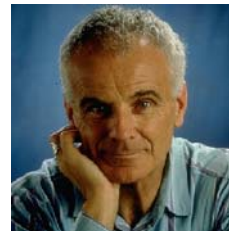


# biography



## SIR PETER MAXWELL DAVIES

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies is universally acknowledged as one of the foremost composers of our time. He lives in the Orkney Islands off the north coast of Scotland where he writes most of his music. In a worklist that spans many decades, he has written across the widest gamut of musical genre, and in many styles. The power to communicate forcefully and directly with his audiences always manifests itself, whether in his profoundly argued symphonic works, the delightful music-theatre works written to be performed by non-specialist children or his sometimes outrageous witty light orchestral works.

Maxwell Davies' major works include the operas *Taverner*, *Resurrection*, *The Lighthouse* and *The Doctor of Myddfai*; the full-length ballets *Salome* and *Caroline Mathilde*, and the music-theatre works *Eight Songs for a Mad King* and *Miss Donnithorne's Maggot*. His huge output of orchestral works includes eight symphonies - hailed by *The Times* as "*the most important symphonic cycle since Shostakovich*" - fourteen concertos, several light orchestral works including *An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise* and *Mavis in Las Vegas*, five large-scale works for chorus including the oratorio *Job*. His most recent series is the landmark cycle of ten string quartets, the *Naxos Quartets*.

Maxwell Davies is also internationally active as a conductor, having held the position of Composer/Conductor with the Royal Philharmonic and the BBC Philharmonic. He has guest-conducted orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Russian National Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic and the Philharmonia Orchestra. He retains close links with the St Magnus Festival, Orkney's annual arts festival which he founded in 1977, and is the Composer Laureate of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Maxwell Davies was appointed Master of the Queen's Music in 2004 in which role he has sought to raise the profile of music in Great Britain, as well as writing many works for Her Majesty the Queen and for royal occasions.

Recent highlights include the culmination of the Naxos cycle with the premiere of the final Quartet in October 2007, when the cycle was described in the *Financial Times* as "*one of the most impressive musical statements of our time*". Recent and forthcoming commissions include an orchestral work for the Camerata Salzburg and Carinthischer Sommer and a violin concerto for the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchester, for which he conducts both premieres. Further conducting engagements include the Hamburg Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic, and further ahead Maxwell Davies will write an opera for the Royal Academy of Music and Juilliard School of Music. 2008 and 2009 sees several chamber and choral works premiered at festivals including the Cheltenham Festival, City of London Festival, St Magnus Festival and as part of the Liverpool City of Culture celebrations.

Sir Peter Maxwell Davies is represented by Intermusica.

June 2009 / 445 words. Not to be altered without permission. Please destroy all previous biographical material.