

THE JEWEL BEYOND PRICE

Music by Cheryl Frances-Hoad and words by Gregory Warren Wilson. Premiered by Peterborough Voices.

*This jewel I'll never relinquish.
Who would want it anyway -
the subtlest of all my gems -
if I chose to give it away?*

*It cannot be possessed or set -
that would be imprisonment;
nor can it be compromised.
Few care, in any event,*

*to value it. But I ... I prize
its unassuming quality
and what it brings to light concerns me -
my jewel of uncertainty.*

Gregory Warren Wilson

Cheryl Frances-Hoad was born in Essex in 1980 and received her musical education at the Yehudi Menuhin School, the University of Cambridge (where she was awarded a double 1st for her BA in Music and a distinction for her MPhil in Composition) and Kings College London (PhD, Composition). Her music has been described as “like a declaration of faith in the eternal verities of composition” (The Times), with “a voice overflowing not only with ideas, but also with the discipline and artistry necessary to harness them” (The Scotsman).

Chosen to be a featured composer on BBC Radio 3's 'Composer of the Week' ('Five under 35', March 2015), her works have garnered many awards, from the BBC Lloyds Bank Composer of the Year award when she was just 15 to more recently the Mendelssohn Scholarship, The Bliss Prize, The Cambridge Composers Competition, The Robert Helps International Composition Prize (USA), The Sun River Prize (China), The International String Orchestra Composition Prize (Malta), The RPS Composition Prize, and three Ivor Novello (formally BASCA) British Composer Awards (for Psalm 1 and Stolen Rhythm in 2010, and Scenes from the Wild in 2022).



Her recent disc of vocal music (featuring Nicky Spence, Sophie Daneman, Mark Stone and Sholto Kynoch amongst others) was released on the Champs Hill Records label in November 2018. Magic Lantern Tales has been highly praised: “the longer you listen to this beautifully crafted CD (...) the deeper you fall under its spell” (SWR2 Treffpunkt Klassik, Germany), “Frances-Hoad’s Magic Lantern Tales disorientate and delight in equal measure.” (Opera Today). Her 2011 CD of chamber works, The Glory Tree, was selected as “Chamber Music Choice” by BBC Music Magazine.

Recent projects include Your Servant, Elizabeth, commissioned by the BBC Proms for the ‘Platinum Jubilee’ Prom on 22nd July 2022 at the Royal Albert Hall, and in May 2023 Laura van der Heijden will premiere Cheryl’s new cello concerto with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ryan Wigglesworth.