

ROB **BUCKLAND**

GAMESHOW

Saxophone Concertos

Michael **Ball**

Andy **Scott**

Graham **Fitkin**

Jacob **ter Veldhuis**

and special guest

John **Harle**

with

**The Royal Northern College
of Music Wind Orchestra**

Conducted by

Clark **Rundell** & Mark **Heron**

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GAMESHOW

Saxophone Concertos

ROB BUCKLAND - SAXOPHONE

with the **RNCM WIND ORCHESTRA**

Conducted by CLARK RUNDALL* & MARK HERON*

with special guest

JOHN HARLE - SAXOPHONE

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------|
| 1 | Concerto for Saxophone & Wind Orchestra*
(Rob Buckland: Alto Saxophone) | Michael Ball | 14'29" |
| 2 | Dark Rain*
(John Harle: Soprano & Alto Saxophones
Rob Buckland: Alto & Tenor Saxophones) | Andy Scott | 21'52" |
| 3 | Gameshow*
(Rob Buckland: Soprano Saxophone) | Graham Fitkin | 14'52" |
| | Tallahatchie Concerto*
(Rob Buckland: Alto Saxophone) | Jacob ter Veldhuis
(Arr. Marc Rogers) | |
| 4 | <i>Slow</i> | | 7'37" |
| 5 | <i>Fast</i> | | 10'38" |
| | | Total Running Time: | 69'28" |

I've been wanting to make this CD for such a long time now. To record music that I have been so intimately involved with, from inception to premiere, is a great privilege, and the disc inevitably presents a very personal and often intimate portrait of my playing through the music that these amazing composers have penned for me. It is humbling to be part of the creation of so many great works for our wonderful instrument, and to be able finally to bring this great music to the much wider audience it so richly deserves.

I started commissioning music pretty much at the time I started playing professionally – about 100 pieces altogether so far, for solo saxophone, for saxophone quartet and with both piano and percussion. Studying at the RNCM in the mid 1980s in Manchester when the great Timothy Reynish was running the Wind & Percussion Department was a huge influence on me - his boundless energy and passion for high quality wind music, and his indefatigable quest to commission, perform and record new and exciting music, have been defining qualities that I have tried to emulate in my own work ever since. It was inevitable that I would follow this path.

My first concerto commission was the wonderful work from Michael Ball (1994), and this piece has been a constant companion ever since. Countless subsequent performances with a wide variety of ensembles, including the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines and the NYWE have brought this piece very much into the mainstream repertoire.

Graham Fitkin's *Gameshow* was my second concerto commission, in 1997. I've been a huge admirer of Graham's writing since first working with him with the Apollo Saxophone Quartet (he has written a quartet and a concerto for the group) and it was when an opportunity came to commission this concerto that I began to think about putting together this collection.

The third commission, from Andy Scott came to fruition

almost a decade later in 2006, premiering that same year. Andy knows my playing inside out, having worked alongside me since 1985, and the piece is a stunning vehicle for the saxophone in all of its colours, from the most declamatory to the sublimely lyrical. To premiere, perform and record this piece alongside John Harle has been such a joy. John's playing, commissioning and endless creativity and energy have been a constant inspiration to me over the years, and I'm delighted to be performing alongside him on this CD.

Jacob TV's *Tallahatchie* Concerto is the only piece not written for me, although I gave the UK premiere of the orchestral version in 2010. This new wind orchestra version, beautifully crafted by Marc Rogers, needed a world premiere recording, however, and Jacob kindly invited me to include it here.

I must thank Clark and Mark, the two conductors who brought such musicality and vision to the recording session - they and the talented and dedicated team of young players from the RNCM Wind Orchestra really gave their all to this project - and for that I shall be eternally grateful. Clark in particular has been a great friend and supporter since we first met in 1985, and it means so much to me that he found time in his schedule to be part of this recording.

John Harle and I talked at great length about our vision for the production side of this disc, and we asked a great deal of the recording team at the RNCM, and the players in the Wind Orchestra as we strove for absolute clarity and flexibility. This made for some very intense and demanding recording sessions but has meant that the finished product is, I hope you will agree, a truly sparkling recorded sound, full of energy and vibrancy, that really brings these wonderful pieces, and first class performances, to life in a way that captures the breadth of colour, nuance and energy of the wonderful music.

© Rob Buckland 2012

CONCERTO FOR SAXOPHONE AND WIND ORCHESTRAMichael **Ball**Conducted by Mark **Heron***Allegro con brio**Moderato – subito più mosso – Lento – Cadenza**Vivace*

Commissioned by Timothy Reynish for Rob Buckland, to whom the work is dedicated, the Concerto received its first performance on 17 September 1994 by its dedicatee with the Northamptonshire County Youth Concert Band, conductor Alan Suttie, in St. Paul's Concert Hall, Huddersfield as part of that year's BASBW Conference. It has since received many performances, both in the UK and internationally.

The work is in three interconnected movements playing without a break: the first brash and argumentative, the second a wistful, gently swung nocturne linked to the sparkling finale by an extended cadenza. The Concerto explores and exploits the full capabilities of both soloist and instrument, much of the final section being off the normal range and into the extreme register.

For more information, visit: <http://www.cmc.ie/composers>

DARK RAINAndy **Scott**Conducted by Mark **Heron**

The writing of this concerto took place throughout the summer of 2005, the 60th anniversary of the destruction of Hiroshima at the end of the Second World War. In 1985 whilst on tour in Japan with the Apollo Saxophone Quartet I visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. On that visit I witnessed both the devastation mankind can inflict on itself and its overwhelming quest for peace. The experience for me was profound but what affected me most were ordinary people's stories of that fateful day and the effect of the 'dark rain'. At first it was thought by the survivors to be a salvation from the heavens as the heat of the inferno had dried up all the water but the black raindrops were radioactive and many died later from its effects.

This concerto pays homage to the versatility of the saxophone and the different styles of writing possible for the instrument. It is in one continuous movement and, after a dramatic opening exclamation from the two soloists, journeys through a collision of contemporary classical, bebop, big band and swing before concluding with a release of tension in a final slower section.

Whilst this double saxophone concerto is not meant to be a "war" or "peace" concerto it does, due to the period in which it was composed, naturally convey an overall yearning for peace. After the tension created by the two soloists, as they work in tandem and individually, their journey travels through the different styles within the piece and the work culminates in a final chorale section. Dark Rain was especially composed for saxophonists John Harle and Rob Buckland. © Andy Scott

Dark Rain was commissioned by BASBW Education Trust-College Commission Consortium; Birmingham Conservatoire, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London College of Music & Media, Royal Northern College of Music, University of Warwick, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama.

Dark Rain was awarded a British Composer Award in 2006.

For more information, visit: www.andyscott.org.uk

GAMESHOWGraham **Fitkin**Conducted by Clark **Rundell**

From time to time my life seems to home in on the cosy ersatz world of soap operas, quiz shows, chat shows and phrases such as '...and on the conveyor belt tonight we have...'. This somewhat worrying interest in the glitzy, smiley and kitsch elements of popular culture seems to lie at odds with my desire for a non-passive society. In this piece I was very loosely trying to explore that nebulous territory between the high and the low, the superficial and the profound, the ironic, the camp and the notion of going 'too far'. © Graham Fitkin, *September, 1997*

GAMESHOW was composed in May and June 1997. It was commissioned jointly for the Uster Festival in Switzerland and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

For more information, visit: www.fitkin.com

TALLAHATCHIE CONCERTOJacob **ter Veldhuis**Conducted by Clark **Rundell**1. *Slow*2. *Fast*

Tallahatchie Concerto is the first piece that I wrote after the oratorio *Paradiso*, my 'magnum opus' so far. This is the reason why 'pink shadows of heavenly orange clouds' hang over the opening adagietto of the piece.

The word 'tallahatchie' occurred to me spontaneously. It appears to be a Native American word, meaning 'river of rocks', which I believe is an apt metaphor for this concerto: the river representing time and melody, and the rocks representing rhythm.

The *Tallahatchie* Concerto for saxophone & chamber orchestra was commissioned in 2001 by the Dutch broadcasting company NCRV and is dedicated to Arno Bornkamp, who has performed the work many times across Europe. The premiere and simultaneous radio broadcast was on March 3 2002, at Vredenburg, Utrecht, by Arno Bornkamp and the Radio Kamerorkest conducted by Thierry Fischer. Soon after the concerto became a repertoire piece and has been performed by soloists such as Ties Mellema, Connie Frigo and Rob Buckland. Since 2009, Branford Marsalis has performed the concerto with orchestras including the Dusseldorfer Symphoniker and the United States Navy Band. A special arrangement was made for wind band by Marc Rogers. The concerto is in fact a stretched out crescendo-accelerando, in which the saxophone gradually leads from celestial atmospheres into terrestrial ones. © Jacob ter Veldhuis

For more information, visit: www.jacobtv.net

ROB BUCKLAND

Rob Buckland is internationally acclaimed as one of the most distinctive and versatile saxophonists of his generation. A popular concerto and recital soloist, he is also a regular performer with his own Equivox Trio and with the Apollo Saxophone Quartet, of which he was a founder member.

He has commissioned and recorded music from many of today's leading composers: on his own solo CD (*Towards the Light* 1998), with the Equivox Trio (*The Time is Now* 2006), on eight CDs with the Apollo Saxophone Quartet, performing, recording and commissioning over 100 new works since the group's inception in 1985 and a CD with the Apollo Saxophone Orchestra featuring the music of Barbara Thompson (2012).

He regularly performs and records with such diverse ensembles as the Michael Nyman Band, Halle Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Concert Orchestra, Opera North and Northern Sinfonia. In demand as both classical soloist and jazz artist, Rob also regularly works with Sax Assault, the John Wilson Orchestra, BBC Big Band, Royal Variety Performance Orchestra, Keith Nichol's various early jazz projects, and can regularly be heard performing on many film and TV soundtracks. Recent highlights include performing as concerto soloist with the RLPO, CBSO and the Orchestra of Opera North performing John Williams' "Escapades" Concerto (taken from the soundtrack to the Dreamworks Film "Catch Me if You Can"), leading the saxophone section of the RLPO's landmark performance with the Wayne Shorter Quartet in 2008, featuring as the saxophone soloist with Elvis Costello's new orchestral project, and performing in a new duo with pianist Jason Rebello.

As a composer, Rob writes and arranges for both concert performance and film, TV and media, and has

written a highly successful and popular ongoing series of original compositions, many of which are now part of the Associated Board, Trinity and Guildhall Saxophone, Clarinet & Flute examination syllabuses. Alongside his busy performing schedule, Rob is Professor of Saxophone at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, where he was recently awarded a Fellowship (2008). He has written a major new Saxophone Method book (2012) outlining advanced technique and practice methods based on 15 years of high level teaching at the RNCM. He is Saxophone Consultant at Chelham's School of Music in Manchester, regularly gives masterclasses at conservatoires across Europe, directs his own International Saxophone Summer School, the Manchester and Harrogate Saxophone Summer Courses, and is frequently invited to present saxophone weekends and days throughout the UK and Europe. He is co-Artistic Director (with Andy Scott) of the RNCM Saxophone Day, now the UK's largest annual saxophone event and is a founding artist of Sospiro Records, (with John Harle, Tim Garland and Simon Harem). Rob is a Henri Selmer Paris artist, endorsee for Vandoren Reeds, and is published by astute-music.com. For more information, visit: www.robuckland.com

JOHN HARLE

John Harle is one of the world's leading saxophonists, and the most significant performer of the saxophone in the concert hall today. With over half a million record sales within the classical genre, he has popularised the classical saxophone, bringing it to the forefront of the public's imagination, whilst inspiring a wealth of new works for the instrument from composers of international recognition.

Creating history at The Royal College of Music, London with a final graduation mark of 100%, and after post-

graduate study in Paris with Daniel Deffayet, he quickly developed a sound described by Michael Nyman as a 'hard-edged, vocal romanticism'.

He has had over twenty five concerti written for him, by composers such as John Tavener, Michael Nyman, Gavin Bryars, Mark Anthony Turnage, Michael Torke and Sir Harrison Birtwistle. In 1995, his outrageous performance of Birtwistle's Saxophone Concerto "Panic", which he premiered at the Last Night of the Proms, propelled him to a level of high international recognition, and in 1996, John followed this performance with his own work, "Terror and Magnificence", recorded by Decca, and performed with Elvis Costello, on a tour culminating in a sell-out concert at the Royal Festival Hall.

He has worked prominently with the conductors Riccardo Chailly, Michael Tilson Thomas, Leonard Bernstein, Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Neville Marriner and Franz Welser-Most. In recital, John Harle works regularly with Steve Lodder and Sir Richard Rodney Bennett.

John has composed two Operas, three Saxophone Concertos, and over forty orchestral, chamber and choral works. He has had three commissions from the BBC Proms. His theme for BBC1's *Silent Witness* won Best Music for Television at the Royal Television Society, and he has written over 100 film and television scores.

He is Artistic Director of Sospiro Records, and has been a record producer for Sospiro, EMI Classics, Decca, Argo, and Universal. His latest production, *Morriconi Paradiso*, for EMI Classics, reached the No.1 chart position in Japan in all genres.

In 1989 John Harle was appointed Professor of Saxophone and Chamber Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, and has taught and mentored many of the younger British saxophonists performing today. For more information, visit: www.johnharle.com

CLARK RUNDALL

Contemporary music specialist Clark Rundell is Artistic Director of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's award winning new music group, Ensemble 10/10. In addition to his frequent appearances with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Ensemble 10/10, Rundell guest conducts widely, and has developed relationships with many leading orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the ASKO Schoenberg Ensemble.

Deeply committed to the performance of new music, Rundell has given world premières of works by composers such as Louis Andriessen, Django Bates, David Bedford, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Derek Bermel, Judith Bingham, Alan Bush, Martin Butler, Gary Carpenter, Tim Garland, Adam Gorb, Edward Gregson, Kenneth Hesketh, David Horne, Steve Mackay, Roger Marsh, Steve Martland, Martijn Paddening, and Mark-Anthony Turnage, amongst others.

A specialist in cross-genre collaboration, Rundell has conducted extensive orchestral projects with artists such as Elvis Costello, Toumani Diabate, Tim Garland, Amal Murkus and the Wayne Shorter Quartet. A highly versatile musician, Rundell held the title of Director of Jazz Studies and is currently Director of Contemporary Music and Head of Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music. For more information, visit: www.hazardchase.co.uk/artists/clark_rundell

MARK HERON

Mark is the music director of the Nottingham Philharmonic, University of Manchester Symphony, and Liverpool Mozart Orchestras. As a member of the conducting faculty at the Royal Northern College of

Music, Mark works regularly with the full range of the College's orchestras and ensembles. As a guest conductor he has worked with many professional ensembles including the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Orquesta Sinfónica de la Región de Murcia, Pori Sinfonietta, St Petersburg Festival Orchestra, Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Pärnu Philharmonic.

Dedicated to working with young musicians, in addition to his roles at the RNCM and Manchester University, Mark has worked with ensembles from the Royal Academy of Music, Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama, Tilburg & Maastricht Conservatories, the National Youth Wind Orchestra of Israel, and many more.

Mark has a keen interest in contemporary music and has given world premieres of many important works. He has collaborated with leading composers such as Magnus Lindberg, James MacMillan, Mark Anthony Turnage, Giya Kancheli, Unsuk Chin, Kalevi Aho, Detlev Glanert, Christopher Rouse and gave the European premiere of American composer Daron Hagen's opera, *Bandanna*. He has recorded 10 CDs with the RNCM Wind Orchestra featuring contemporary wind repertoire. For more information, visit: www.markheron.co.uk

RNCM WIND ORCHESTRA

The Royal Northern College of Music Wind Orchestra is recognised as one of the leading conservatoire ensembles in the world. Through a unique series of concerts, commissions, broadcasts and over 30 professional recordings to date, the RNCM Wind Orchestra has transformed the repertoire and performance standards of wind ensemble music. The RNCM Wind Orchestra was the first conservatoire ensemble to be invited to perform at the BBC Promenade Concerts, and has also performed at

Festivals such as Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Huddersfield, Lichfield, Spitalfields, Malvern and Three Choirs, as well as festivals in Holland, Japan, Switzerland and Poland.

The orchestra has commissioned and given world premieres of major works by composers including Sir Malcolm Arnold, David Bedford, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Michael Berkeley, Judith Bingham, Martin Butler, Gary Carpenter, John Casken, Nigel Clarke, Martin Ellerby, Anthony Gilbert, Adam Gorb, Edward Gregson, Kenneth Hesketh, David Horn, Gordon Jacob, Stephen McNeff and Geoffrey Poole as well as dozens of UK premieres.

In 2000, the RNCM was presented with a Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education for the College's outstanding and pioneering work with the Wind Orchestra. Queen Elizabeth II presented former RNCM Principal Edward Gregson and Timothy Reynish with the award at a special awards ceremony held at Buckingham Palace. For more information, visit: www.rncm.ac.uk

RNCM WIND ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

RNCM Orchestral Manager Ian Duckworth

Piccolo

Sarah Bennett

Flute

Holly Melia

Johanna Mattson

Oboe

Chu Sun

Leanne Emery

Cor Anglais

Rebecca Woodward

E♭ Clarinet

Bethan Edwards

B♭ Clarinet

Rhodri Taylor

Lucy Payne

Carolyn Cossins + Bass

Bass Clarinet

Michael Pearce

Bassoon

Christopher James

Alexander Benn

Contra Bassoon

Jonathan Jones

Sop/Alto Saxophone

William Upton

Miriam Rintelen

Tenor Saxophone

Eleanor Pike

Alto/Baritone Sax

Daniel White

Kyran Matthews

Horn

Samuel Yates

Julia Payne

Elizabeth Robinson

George Bone

Ian Wildsmith (bump)

Trumpet

Christopher Dowdall

Alistair Campbell

Joe Murray

Laura Wilson

Trombone

Christopher Jones

Stephen Loosemore

Matthew Denney

Euphonium

Sean Peterson

Tuba

Michael Dawson

Double Bass/Bass Guitar

Stewart Wilson

Timpani

Louise Gregg

Percussion

Hilary Ball [P]

Bing Chen

Torgeir Arnesen

Harry Meredith (kit – Dark Rain)

GAMESHOW

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Recording Engineers: Ben **Cottrell**, Steve **Guy** & David **Coyle** at the RNCM,
Roland **Heap** at The Old Malthouse

Editors: Ben **Cottrell**, David **Coyle**, Roland **Heap**

Producers: John **Harle**, Rob **Buckland** & Andy **Scott** (Dark Rain)

Mixing: Roland **Heap**

Executive Producers: Rob **Buckland** and John **Harle**

Photography: Pauline **Nield**

Artwork: Andy **Day** at www.add-two.com

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John Harle, Tim Jackaman, Jane Ward, Ro Heap and everyone at Sospiro Records. Clark, Mark and all of the members of the RNCM Wind Orchestra for their musicianship and dedication. My family - Mum, Dad, Emma & Jodie for their love and support always.

ROB

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