Ben Rowarth

Composer

Winner of the NCEM Composers Award (2012) and Leeds International Film Festival Best Documentary Soundtrack (2013), Ben Rowarth has received commissions and performances from leading choirs and institutions including I Fagiolini, BBC Singers, The Marian Consort, Merton College Oxford, York Minster, The Tower of London and The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music. Rowarth has also composed soundtracks for live theatre, documentaries, fine art exhibitions, and short films.

Rowarth’s music has featured on recordings by Helen Charlston, ORA, The Rodolfus Choir, Fieri Consort and Khoros. His piece *The Short Walk of a Madman* was used for the soundtrack to the silent film *The Short Walk*, directed by Sophia Carr-Gomm. Rowarth’s work has also received regular broadcasts on BBC Radio 3, notably by The Tallis Scholars.

Upcoming projects include a new work for award winning Mezzo-Soprano Helen Charlston, to be premiered at York Early Music Festival 2024; a new Christmas piece for the Huddersfield Choral Society; and a commission from Siglo De Oro for a large-scale choral work entitled *The Fall*. Directed by Patrick Allies, and with a libretto by writer and film director Sophia Carr-Gomm, *The Fall* will use voices, cello and electronics to bring to life the myth of the Trojan horse and the self-destructive nature of humanity.

Major works include The Short Walk of a Madman (2021), an extended eight-voice work commissioned and recorded by The Fieri Consort; it engages with issues of immigration, belonging and mental health whilst pushing the boundaries of technical writing for vocal ensembles. In 2022, acclaimed vocal ensemble The Marian Consort commissioned *The World Around Us*, an education project in which primary schools around the UK helped to create and perform a new work that reflects on climate, recycling, and renewal. The piece received its world premiere as part of The Dunster Festival on 27 May 2022. Rowarth enjoys an ongoing relationship with The Marian Consort, who previously commissioned *Ave Maris Stella* (2021) for the 2021 Dunster Festival.

Further highlights include the world premiere of A New Year Carol (2022), commissioned and performed by the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church, Oxford. Rowarth’s For the Fallen (2018) and Night Prayer (2018) were performed by the BBC Singers in November 2021, conducted by Sofi Jeannin. Rowarth was also commissioned to write for Helen Charlston and Mike Craddock’s album *The Isolation Songbook*, for which he wrote *The King’s Breakfast* (2021)*,* and in December 2021, Christ Church Singers performed a new carol by Rowarth as part of their New Music 2020 project. Vocal ensemble I Fagiolini also commissioned Rowarth’s *Deus Venerunt Gentes* in 2021, the premiere of which featured actress Tamsin Greig as Narrator.

Outside of composition, Rowarth began his musical life as a chorister at Hexham Abbey, where he later went on to sing bass and became Organ Scholar from 2009 to 2010. Following undergraduate and postgraduate music degrees at Durham and York universities respectively, Rowarth now performs regularly as a bass-baritone, both as a soloist and in leading UK ensembles including Britten Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, I Fagiolini and the BBC Singers. He lives in London and teaches composition at Oxford University.

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