

BIOG Karen Wimhurst

Karen Wimhurst is a widely commissioned composer ranging from chamber works to music theatre, theatre and large-scale, collaborative productions. She has been commissioned by festivals and ensembles throughout Britain with performances by the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Grimethorpe Brass Band, Welsh National Opera, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Electric Voice Theatre, Allegri Quartet and Solid Strings among others. Eclectic in nature, her own distinctive music manifests diverse traditional and jazz influences alongside a strong grounding in contemporary classical music.

A passionate environmental activist, she has worked in many cross disciplinary collaborations alongside the entomologist Dr Peter Smithers (Plymouth University), Professor Adrian Newton, (Ecology and Conservation Bournemouth University), the environmental charity Common Ground, the National Trust, the Museum of Design in Plastic, Futerra, Extinction Rebellion and others.

Recent works include *Synthetica* (a chamber opera commissioned by the Museum of Design in Plastic) a multi media exploration of the rise and fall of Russian Communism Freedom, Bread and Peace commissioned by AUB and Sound Storm; *Miriam and Bemused*, two chamber opera pieces for EVT at the Edinburgh Festival and *Tete a Tete 2015/2016* exploring the life of entomologist Miriam Rothschild and bee specialist Eva Crane 'What They Left Behind' WCT theatre company and *Get Up and Tie Your Fingers*, a Custom's House touring production.

"The style of performance was innovative, not least in the fact that a new category of modern 'choral theatre' was forged. The music element stretched everyone involved artistically because of the ambition and intricacy of Karen Wimhurst's composition..." The Stage.

"dramatic, compelling, thought provoking and challenging the opera Synthetica is brilliantly conceived for a soprano soloist, a trumpet player, and DJ mixing tracks live by the composer Karen Wimhurst." Andrew Burns Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

As an improvising performer she has worked with many ensembles, usually characterised by an innovative fusion of musical styles. Her initial steps in this arena featured the 8 piece band 'the Cauld Blast Orchestra' which received two Scottish jazz awards. On moving to England she worked with Zaum "...music that almost never treads water and promises a surprise around every corner." John Fordham, The Guardian

"... the most exciting free jazz group operating in Europe today." The Penguin Guide To Jazz

Recently bands include 'Misbehavin' with the singer Helen Porter and the duo Pagoda with accordionist Paul Hutchinson. Their album Clarion/Pagoda Duo received 5 star reviews in Songlines and Folk Roots and was featured on Songline's Top of the World CD.

...a performance packed with stunning musical technique and interpretation of original material interspersed with wonderfully humorous introductions! What a treat....! Fine Times Recorder

"...The music is beautiful and measured, a real pleasure to settle in and get familiar with...music of calm bringing a measure of sympathy and healing to a strange and deadly world. " Tim Cumming SONGLINES

'the protagonists are both hugely talented and versatile musicians and share a love of all things musical, and with a wicked - and intelligent - sense of humour to match.' Fatea Records

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