

intangible classics

A black and white close-up portrait of an elderly man, Malcolm Lipkin, with his head tilted slightly to the right and resting on his hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

# MALCOLM LIPKIN RECOLLECTIONS

Interplay  
Clifford's Tower  
Naboth's Vineyard  
Pastorale  
Prelude and Dance  
String Trio  
The Journey



divine art

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# RECOLLECTIONS

MALCOLM LIPKIN (1932-2017)

<b>Prelude and Dance</b>		<b>9:11</b>
1	I. Prelude: <i>Comodo grazioso</i> –	4:14
2	II. Dance: <i>Allegro molto</i>	4:56
<b>Naboth's Vineyard</b>		<b>12:57</b>
3	I. Dialogue I –	3:37
4	II. Dialogue II –	2:53
5	III. Interlude –	2:42
6	IV. Dialogue III –	2:06
7	V. Dialogue IV	1:37
<b>Interplay</b>		<b>11:29</b>
8	I. <i>Moderately flowing, dreamlike</i>	5:20
9	II. <i>Very still</i>	6:08
10	<b>The Journey</b> ( <i>Intenso</i> )	<b>2:58</b>
11	<b>Clifford's Tower</b> ( <i>Into darkness–Threnody–Hymn to Peace</i> )	<b>17:56</b>
12	<b>Pastorale</b> ( <i>Andante con moto</i> )	<b>4:33</b>
<b>String Trio</b>		<b>24:42</b>
13	I. <i>Allegro con moto</i>	8:16
14	II. <i>Allegretto capriccioso</i>	3:32
15	III. <i>Canzona: Largo di molto</i>	6:06
16	IV. <i>Moderato – Allegro</i>	6:46
<b>Total playing time</b>		<b>83:46</b>

John Turner (recorder): tracks 3-10; Nicholas Trygstad (cello) tracks 1-9;  
Janet Simpson (harpsichord/piano): tracks 1-9; David Corkhill (percussion): tracks 8-9;  
The Nash Ensemble: tracks 11-16

## RECOLLECTIONS – MALCOLM LIPKIN

This album celebrates half-a-century of Malcolm Lipkin's composing career, from music of his early thirties, the String Trio and *Pastorale*, to his very last piece *The Journey*, written when he was 84. He was born in Liverpool, and during his teens was taught the piano by the renowned Gordon Green. In 1949 he won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he continued his piano studies with Kendall Taylor, and studied harmony and counterpoint with Bernard Stevens. At Dartington Summer School he had composition lessons with Boris Blacher, and aged 19 played his Third Piano Sonata at the Gaudeamus Foundation Week in Holland where he received encouragement from Georges Enescu. From 1954 to 1957 he studied with the Hungarian-British composer, Mátyás Seiber, who instilled in him his belief, as summarised by his pupil, that 'composition is the art of including everything that is relevant and nothing that is redundant'. Lipkin's music exemplified this ideal.

Success came swiftly in the 1950s with several premieres at the Cheltenham Festival, while his First Violin Sonata (1957), written for Yfrah Neaman and Howard Ferguson, received over 100 performances in a year. Two major commissions followed: from Neaman, the Second Violin Concerto (1960-62), which he premiered with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Constantin Silvestri; and from the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society, the *Sinfonia di Roma*, first performed in 1966 under Charles Groves.

By the early 1970s though, Lipkin found his music regarded as 'old fashioned', and performances declined. Nothing daunted, from his home in Sussex, where he and his wife, Judith, settled a few years after their marriage in 1968, he carved out what today would be described as a 'portfolio' career as a composer, enlightening lecturer and superb copyist. He also blazed a trail in becoming one of the first 'self-published' composers, long before this became the norm. Staunchly beside him, Judith dealt tirelessly with administrative matters such as sending out scores to conductors, artists, concert promoters and broadcasters. This support was crucial during the decades that followed when Lipkin tenaciously ploughed his singular furrow, adding to his legacy of distinctive, finely crafted works.

These include two further powerful symphonies, *The Pursuit* (1975-9) and *Sun* (1979-86), both premiered by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. Among other orchestral works are the Oboe Concerto (1988-9) and a suite for string orchestra *From Across La Manche* (1998). Chamber music was a major preoccupation of his later career, works frequently composed with specific artists in mind: these include a Wind Quintet (1985, Nash Ensemble), Variations on a Theme of Bartók (1989, Delmé String Quartet), Five Bagatelles for oboe and piano (1993-5, Nicholas Daniel), Second Violin Sonata (1997, Levon Chilingirian and Clifford Benson), and *Invocation* (2013, Leon Bosch).

For the piano he completed his Sixth Piano Sonata in 2002, and over a 21-year period between 1987 and 2008 composed eight *Nocturnes*. Vocal and choral include *Four Departures* for soprano and violin (1972), Psalm 96 (1969), commissioned by the John Lewis Partnership, and Psalm 121 (1975) which was intended for liturgical use. It remains part of the repertoire of the West London Synagogue, its stark beauty expressing Lipkin's connection to the Jewish faith.

### **Prelude and Dance**

The Prelude and Dance for cello and piano, composed in 1987, was conceived as a tribute to Jacqueline du Pré and received its premiere on 5 July 1988 at the City of London Festival played by Robert Cohen and Alan Gravill. Its grave, reflective Prelude quotes from the work with which she was so associated, Elgar's Cello Concerto. This gives way to an assertive, vigorous dance as if, Lipkin suggested, 'symbolizing the triumph of the human spirit over physical adversity.'

### **Naboth's Vineyard**

John Turner, the recorder player and indefatigable champion of living composers, has known Lipkin's music since his youth. They met through one of Turner's accompanists, Heather Slade, who was married to the composer's cousin. Out of that meeting came Turner's proposal of a commission: *Naboth's Vineyard*, composed during 1982, was the outcome. The first performance was on 29 March 1983, at the Law Society's Hall, Chancery Lane, London, when the musicians were John Turner, recorders, Christopher van Kampen, cello, and Keith Elcombe, harpsichord.

The work's inspiration is the Biblical story of Naboth, the Jezreelite, related in Chapter 21 of the First Book of Kings, which Lipkin found 'an appalling tale of human greed, and dispossession through murder'. The music, playing without a break, is structured through two pairs of dialogues between the protagonists, framed by a central Interlude, and explores their reaction as events unfold. Naboth, 'proud, God-fearing, true to his ancestral faith' is represented by a muted cello; the infamous scheming Jezebel is portrayed by the harpsichord; her husband, the sullen King Ahab, 'a man of straw in her hands', is evoked through the different timbres of the treble, tenor and bass recorders, whilst the voice of the prophet Elijah is the unmuted cello.

In Dialogue I, Ahab's whining pleas begging Naboth to give up his vineyard are evident in the cajoling motif of the treble and bass recorder's melodic line, and are in stark contrast to the resolute steadfastness of the cello's response. The second Dialogue continues with the tenor recorder venting Ahab's sulking pique; Jezebel's assurance that the

vineyard will be Ahab's is advanced in a sequence of 'very sinister' harpsichord chords. During the Interlude, her evil plan is hatched to a swirl of mounting tension on the harpsichord, culminating in the cello's anguished *glissandi* as Naboth is stoned to death. Her gloating is marked by a grotesque, heavily emphasised, march-like rhythm. Dialogue III bursts into an obscene, gleeful dance as Jezebel tells Ahab of Naboth's demise; he leaves to take possession of the vineyard. However, in Dialogue IV, Ahab finds himself 'confronted by the figure of Elijah', who berates him (cello now unmuted) in no uncertain terms for his unpardonable crime.

### Interplay

*Interplay* was commissioned by the virtuoso recorder player Carl Dolmetsch for a concert of his ensemble at the Wigmore Hall on 5 March 1976, when the musicians were Dolmetsch, the dedicatee, treble recorder, his daughter, Marguerite Dolmetsch, viola da gamba, and Dolmetsch's long standing keyboard partner, Joseph Saxby, harpsichord. Also joining them on that occasion was the most eminent percussionist of his generation, James Blades. Before composing the work, Lipkin consulted Marguerite Dolmetsch regarding the characteristics of the viola da gamba, as well as visiting Blades in his 'den', which housed his vast array of percussion instruments. Blades demonstrated various percussion instruments suitable, Lipkin recalled, to 'balance the delicate tones' of the mixed ensemble; the choice fell to tubular bells, six timbrals, glockenspiel and xylophone. Lipkin's deft use of his chosen percussion instruments was remarked upon at the time of the initial performances. For this recording the viola da gamba was replaced by a cello as sanctioned by the composer when Turner prepared *Interplay* for a BBC broadcast.

Formed of two movements, *Interplay* is an apt title for this unusual instrumental combination, in which contrast is the over-riding feature. In the first movement, a note from Lipkin describes 'elements of a scherzo are juxtaposed with more dreamlike, reflective themes', as in a passage ponderously led by the harpsichord, to which the recorder and cello add plaintive, expressive descending phrases. The second movement explores 'contrasts in dynamics' with an emphasis on space and quietness, for instance, when the recorder and gamba, coloured by pointillist glockenspiel, are heard as if 'very distant'.

An intense interjection by the recorder, punctuated by xylophone, briefly rises to *fortissimo*, before the music slowly subsides to an austere, jerky rhythm on harpsichord and timbrals, the continued pattering of the latter, and a concluding calm consonance.

## The Journey

*The Journey* was composed in 2016 as a tribute to Lipkin's fellow Liverpoolian composer, John McCabe, who died in 2015. It was first performed by John Turner, at the Royal Northern College of Music, on 29 October 2016. Of it, Lipkin wrote, 'The meaning of the title might at first seem somewhat obscure, but each of our lives is really a journey, and the music, I hope will speak for itself.' In its measured tread and tender rocking two-note phrase it surely does just that.

## Clifford's Tower

*Clifford's Tower*, for wind quintet and string trio, was composed in 1977. Like *Naboth's Vineyard*, the work reveals Lipkin as a compassionate humanist who was acutely aware of the frailty of existence, and the uneasy, contradictory nature of the times in which he lived. It stemmed from his reading William of Newbury's account of an incident in 12<sup>th</sup> century York, where the Jewish population of the city was massacred by a brutal mob. They had taken refuge in Clifford's Tower, but once it became apparent that escape was impossible many took their own lives; the remainder, pleading for mercy, abandoned the tower, but were ruthlessly slaughtered – men, women and children.

The work is cast in three sections played without a break: 'Into Darkness' evokes the terror of the hunted and the evil of the oppressors with jagged fragments of notes and repeated, distorted rhythmic figures whose juxtaposition is menacing and violent. In a short slower section, there are echoes of Jewish music – the violin's fiery phrase underpinned by forceful pizzicato viola and cello. The movement ends with jabbing, syncopated, dissonant wind chords.

The strings commence 'Threnody' as if in shocked stillness, the horrific vision of carnage laid bare. Gradually through brief sorrowful wind solos, and a sighing fragment beginning on cello, then taken up by the viola, a lament for the oppressed unfolds. It erupts into a harsh climax for the winds, as if railing against the cruelty, before the music fades to nothing. A calm horn melody opens 'Hymn to Peace' in which 'the grim mood gives way', Lipkin wrote, 'to a new spirit', emphasised musically by a peaceful chorale-like passage and an affirmative *fortissimo* climax with rapidly repeated notes on clarinet and flute.

It is exemplified too by his reference to a quotation from *Euphues* by the Elizabethan writer John Lyly (1553/4 – 1606): 'the sun shineth upon the dunghill and is not corrupted'. The blind hatred of mob violence still rages, brutal oppression remains a fact of life for millions; indeed, immediately after completing the final bars Lipkin switched on

the radio to hear a news report of a savage mass killing in Nicaragua, a sobering moment after finishing a work which he described as 'a plea for tolerance in a fragile world'. It was little surprise that *Clifford's Tower*, made a deep impression at its premiere by the Nash Ensemble, at the Cheltenham Festival, on 11 July 1980.

### **Pastorale**

In the late 1950s Lipkin met Gerald Finzi's eldest son, Christopher, which led to a lasting friendship with the Finzi family. Gerald's widow Joyce, known to all as Joy, encouraged him to escape the noise of London so that he could compose in the peace of the house they had built high on the Hampshire Downs at Ashmansworth in 1939. There he wrote several works, working in Finzi's music room, including the *Pastorale* and the String Trio. The *Pastorale* came about in a curious way; As Lipkin told it, no sooner had he arrived for a visit, when Christopher announced 'that the Newbury String Players (the ensemble Gerald had founded during World War II as a morale boosting initiative) required a short piece for horn and strings within eight days, and I was set to work accordingly! Thus was my *Pastorale* completed in a single day'. David Cripps, then still in his teens, but who became a leading horn player of his generation, gave the first performance on 25 January 1964, at the County Girls' Grammar School, Newbury, with the Newbury Strings, conducted by Christopher Finzi. Inhabiting an autumnal mood, its gently lilting theme over the steady crotchets gradually builds to a short-lived climax, only to fade in a serene coda. The version on this recording was the composer's arrangement for horn and string quintet made in 1984.

### **String Trio**

The String Trio came about through a suggestion by members of the Nemet String Trio that Lipkin might write a work for them. Dedicated to Joyce Finzi, much of the trio was composed at Ashmansworth during 1963 and 1964, with the ensemble giving the premiere at Morley College, London, on 13 November 1964.

Although not following a formal sonata-form structure, the opening fast movement is nevertheless closely argued and tautly constructed. It is Lipkin wrote 'based on three themes, heard at the outset: the first assertive, the second more lyrical with pizzicato accompaniment, while the third is more rhythmical with repeated staccato notes.' The first theme contains both an A natural and A flat, which vie with each other in creating the movement's restless harmonic ambiguity. In a long development section, the opening ideas are subtly transformed.

A scherzo follows, its marking, *Allegretto capriccioso*, reflecting the skittish mood of the music, which is characterised by a rhythmic verve engendered by the rapid alternation of time signatures. In the contrasting middle

section, extremes of register are explored between the violin in the heights and cello in the depths, followed by spooky dance-like tune on the violin accompanied by clashing harmonies which leads back to the scherzo itself.

Following on 'attacca', and in a very slow tempo, the broad, 'Canzona' comprises two extended statements of a wistful melody growing out of material from the scherzo. The violin introduces the song-like theme over an insistent rhythmic pattern, before it passes to the viola. Slowly but surely it climbs to its peak, before emphatic pizzicato thrumming is coloured by swirling decoration by the violin. On its second appearance, there are allusions to first movement ideas, the music's melancholy heightened by the pizzicato tramp of the cello.

The finale is a theme and variations, the cello announcing the theme which itself is divided into two distinct phrases; from these the variations are fashioned. Variations one to four are fast with an emphasis on rhythm, the second is particularly striking where over a syncopated dance-like rhythm on cello, the violin dramatically develops the second part of the theme. The fifth variation is expansive as it brings back themes from the first movement and leads to a dialogue between the instruments of limpid beauty. In the final variation the tempo slackens, then in the coda, the opening theme of the work returns in a transformed guise to bring the music back full circle in a final sweeping flourish.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The making of this recording in tribute to my late father is very much a team effort, and I want to extend special thanks to the following:

John Turner, for valued guidance and help in pulling all of the strands of the project together; Paul Hindmarsh and Phil Hardman, for the new recordings, and Paul Baily for remastering the older ones; Andrew Burn for providing the programme notes, and Stephen Sutton at Divine Art; and The Finzi Trust which sponsored the Hyperion LP on which the Nash Ensemble performances first appeared – and of course all the musicians for their wonderful playing.

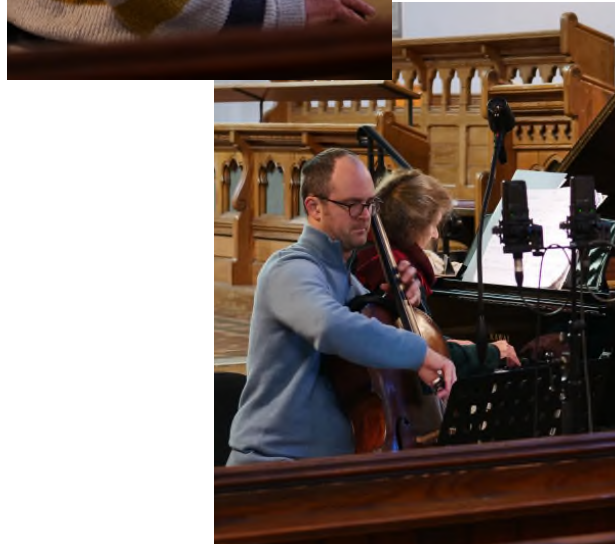
*Jonathan Lipkin*



## THE MUSICIANS AND COMPOSER

**Malcolm Lipkin** (1932-2017) was an English composer who came to prominence in the 1950s and continued writing over many decades. His works include three symphonies and a significant body of orchestral, chamber and solo instrumental music. Partly shaped by the Hungarian-British composer, Mátyás Seiber, with whom he studied in the 1950s, Lipkin's style is characterised by a very distinctive tonality and precision of expression. He was also strongly influenced by history, literature and religion, drawing inspiration from a wide range of sources. Some of this is evident in two works featured on this album, *Naboth's Vineyard* and *Clifford's Tower*, and was particularly clear in his symphonies, which included references as diverse as the metaphysical poet Andrew Marvell and the traffic in the city of Rome. A constant feature in his work, particularly evident later in his career, was an intense concern for humanity, expressed often in intimacy but sometimes in despair.

Until recently, recordings of Lipkin's work have been comparatively rare, reflecting a long struggle for wider recognition. Paul Conway captured the views of a number of observers of English music when he observed that: "He followed his own path steadily and regardless of passing trends to create a rewarding body of work of impeccable integrity which largely awaits rediscovery." This release features new recordings of chamber works from different stages of Lipkin's career, together with three works originally released by Hyperion Records under the auspices of the Finzi Trust. Together, they span over fifty years of Lipkin's career, telling also a story of long friendships, which are reflected in the impetus behind this new release.



**John Turner** was Senior Scholar in Law at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge before pursuing a legal career, acting for many distinguished musicians and musical organisations, alongside his many musical activities. These included numerous appearances and recordings with David Munrow's Early Music Consort of London, the Academy of Ancient Music, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the English Baroque Soloists.

He now devotes his time to playing, writing, reviewing, publishing, composing and generally energising. He has given the first performances of over 600 works for the recorder, including works by many non-British composers, such as Leonard Bernstein, Ned Rorem, Peter Sculthorpe, Douglas Lilburn, and Petr Eben.

Many of the works he has premiered have now entered the standard repertoire, and these and his own recorder compositions are regularly set for festivals and examinations worldwide. He has rediscovered several works for his instrument, including the Rawsthorne *Recorder Suite*, Antony Hopkins' *Pastiche Suite*, Herbert Murrill's *Sarabande*, and Handel's *F Major Trio Sonata*.

John was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Royal Northern College of Music for his services to British music, and is a Visiting Distinguished Scholar of Manchester University.

Born into a musical family, **Nicholas Trygstad** began cello lessons at the age of four in Minnesota, USA. In his teenage years he studied with Peter Howard, Principal Cellist of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, who inspired him to pursue the cello professionally.

In 1998 he came to England to study with Hannah Roberts and Ralph Kirshbaum at the Royal Northern College of Music. While at the RNCM he received many awards both within the UK and America, most notably the Bronze Medal in the London Symphony Orchestra scholarship competition, performing the Schumann concerto with the LSO, and the Gold Medal from the RNCM, the institution's highest honour.

Having previously been Principal Cello with Scottish Opera, Nicholas Trygstad became Principal Cellist of the Hallé in 2005. In addition to his work with the Hallé he has a number of students at the RNCM and performs regularly in recitals and chamber music collaborations. He is a member of the Manchester Piano Trio, which plays extensively around the UK, and he has performed concertos with the Northern Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of Opera North and the Hallé.

A passionate educator, Nick has taught and led workshops for many years at the Royal Northern College of Music and is delighted to now be working with the NYO and NYO inspire.

After studying with the renowned teacher, Cyril Smith, and winning several prizes whilst at college, **Janet Simpson** joined the Hallé Orchestra as their Principal Keyboard player, a position she held for over 30 years. During that time, Janet toured extensively abroad and was involved in numerous recordings and broadcasts. She also appeared as soloist with the orchestra on many occasions.

On leaving the Hallé Orchestra, Janet continues to work in London, playing with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Philharmonia, this year performing a Trio for Harp, Cello and Celeste in the Royal Festival Hall with members of the Philharmonia. Chamber music and accompanying now form a large part of her musical life and she is a member of the Syrinx Trio.

**David Corkhill** is one of the U.K.'s most familiar musical figures, both on the concert-hall platform and in the recording studio, as a player, arranger, composer and conductor.

He began his adult musical life at London's Royal Academy of Music with a wide musical grounding as a pianist and harpsichordist as well as the french horn, and graduated as a timpanist and percussionist. These studies and elements of performance became the basis of his conducting studies at the Academy under Professor Maurice Miles, for which David was awarded the Ricordi Prize.

David's early years as a professional musician included work with a great many distinguished musicians - David Munrow, Philip Jones, John-Eliot Gardener, and Karlheinz Stockhausen amongst others - and in 1988 he received a much coveted 'Grammy' award for his chamber music work with Sir Georg Solti, Murray Periah and Evelyn Glennie.

David developed a special interest and affection for the music of Benjamin Britten during time spent at the Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk where he took part in many historical performances of Britten's works including *The Turn of the Screw* under the composer's baton, and *Death in Venice*, the timpani part for which was written for David. As a player also, David was honoured in 1995 by an invitation from Sir Georg Solti to be a founding member of his World Orchestra for Peace.

David's broad experience in all fields of music making enables him to be equally at home directing ensembles of contemporary music, period instrument performances, grand opera, or the mainstream 19th century orchestral repertoire. Amongst his varied work with many ensembles David has most notably conducted the English Chamber Orchestra,, the Chamber Orchestra of South Africa, the Jersey Chamber Orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia, and ensembles from the Philharmonia. David is Musical Director of Orchestra of the Arts, resident at St. Mary-le-Bow in the City of London, as well as Staff Conductor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Assistant Conductor and Chamber Music Co-ordinator of Southbank Sinfonia.

The **Nash Ensemble** has been Resident Chamber Ensemble at Wigmore Hall since 2010 and is acclaimed for its adventurous programming and virtuoso performances. It presents works from Haydn to the avant-garde, and is a major contributor towards the recognition and promotion of contemporary composers. By the end of the 2019/20 season the group will have premièred over 300 new works by 225 different composers of which 215 have been especially commissioned.

An impressive collection of recordings illustrates the same varied and colourful combination of classical masterpieces, little-known neglected gems and important contemporary works. Releases receiving critical acclaim include all the Mozart String Quintets, Russian chamber music, and chamber works by Schumann and Joaquin Turina, and by Czech composers incarcerated in the Theresienstadt concentration camp between 1941 and 1945. Releases have also included a CD of Hollywood composers for Hyperion, Harrison Birtwistle's *The Moth Requiem* for Signum Classics and a CD of chamber works by Max Bruch for Hyperion. Last June the Nash recorded works by Ernst von Dohnányi and this year it has recorded chamber works by Julian Anderson for NMC and those of Fanny Mendelssohn and Clara Schumann for Hyperion.

Over the last two years the Nash has presented major series of concerts including 'German Romantics' and in 2019/20 their performances centred around the music of Schubert and that of several of his contemporaries. Other recent highlights have included concerts in Turkey, France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Italy. The Ensemble broadcasts regularly for the BBC including appearances at the BBC Proms.

The Nash Ensemble has won numerous accolades including The Edinburgh Festival Critics award 'for general artistic excellence' and two Royal Philharmonic Society awards in the chamber music category "for the breadth of its taste and its immaculate performance of a wide range of music."



Tracks 1-9 were recorded at St Pauls Church, Heaton Moor Road, Stockport,  
on 30 October 2019.

Producer: Paul Hindmarsh; Engineer: Phil Hardman.

Track 10 was recorded at the Carole Nash Room, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, on 21 April 2017.

Producer and engineer: Richard Scott.

Tracks 11-16 were recorded by Hyperion on 7-8 July and 6 December 1984.

Producer: Andrew Keener; Engineer: Antony Howell.

Track 10 is issued under licence from John B. Turner –  
from the album 'Rawsthorne and Other Rarities' (Divine Art DDA 25169).

On this recording (tracks 11-16), the Nash Ensemble players were:

Judith Pearce *flute*

Gareth Hulse *oboe*

Michael Collins *clarinet*

Brian Wightman *bassoon*

John Pigneguy *horn*

Marcia Crayford *violin*

David Ogden *violin*

Roger Chase *viola*

Christopher van Kampen *cello*

Rodney Slatford *double bass*

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