



Born in London but resident in France since 1994, **PETER BANNISTER** began his musical training as a member of Trinity Boys' Choir, being initiated into professional music in a wide variety of contexts ranging from opera performances at the Aldeburgh Festival to performing on Monty Python's *Contractual Obligation* album. His first teachers were David de Warrenne (piano) and Helen Roy (singing). After reading Music at King's College Cambridge, where he was also a piano and organ accompanist to the Chapel Choir under Stephen Cleobury, he completed his studies in Paris as a French Government Scholar with Geneviève Ibanez, Michel Beroff (piano) and organist/composer Naji Hakim. Among his awards are prizes at the international organ competitions of Chartres (1992) and Nürnberg (1996) as well as the *Prix André Caplet* for musical composition from the French Institut des Beaux-Arts (1999) and three prizes for composition at the international competition in San Sebastian (2007).

As a composer his catalogue includes some fifty works of orchestral, choral, vocal and instrumental music, bringing together a highly eclectic range of influences encompassing everything from Hildegard von Bingen and Bachian counterpoint to Messiaen, Polish aleatoricism, neo-minimalism and electric jazz. European and North American commissions and performances have resulted in collaborations with Notre-Dame de Paris, Rencontres Musicales de La Prée, Saarländischer Rundfunk, Polish Ministry of Culture, Vale of Glamorgan/Cheltenham Festivals, Niederrheinische Sinfoniker, Ars Nova Copenhagen, Trinity College Choir, Cambridge, Cor Cantiamo, Illinois (CD *Psallite Deo*, 2016), Bourges and Chartres Cathedrals...). A meeting with American conductor John Nelson in 2000 had a decisive impact on his compositional development, leading to the large works for the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris *Nuages de Magellan* and *Pursued by Bronze Horsemen*, premiered at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 2004 and 2006 respectively. From 2009 to 2013 he was Associate Artistic Director to John Nelson and Composer-in-Association with the Chicago-based sacred music organization SOLI DEO GLORIA Inc., for whom he wrote a series of works including *Hermosura de Dios* for voice and orchestra, premiered by the Hungarian mezzo-soprano Andrea Melath at the Zemplén Festival in 2010 and an Organ Concerto in

memoriam Albert Schweitzer premièred in Stuttgart Cathedral in 2013. With SDG he was also the instigator of a large-scale Psalms Project funded by the Lilly Endowment, commissioning new concert and liturgical works from a roster of leading international composers including James MacMillan, Gavin Bryars, Eriks Esenvalds, Richard Dubugnon, Sven-David Sandström and Aaron Jay Kernis.

Recent compositional projects have included a *Miserere* for voice and orchestra premièred by the Finnish soprano Tuuli Lindeberg and conductor Teemu Hämäläinen (April 2017), an *Ave Maria* performed in a series of five concerts by organist Yves Castagnet and soloists from Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, an extended *Ecumenical Magnificat* for soloists, choir and orchestra premièred in Heilbronn in October 2017 and a bass clarinet and piano suite for the New York clarinetist David Gould (with whom he recorded the critically-acclaimed duo CD *The Forgotten Clarinet* in 2014) to be performed at the international ClarinetFest in Ostende (July 2018). Future plans include a work for the 100th anniversary of Polish independence to be premièred at the Polish Embassy in Paris in November 2018, pieces for the early keyboard virtuoso Marcia Hadjimarkos and Ukrainian violinist/organist Ivan Dukhnych, a recording with US bass Jared Schwartz, as well as the upcoming CD voice and piano release *Lauda and Litany*, the first volume of a large-scale interdisciplinary project in which Peter Bannister appears simultaneously as baritone, pianist and composer.

As a pianist and organist he has appeared in concert/broadcast and as a soloist with orchestra (Rachmaninov, Handel, Beethoven, Chopin...) in Europe and North America (BBC TV, France-Musiques, RAI, London Southbank Centre, Cambridge Festival, Vienna Stephansdom, Festival Klangbogen Wien, Schwäbisch Gmünd European Church Music Festival, Heilbronner Meisterkonzerte, Pollini Auditorium Padova, Lviv National Opera, Settembre Musicale di Trieste, Erfurt, Konstanz, Salzburg and Ulm Cathedrals, organ festivals in Arezzo, La Verna, Chartres, Oliwa, Ravenna, Montreal International Congress of Organists...) as well as being a continuo player with the Paris Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He has a special interest in showcasing the work of the younger generation of contemporary composers (Roxanna Panufnik, Pawel Lukaszewski, Eriks Esenvalds, Dobrinka Tabakova...), as well as having a particular association with the music of Ukrainian composer Valentin Silvestrov, who recently dedicated his Op. 275 piano pieces to him.

Peter Bannister's first conducting experience came during his years working in the opera and choral world (Opéra National de Paris, Théâtre du Châtelet, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Accentus Chamber Choir...) as a pianist, coach and assistant for conductors including Sir Simon Rattle, James Conlon, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. In 2008 he conducted the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Maîtrise de Paris and French Army Choir in his oratorio *Et iterum venturus est* in the closing concert of the Messiaen centenary cycle at the church of La Trinité in Paris. In 2013 he conducted a Mendelssohn-Honegger-Bannister program at the Palais-Omnisports-Paris-Bercy, including his work *Breathe in Me*, which he had previously premièred as a baritone in Hungary with Budapest Opera soprano Beata Trubin and US conductor Delta David Gier. In March 2016 he directed his electroacoustic *Stabat Mater* with the Warsaw-based Hashtag Ensemble at the Poznan International New Music Festival.

Holder of a Master's Degree in Systematic and Philosophical Theology from the University of Wales, Peter Bannister's academic publications on music and theology have included contributions to the volumes *Messiaen the Theologian* (Ashgate, 2009), *Twentieth-Century Organ Music* (Routledge, 2010), *Contemporary Music and Spirituality* (Routledge, 2013) and *Mystic*

Modern: the Music, Thought and Legacy of Charles Tournemire (Church Music Association of America, 2014), also having been a guest lecturer and presenter at St Andrews, Boston and Southern Methodist Universities, Institut Catholique de Paris, Calvin and Wheaton Colleges...

After 20 years in Paris as a freelance musician and singer/organist for the American Church in Paris, he currently lives in Cluny in Burgundy, where he serves as organist for the Taizé Community.

"A complete musician who, in his own terms, "keeps his distance from quarrels over style", a refined orchestrator, he excludes no means of musical expression, most often relying on elaborate thematic development as well as classical forms of inspiration renewed by a flourishing lyricism..." Eric Lebrun, *Guide de la musique d'orgue* (Fayard, 2012)

"Exciting Meisterkonzert with Peter Bannister in the Deutschordensmünster. A large audience gave much applause for a truly masterly concert" Lothar Heinle, *Heilbronner Stimme* (October 2017)

"Peter Bannister - such a British virtuoso (yes, the type who plays impossible stuff while thanking you for turning a page for him from time to time) [...] prodigious ease and breathing, both in the ferocious accompaniments to pieces by Vierne and Wolf/Reger and in his solos." Bertrand Ferrier, Paris (December 2017)

"Gould and Bannister play it brilliantly... Expert musicianship of pianist Peter Bannister." Larry Guy, review of *The Forgotten Clarinet*, *The Clarinet* magazine (2015)

"Over the last few 5 years, I have had several opportunities to hear and read the works of Mr Peter Bannister, particularly at a concert where his piece The Tree of Life was played, and more recently when I studied his symphonic music. Every time I was seduced by the charm and depth of thought of the scores whose poetic radiance seems to me to be of a quality very rare in our days." Composer Jean-Louis Florentz+ (1947-2004), Membre de L'Institut (2002)



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