

# biography



## JAMES MACMILLAN, COMPOSER-CONDUCTOR

James MacMillan is one of today's most successful living composers and is also internationally active as a conductor. His musical language is flooded with influences from his Scottish heritage, Catholic faith, social conscience and close connection with Celtic folk music, blended with influences from Far Eastern, Scandinavian and Eastern European music.

MacMillan first became internationally recognised after the extraordinary success of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* at the BBC Proms in 1990. His prolific output has since been performed and broadcast around the world, placing him in the front rank of today's composers. His major works include percussion concerto *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*, which has received more than 400 performances, a cello concerto for Mstislav Rostropovich, large scale choral-orchestral work *Quickening*, and three symphonies. Recent major works include his *St John Passion*, co-commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Boston Symphony and Rundfunkchor Berlin; his Violin Concerto, co-commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Concertgebouw Zaterdag Matinee and the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris; and most recently his Piano Concerto No.3, *Mysteries of Light*, which received its world premiere by the Minnesota Orchestra and Jean-Yves Thibaudet conducted by Osmo Vänskä in 2011.

MacMillan's music has been the focus of many major festivals and residencies over the years, such as the London Symphony Orchestra's 2009/10 season 'Artist Portrait' which, alongside the world premiere of his Violin Concerto, included MacMillan conducting the orchestra in the City of London Festival, a revival of the *St John Passion* with Sir Colin Davis, performances of his trumpet concerto *Epiclesis* and an education project based on his work for ensemble and orchestra *Into the Ferment*.

MacMillan enjoys a flourishing career as conductor of his own music alongside a range of contemporary and standard repertoire, praised for the composer's insight he brings to each score. He is Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie and was Composer/Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic from 2000-2009; he has conducted orchestras such as the Baltimore Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Radio Symphony, Danish Radio Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and NHK Symphony Orchestra among others.

MacMillan is Composer in Residence at the 2012 Grafenegg Festival, the co-commissioners of his new choral-orchestral piece *Credo*. While at Grafenegg MacMillan conducts this work alongside the music of Britten and Vaughan Williams with the Tonkuenstler Orchestra, rehearses and performs *Into the Ferment* with young musicians and directs "Ink Still Wet", a week-long composer/conductor workshop. His works will be performed throughout the Festival. MacMillan continues his term as Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie, which this season includes conducting a Britten centenary concert as part of the Concertgebouw's Zaterdag Matinee series. Also during the 2012/13 season, MacMillan's music is the focus of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra's *Spektrum Artist* series, where he also conducts, and other highlights include conducting engagements with the Luxembourg Philharmonic and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

James MacMillan has directed many of his own works on disc for Chandos, BIS and BMG, most recently a disc featuring MacMillan's violin concerto *A Deep but Dazzling Darkness* and percussion concerto *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel* with Colin Currie and the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie. Other recent releases include an LSO Live disc of his *St John Passion* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis, a live recording of his opera *The Sacrifice* from its premiere performance by the Welsh National Opera in 2007 on Chandos, and a Grammy-nominated disc of *Sun-Dogs* and *Visitatio Sepulchri* with the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie and Choir on BIS.

MacMillan was awarded a CBE in January 2004.

James MacMillan is represented by Intermusica. [www.intermusica.co.uk/macmillan](http://www.intermusica.co.uk/macmillan).

The works of James MacMillan are published by Boosey & Hawkes.

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