep rest and peace.

WHEREVER I WANDER

Wherever I Wander was inspired by a line from Robert Burns' famous poem 'My Heart's in the Highlands':

'Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.'

My late father was a keen folk fiddler, and having often played my own clarinet on our highland holidays growing up, the two instruments, together with piano, felt a very natural vehicle to express the boundless horizons and dramatically mountainous landscape of the place we have treasured through the generations. *Wherever I Wander* is dedicated with deep gratitude to my parents, who bequeathed a lifelong love of the Scottish hills.

Opening with a simple original folk melody for unaccompanied violin answered tenderly by clarinet, the musical language is rhapsodic and evocative of the wide open, wild and beautiful spaces of the rugged Highlands of Scotland. A freer, more improvisatory section follows, with conversational musings and gestures. The music builds in intensity and virtuosity, journeying in tonality with lush piano textures, soaring violin, and flowing cantabile clarinet writing. With nostalgic poignancy, the music circles back to the home key and ends softly with a sense of sublime peace.

WHEN THE SEASONS DANCED

Composers have long been drawn to the theme of the Seasons, and with a particular love for the natural world, I desired to place my own stone on the cairn. The resulting work, *When the Seasons Danced*, was composed in the spring and early summer of 2025 and a memorable premiere was given by John Bradbury and Simon Leach on Saturday 12th July 2025 in the Lorimer Music Room of Marchmont House, Berwickshire. Fittingly, the theme of the Seasons is represented in the Cupola Hall of Marchmont House with a Four Seasons mural cycle and also in stunning plasterwork of Thomas Clayton in the Drawing Room, alongside similarly themed outdoor sculptures.

I. *Spring: Catkins in the Breeze.* Spring is expressed as a serenade, with a gentle swaying clarinet melody depicting catkins waving in the breeze. The freshness and new life of a stream babbles in the piano accompaniment. Whilst the movement bubbles with hope and innocence, the harmonies occasionally darken, speaking of the changeable Scottish weather!

II. *Summer: Old Roses.* Summer is a Romanza, a slow, beguiling and tender waltz which, written in 7/4, lingers with an extra beat, giving time to 'stop and smell the roses'. The sighing and affectionate clarinet melody becomes more ardent, and a quicker, charming, and elegant *grazioso* middle section ensues. A short cadenza brings about the return of the more languorous opening music, sweet with affection and romance.

III. *Autumn: Salmon Tale.* The salmon run in the autumn is a great feature here in the Scottish Borders and *Salmon Tale* follows the salmon journeying upstream, with spectacular, breathtaking clarinet 'leaps' in the cadenza. The opening iridescent watery piano arpeggios flow into a gurgling characterful and jocund dance which gurgles, twists and dives, with flashes of virtuosity. Entertaining and light-hearted, this *Allegro poco scherzando* movement tells the story of the dancing salmon.

IV. *Winter: Window to the Stars.* A simple lullaby, *Window to the Stars*, depicts the sense of wonder at the winter stars shining in the dark skies. Childlike, dreamy and with a hypnotic and atmospheric accompaniment, this final movement, marked *Andantino dolcissimo,* maternally embraces the listener, and with distant echoes of Christmas bells, brings thoughts of the music and mystery of the cosmos.

When the Seasons Danced is dedicated to the Tait family.

THE DOVE OF PEACE

Speak to any clarinettist of combining clarinet, violin, cello and piano, and they will all say one name: Messiaen! The genesis and supremely beautiful, spiritual musical language of his masterpiece *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* have rightly made a lasting impact on ensuing generations, and I approached composing a work for this particular combination of instruments with a sense not only of real gratitude, but also reverence and respect towards the master. The combination of instruments is, in itself, a very pleasing one in terms of timbres, but combining these particular instruments seemed symbolistic, and I found a great desire to write a relatively short work to articulate our need for peace in our own day. I spent time reflecting on Picasso's iconic lithograph ink-wash of 1949 entitled 'Dove'. With its soft white feathers against the dark background, his work spoke of peace in the post-war years, and various of Picasso's dove paintings were used officially for posters for a number of Peace Congresses.

An image popped into my own head of a white dove encircling the earth, and I felt inspired to write down a simple melody. Beneath a celeste-like piano texture, the sweet but stately tune unfolds on the cello, then is taken up by clarinet, followed by violin. The music, marked *Larghetto cantabile,* weaves its way expressively through different keys, winging the message of peace and enfolding the listener with prayerful hope as the music modulates into C major. The sense of triumph fades to gentleness once again and the work comes to rest with an expressive *teneramente*.

The Dove of Peace is dedicated to my friend Rev. Sheila Moir to mark her retirement from Dryburgh District Churches, where she so often stood beneath the Dove Window to speak.



HOMMAGE À EDGAR DEGAS

Hommage à Edgar Degas was commissioned by Scottish bassoonist Abi Adam and pays tribute to one of the most beloved artists of musicians, namely Edgar Degas (1834–1917). He famously captured not only the beauty and movement of ballet dancers often behind the scenes, but also of instrumentalists and singers. His friend, Désiré Dihau (1838–1909), the bassoonist of the orchestra at the Paris Opera, had himself commissioned Degas to create a new painting and the resultant oil on canvas,

L'Orchestre de l'Opéra (1870), portrays Dihau playing bassoon in the orchestra pit of the *Salle Le Peletier*, as well as Louis-Marie Pilet playing cello among the other musicians. *Hommage à Edgar Degas* was composed in the first half of 2025, in anticipation of the premiere at the Scottish Arts Club, Edinburgh 1st November 2025 by Abi Adam and pianist Ingrid Sawers, and although originally scored for bassoon and piano, fittingly, is also adapted for cello and piano. The premiere of the cello and piano version was given by Adrian Bradbury and Simon Leach in Marchmont House in March 2026.

Degas is known as an artist for his exceptional ability to convey physical form and movement, and as I began to engage with his work, I found myself wanting to express this quality not so much in terms of rhythm as I had anticipated, but of melodic line and musical gesture. A distinctive harmonic palette with some vivid colours reflects the vibrancy of Degas' work. Often communicating human struggle, I was struck by the emotional intensity expressed in the paintings and the resultant music of *Hommage à Edgar Degas* is unashamedly of the human heart.

There are three movements: I. *Vocalise*; II. *Arabesque*; and III. *Introduction and Valse Caprice*. The opening bars of the first movement *Vocalise* present the musical letters of Degas' name, with DEGA followed by a musical turn for the S, and both the first and second movements are infused with this pattern. The name 'Edgar' is remarkably similar and I took the liberty of interpreting the 'r' as a Repeat – look out for it in the trills at the beginning of the second movement, *Arabesque*.

I. *Vocalise*. This movement was directly inspired by the *L'Orchestre de l'Opéra* painting. Midst the energy of the full-bodied sound of the orchestra, grandeur of the theatre, and the enchanting scene on the stage itself, this is a sweeping yet intimate song, both lyrical and stirring.

II. *Arabesque*. I sought to capture one of my own favourite characters in Degas' whole output: the dancer outstretched with natural beauty in an arabesque in the painting *The Rehearsal* (c.1874, Burrell Collection). Poised, and quintessentially graceful; a line maintained with perfect control from both ballerina and musician.

III. *Introduction and Valse Caprice.* Exuberant and virtuosic, this contrastingly rhythmic movement matches energetic technical display with tunefulness. In my mind's eye, the *Valse Caprice* depicts the dancers on the stage itself, and this finale offers a celebration in music of all that Degas gave to the world.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Drawing on the inherent ethereal beauty of the clarinet as an instrument, *Butterfly Garden* is a musical metamorphosis where both delicacy and virtuosity intertwine. The opening embryonic five-note theme is freely developed and transformed through the six movements, and the unfolding music both evokes the beauty and tranquillity of a garden and points to the remarkable journey of transformation of the butterfly.

The original inspiration for this entire work, *Butterfly Garden*, came from the Greek word *metemorphothe* which is used biblically to describe the change in the appearance of Christ at the Transfiguration and is the root to our word metamorphosis. With butterflies often symbolising hope, this deeply spiritual work, written largely during Lent of 2024, was given a private premiere by John Bradbury and Simon Leach in the Lorimer Music Room of Marchmont House in June 2024. Exploring themes of mortality and immortality, it moves freely and at times imperceptibly between the temporal and eternal, seeking to capture the wonder and beauty of a liminal space. *Butterfly Garden* is dedicated to the memory of Áine Kiely Ambrose.

I. *Papilio emergentes* (Butterfly emerging). From the sepulchral dark depths of the instruments, the five-note theme is presented. Little by little the butterfly breaks free, emerging into the light.

II. *Melodiam ad hortum* (Melody for the garden). With a celeste-like introduction, the butterfly appears and a song begins, built on the opening five-note theme. With sweetness and beautiful flutterings, the *cantabile* music uses the whole range of both clarinet and piano.

III. *Dilectus aeternus* (Belovèd forever). With the rhythm of the theme now greatly augmented, this movement with its outstretched melody and rocking piano accompaniment portrays eternal love as expressed in the biblical phrase from the story of the Transfiguration: 'This is my beloved Son'. There is an expressive depth and radiance to this particular movement; as though the butterfly is drinking nectar, the musical language is one of heavenly intimacy.

IV. *Canticum renovationis* (Song of renewal). The theme now inverted, cascades of life, colour and renewed energy burst into being with this *Allegro volante ma cantabile*. With flamboyancy and virtuosic freedom, this is an uplifting display of the strength and vibrancy of nature.

V. *Semita* (Path). A short, improvisatory and largely unaccompanied movement leads along a symbolic path of tonal transformation.

VI. *Hortus gloriae* (Garden of glory). Revisiting initially the texture of the second movement, the 'garden' musical concept takes on a new meaning, and the sounds becomes richer and more glorious with dramatic harmonic colour and gesture. Following a final series of delicate fluttering from the clarinet, the work arrives in a place of celestial peace and harmony.

PRELUDE FOR A ROYAL SWAN

Prelude for a Royal Swan was composed especially for my husband, Simon, to play on the organ, as a reflection at the opening of the morning service at Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, on the 6th February 2022, thus marking the 70th Anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Canongate Kirk serves Holyrood House and Edinburgh Castle, and the late Queen herself, as well as other members of the royal household, have followed in the footsteps of bygone generations, in attending the Kirk for worship. In August 2023, *Prelude for a Royal Swan* was played there in the presence of HRH Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh, and the work has been featured on Radio 3 Breakfast as well as on several occasions on RNZ Concert.

With an undulating accompaniment flowing through different harmonies, the expansive melody seeks to portray the beauty, dignity, and unwavering commitment of the late Queen.

Helen Leach



In Memoriam Áine Kiely Ambrose

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Metamorphosis for Clarinet in B flat and piano (2024)

Helen Leach (b.1972)

I. Papilio emergentes

(Butterfly emerging)



Clarinet in B♭

Piano

Larghetto espressivo ♪ = c.62 - 64

pp

8vb

Con Ped. ad lib.



3

pp *a piacere*

p

p

* Grace notes before the beat.

5

poco stringendo **poco rit.**

cresc.

poco stringendo **poco rit.**

cresc.

8vb

6

Poco più mosso ♪ c.66 - 68

mp

Poco più mosso ♪ c.66 - 68

mp

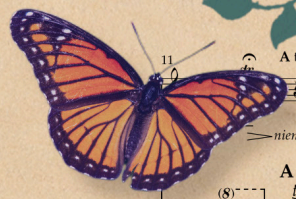
7

cresc.



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riten.

riten.

A tempo poco stringendo rall.

ten.

p a piacere *poco cresc.*

A tempo poco stringendo rall..

p poco cresc.

Tempo primo poco rit.

ten.

p dolce

Tempo primo poco rit.

8va

p dolce *colla parte*

* Trill only during zigzag line.

A tempo

ten.

niente

A tempo

ten.

cresc. molto

Segue

Segue

f sfz *sfz*

II. Melodiam ad hortum

(Melody for the garden)

Andantino dolcissimo e grazioso ♪ = c.76-78

Andantino dolcissimo e grazioso ♪ = c.7

8va

poco rit.

pp

Helen Leach, composer

Born in Hawick in the Scottish Borders, Helen Leach has a growing international reputation as one of Scotland's leading female composers, with tracks from her Divine Art 2024 debut album *Diary of the Bee* continuing to receive regular broadcasts on radio stations around the globe, including American Public Media and ABC Classic FM in Australia; together with European radio stations such as WDR3 in Germany and DR DK P2 in Denmark. Helen is delighted that RNZ Concert in New Zealand have frequently broadcast the violin and piano version of *Prelude for a Royal Swan* to mark the 2026 Centenary Year of the late Queen Elizabeth II. In Great Britain, Aled Jones showcased her *Cup of Kindness* for Burns Day on Saturday 25th January, 2026, bringing about her Classic FM debut. The album has been oft included on BBC Radio 3 by several well-known presenters such as Petroc Trelawny, Tom McKinney, Georgia Mann, Sarah Walker, Sara Mohr-Pietsch, Hannah Peel, John Toal, and Al Ryan. A frequent inclusion on the new sister channel BBC Radio 3 Unwind playlists, *Diary of the Bee* tracks are streamed regularly to thousands of listeners.

With a background as a clarinettist and church musician, Helen enjoyed a rich and diverse musical upbringing in the Scottish Borders, being fortunate to come under the wing of the late Brian Bonsor MBE and his wife Mary, as well as Head of Music at Hawick High School, the late Ian Seeley and his Assistant at that time Edward Ferguson. Becoming Principal Clarinet with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, Helen went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music; a Virtuosi Society Bursary enabled additional Clarinet study with Gervase de Peyer in Washington, D.C. After graduating, Helen was, for a number of years, a Director of Worship in Manchester and there directed the music for live BBC Radio 4 broadcasts.

Helen returned from Manchester to her roots in the Scottish Borders in 2019 and has been loving her new lifestyle in this scenic part of the world, teaching and devoting time to composition. In 2022, she became Composer-in-Residence at the stunning Palladian mansion of Marchmont House, Berwickshire, and the historic Lorimer Music Room there has seen the premiere of many of her recent chamber works. Helen was the recipient of generous funding from the Hugo Burge Foundation for her *Diary of the Bee* album, which enabled her launch as a composer. Her sheet music is published by United Music Publishing and, at the request of HRH King Charles III, a copy of her *The Call to Care for Creation* was placed in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

Helen loves working as part of the BBC Songs of Praise team, and has, since 2024, conducted and arranged the ensemble music for the annual BBC Young Chorister of the Year event with Aled Jones. Additionally, the episode from Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, filmed in 2022, for which she conducted and arranged music, has received numerous repeat TV broadcasts. Helen is excited to be in the Conductor role for a new episode of BBC Songs of Praise, filmed in June 2026 from St Cuthbert's Chapel in Ushaw Historic House, Durham.

Helen is always happy when surrounded by children - she has six of her own - and this, together with her background as a church musician and teacher has shaped her ethos of musical accessibility whilst striving to attain international standards of musicianship. She looks forward to sharing the music and inspiration of her upcoming second album, *Window to the Stars,* and hopes it brings peace and harmony to the broken world.



John Bradbury, clarinet

John studied Natural Sciences at St John's College, Cambridge. He was awarded a Travel Scholarship to study Clarinet with Larry Combs of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, then went on to the Royal Academy of Music where he won the Hawkes Clarinet Prize and the Principal's Prize.

John held the sub-principal chair in the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the London Symphony Orchestra, before his invitation to become Principal Clarinet with the BBC Philharmonic. He has played Guest Principal with all the major UK orchestras as well as with John Wilson's hand-picked orchestra at the Proms.

John has given many solo performances with the BBC Philharmonic, with highlights including the Mozart, Nielsen, Stanford and MacMillan Concertos. His recordings for Chandos include the Busoni Concertino, Malcolm Arnold "Scherzetto" (Editor's Choice in "The Gramophone"), and Ben-Haim Pastorale variée. His celebrated Naxos disc "The English Clarinet" remains a best-seller, followed in 2023 by "From the Airwaves" on the MPR label. In 2024 John appeared on the acclaimed album of Helen Leach's Chamber Music, *Diary of the Bee*.



John was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Academy of Music in 2018.

Benedict Holland, violin

Ben studied Violin and Piano at the Royal Academy of Music, later moving to the Royal Northern College of Music to study in Yossi Zivoni's violin class. As a chamber musician, he was a founder member of the Matisse Piano Quartet and the Music Group of Manchester. He is currently a member of virtuoso chamber ensemble *I Musicanti*, and together with friends David Greed, Kimi Makino, and Adrian Bradbury, of the *Victoria Quartet*, as well as pursuing a busy recital programme on violin and viola with both piano and organ.



As an experienced orchestral leader, he has guest-led many of the UK's major orchestras, including The Hallé, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Northern Sinfonia, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Ensemble, Orchestra of Opera North, and BBC Philharmonic, and until 2023, he was the violinist and violist with the contemporary ensemble Psappha.

Ben has always put teaching at the heart of his work at the RNCM, where he was awarded a professorship in 2016. He also gives consultative classes in orchestral and contemporary techniques at Trinity Laban Conservatoire where he is a visiting artist.

Ben's violin is a rare Rogeri, c. 1710.

Adrian Bradbury, cello

Adrian Bradbury was Principal Cello in the National Youth Orchestra before winning scholarships to Churchill College, Cambridge (where he read Veterinary Science and Music) and then to the Royal Academy of Music. After further study in Berlin, he developed an international career in chamber music as the cellist in Composers Ensemble, Jane's Minstrels, Trio Gemelli, Touchwood Piano Quartet, and Chamber Domaine, winning a Royal Philharmonic Society Chamber Award and giving countless world premieres of solo and chamber works by composers including Thomas Adès, Guy Barker, Judith Bingham, James MacMillan, Hugh Wood, John Woolrich, and Helen Leach. Adrian is a regular guest principal player with orchestras including BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, English National Opera, Ensemble Modern, London Sinfonietta, London Symphony Orchestra, and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and he is Cello Tutor for the National Youth Orchestra.

His research into ensemble synchronisation, in collaboration with Professor Alan Wing, is published by the Royal Society and has led to invitations to curate a "Music and Brain" series at the Aldeburgh Festival and to appear as speaker on BBC Radio 4's "PM" and "Today" programmes and on Radio 3. He has held fellowships at the University of Cambridge (artistic by-fellow), University of Birmingham (honorary), and the Royal Academy of Music (honorary).



Adrian's discography includes the complete operatic fantasies of 19th-century virtuoso Alfredo Piatti, with pianist Oliver Davies, and *The Pre-Raphaelite Cello,* with pianist Andrew West. His chamber music discs have variously won "Editor's Choice" in *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*, and "CD of the Month" in the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Strad*. He was appointed Artistic Director of Music in the Burnhams in January 2026.

Simon Leach, piano

Simon Leach studied Organ with Dr Gordon Stewart and Piano with David Lloyd at the Royal Northern College of Music, winning the Alice Shawcross Organ Award, the Alice Shawcross Performance Award, and 1st prize in the Prix Scarbo Keyboard Competition. As an outstanding student, he was invited to perform in the prestigious Principal's Concert.

Since his graduation in 1992, Simon has enjoyed a richly varied career as a keyboardist, performing on piano, organ and harpsichord with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, The Hallé, Manchester Camerata, Northern Sinfonia, London Festival Orchestra, and the Northern Chamber Orchestra. Additionally, he has held Organist posts at the Church of the Holy Name, Manchester and St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral, Edinburgh. Simon is currently the Organist at Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh, which is the Kirk of Holyrood House and Edinburgh Castle. Additionally, he is Musical Director at Marchmont House in the Scottish Borders and combines these roles with an array of work as a freelance performer and a busy teaching schedule.

Simon is active as a solo Organist and has performed in many of the cathedrals and concert halls in Great Britain, as well as travelling to New York to perform at prestigious venues including St Patrick's Cathedral and the Church of St Thomas Fifth Avenue. In February 2017, he was invited to represent Great Britain in the International Recital Series at Notre-Dame Cathedral Paris, performing to an audience of 2000. He also regularly performs in the UK with Violinist Benedict Holland. He has given several world premieres of compositions by Helen Leach, Naji Hakim, and Paul Mealor. His performances of Helen Leach's music are frequently broadcast on radio channels throughout the world.



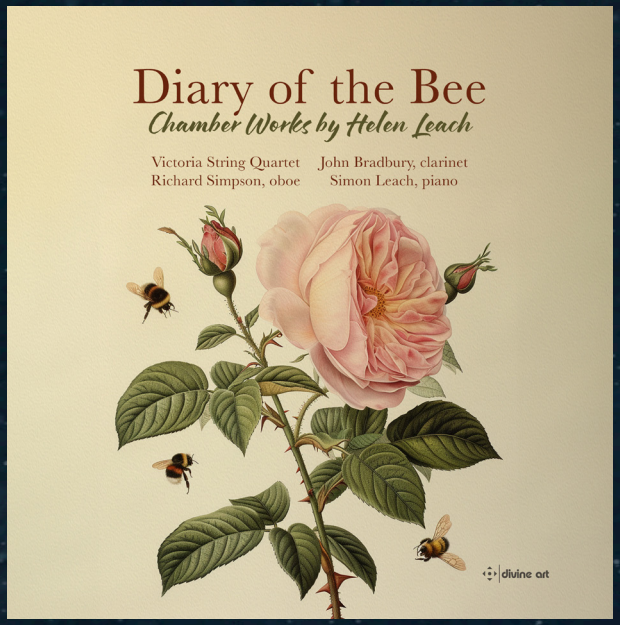








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