



JOHN
RUTTER

CLASSICAL
TRANQUILLITY

MANCHESTER
CAMERATA

Collegium
RECORDS



CLASSICAL TRANQUILLITY

John Rutter conducting the Manchester Camerata

(leader: Jonathan Martindale)

Total playing time: 44' 45"

- 1 **She moved through the fair** (2' 18") Irish folk song arranged by John Rutter
Flute: Amina Hussain • Violin: Jonathan Martindale • Harp: Lauren Scott
- 2 **Daydream** (2' 21") Erik Satie (*from Gymnopédie No. 1*) orchestrated by John Rutter
Clarinet: Daniel Bayley
- 3 **On hearing the first cuckoo in spring** (7' 04") Frederick Delius
- 4 **Pavane pour une infante défunte [Pavane for a departed princess]** (5' 48") Maurice Ravel
Horn: David Tollington
- 5 **Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace** (2' 59") John Rutter (*from Five Meditations for Orchestra*)
- 6 **The Railway Children** (3' 44") Edvard Grieg (*from Symphonic Dance no. 2, Op. 64*) adapted by John Rutter
Oboe: Rachael Clegg
- 7 **Bist du bei mir [When you are with me]** (2' 49") J. S. Bach arranged by John Rutter

- 8 **Menuet** (3' 16") Maurice Ravel, orchestrated by John Rutter (from *Sonatine*)
- 9 **Clair de lune [Moonlight]** (4' 35") Claude Debussy, orchestrated by John Rutter (from *Suite Bergamasque*)
- 10 **Where'er you walk** (4' 10") G. F. Handel, arranged by John Rutter (from *Semele*)
Oboe: Rachael Clegg
- 11 **Sheep may safely graze** (5' 02") J. S. Bach, arranged by John Rutter (from *Cantata no. 208*)
Flutes: Amina Hussain, Sarah Whewell • Oboe: Rachael Clegg

Tracks 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 © Collegium Music Publications



Soft stillness and the night become the touches of sweet harmony –
William Shakespeare

Tranquillity is a state of mind. You might be more likely to describe a favourite countryside scene rather than a person as ‘tranquil’, but you are really describing the effect it has on you. You feel calm, serene, still, at peace, relaxed, untroubled, chilled-out . . . perhaps we have so many different words for this state of mind because it is so important, and yet so elusive in an often noisy, frantic world.

Music has an extraordinary power to evoke tranquillity – as is revealed in the eleven pieces I have chosen to make up this collection. Ten of them happen to be among my personal favourites, drawn from the music of seven composers, plus the treasure trove of anonymous folk music, and I have added an orchestral version of my choral setting of *Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace*, a text formerly believed to be by St Francis of Assisi.

Bach can hardly have experienced much tranquillity in his home, filled with various of his twenty children, but he was able to capture it unforgettably in music. *Sheep may safely graze* comes from a secular cantata of 1713 in which the shepherd guarding them, often assumed to be a heavenly one, was actually the local ruler, Duke Christian of Saxe-Weissenburg. The more intimate dedicatee of *Bist du bei mir*, a tender love song, was Bach’s second wife Anna Magdalena. It is found in his *Notebook for Anna Magdalena*, a collection Bach compiled of her favourite pieces, and it is not certain whether Bach composed it himself, but there is no doubt of its beauty. Handel, like Bach, did not

hesitate to transcribe his own vocal music for orchestra – ‘And the glory of the Lord’ from *Messiah* pops up in one of his *concerti grossi* – and I hope he would not have disapproved of the voice part in his renowned aria *Where’er you walk* being assigned to oboe, which perfectly suits it.

I well remember visiting Grieg’s lakeside home (now a museum) on the outskirts of the Norwegian city of Bergen. His music room commands an idyllic view of the lake, and I like to think this may have inspired the second of his Op. 64 Symphonic Dances, composed in 1896 but remembered by aficionados of vintage BBC television drama thanks to its use in a 1957 serialisation of Edith Nesbit’s golden-age children’s book *The Railway Children*. This wistful melody was said by the composer to be based on a Norwegian folk song, also the inspiration for Delius’s *On hearing the first cuckoo in spring*, one of two pieces for small orchestra composed in 1912. Like Grieg (whom he greatly admired) Delius had a gift for evoking mood, often nostalgic and pastoral, perhaps reflecting the rural landscape surrounding his home at Grez-sur-Loing in France.

Debussy and Ravel were both masters at conjuring up a dream world in their piano music – in Ravel’s case often later transcribed by the composer himself for orchestra. His *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (literally ‘Pavane for a departed princess’) was originally a piano piece, memorably reimagined for orchestra in 1910 and featuring an evocative horn solo. Inexplicably Ravel never made an orchestral version of his *Sonatine* for piano, perhaps because the tempestuous final movement was too purely pianistic, but the cool, serene *Menuet* preceding it seems to invite an orchestral transcription, which I have ventured to provide. Who knows what Ravel’s eccentric contemporary Erik



Satie would have made of the many transcriptions that later musicians have made of his most often-played piano piece, the enigmatic *Gymnopédie No. 1*. Impoverished as he was – he played the piano in Parisian cafés to supplement his meagre income – he would probably at least have appreciated the royalties. As far as scholars have been able to determine, the title *Gymnopédies* for his set of three pieces is completely meaningless, so I have suggested calling the first of them, recorded here in my orchestral transcription, *Daydream*. His fellow-composer Claude Debussy enjoyed far wider recognition but might have felt irked that one brief movement, *Clair de lune*, from his early *Suite bergamasque*, eclipsed his later and more significant piano music in popularity. Yet it *is* an evocative and lovely piece, which seems to go beyond the realms of piano music, calling for the colours of the orchestra – in which form we include it here.

Celtic folk music has a unique character embracing many moods. For perfect tranquillity my personal favourite is the haunting Irish folk song *She moved through the fair*, which I couldn’t resist including, even without its poetic text. You can capture the flavour from just this one verse I will quote before letting the music of our album speak for itself:

She stepped away from me, and she went through the fair,
And fondly I watched her move here and move there.
And then she went homeward with one star awake,
As the swan in the evening moves over the lake.

JOHN RUTTER



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