



Sadie HARRISON

SOLOS AND DUOS FOR STRINGS AND PIANO

...BALLARE UNA PASSACAGLIA DI OMBRE...

THREE DANCES FOR DIANA NEMORENSIS

...UNDER THE CIRCLE OF THE MOON...

GALLERY: ROOMS I AND II

HIDDEN CEREMONIES I

Peter Sheppard-Skærved, violin

Roderick Chadwick, piano

Diana Mathews, viola

Mihailo Trandafilovski, violin

SADIE HARRISON Solos and Duos for Strings and Piano

Gallery for solo violin

Room 1 (2012–13)

1	I	The Flight of Swallows	21:45
2	II	Mint Tea in an Empty Medina	3:21
3	III	...same strand...	1:46
4	IV	Measure for Measure	2:03
5	V	The wonder of flying or Time for the night of practice	1:37
6	VI	Return from Lysøen – 25/10/12	0:38
7	VII	Coffee with Aphra Behn: Westminster Abbey Cloisters	1:54
8	VIII	Nur pünktlich	3:02
9	IX	Sheppard's Meadow	2:20
10	X	Two morning lights	1:19
11	XI	It rubs off	1:49
			1:38

Room 2 (2013–14)

12	I	The writing cabin in the woods	16:17
13	II	Scheherazade	1:48
14	III	Early Responses to the Thames 1990 I: Twilight... Dawn	1:22
15	IV	Practising Sadie Harrison	1:22
16	V	Lachrymae (Tennessee) after Cotton Eye Joe	1:48
17	VI	Stormfactory: Stravinsky 'Three Pieces'	2:44
18	VII	Cymbeline's Fort	1:22
19	VIII	Sarabande/double – walk through the graveyard (6 November 2012)	3:28
			2:16
20		<i>...ballare una passacaglia di ombre... for solo violin (2011)</i>	3:36

<i>Hidden Ceremonies I: 9 Fragments after Paintings by Brian Graham</i>	for solo piano (2013)	11:06
I	after <i>Antiphon</i>	1:26
II	after <i>Sacrarium</i>	3:49
III	after <i>Palimpsest</i>	0:27
IV	after <i>The Intervening Figure</i>	1:05
V	after <i>Flint</i>	0:24
VI	after <i>Hearth</i>	1:10
VII	after <i>Hidden Ceremony</i>	1:21
VIII	after <i>Spine</i>	0:27
IX	after <i>Antler Music</i>	0:55

<i>Three Dances for Diana Nemorensis</i>	for solo viola (2013)	7:08
I	Diana	1:41
II	Hecate	2:17
III	Selene	3:10

<i>...under the circle of the moon... (Mansions I–VII)</i>	for two violins (2004)	12:07
I	The Vision of Anne Catherine Emmerich	2:12
II	The Life of Skin	0:31
III	Brahma's Angels – Indra's Thunderbolt – Vaivasvata's Ark	2:58
IV	The Thousand Songs of Thebes	1:13
V	Albrecht Dürer Self-Portrait 1500 AD – The Frankfurt Zoll	2:53
VI	Tourmaline	0:42
VII	The Curse with Turtledoves	2:15

Peter Sheppard Skærved, violin – 39
 Roderick Chadwick, piano –
 Diana Mathews, viola –
 Mihailo Trandafilovski, violin –

TT 72:15

NOTES ON MY SOLOS AND DUOS

By Sadie Harrison

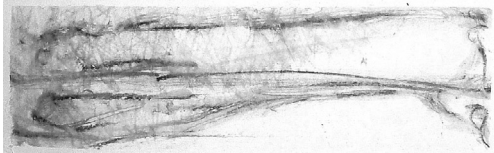
I am fascinated by miniatures in art and over the years have spent many hours studying them, particularly in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London which houses the national collection of miniature paintings. In the 2000 catalogue of the Miniature Art Society of Florida (MASF), the artist Marty Munson wrote that ‘they [miniatures] use size not as a restriction but as an intimate area for experiment’; and Suzanne Lucas, President of the Royal Society of Miniature Painters from 1980 to 2004, noted in the same volume that ‘where large paintings give some latitude in composition, miniatures are unforgiving of the least mistake’. This disc presents five sets of musical miniatures, all but one written in the last four years. *Gallery (Rooms 1 and 2)* marked my return to composition after a long break during which I had worked as an archaeologist, researching the minutiae of designs on prestige Bronze Age pottery from the Carpathian Basin. The ‘unforgiving’ nature of writing miniatures was extremely important when I embarked on *Gallery* after my composing hiatus. Using Peter Sheppard Skærved’s paintings as inspiration, I wrote a piece a day: explorations of technique, of colour, contour, expression and form. *Hidden Ceremonies* continues the theme of collaboration with an artist, this time with Brian Graham, whose often huge canvases I sought to reduce to fragments of expression – fragments akin to the residues left by past peoples. Both *...ballare una passacaglia di ombre...* and *Three Dances for Diana Nemorensis* also take antique themes as their starting point, united by Greco-Roman material culture. *...under the circle of the moon...* was written in 2004 and so is the earliest of the works on this disc. Although separated by nearly a decade it shares much in common with the later ones, each movement ‘an intimate area for experiment’, as the MASF catalogue has it, and inspired once again by my joyful and constantly enriching collaboration with Peter Sheppard Skærved.

Gallery (Rooms 1 and 2) for solo violin (2012–14)

As well as being an exceptional musician, Peter Sheppard Skærved is also a very fine artist, and *Gallery (Rooms 1 and 2)* [1]–[19] is an ongoing collection of miniatures inspired by some of his artwork. The pieces (either as a complete set or a selection) can be performed in any order just as different viewers choose their various paths through a gallery space. These miniatures attempt to capture different aspects of Peter’s pictures – sometimes the medium or technique with which they are created or the structurally suggestive juxtaposition of colours and shapes. But more often they are expressions of



Two Morning Lights



It rubs off!

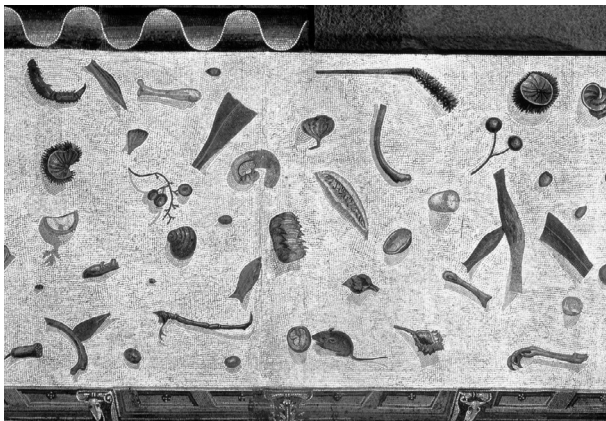


Stormfactory

imagined narratives, personal responses to the kaleidoscopic references of the pictures, their vivacity, drama and quiet beauty. *Gallery* is dedicated to Peter in admiration and with thanks for so many wonderful years of collaboration. *Gallery (Room 1)* received its first performance at Wilton's Music Hall, London, on 11 September 2013 with selected movements from *Room 2* premiered in The Shoe Factory, Nicosia, on 29 March 2015. Peter's pictures can be seen at www.peter-sheppard-skaerved.com.

...ballare una passacaglia di ombre... for solo violin (2011)

...ballare... [20] was written as part of a Heinrich Biber project of Peter's where he was investigating the connections between the composer's storytelling and 'eventyr' (Danish fairy-tales) written by his wife, Malene Skaerved. The title, of my making, translates as 'dancing a passacaglia of shadows' and is one of several movements based on a celebrated mosaic by Sosos of Pergamon depicting an unswept floor. A second-century Roman copy can be found in the Via Biberatica in Trajan's Market in Rome and my own work interweaves the melodies of two fragmentary Delphic hymns written in 138 BC and the passacaglia from Biber's Sonata No. 16, creating a half-lit world of dancing spirits and shades. The work was premiered by Peter at Ingram Hall, Nashville, Tennessee, on 19 September 2011.



*Unswept
floor*

Hidden Ceremonies I: 9 fragments after paintings by Brian Graham for solo piano (2011)

Hidden Ceremonies I [21]–[29] is the first of an ongoing series of works inspired by the paintings of Dorset-based artist Brian Graham – paintings which draw together the worlds of prehistoric archaeology, geology, music and contemporary landscape. Brian brings the reality and imaginings of prehistoric sites into the present through direct, emotive expression, sometimes inspired by the music of past and contemporary composers. The works are by turns pale, delicate and fragile, then ablaze with red-black drama; they are quiet contemplations of the scarred landscape and the conjurings of dark spells and ancient ritual acts. These nine musical fragments, almost exclusively fitting on a page as if a painting themselves, add a further layer to Brian's palimpsests. Some mirror physical shapes on the canvases ('Sacrarium', 'Flint'), others interpret the colours, perhaps just the title ('Antiphon', 'The Intervening Figure'), others the objects depicted ('Hearth', 'Spine', 'Antler Music'). All attempt to capture, fleetingly,

something of the intensity and energy of the paintings... each over in seconds, in stark contrast to the deep past that has inspired them. *Hidden Ceremonies* is dedicated to Brian and received its premiere on 1 May 2015 at the York Spring Festival of New Music, performed by Geert Callaert.



Sacrarium

Three Dances for Diana Nemorensis for solo viola (2013)

Three Dances [30]–[32] is based on the Greco-Romano tripartite representation of Diana-Selene-Hecate, known as Diana Nemorensis. Representations of the goddess feature on several coins, one the most



celebrated being a denarius minted by Publius Accoleius Lariscolus in September–December 43 BC. It shows her three manifestations standing within a cypress grove surrounded by her typical attributes: a bow and quiver, a clasped open gown and flowers or cereal, possibly poppies or wheat. The piece was written especially for Diana Mathews and was premiered by her on 19 August 2013 at St James' Piccadilly, London.

...under the circle of the moon... (Mansions I–VII) for two violins (2004)

In 1801 Frances Barrett's treatise *The Magus or The Celestial Intelligencer* was published in London. A section from its introduction reads:

the wise men of the Indians and most of the ancient astrologers have granted twenty eight Mansions to the Moon [...] and in these twenty eight Mansions do lie hid many secrets of the wisdom of the ancients, by which they wrought wonders on all things which are under the circle of the Moon.¹

These seven pieces [33]–[39] are all based on the number 28, taking as inspiration such diverse subjects as the life of skin, the visions of stigmatic Anne Catherine Emmerich, the Thousand Songs of Thebes, the gemstone tourmaline and a self-portrait by Dürer. The work is dedicated to Peter Sheppard Skærved and to Philippa Mo who gave its first performance in Leighton House, London, on 12 May 2004.

¹ The text can be found in full at www.archangels-and-angels.com/misc/mansions_of_the_moon.html.

A PERSONAL RESPONSE

by Peter Sheppard Skærved

Sadie Harrison's music might be 'read' as autobiographical, offering insight to her unique world-view. This view is extraordinarily rich; to appropriate Umberto Eco, it is truly an 'Infinity of Lists'.¹ Whenever I think that I have reached the limit of her fascinations, she opens a new cabinet of possibilities in which unexpected vistas and perspectives appear.

The two 'rooms' of *Gallery* (for solo violin) are, in part, responses to my own painting and drawing. Sadie's musical counterweights to my original work plumb new depths, often intuiting the circumstances in which drawings and paintings were produced, bringing new layers of ideas and resonances.

'The Flight of Swallows' [1] is based on a watercolour (without swallows) painted on a summer's night in Munich. Sadie responded to the avian 'contrails' and to the kingfisher blues and oranges in the picture with her signature chains of tremolos and with highly coloured counterpoint. The piece ends, it seems to me, with an echo of Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* which Sadie insists is 'entirely serendipitous'.²

'Mint Tea' [2] was served in a café in the Medina in Tangiers, full of conversation, crumbling architectural splendour, the view across the roofs to the water, and the steam wafting from glasses of very fresh mint tea. There's more than an echo in this work of Sadie's *Bavad khair baqi!*, written for me in 2001 as part of her Afghanistani-influenced *Light Garden Trilogy*.

'...same strand...' [3], the first 'Nordic' movement, relates to the oldest drawing, made on the beach at Humlebaek, Denmark. Sadie evokes the January sea-mist over the Sound, the heave of the water over the bouldered beach, and the youthful longing which is my memory of the day. She observes that the piece is also 'the same strand, reworked four times'.³ I recently performed this piece on a ship at night as it sailed past the same beach – an eerie experience.

Sadie's 'Measure for Measure' [4] has far more of Shakespeare than my painting. The performance instructions points out that it's a 'bed trick' (Mariana is substituted for Isabella in Angelo's bed), evoked by a device which appears in a number of the movements in *Gallery*. The composer heaps obstacles, disguises even, on and around repeated material, which somehow the performer still has to play! This

¹ Umberto Eco, *The Infinity of Lists*, MacLehose, London/Rizzoli, New York, 2009.

² In an e-mail to me dated 7 March 2015.

³ *Ibid.*

technique reflects the ‘divisions’ in seventeenth-century music, but also has resonance in the late music of Priaulx Rainier, a composer with whom Sadie has much in common.

‘The wonder of flying or Time for the night of practice’ [5] takes a rose-tinted view of my late-night working methods, this delicate ribbon of music recalling the finale of Hindemith’s *Kammermusik* No. 4 (which Luciana Berio appropriated for his *Sinfonia*). Sadie notes that the performer’s arm moves ‘like a wing.’⁴ This fluid arian flight is far from the stop-start reality of my nocturnal work!

‘Return to Lysøen’ [6] was inspired by Ole Bornemann Bull’s island and house near Bergen, and Sadie references the *Bridal March* of the Hardanger fiddler Targei Augundsson, known as Myllarguten (‘the Miller’s boy’). It was Bull who brought Augundsson to national fame in the 1840s. I premiered the piece in Bull’s music-room, the exquisite ‘Moorish Alhambra,’ which he built on the island in 1870.

The seventeenth-century Kent-born spy and writer Aphra Behn (the ‘passionate shepherdess’) is a hero in my household, and we have a tradition of going to drink coffee by her tombstone in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, a few yards from Poet’s Corner which she has been deemed unworthy to enter. Her epitaph reads: ‘Here lies a proof that Wit can never be Defence against Mortality’. Echoing the setting of the painting, Sadie uses a fourteenth-century *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* from the School of Worcester. She notes: ‘I had Bach in my head too – his human passion’ [7].⁵

‘Nur pünktlich’ [8] unleashes violent modernism, with more than a hint of those aspects of Webern’s music which inspired the early Darmstadt-School composers. My drawing was made in biro, which I love for its initial harshness, and then the way that it distorts the surface of the paper into landscapes and relief maps. The composer *drags* this music out of the instrument; its jagged lyricism is directly proportional to the physical pain its performance causes the player. She pointed out that the process of composition was painful, too, that it felt ‘like hacking the music out.’⁶

‘Sheppard’s Meadow’ is a glade in Epping Forest, which was given to the people of the London by Queen Victoria in 1881. It is named for my grandfather, Samuel. In the autumn it droops with blackberries and crab apples. I have never had a conversation with Sadie about my ‘Papa,’ but shortly after I posted a workshop recording of this piece [9] online, my cousin Julie, an archaeologist, emailed: ‘It sounds like him’ – and it does, with ‘nostalgic whimsy’ as the score instructs.

‘Two morning lights’ [10] was painted on a freezing Sunday morning in the woods at Arlington, Virginia, at the home of friends, Julie Anna Potts and Parkes Shackleford. I had the kitchen table of this home-from-home to myself as chickadees, nuthatches and cardinal birds made a fine show outside. As the

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

sun moved through the bare trees, there were two qualities of light – one blue grey, the other roseate.

My home is close to the tideway of the Thames between Limehouse and Wapping. The salt-stench of the river has been in my nostrils from childhood, 'adding new deposits to the crust upon crust of mud', like Dickens' ill-tempered pedestrians.⁷ Sadie builds tenacious layers upon layers as her ferociously cumulative piece winds itself up. 'It rubs off' [11] indeed! Onto the furniture, the walls, other people's clothes! She has noted that piece evokes 'the hum of activity – industry, a working mechanism of a river'.⁸

A pair of pieces about writers opens *Room 2*: 'The writing cabin in the woods' [12] is the former workplace of my father-in-law, Garrison Keillor, part of a group of Swedish settlers' huts he erected near the St Croix River in Wisconsin. Sadie imagined a clock in the cabin, and a cuckoo outside, slightly syncopated. The second writer, Malene Skaerved (my wife), is collaborating with Sadie on an opera. Both of them are natural storytellers, both have something of 'Scheherazade' [13] about them, weaving tales while Rimsky-Korsakov's Arabian Sea heaves. Sadie described it to me as 'a love song, without guile, unlike Scheherazade'.⁹

'Early Responses to the Thames' [14] is one of the most elaborate and elusive movements of *Gallery*, written in memory of Anthony Wedgwood Benn two days after his death in 2014. It is prefaced with a 1929 quote from the radical London politician John Burns: 'The Thames is liquid history',¹⁰ and the music slips from the instrument like water cupped in the hand. There's a fleeting moment of Handel's *Water Music*, and a return to the quivering chains of *tremolandi* from 'The Flight of Swallows' throws garlands across heaven. Sadie is not 'one for nationalism', but admits that 'this is an overtly English piece'.¹¹

And then she refers again to practice – in this case, both to my practice, and to her music. 'Practising Sadie Harrison' [15] riffs on the very first piece which Sadie wrote for me, *Traceries* (1997). This work is very different from her imagining of my nocturnal practising earlier in the cycle, reflecting instead the frustration of sitting with a performer while they get it wrong, again and again.

'Lachrymae' [16] is another elegy, for the Maine-based painter and humanitarian Deedee Schwartz, who died in 2014 (it's also dedicated to Schwartz's composer husband, Elliott). Its sorrow echoes John Dowland, counterbalanced with a memory of the American folksong 'Cotton Eye Joe' wending its way north from the Deep South. In midstream, the piece leaps joyfully into a hoedown, entirely of Sadie's own making.

⁷ Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*, 1853; Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1971, p. 491.

⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Quoted in Burns' obituary in *The Daily Mail*, 25 January 1943.

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

In the winter of 2013–14 Britain was lashed by Atlantic gales, in a month of destruction and flooding. Sadie uses a series of ‘processes,’ derived from Igor Stravinsky’s epochal *Three Pieces for String Quartet* (1914) to whip up this storm [17], which I painted from the comfort of my workroom in Wapping. Halfway through, a real gust (from the player) howls in, after which the physical effort necessary to play the material stretches the violinist’s technique.

And now, recording serendipity. ‘Cymbeline’s Fort’ [18] refers to a windy day on a hill fort near Wendover in the Chilterns. Cymbeline’s Fort never was – Philip Marsden points out¹² that the naming of structures is the history of people trying to fathom out what they were, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth’s confident assertion that Stonehenge was raised by Merlin. Sadie has observed that she ‘wanted the piece to reflect the monument’s different histories – its deepest past, the medieval, the contemporary – all mixed up in a haze of mystery.’¹³ The rhythmic material is derived from a medieval pipe-organ dance-piece. ‘Cymbeline’s Fort’ is full of wind effects and on the recording day (not far from the original location of the Fort) the Boreades stepped in – as we reached this movement, the church was assailed by everything that Nature could throw at it. There was only one thing to do, which was to capture this miracle, now scored in as part of the piece!

Gallery finishes with the haunted ‘Sarabande/double – walk through the graveyard’ [19] – actually the graveyard of St John the Baptist Aldbury, where this and so many of our recordings are made (the drawing was made in the break of recording another disc). Sadie marks this movement ‘À la Baroque with an icy chill’, and there really is something eerie about it, even the mordents are marked ‘the shakes!’ It ends with the violinist as lutenist.

...*ballare una passacaglia di ombre...* [20] is the only free-standing piece on this disc. It emerged from conversations I had with Sadie in 2011 about Heinrich Biber while I was preparing to play the ‘Rosary Sonatas’. She responded with extraordinarily allusive and discursive letters and musical fragments, a magical alternative to my dour historical perspectives. What had been a rather straightforward project transformed itself into storytelling and myth. This magical piece is based on the amazing passacaglia which ends Biber’s cycle *Der Schutzengel als Begleiter des Menschen* (‘The Guardian Angel as Companion of Mankind’), c. 1688.

Hidden Ceremony I, for solo piano, is part of Sadie’s dialogue with the painter Brian Graham, a very rare example of a reciprocal dialogue between artist and composer. Sadie’s pieces were inspired by Graham’s paintings, her notations reflecting his mysterious markings in various degrees. He then responded with paintings laid onto the canvas on what are clearly musical ‘systems’ (the pairs of staves for piano music),

¹² ‘Rising Ground’, *Granta*, 2014, p. 47.

¹³ *Loc. cit.*

which clearly reflect the layout of Sadie's pieces. Roderick Chadwick, who plays the work here, notes: 'In Sadie's and Brian's creations art feeds music, which in turn becomes a template for art; a pianist working in this open-ended process has, if anything, more of a sense of place'.¹⁴

'Antiphon' [21]: this movement is marked 'with gravitas, a hymn'. It consists of a baritone melody in a dark space (a clearing, a subterranean dwelling perhaps) which melts into a pedal-rich aureole. There's an overwhelming sense of bardic doom:

The pale faced moon looks bloody on the earth
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change.¹⁵

'Sacrarium' [22] is one of two symmetrical pieces in the set. This one has vertical and horizontal symmetry, reminding me of a similar device in Andrzej Panufnik's Third Quartet. Notes are arranged on the page as if in a collection space for sacred objects. The highest note in the piece is mirrored by the very lowest. Perhaps the whole of *Hidden Ceremony* takes place in this sacred space, which means nothing without the procession which enters and leaves it, the ritual which takes place, hidden within. Sadie writes: 'the most sacred, innermost space illuminated and illuminating – and upon leaving, the observer is altered'. The painting itself represents the 'footprint' of a Neolithic burial chamber.

'Palimpsest' [23] is marked 'a delicate tracery', this being the web of repeated figures around which 'star fragments' (high and low, light and dark) burst. It is not clear, in painting or piano piece, what has been erased, scraped away, and what has appeared. Ungaretti comes to mind:

a una
a una
si svelano le stelle.¹⁶

'The Intervening Figure' [24] obtrudes (is it human, is it the god?) in the middle of Graham's canvas, and over the three 'systems' of Sadie's score as musical intervals and gestures explicitly separated in time. The opening, marked 'fanfare of flame', may relate to the flickering figuration at the top of the canvas.

'Flint' [25] is the painting and the painting is the piece. The score is a simulacrum of the canvas which shows a rough-hewn spear-/axe-head lying horizontally. Graham responded to the score with a version

¹⁴ E-mail to me, dated 13 February 2015.

¹⁵ Shakespeare, *Richard II*, Act II, Sc. iv, lines 10–11.

¹⁶ 'One by one, the stars are unveiled', from 'Serenio: Bosco di Courton luglio 1918', *A Major Selection of the Poetry of Giuseppe Ungaretti*, ed. Diego Bastaniutti, Exile Editions, Toronto, 1997, p. 128.

where the stone tool lies on the piano staves. Sadie articulates this shape with what are described in the score as ‘purposeful blows’. The piece, her instruction goes on to say, is both ‘an object and an act’.

Graham’s *Hearth* is described by the composer as ‘a blaze of fire’. Her piece [26] presents the whole process of building the hearth, beginning with the striking of the spark, then the burst of flame in the kindling, and finally, as Sadie discussed with me during the recording, ‘fire and warmth... a song, people around a comforting fire, listening’. Graham’s response to the piece seems to me to be the burnt remains of a hearth, perhaps after travellers have moved on.

The seventh movement, ‘Hidden Ceremony’ [27], provides the title for the complete set of pieces. Sadie seems to provide an environment for the whole ritual, a landscape, a cluster held down silently, in which one hears ‘pulsed time passing’. And then in which one hears (according to the score) ‘pulsed time passing’. And then ‘out of the resonance’, ‘The Ceremony’ emerges. The composer writes:

I was thinking about the different ‘times’ in which a ceremony is enacted, remembered, forgotten, discovered, re-enacted – about the long, slow pulse of deep time, our own clock time, and the disruption of both through the act of archaeological ‘destructions’. The ceremony is always ‘hidden’ – we can only intuit bits of it – fragments of pulses.¹⁷

Recording this work, at which I was merely a bystander, there was a palpable sense of a rite being enacted, with disturbing results. Any ritual summons up different spirits, different emanations, for each witness. Hearing Roderick Chadwick playing ‘Spine’, the ‘pattern of bones’ to which Sadie refers, recalled another, equally haunted piano piece, the Gigue from Arnold Schoenberg’s Suite, Op. 25. Sadie vigorously denies any connection, but I hear it every time; every act has results, echoes, in ways that its initiator cannot predict or control. Perhaps that is as it should be.

‘Antler Music’ [29] evokes the memory of the hunt. Listening to it, I remember what Lady Anne Clifford wrote:

The said King hunted a great stag who was killed near the said Oak Tree. In memory whereof the Hornes were nayled up in it, growing as it were naturally in the tree, and have remained there ever since.¹⁸

Sadie has used this music in two subsequent pieces for solo piano, both written in 2013: *Shadows: Six Portraits of William Baines*, where it represents the advance of a military (First World War) force, and *Return of the Nightingales*, where it has become her *Leitmotif* for destruction, this time by the Taliban. She notes that *Antler Music* ‘is the most romantic!’¹⁹

¹⁷ Loc.cit.

¹⁸ *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, ed. D. J. H. Clifford, Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1990, p. 143.

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

The real ritual here, shared between composer and artist, is that of time. The paintings which Sadie reflects date from 1999 to 2006. They are presented in chronological order. The piece itself enacts this eight-year stretch, offering a world, a time, captured, returning with each performance. Roderick Chadwick sums up the colloquy of artist and composer:

Brian's extraordinary pictures suggest many different scales and aspects: aerial, interior, archaeological, imaginary, cosmic. Sadie's responses are immense miniatures.²⁰

Turning from this mysterious ritual, the three solo-violin works *Diana Nemorensis* ('Diana of the Groves') offer a key to Sadie's personal mythologies. From the off, this is the world of the 'priest-murderer' of the Grove (*nemus*) of Diana, described on the first page of Frazier's *Golden Bough*:

In this sacred grove, there grew a certain tree round which, at any time of the day, and probably far into the night, a grim figure might be seen to prowl. In his hand he carried a drawn sword, and he kept peering wildly about him as if every instant he expected to be set upon by an enemy.²¹

That's the setting for this interwoven triptych written for Diana Mathews.

The two first pieces explicitly refer to the tragedy of Dido; two similes referencing the Goddess from Virgil's *Aeneid* are quoted in the score. The first movement, 'Diana' [30], recalls Virgil's description of Aeneas' first meeting with the Carthaginian Queen with her train: 'she carries a quiver on her shoulder, and overtops the other goddesses as she walks', like Diana/Artemis, 'tall with her bow', amidst 'dancing youths'.²² Sadie underlines the threat, the danger, in this meeting with a loaded performance direction: 'a gracefully wicked dance'. The second quote from Virgil [31], 'Hecate whose name is howled by night at the city cross-roads',²³ is bellowed by Dido cursing Aeneas's treachery, invoking Diana as Hecate, who had savage associations, linked to magic, sacrifices, murder, witchcraft and murders at crossroads. Hecate was often presented as having three aspects, and there's a sense that all three movements might be read as these three characters. The performance direction of *Hecate* points to the curse, to Dido's suicide, and another suicide, that of Cleopatra: 'A dance of fire, daggers and serpents'. Hecate is attended by hellhounds, bellowing on the violin here, recalling Diana/Artemis's dogs tearing at the hapless Actaeon in the glade.

Diana Mathews recalls the fun of achieving some of the colours in *Hecate*:

²⁰ E-mail to me, dated 13 February 2015.

²¹ G. J. Frazier, *The Golden Bough*, Macmillan Press, London, 1922, p. 1.

²² *Aeneid*, Book 1, ll. 494 *et seq.*

²³ *Aeneid*, Book 4, ll. 609 *et seq.*

The final challenge [...] the stamps. Which shoes would get the desired timbre when stamped on the church floor ... sandals, heels, ended with blue fluffy slippers! With the right amount of clatter, not too high and not too low.²⁴

In the third movement [32], Sadie continues to play with the multiple cross-associations of this Asiatic, Greek and Roman goddess – whether Selene, Hecate, Diana, or Artemis. This polymorphic deity has been associated with the Moon, the figure of ‘Luna’, which the Arthurian Morgan le Fey had tattooed on her hairline, and which the Virgin Mary is often depicted as riding. Sadie’s ‘Selene’ is set according to the performance instruction in ‘a distant moonlit glade’ taking the listener back to the nervous priest in Diana’s grove. But there’s starlight, too. The piece ends with one of Sadie’s favourite devices, a glittering starburst of harmonics: when she used this trope in her solo-violin piece *Bavad khair baqi!*, the notes were replaced by stars on the score.

The cycle of violin duos *...under the circle of the moon...* (2004) explores aspects of ritual, although it is not in itself ritual, and the movements are not cumulative – but they are linked by a fragile web, much of it to do with the number 28. The work is festooned with elaborate instructions, blurring the divide between practical information and discursive symbolism, not to mention lavish illustrations – this is ‘illuminated’ music.

‘The Vision of Anne Catherine Emmerich’ [33] seems to evoke the ‘inscape’ of the famous mystic. In her recording notes, Sadie described this piece as ‘weird’ and her performance instructions suggest ‘An unstable world, vacillating, rarely in focus’. The two players are required to play in double and triple stops while singing (contradictory) fragments in Latin. The effect is extremely unsettling, unstable even.

‘The Life of Skin’ [34] casts mysticism aside with a brief, explosive exploration of the activity of the largest organ of the body, the epidermis, which, as Sadie notes, ‘renews itself every 28 days through continual reproduction, differentiation/cornification and desquamation’.²⁵ It might seem contradictory, this counterpoise of the hyper-spiritual and the brutally corporeal, but in Sadie’s hands and imagination, they inhabit the same sphere.

‘Brahma’s Angels – Indra’s Thunderbolt – Vaivasvata’s Ark’ [35] sets up a terrestrial/sidereal contradiction which Sadie describes in the score as ‘Earthly dances’ (dissonant chords) and ‘Heavenly onlookers’ (starry harmonics). She notes: ‘According to the Brahmas, there are 28 paradisiac or angelic levels which exist above the human state’. The two worlds are separate until the end, when there is reconciliation in a radiant, tremulous apotheosis marked ‘As one angelic voice’.

²⁴ E-mail to me, dated 13 February 2015.

²⁵ *Loc. cit.*

‘The Thousand Songs of Thebes’ [36] instructs the performers to evoke ‘Osiris, rather than the mourners’. Osiris, according to Plutarch, reigned for 28 years. The music itself seems to represent the quote placed at the top of the movement: ‘That day of lamentation shall come upon you – and the Weary of Heart (Osiris) heeds not their wailing; their weeping cannot save a man from the Netherworld.’²⁶ Sadie reminds me that the music ‘also represents the ebb and flow of the water of the Nile.’²⁷

‘Albrecht Dürer Self-portrait 1500 AD – ‘The Frankfurt Zoll’ [37] celebrates the famous picture of the artist at the ‘perfect age’ of 28, itself an act of astonishing blasphemy, as Christ. The portrait is fraught with number symbolism, painted in 1500, the half-millennium, when the artist had 28 years to live. It is 28 Frankfurt inches (‘Zoll’) high. There’s more playfulness in the musical allusions: the composer notes that the first melody heard, written circa 1524 by Leonhard Kleber, is ‘in Re (Dürer)’, the second, by Hans Kotter from 1520, is ‘in fa (Frankfurt)’.

‘Tourmaline’ [38] is one of the most sharp-edged works which Sadie has produced, marked ‘hard, permanent, brilliant’. This gemstone, the symbol for 28th anniversaries, was said by the ancient Egyptians to have garnered its beauty journeying from the centre of creation on a rainbow. The two violins sound as if they are mining this gemstone; this tiny piece begins dense/hard, then denser/harder, densest/hardest, and then, there it is!

‘The Curse with Turtledoves’ [39] is gender-specific. The two violin parts are marked ‘Her’ and ‘Him’, and do not share material. Their co-existence, marked ‘with an undercurrent’, has a fidgety rapture; only the coda reaches ‘uneasy reconciliation’. The circle of the moon referred to here is the lunar calendar, thirteen 28-day months, linked to menstruation. As Sadie notes in the score: ‘In Gaelic, menstruation and calendar are the same word’.

These duos, like all of Sadie’s works, are ‘players’ pieces’, exploiting to the full the musicians’ love of performing. Mihailo Trandafilovski sums it up:

These pieces are gems – each one of them, in its own way, intense, expressive and of focused presence – their combination leading to a colourful and fascinating world.²⁸

²⁶ Adolf Erman, *Die Literatur der Aegypter*, Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1923; English translation by Aylward M. Blackman published as *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, Methuen, London, 1927, p. 71.

²⁷ *Loc. cit.*

²⁸ E-mail to me dated 7 March 2015.

Sadie Harrison was born in Adelaide, Australia, and has lived in England since 1970. Her music has been heard in venues as far apart as the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, South Bank Centre, Millennium Centre (Cardiff) and Vilnius Philharmonic Hall, with works released on Naxos, NMC, Cadenza, Sargasso, BML, Divine Art/Metier, and Clarinet Classics. Many of her compositions have been inspired by the traditional musics of old and extant cultures, with cycles of pieces based on the folk-music of Afghanistan, Lithuania, the Northern Caucasus, Skye and elsewhere in the UK. Reflecting her passion for the past, she undertook an archaeology degree in 2007, subsequently spending time in Hungary researching the prestige pottery of the Continental Bronze Age (also appearing on *Time Team* on Channel 4). Her music is published by UYMP, Recital Music and ABRSM. Her website can be found at www.sadieharrisoncomposer.co.uk.



Photo: Bella West

Peter Sheppard Skærved has worked with Sadie Harrison for nearly the whole of his career; her artistry is one of the most important influences on his work as a violinist. He is the dedicatee of over 400 works for violin, by composers including Hans Werner Henze, Poul Ruders, David Matthews, Judith Weir and Jörg Widmann. Peter has made over 60 recordings, including cycles of sonatas by Tartini (of which two volumes have already appeared on Toccata Classics) and Beethoven, quartets by Reicha (again on Toccata Classics) and Tippett, and many of the works written for him, resulting in a Grammy nomination and awards from *BBC Music Magazine*. Peter is the only musician to have been invited to curate an exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, London, and has made and performance projects for the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and galleries worldwide. He is married to the Danish writer and poet Malene Skærved and is the Viotti Lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he was elected Fellow in 2013. For recordings, films, writing and more info, go to www.peter-sheppard-skaerved.com.

Manchester-born **Roderick Chadwick** is a pianist, writer and teacher who has been described as ‘possessor of devastating musicality and technique’ by *The Sunday Times*. As a performer he is active mainly as a chamber musician, and has worked extensively with Peter Sheppard Skærved and the Kreutzer Quartet (recent releases include Finnissy quintets on the Métier label), Mark Knoop and Newton Armstrong – Stockhausen’s *Mantra* for Hathut records won plaudits – and the ensembles Plus-Minus and Chroma. In recent times he has performed at the Bergen Festival, Wigmore Hall and the inaugural London Contemporary Music Festival, and before that at venues across Europe and East Asia such as the Ultima, Borealis and Huddersfield festivals, Auditorium du Louvre, nyMusikk Oslo, and Tokyo Opera City. He has written about the music of Olivier Messiaen and Gloria Coates and was recently named Reader in Music at the Royal Academy of Music, where he has taught since 1999.

Diana Mathews pursues an active performing career as soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. Prizes include the Theodore Holland Prize and that of the Kenneth Page Foundation Viola Competition. As concerto soloist, Diana has performed with the Isis Chamber Orchestra and Huntingdon Philharmonic, among others. As a recitalist, Diana's performances, with her duo partner, the pianist Jonathan Beatty, have included concerts for the Concerts in the West recital series and for Oxshott and Cobham Music Society. Diana has a keen interest in contemporary music. Works dedicated to her include Richard Bullen's *Rite* and Sadie Harrison's *Diana Nemorensis*. As a chamber musician she is a regular guest artist with the Kreutzer Quartet, and she has participated in the London Festival of Chamber Music playing with the English String Quartet. She freelances with various orchestras including the Royal Opera House Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra. Diana plays on a Pietro Antonio Testore viola (1780). Her website can be found at www.diana-mathews.co.uk.

Macedonian-born composer, violinist and educator **Mihailo Trandafilovski** studied at Michigan State University and the Royal College of Music in London. Mihailo's first portrait CD, performed by the Kreutzer Quartet and Lontano (conductor Odaline de la Martinez), was released by LORELT in 2011. His music has also been released by Clarinet Classics (*Magnets, Lava, Crystals*, with Roger Heaton and the Kreutzer Quartet) and SOCOM/Macedonian Radio-Television (performers Peter Sheppard Skærved and Aaron Shorr, Ana Gaceva, Quatuor Diotima, Trio Ardenza, and chamber orchestra Arcata Stuttgart), and some of his electronic works have been published by Avalon Production (Macedonia) and Alliance of MSU composers (USA). A new portrait CD will be released in 2015 by Innova Recordings. As a violinist, Mihailo has performed across Europe and America. In 2006 he joined the Kreutzer Quartet, with whom he has closely worked with a number of acclaimed composers and has recorded extensively. Mihailo is one of the founders and a music director of FuseArts, a not-for-profit organisation formed in 2009, supporting shared projects among the arts and promoting contemporary artistic creativity to a wider audience. His website is at www.trandafilovski.com.



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Recording engineer: Jonathan Haskell.

Produced by Peter Sheppard-Skærved.

Musical supervision: Sadie Harrison

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