



NIGEL
CLARKE

(b. 1960)

MYSTERIES OF THE HORIZON

DIAL 'H' FOR HITCHCOCK • SWIFT SEVERN'S FLOOD
EARTHRISE

HARMEN VANHOORNE, CORNET
GRIMETHORPE COLLIERY BAND
NIGEL CLARKE,
DAVID THORNTON, SANDY SMITH

Nigel Clarke (b. 1960)

Dial 'H' For Hitchcock • Swift Severn's Flood • Mysteries of the Horizon • Earthrise

Nigel Clarke has always been fascinated by musical virtuosity and timbre, aspects that are strongly evident in his chamber, orchestral, symphonic wind orchestra and film scoring. But it is the brass band genre that has lent itself most to Clarke's 'no prisoners' approach and passion for musical athleticism and colour. Clarke prefers to write with a subject in mind: 'I love researching a topic for a work and getting excited about the subject matter.' As an example, *Dial 'H' for Hitchcock* on this album is written as an imaginary film score in the film noir vein. *Mysteries of the Horizon* examines four René Magritte paintings. *Swift Severn's Flood* is a war-like drama inspired by a line from William Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part I*. *Earthrise* deals with the story of Apollo 8 circumnavigating the moon. Clarke has always embraced and relished close collaboration with performers, conductors and literary writers. A notable collaborator is violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved, for whom he has written two violin concertos recorded on the Naxos label [8.570429]. Clarke's introduction to writing for brass band began while he was on the staff of the Royal Academy of Music. It was then that the trumpet player James Watson asked him to write a work for the legendary Black Dyke Band, and he subsequently became the first composer to hold a residency with them. Later, Belgian conductor Luc Vertommen persuaded him to compose for and accept a position with Brass Band Buizingen in Belgium. Today, Clarke is international composer in association to the world-famous Grimethorpe Colliery Band based in the former coal mining village of the same name in South Yorkshire, England.

Dial 'H' For Hitchcock (2016, rev. 2019)

A Psychological Thriller for Brass Band

Written for Grimethorpe Colliery Band, *Dial 'H' for Hitchcock* harks back to the golden age of cinema and the genre of film noir attributed to Sir Alfred Hitchcock, where men were portrayed as rugged, but morally weak, liquor was strong, and the lit cigarette was a compulsory accessory. The heroines were strong-minded, independent,

and seductive with perfect hourglass figures. The unexpected was around every corner. Clarke's aim was to write a Hitchcock-style score to an imaginary thriller directed by the master of psychological suspense, and the listener is encouraged to make up their own storyline. Some of the slower music conjures up the harmonies and counterpoints from this iconic age of cinema; it is here that Clarke draws on his experience of writing for motion pictures. There are three sound effects that Clarke uses in *Dial 'H' for Hitchcock*: a 'damsel in distress' ear-piecing scream, a single cold-blooded revolver shot and a classic film noir police siren. So sit back, pour a whiskey sour on the rocks, light up a cigarette and let your imagination do the rest!

Swift Severn's Flood (2009)

A Shakespeare Drama for Brass Band

Originally written for conductor Luc Vertommen and Brass Band Buizingen, *Swift Severn's Flood* is a musical portrayal of William Shakespeare's fictional depiction of Sir Edmund de Mortimer's brutal and bloody battle in 1402 with Owain Glyndŵr ('Owen Glendower') on the banks of the River Severn in *Henry IV, Part I (Act I, Scene III)*. *Swift Severn's Flood* is brooding and brutal in nature; the composer has contrasted these elements with occasional nods towards a type of monastic plainsong. To add to the work's stark atmosphere, on occasions the score demands that groups of brass players blow through their instruments using various techniques to create elemental howling wind effects. Clarke's work is also heroic in nature and requires great virtuosity with fast, furious running passages juxtaposed with extreme dynamic contrasts.

**Henry IV, Part I
Act I, Scene III**

Those mouthèd wounds, which valiantly he took
When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In single opposition, hand to hand,
In changing hardiment with great Glendower:
Three times they breathed and three times did they drink,
Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood, ...

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

Mysteries of the Horizon (2012)

Concerto (in Four Movements) for Cornet and Brass Band

Mysteries of the Horizon was written for the cornet virtuoso Harmen Vanhoorne. The subject material examines four paintings by the iconic 20th-century Belgian artist, René Magritte. The movement's titles are named after the paintings: *I. The Menaced Assassin*, *II. The Dominion of Light*, *III. The Flavour of Tears*, *IV. The Discovery of Fire*. Clarke has tried to capture the surrealist atmosphere of each of Magritte's masterpieces. The composer commissioned a poem by the writer Martin Westlake to capture the atmosphere and sentiment of the work:

Mysteries of the Horizon (2012)

Ceci n'est pas un poème:
For pictures are a meaning and
That truth is the mystery.

Please bleed away from our averted eyes,
Your silk-scarfed neck
Separating off the peaks our mountain echoes.
Hat, coat and case, blackjack and net
Wait for the music to end as night falls.
Listen; the sun shines tonight and the lamp
Casts shadows on our reflections.
After all, why should we choose between
night and day?
Isn't that the poetry?
So, let us taste the tears and

May all hairy caterpillars munch
On leafy birds and approaching war
As we consider the eternal truth
That a flaming tuba
Is hard to light and even more difficult to play.

Ceci n'est pas un poème:
For pictures are a meaning and
That truth is the mystery.

Martin Westlake (b. 1957)

Earthrise (2010)

After a photograph taken from Apollo 8 in 1968

Earthrise is a musical celebration of one of the most iconic photographs in history. The NASA image AS8-14-2383 was taken by William Anders and the Apollo 8 crew on 24 December 1968 during the first manned mission to orbit the Moon.

Clarke's music emulates the speed and power of Apollo 8's Saturn V rocket, using the earth's gravitational force to catapult it towards the moon. Preceding the central section of *Earthrise* is a large-scale, multi-layered cadenza featuring most instruments in the band in free-time floating bars, portraying the weightlessness experienced by the astronauts on their odyssey. The final section of the work depicts Apollo 8 hurtling back to Earth at an incredible 25,000 miles per hour on its quarter of a million-mile journey, hitting Earth's narrow atmospheric corridor and finally splashing down in the Pacific.

Stella Wilson

With thanks to: Alice Atkinson, Paul Baily, Tom Bullen, Norman Clarke, Rosemary Clarke, Stella Clarke, Andrew Coe, Sam Craggs, Peter Haigh, Griff Hewis, Trevor Machen, Ian McEllicot, Jess Monk, David Nichols, Chris Palmer, Steve Peacock, Sandy Smith, Nicky Stubbs, David Thornton, Harmen Vanhoorne, Luc Vertommen, Kim Ward, Roger Webster, Martin Westlake, Air-Edel, Besson, The Foundry Studio, The Grimethorpe Colliery Band, Re:Sound UK, Soundbytes Media, Studio Music Company.

Harmen Vanhoorne



Born in 1986, the Belgian cornet soloist Harmen Vanhoorne is one of the most exciting young brass players of his generation. Known for his innovation, Vanhoorne regularly commissions composers both at home and abroad and is actively involved in the development of the modern cornet. Since 2007 he has been a soloist with the Royal Wind Band of the Belgian Guides. His concerts and recitals take him all over the world and he has won many awards including International Soloist of the Year, which he was awarded after winning both the British Open Solo Competition and the Ern Keller Memorial Trophy in 2011. He also won the prestigious British Open Solo Competition in 2010. Vanhoorne studied at the renowned Lemmensinstituut in Leuven, Belgium and plays exclusively on a Besson Prestige Cornet BE-2028.

www.harmenvanhoorne.com

David Thornton



Photo: Devmac Photography

David Thornton (b. 1978) is regarded as one of the foremost euphonium players and teachers of his generation. He has held solo euphonium positions with the Fairey Band, Black Dyke Band, Brighouse and Rastrick Band and Foden's Band. Thornton's international reputation as a conductor has seen him work with Brighouse and Rastrick Band, Black Dyke Band, Foden's Band and has been newly appointed as conductor to the Grimethorpe Colliery Band. Thornton is an alumnus of the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester where he is the senior tutor in brass band studies. He was awarded his Doctorate from the University of Salford.

www.euphoniumsoloist.co.uk

Sandy Smith



For over 30 years, Sandy Smith (b. 1961) has been at the forefront of tenor horn playing within the brass band movement in the UK. He has also held positions as conductor of the Brighouse and Rastrick Band and, more recently, the Grimethorpe Colliery Band. He is also well known as an arranger and a teacher. He was the brass orchestrator for the *Pandemonium* and *Olympic Anthem* sections of the Opening Ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics and in 2016 co-founded Tubular Brass which premiered his own arrangement of Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells* for brass band. He has taught at the Royal Northern College of Music, Leeds College of Music, the University of Huddersfield, and on courses run by the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain and the National Youth Brass Band of Scotland.

Grimethorpe Colliery Band

Formed in 1917, Grimethorpe Colliery Band is a British institution which remains firmly rooted in the village of Grimethorpe in South Yorkshire. The Band performs internationally, and has been featured at the FIFA World Cup, the BBC Proms, the Eurovision Song Contest and the London 2012 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony. The ensemble have been the recipient of two gold discs and a BAFTA nomination for their contribution to the global hit movie *Brassed Off*, and were featured on the soundtrack score to the Walt Disney movie *Escape from the Dark* with music by Ron Goodwin. Aside from performing in the world's leading concert halls, Grimethorpe Colliery Band have played host to leading composers over the years, including Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir Michael Tippett, Sir Malcolm Arnold and the German composer Hans Werner Henze.

www.grimethorpeband.co.uk



Photo: David Nichols



Nigel Clarke

Nigel Clarke studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music with Paul Patterson, where he was awarded the Academy's highest distinction, the Queen's Commendation for Excellence. In 1997 the then US Ambassador William J. Crowe, Jr. invited Clarke to join the International Visitor Leadership Program sponsored by the United States Information Agency. Clarke has previously held positions as young composer in residence at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, composition and contemporary music tutor at the Royal Academy of Music, London, head of composition at the London College of Music and Media, visiting tutor at the Royal Northern College of Music, and associate composer to the Young Concert Artists Trust, Black Dyke Band, the Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards, Brass Band Buizingen, Middle Tennessee State University bands and the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. Clarke has also co-written film soundtracks to *Jinnah*, *The Little Vampire*, *The Little Polar Bear*, *The Thief Lord*, *Baseline* and *Will*, and in 2006 was a nominee at the World Soundtrack Awards. He is currently international composer in association to the Grimethorpe Colliery Band.

www.nigel-clarke.com

Photo: Jess Monk

Nigel Clarke has always been fascinated by virtuosity and timbre – it is the brass band genre that has lent itself most to his passion for musical athleticism. *Dial ‘H’ for Hitchcock* is an imaginary film score in the film noir vein, complete with classic and chilling sound effects, while the heroic, brooding and violent *Swift Severn’s Flood* was inspired by a line from Shakespeare. Cornet concerto *Mysteries of the Horizon* examines the atmosphere of paintings by René Magritte, and *Earthrise* celebrates one of the most iconic photographs in history and the drama of the Apollo 8 mission.

Nigel
CLARKE
(b. 1960)

1	Dial ‘H’ For Hitchcock (2016, rev. 2019)*	15:22
2	Swift Severn’s Flood (2009)	14:35
	Mysteries of the Horizon (2012)	21:04
3	I. The Menaced Assassin	6:32
4	II. The Dominion of Light	2:31
5	III. The Flavour of Tears	6:55
6	IV. The Discovery of Fire	4:58
7	Earthrise (2010)	18:00



***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Harmen Vanhoorne, Cornet **3–**6****

Grimethorpe Colliery Band

David Thornton **1, Nigel Clarke **2** **7**,**
Sandy Smith **3–**6**, Conductor**



Recorded: 1 and 8 July 2019 **1**, 28 January and 4 February 2019 **2**, 1 June 2019 **3**–**6**
and 17–18 November 2018 **7** at The Foundry, Sheffield, UK

Producers: Nigel Clarke, Sandy Smith • Engineers: Griff Hewis, Chris Palmer

Mixed at Air-Edel Studios, London, UK • Mixing engineer: Nick Taylor • Editor: Paul Baily

Booklet notes: Stella Wilson • Publishers: C. Alan Publications **1**, Studio Music Company **2**–**7**

Sponsored by Besson • Cover: *Grimethorpe Colliery* by Roy Machen

© & © 2020 Naxos Rights (Europe) Ltd • www.naxos.com