

SOMM
RECORDINGS



Quiet Summer Evening

British
Light
Classics

Lennox Berkeley

Frederick Delius

Edward Elgar

Clive Jenkins *et al.*

Peter Cigleris *clarinet*

Sarah Watts *bassoon*

Alexei Watkins *horn*

Michael Mace *cello*

Chamber Ensemble of London

Peter Fisher *violin, director*

Almost 60 years ago, Andrew Gold – head of the BBC Light Music Unit from 1965–69 – explained his duties as programming “music where the tune is more important than what the composer does with it”. His straightforward definition of what is often termed “light classical music” remains as true today as it was then, the immediacy of appeal of such music being the most lasting characteristic of the vast majority of listeners’ loyalties.

Our selection, mainly drawn from contemporary examples of this repertoire, opens with the **Rhapsody for Clarinet & Strings** by Geoffrey Bush, who was born in London in 1920. Aged eight, he was accepted as a chorister at Salisbury Cathedral. Later, at Lancing College he was introduced to John Ireland, who gave him lessons during holidays; they became lifelong friends. Bush divided his time between teaching and composing, and his output includes songs, operas and two symphonies. He broadcast often, speaking on a wide range of music, and as a pianist in his own compositions. His music is notable for its many lyrical qualities, and this melodic, hauntingly beautiful piece, written in 1940, comes from the early days of his career. Its popularity soon led to a number of transcriptions – a glimpse, perhaps, of hoped-for peace for a country then so recently plunged into war.

Terence Higgins grew up in Bangor, Northern Ireland, where he took piano lessons and studied music. Notwithstanding his early promise he decided against a full-time professional musical career and qualified as a dentist (as did British composers Wilfred Josephs and Alan Rawsthorne). He continued to compose, however, and his appealing study **Vers Le Sud** (Towards the South) admirably reflects the more languidly pervasive nature of southern climates with – perhaps – occasional glimpses of the unique atmosphere of southern France’s blustery *mistral*. It is played here in an arrangement by David Stowe for violin and orchestra with Peter Fisher as soloist.

The British composer and conductor Clive Jenkins was born in Plymouth in 1938 and has reflected his West of England roots in many of his compositions. He is currently associate

composer with the Chamber Ensemble of London; our collection includes several of his original works as well as a number of arrangements. Jenkins explains the background to his original **Fantasy for Horn & Strings** as follows: “With a different title and in another arrangement, my *Fantasy for Horn* was premiered in Plymouth Guildhall in March 2002 by the South West Sinfonietta under Derek Kitt. It had been commissioned by Plymouth Music Accord to promote a brilliant young horn player, Andrew Maher, now a long-standing member of the Hallé Orchestra and the Metropolitan Brass Ensemble. This version, with string orchestra accompaniment, was made in 2009 for the Chamber Ensemble of London and the Turkish horn player Kerim Gürerk for a performance at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London.”

Nigel Brooks studied at London’s Guildhall School before beginning a notable career in music as an arranger, conductor and composer. His eponymous ensemble, The Nigel Brooks Singers, became enormously popular through appearances on numerous TV variety and music shows, like *Stars and Garters* and *Stars on Sunday*. He wrote the original, contemplative piece **Sunday Afternoon** for solo bassoon and small orchestra specifically for this release. Brooks also composed three ballets and an opera, and in memory of his beloved late wife Jean he wrote the hauntingly beautiful Adagio for strings, *To My Love*. Brooks died at his home in Barnstaple, in March 2024, aged 97.

Sarah Watts is an admired and much in-demand British instrumentalist. She is also the composer of a wide range of works defined above all by their suitability for the occasion and their practicality in performance. Both characteristics are to be found in the rather quixotically titled gem **Everything Is Somewhere Else**. Watts’s delightfully natural and characteristically lyrical creative impulses shine through in this work in a variety of forms, the whole so organically and endearingly crafted as to sustain one continuously evolving variation.

Clive Jenkins's **5 Pieces for Clarinet & String Orchestra**, with Peter Cigleris on clarinet, are, as Jenkins himself explains, "an orchestration, made in 2013–14, of a suite commissioned in 2003 by Jeanie Moore MVO to mark ten years of lunchtime recitals in the International Series at Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery. Ms Moore stipulated that I should write 'fairly light music to run 15 minutes including a spoken introduction'. She asked for 'Tamarside', which was originally an orchestral piece, to be included, as she liked the tune." The composer adds, "The *Five Pieces* have each been given a name connected with Plymouth: 'Richmond Walk' is a promenade by the sea; 'Plym Valley' has woods and a boulder-strewn river with weirs; 'Tamarside' is the broad estuary between Devon and Cornwall; 'The Barbican' is Plymouth's bustling old quarter; and 'Drake Circus' is its very busy hub."

Andy Meyers studied conducting, piano and horn at Trinity College of Music, winning the Ricordi Prize for conducting and, as a collaborative pianist, the Elisabeth Schumann Prize for Lieder and the Dorothy Hawes Prize for French Song. He has written a number of orchestral works including *Encore une fois*, *Cantilena*, *Midsummer Night's Dream Suite* and a *Sinfonietta Concertante* alongside concertos for flute, bassoon, recorder and bass clarinet, and a horn concerto titled *Orion*, premiered by Richard Watkins and the Kingston Chamber Orchestra. This is the first recording of his lyrical **Serenade for Horn & Strings**.

Gordon Jacob, born in London in 1895, was one of the most prolific British composers of his generation, as well as a noted teacher of composition and an absolute master of orchestration. His *Four Sketches*, written in 1976, from which the endearing **A Little Waltz** is taken, display his mastery in these and other areas. The waltz is wholly characteristic, delightful and graciously humorous – exactly as its title implies.

Luke Whitlock was born in Exeter in 1978 into a musical family. His father, John Whitlock, is a composer and jazz musician. From the age of three, Luke was involved in music and soon began to study piano and clarinet. He started composing in his early teens, and since 2007 has been employed by the BBC, working on various Radio 3 programmes. While he continues to work at the BBC, he has more recently re-entered the world of education.

In 2022 Whitlock received an invitation from fellow West Country composer Clive Jenkins to write something for this album, specifically for horn and orchestra. The end result, **Lullaby**, is a highly lyrical work in which both soloist and orchestra are given the opportunity to share the limelight. This programmatic piece has contrasting moods and emotions, which the composer hopes listeners and performers will find reminiscent of something from the past, just out of sight.

Edward Elgar's concert overture *In the South* (1904) remains one of his most significant single-movement orchestral works on a large scale. It begins with a sweeping gesture that is fully maintained until the deeply affecting second episode, dubbed **Canto Popolare**, which was inspired by the music of a passing shepherd (Elgar was holidaying in Italy at the time). Elgar incorporated the tune (an original inspiration) to contrast with the surrounding music's power, and it soon became so popular that it was published separately. It is heard here in a very effective arrangement by Clive Jenkins.

Lennox Berkeley's characteristically expressive single-movement **Andantino** is, as with all the composer's music, immediate in its direct appeal to the listener: as English as a day in summer, as reflective as a quiet contemplation that "walks in beauty". The music is a moment of inner calm, adapted for cello and piano by Berkeley from his 1945 *A Festival Anthem, Op.21 Part 2* composed for SATB choir and organ to celebrate the end of World War II. This arrangement for cello and strings is by Clive Jenkins.

Another Clive Jenkins arrangement follows in the shape of a most hauntingly beautiful work, a transcription of one of Delius's earliest surviving compositions, which was originally written in 1896. The **Romance** is likely to have been performed at that time, but it was not until it was rediscovered and given its first modern performance in 1976 by Julian Lloyd Webber that it has entered the repertoire of English music of lighter character, shedding fresh light on a little-known aspect of this original English composer. Delius's mastery of instrumental colouration is echoed in Clive Jenkins's characteristically appropriate fresh setting.

The British musician Don Shearman, who was born in 1932 and died on February 26th, 2024 at the age of 92, enjoyed a highly successful career as a pianist working with a number of leading entertainment artists, including Norman Wisdom and Russ Conway.

Shearman's considerable musical accomplishments extended to original composition, and amongst the most immediately appealing of his works is **Quiet Summer Evening**, an endearing sound-picture of reflective contemplation – not so much of stillness, although that is implied, but of absorbing views of nature as we muse on what we quietly observe, as well as feeling the emotions it brings to mind.

Robert Matthew-Walker © 2026



CHAMBER ENSEMBLE OF LONDON

Violin 1

Peter Fisher (director)
Eri Konii
Anne Wilson
Richard Smith *
Kirsty Lovie °
Fiona McCapra §

Violin 2

Judith Stowe
Susan Bowran
Julia McDonough

Viola

David Wyn Lloyd *
Suzanne Evans *
Bridget Carey ° §
Matt Quenby ° §

Cello

Michael Mace
Yuki Konii

Double Bass

Michael Allnat *
Chris West ° §

Conductor

David Stowe °

* 2023

° 2024

§ 2025

(all sessions, if unmarked)



PETER FISHER is a versatile violinist (baroque to jazz). At the Royal College of Music, the Musikhochschule in Stuttgart and Indiana University, he studied with masters from three great schools of playing (Bohemian, Carl Flesch and American), enabling him to capture the spirit of virtually any Western musical tradition. His success in the Alexander Glazunov Violin Competition in Paris confirmed his place amongst the leading British violinists of his generation.

For 30 years he worked regularly with the Dankworth family, performing on several occasions for Royal Gala Evenings together with pianist Avril Dankworth. Sir John Dankworth composed his piece *Mariposas* for Peter's Wigmore Hall debut in 1996, and Peter played the piece again at Sir John and Dame Cleo Laine's Golden Jubilee concert at the Royal Albert Hall a few years later. After this *The Times* hailed him as one in a "handful of the world's finest musicians".

Peter established the **CHAMBER ENSEMBLE OF LONDON** in 1997. It consists of handpicked players from the leading London-based orchestras and chamber music ensembles.

The Ensemble, ranging in size from 8 to 14 players, has given dozens of performances at St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Banqueting House, the Victoria & Albert Museum, County Hall (for the London Film Museum), Kings Place, the Purcell Room, Cadogan Hall and St James's Piccadilly, as well as at festivals and for music societies outside London.

Many programmes are “specials” devised, composed and arranged by Clive Jenkins, the Ensemble’s associate composer. They cover a wide variety of subjects – food, sport, film, the Georgians, the Royal Family, London and the Thames. In 2012, Peter put together a children’s programme for Kensington & Chelsea Music Society.

The Chamber Ensemble’s CDs have received many broadcasts – particularly on Classic FM.

peterfisherviolin.com
chamberensembleoflondon.co.uk
clivejenkinsmusic.co.uk



Photo: Timothée Borbol

Clarinetist **PETER CIGLERIS** is in demand as a soloist and chamber musician. His interest in the English clarinet repertoire has seen him premiere concertos and chamber music by Ruth Gipps, George Benjamin, Susan Spain-Dunk, Dorothy Gow, Cécile Hartog and others, as well as contemporaries such as Vahan Salorian, Gavin Sutherland, Lloyd Moore and Peter Seabourne.

As a solo recording artist Peter has a growing discography. He has featured on discs for Cala Records, Cala Signum, Heritage Records and Toccata Classics. Previously on SOMM Recordings is his recent *Clarinet Concertos* for solo clarinet and wind orchestra, featuring two world-premiere recordings, along with *Dedication: The Clarinet Chamber Music of Ruth Gipps*

(all world-premiere recordings) and a contribution to *Eclogue: British Chamber Music* ("Cigleris makes an eloquent case for the engaging single-movement Concertante [by Joseph Horowitz], and he also excels in Cecilia McDowall's hauntingly evocative *Y Deryn Pur*" – *Gramophone*).

Peter studied at both the Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal College of Music. Whilst at the Conservatoire, Peter won the prestigious John Ireland Chamber Music Award with a performance of that composer's *Fantasy-Sonata*. Peter also performed Malcolm Arnold's Second Clarinet Concerto as part of the composer's 80th birthday celebrations. Whilst completing his postgraduate studies at the RCM, Peter was awarded the Prix de Fossat and was invited to Cahors, France to present a recital for Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark at a private reception.

As an orchestral player Peter has worked with several well-known English orchestras and has been involved in various session recordings. Peter has also held the principal clarinet seat with the Symphony Orchestra of India and has worked with conductors such as Charles Dutoit and Rafael Payare amongst others.

Peter has appeared on BBC Radio 3's "In Tune" programme talking with Sean Rafferty and on a separate occasion playing live with the Tippett Quartet. He has also performed live for the BBC in the Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Peter has worked with Martin Cousin, Mark Bebbington and Julian Lloyd Webber, performing for various music clubs and in festivals around the UK including the Windsor Festival, Wooburn Festival, English Music Festival and Carlisle International Music Festival. Peter is a member of "ChamberMusicBox", which presents innovative chamber music programmes in London and the surrounding areas.

petercigleris.com

SARAH WATTS studied the bassoon and piano at the Royal College of Music, London. She also plays the flute and saxophone. She has become well known all over the world as a prolific composer, particularly of colourful and inspiring music for education.

Her early music-making was encouraged by inspiring and creative parents. Her mother played jazz piano and her father was a talented artist and cartoonist. Her teenage years were greatly influenced and encouraged by the Dankworth “Allmusic Philosophy”, and later she went on to encourage this broad-minded musical thinking as artistic director of The National Youth Music Camps (formally the Avril Dankworth Children’s Music Camps).



Sarah has had several hundred of her works published, mostly by Kevin Mayhew Publishers, but she has also written for the ABRSM, Trinity, Cambridge University Press, Longmans and for various individual commissions. She has written for most solo instruments, large-scale choral works, musicals, for string orchestra and more.

Sarah’s books for beginner and intermediate flexible ensemble have been highly acclaimed and award nominated. *Five Note Philharmonic* and *Five Note Philharmonic and Friends* were shortlisted for the Best Print Resource Award at the 2018 Music Teacher Awards for Excellence. For her series *Flavour Fusions* she has collaborated with respected composers and arrangers from different musical traditions to produce a diverse collection of flexible and colourful intermediate ensemble books.

Sarah is keen to provide new repertoire for instruments that are often overlooked, and in her series *Hub* presents several books of new compositions for instruments such as oboe, bassoon, and treble recorder. Sarah's piece *Everything Is Somewhere Else* for bassoon and string orchestra was premiered at St Martin-in-the-Fields by the Chamber Ensemble of London and is published by Kevin Mayhew. Scores for piano accompaniment and string parts are also available.

Sarah believes strongly in the importance of music as part of mainstream education. She has lead teachers' workshops in the UK, Europe and America. She has been a mentor for Music for Youth for many years and is a member of the Court of Assistants for the Royal Society of Musicians.

sarah-watts.com

London-based hornist **ALEXEI WATKINS** graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with a Master of Arts Degree (Distinction) in 2018, having been awarded the Dennis Brain Prize.

As a soloist, Alexei has performed recitals extensively across the UK, with recent solo engagements including performances of the Gipps Horn Concerto at Cadogan Hall, Mozart's Third and Fourth Horn Concertos, Arnold's Second Horn Concerto and the Gregson Horn Concerto. In 2019 Alexei won the University of London Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition and returned to perform Strauss's First Horn Concerto with the orchestra in 2022. In Summer 2023 Alexei recorded several pieces for horn and strings as soloist with the Chamber Ensemble of London and was an artist-in-residence at Presteigne Festival, performing the Britten *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings* and the Brahms Horn Trio, amongst other works.



Alexei is a keen orchestral player and is principal horn of the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also played principal horn with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Hallé, English National Opera, the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Britten Sinfonia, English National Ballet Philharmonic and Glyndebourne Sinfonia. He also regularly plays with orchestras such as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic and English Chamber Orchestra. Alexei's playing can also be heard on various film and television soundtracks including the James Bond film *No Time to Die*.

Alexei particularly enjoys playing chamber music and has performed with the Nash Ensemble and London Winds at the Wigmore Hall, the Bath Mozartfest and other venues. He has collaborated in chamber music with pianists such as Joanna MacGregor, Simon Crawford-Phillips, Paul Lewis, Ivana Gavrić and Harry Rylance, and with tenors such as Nicky Spence, Mark Wilde, James Way, George Curnow and Hiroshi Amako. In 2023 he recorded Paul Reade's *Serenata for Wind Sextet* with London Winds for Signum Classics. Whilst at the Academy, Alexei recorded Mozart's *Gran Partita* with the Royal Academy of Music Soloists Ensemble and Strauss's *Serenade for Winds* with Aldeburgh Winds, both for Linn Records.

alexeiwatkins.com



As a cellist **MICHAEL MACE** pursues a wide and varied musical career. As a performer, he is a soloist and chamber musician but has also freelanced with many orchestras, ballet and opera companies from all over the world. Michael's commercial work includes recording with artists as diverse as Cliff Richard, Lil' Kim and Radiohead.

Michael is also a well respected cello teacher, with many of his pupils having realised professional careers. He teaches the cello and chamber music at Eton College, Peter Symond's College and St Swithun's School and is Professor of Cello at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, Twickenham.

Michael has found success with various teaching innovations including his Dyslexic Scale System.

**More from the Chamber Ensemble of London
on SOMM Recordings**



SOMMCD 0653

Quiet Summer Evening

British Light Classics

^a Peter Cigleris *clarinet* · ^b Sarah Watts *bassoon*

^c Alexei Watkins *horn* · ^d Michael Mace *cello*

Chamber Ensemble of London · ^e Peter Fisher *violin, director*

SOMMCD 0727

* FIRST RECORDINGS

1	GEOFFREY BUSH Rhapsody for Clarinet & Strings ^a	9:27	11	ANDY MEYERS Serenade for Horn & Strings ^{*c}	2:55
2	TERENCE HIGGINS Vers Le Sud ^{*e}	7:58	12	GORDON JACOB A Little Waltz ^{*b}	1:02
3	CLIVE JENKINS Fantasy for Horn & Strings ^{*c}	5:53	13	LUKE WHITLOCK Lullaby ^{*c}	3:28
4	NIGEL BROOKS Sunday Afternoon ^{*b}	5:02	14	EDWARD ELGAR Canto Popolare ^{*e}	3:19
5	SARAH WATTS Everything Is Somewhere Else ^{*b}	3:35	15	LENNOX BERKELEY Andantino ^{*d}	2:51
6	CLIVE JENKINS 5 Pieces for Clarinet & String Orchestra ^{*a}		16	FREDERICK DELIUS Romance ^{*d}	5:31
7	I. Richmond Walk	2:09		DON SHEARMAN Quiet Summer Evening ^{*e}	6:21
8	II. Plym Valley	2:10		Total Duration	69:32
9	III. Tamarside	3:59		arr. 2 David Stowe; 13-16 Clive Jenkins	
10	IV. The Barbican	1:56			
	V. Drake Circus	1:51			

DDD



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