

THE PETER TRANCHELL FOUNDATION

Registered Charity 1193849

Presents

Songs, Lost and Found

Music by Peter Tranchell and the winners of the
2024 Peter Tranchell Foundation Composition Prize

9th November 2024, 18:30 St Paul's Knightsbridge



Mary Bevan, James Gilchrist,
Lucy Colquhoun and William Vann

Champagne will be served from 18:00 while the audience mingles to light piano music

*A buffet Reception follows for those who have booked.
Those attending are asked to leave the church by 21:15
to allow for clearing in preparation for services tomorrow*

Souvenir post-performance edition

PROGRAMME

6:00

Pre-concert piano miscellany, starting with lighter works by Peter Tranchell: Remembrance Waltz, Salonika Nights, A Thing or Two, Heaven for Two (Lucy Colquhoun) continuing with C'est la Vie (Denise Langley; specially commended entry for the Prize); PAT's piano arrangement of a selection of songs from Zuleika (1954 version) (William Vann)

6:30 Main concert

Two Kavafy songs (1956): *Voices and Grey* (James Gilchrist & Lucy Colquhoun)

Two Poems of Po Chü-I (1948): *Lazy Man's Song and To Liu Yü-Hsi*
(Mary Bevan & William Vann)

Three songs from **In a Sunday Paper** (1953) (James Gilchrist & Lucy Colquhoun)

Police use hoses against seven hundred
A seal named Celia
County Cricket

Selection from the Prize-winning entries to the 2024 Composition Prize:

Third Prize: Guy Turner: **Malky's Chapel; Lace yourself tighter, Lucy**
(James Gilchrist & Lucy Colquhoun)

Second Prize: Ian Shaw: **Catholic Church; Lullaby** (Mary Bevan & William Vann)

First Prize: Will Harmer: **Lullaby** (Mary Bevan & William Vann);
Summer Dance (James Gilchrist & Lucy Colquhoun)

Friendly Grotesques (1953) piano duet, two movements:
2 Rumboid and 4 Pas à quatre mains gauches (Lucy Colquhoun and William Vann)

A Tedious Affair (Child's Play 1958) (Mary Bevan & William Vann)

Two duets from **The Mayor of Casterbridge** (1951):
(Mary Bevan, James Gilchrist & William Vann; violin obbligato Megan Hathaway)

When the flow'r is in the bud (Act II Scene 1)

Wedding night duet (Act III Scene 3)

Two duets from **Zuleika** (1954)

All Over Again (Mary Bevan, James Gilchrist & William Vann);

Zuleika's Entry at Cambridge
(Mary Bevan, James Gilchrist, Lucy Colquhoun & William Vann)

Thanks to Robin Flower for page-turning during the performance.

NOTES AND TEXTS

Piano miscellany: to include **Salonika Nights**. Although undated, it was probably composed in 1945-46. Peter was at this point stationed in Greece, first Salonika (Thessaloniki) and then Athens. He was sometimes called upon to play in a dance band at events in the officers' Mess, and often expected to play light music in the background. A perennial favourite request was the Richard Addinsell's Warsaw Concerto which he grew to dislike intensely.

The **Remembrance Waltz** (otherwise 'Valse Souvenir d'un jour d'espoir') was part of the incidental music Peter wrote for the JB Priestley play *Johnson over Jordan*, produced in Cambridge in 1947. It includes the marking 'Tempo di Hesitation' for the main theme.

From 1947 to 1949 Peter was Musical Director of Footlights and would relax from the rigours of serious composition by writing light songs for performance at the 'Smokers' and revues, mostly for a solo voice and piano and using someone else's words – often by his close friend Ted Cranshaw. This evening we include **Heaven for Two** and **A Thing or Two**.

Peter's piano selection from the 1954 version of **Zuleika** was intended to be sold at the Cambridge performances. It includes most of the 'big tunes' – the version available from the Foundation website includes a note about the circumstances of the production before it was taken up commercially in 1957; and see below for the note on the two duets in this evening's concert.

Two Kavafy songs (1956): *Voices and Grey*

The translation of the poems by John Mavrogordato was published in 1951 – Kavafy, or more usually in English Cavafy (PAT the classicist adopting a strict transliteration of Καβάφης) died in 1933. He is now considered one of the finest European and modern Greek poets. Little of his work was published in his lifetime; he circulated his poems among his friends, who were presumably unsurprised by the homosexual themes in many of them.

We know very little about the circumstances of the composition of these songs – the draft of *Grey* is dated 14 Aug 1956, when Tranchell was living at 9 Halifax Road in Cambridge. Although described as being for tenor and piano, the vocal range makes the songs more suitable for a baritone, so *Grey* is transposed to better suit the tenor voice.

The late summer of 1956 was for PAT a frenzied period of continuing and unhappy involvement with the commercial production of *Zuleika*, having to travel continually to London to confer with producer and librettist about the changes they wanted. Perhaps the writing of these two songs gave him some relief from all this; they are not mentioned in his letters home, and the fair copies show no sign of a performance ever having taken place. So this performance is probably their world premiere.

Voices

Voices ideal and beloved
of those who have died or who are lost for us like the dead.
Sometimes in dreams they speak to us,
sometimes within, thinking,
the brain hears them
and with the sound of them for a moment return.
Sounds from the first poetry,
from the first poetry of our life
like music, music at night,
in the distance that dies away.....
voices.....

Grey

Looking at an opal, a half grey opal,
I remembered two beautiful grey eyes
I had seen, it must have been twenty years before...
For a month we loved each other.
Then he went away, I think to Smyrna,
to work there; we never saw each other again.
The grey eyes, if he lives, have lost their beauty,
the beautiful face will have been spoiled.
O Memory, preserve them as they were,
And, Memory, all you can of this love of mine,
whatever you can, bring back to me tonight.

Two songs from **Seven Poems of Po Chü-I** (1948): *Lazy Man's Song* and *To Liu Yü-Hsi*

Arthur Waley's translations were published in 1919; they have been fairly freely adapted by Peter Tranchell and set to music for baritone, piano and string quartet (1948) – here arranged for voice and piano. In a letter home of 24 May 1948 he wrote 'In the last couple of weeks I have produced the skeletons for settings of a number of Chinese Poems' – the exams were about to start. On 11 July he wrote 'I continue composing & have only four Chinese songs left to complete.' On 21 July 'Yesterday I assembled a pianist, a string quartet, a baritone, and a turner-over for the pianist & we read through [the Seven Poems]. Sometimes it was chaos, some-times it was quite thrilling. I conducted.' There is no evidence of a subsequent concert performance – PAT remained in Cambridge for the MusB for the academic year 1948-49. In November 1949, he submitted them to Herbert Murrill at the BBC in the hope that they would be broadcast but they were rejected. The songs must have been performed since there are revisions in the string parts designed to allow the voice to sound and there are some pencil markings on the scores.

'Lazy Man's Song' was revised in 1964 for baritone, male chorus, 2 flutes, oboe, 2 bassoons, horn, 3 trumpets, strings & piano, and as one of 'Three Chinese Songs' was performed in the Caius Christmas concert that year.

Lazy Man's Song

I could have a job, but am too lazy to choose it;
I have got land, but am too lazy to farm it.
My house leaks; I am too lazy to mend it.
My clothes are torn; I am too lazy to darn them.
I have got wine, but am too lazy to drink;
So it's just the same as if my cup were empty.
I have got a lute, but am too lazy to play;
So it's just the same as if it had no strings.
My wife tells me there is no more steamed rice;
I want to cook, but am too lazy to grind.
My friends and relatives write me long letters;
I should like to read them, but they're such a bother to open.
I have always been told that Hsi Shu-yeh
Passed his whole life in absolute idleness.
But he played his lute and sometimes worked at his forge,
So even *he* was not so lazy as I.

To Liu Yü-Hsi

In length of days and soundness of limb you and I are one;
Our eyes are not wholly blind, nor our ears quite deaf.
Deep drinking we lie together, fellows of a spring day;
Or gay-hearted boldly break into gatherings of young men.
When, seeking flowers, we borrowed his horse, the Governor was vexed;
When, to play on the water, we stole his boat, the Duke of Chin was sore.
I hear it said that in Lo-yang, people are all shocked,
And call us by the name of "Liu and Po, those two mad old men."

Three songs from **In a Sunday Paper** (1953)

In his post-Footlights era Peter was often stimulated by something he saw in a newspaper which tickled his fancy; he kept a selection of cuttings in his wallet and when called upon to sing and play at a party he would choose some upon which to improvise. His choral settings of **The dog that sat** and **His way of taming a shrew** were perennial favourites at informal concerts and indeed were performed at the Centenary Soirée here two years ago..

This cycle of eight songs formalised the genre and was dedicated to Norman Platt, a successful operatic baritone and founder of Kent Opera, though there is no evidence that he ever performed them in public. They eventually saw the light of day in 1960, performed in London and Munich by Peter Lehmann Bedford, a member of the Glyndebourne chorus who later in his career appeared a couple of times in operatic TV productions. The words are taken from various newspapers published on or around 9 August 1953.

5 *Police use hoses against seven hundred* (Daily Telegraph, 8th or 10th August 1953)

From our special correspondent. Berlin, Friday.

A total of seven hundred communists raided free food centres near the Sector Frontier here today. They were dispersed without difficulty by West Berlin Police. At one place, water hoses were turned on them. The raiders were workers, who had left off an hour early for the purpose. About thirty were arrested. East Germans said that the promised coal rations were not forthcoming. Private businesses were also without supplies. Local Authorities had announced that rations, ample rations would be available at latest in early May. Coupons can be purchased for coal at three times ration prices. So far, however, none of the coupons has been honoured.

7 *A seal named Celia* (News of the World, 9th August 1953)

A young man was seated on a fun-float in the sea, paddling it near the shore. Suddenly a small grey seal swam up and slithered beside him onto the float. The young man and a friend carried the baby seal to their home; they called her Celia, and kept her in the bath; but efforts to feed her with fish or milk from a bottle were of no avail. So the next evening she was put back into the sea.

Next morning two little girls were searching, searching for crabs by the sea, a little further down the coast, when Celia flopped out of the water right at their feet. They carried her to a boatman who advised them to put the seal back in the water. One of the little girls said, "Celia was very friendly, and nuzzled us with her oily, white-whiskered snout. We stroked her, and patted her, and she seemed to be quite used to children. But she had a cut mouth, as though a fisherman's hook had caught it. When we waded into the sea to let her go, she gave us a long sad look with her big black eyes, and then vanished under a wave. All we

saw was a trail of bubbles.”

Last night, a baby seal was washed ashore. It was dead.

8 *County Cricket* (“This piece is a collage or mélange of bits from several reports”)

Lancashire were heading towards a surprisingly cheap dismissal of the Australians on a perfect Old Trafford pitch, when two bowlers who can bat launched an exhilarating eighth wicket assault on the previously dominant county attack, that completely and utterly changed the outlook. Apart from this innings pace, bowlers, Jackson, Morgan and Gladwyn of Derby, and Tyson and Brown for the Home County, had things much their own way. But left-hander Watkins came to the rescue of a despairing Glamorgan, and after local farmer Richardson had gone for a hundred and twenty nine, he snapped up four quick wickets.

Selection from the Prize-winning entries to the 2024 Composition Prize:

Third Prize: Guy Turner: Malky’s Chapel; Lace yourself tighter, Lucy (from Three in Three. Suggested by the titles of lost songs by Peter Tranchell)

Malky’s Chapel

Composer’s note: Malky is clearly Malcolm Burgess, who was a close friend of Peter’s and a Fellow of Corpus. Malcolm, who designed the original sets for Peter’s musical Zuleika, was very much involved with the design of the refurbishment of Corpus Chapel in the seventies, and I have assumed this inspired the missing Tranchell song.

The song imagines someone (Peter?) contentedly lying on the chapel floor observing Malcolm’s handiwork on the chapel ceiling. The ceiling bosses mentioned in the lyrics do have a degree of ambiguity – a Cambridge Professor told me ‘they cannot be Tudor Roses: they are the wrong colour’, while the Corpus archivist told me they are Tudor Roses, despite being gold. There are twenty of them, plus another eight bosses in the chancel which are of a different (and even more ambiguous) design.

I think I must have just been sleeping:
I’d had a little wine.
I can’t get up, but otherwise I’m fine.

It’s not my first time in the chapel,
I’ve looked around before,
But never watched the ceiling from the floor.

And lying here, I somehow seem to see
Twenty suns shine down on me.

I think they’re really Tudor roses,
But nothing’s very clear.
The roses look like golden suns from here.

Revolving freely round the rafters,
Orbits intertwined,
Then pausing on the purlins, realigned.

Still lying here, I’m certain that I see
The twenty suns smile down on me.

Lace Yourself Tighter, Lucy

Composer's note: The first seven notes of this tune are quoted towards the end of each chorus. The 'story' of the song has nothing to do with Peter (who, knowing him, may have had a more X-rated scenario in mind), but just derives from his title.

Lucy says she never ever sought to be in period drama,
But now she's in it every day:
Crinoline won't go away.
Anything historical for her had simply quite the wrong karma,
But now she feels type-cast, and she's corseted in every play.

But... Her agent says:

Lace yourself tighter, Lucy,
Though corsetry causes pain.
You've got the right look for a period piece.
They'll cast you again and again.
So blanket your face with make-up, and fix on your facial moles.
Just lace yourself tighter, Lucy:
You've no rival in Regency roles.

Lucy says that she's exasperated by her thwarted ambition
For expressionist and kitchen sink,
The sort of stuff that makes you think.
Now it's only ever costume roles for which she's called to audition.
Inside she's a punk and yet for every part she has to dress in pink.

But...

Lace yourself tighter, Lucy,
However extreme the stays,
Though you want to do Berkoff, you know you excel
in Goldsmith and Sheridan plays.
Forget about Brecht and Beckett,
Forget about Friel and Fo
Just lace yourself tighter, Lucy:
You'll surely have far to go.

Lace yourself tighter, Lucy,
Squeeze on your silver shoes.
Ruffle your ruffles and boost up your boobs,
Use foundation to hide your tattoos.
Put up with the silk chemises,
Put up with the massive wig.
Just lace yourself tighter, Lucy:
And you'll really make it big.

Second Prize: Ian Shaw: Catholic Church; Lullaby

Composer's note: In *Songs for Peter* I have used the titles and opening themes of three of Peter Tranchell's songs, taken from his *Thematic Catalogue*. These include *Catholic Church*, *Words cannot express* and *Lullaby*.

Catholic Church



Lullaby



It was my privilege to be taught by the late Peter Tranchell. Recently, I listened to him on YouTube singing and playing David and John, which tells the story of two young men in love. He wrote both the words and the music of this tender, tragic song and recorded it in about 1960, seven years before homosexuality ceased to be illegal in UK. Hearing his light baritone and effortless piano-playing after such a long time brings him vividly to mind – his scholarship, his generosity, his wry, anarchic humour. I only later began to understand the courage that being openly gay demanded from men of his generation. On the same day as hearing David and John, I read Davide Ghiglione's report for the BBC News website, 'Darkest period of my life': Gay conversion therapy in Italy, which recounts the recent experience of Rosario Lonegro, an ordinand. The song and the report describe the same deep pain and confusion in virtually identical terms. What do you do if you're not allowed to be who you are? David rejected the love of his life; Rosario had a nervous breakdown and abandoned his vocation. At least he has a brighter future now.

It occurred to me to set lines from 'Darkest period of my life' as the first number in this short sequence, under the title Catholic Church. In doing so, I was following the example of Peter's 'In a Sunday paper' (1953), a cycle of eight songs to news articles. One of these, the tellingly nonchalant Women walk out of court, concerns the trial of seven men for 'impropriety' at a racecourse. My accompaniment is intended to suggest the soft clatter of a reporter's typewriter.

The text for Catholic Church is from Davide Ghiglione's article for BBC News, 'Darkest period of my life': Gay conversion therapy in Italy, published on 2 June 2024 and abridged by me. Lullaby has no words.

Catholic Church

Rosario Lonegro was only twenty years old when he entered a Catholic seminary in Sicily. But while he was there he fell in love with another man and his superiors demanded that he undergo conversion therapy. For more than a year, he was compelled to take part in spiritual gatherings outside the seminary, some over several days, where he was subjected to a series of distressing activities intended to strip him of his sexual proclivities. These included being locked in a dark closet, being coerced to strip naked in front of fellow participants, and even being required to enact his own funeral. During these rituals, he was tasked with committing to paper his perceived flaws, such as "homosexuality", "abomination", "falsehood" – and even more explicit terms, which he was then obliged to bury beneath a symbolic gravestone. Pope Francis has said that the Catholic Church is open to everyone, including the gay community, and that it has a duty to accompany them on a personal path of spirituality, but within the framework of its rules. Rosario Lonegro has left Sicily behind and now lives in Milan. He shares an apartment with his boyfriend and studies philosophy at university. Following a nervous breakdown in 2018,

he left both the seminary and the conversion therapy group. While he still believes in God, he no longer wants to become a priest. The psychological wounds inflicted by such activities still run deep.

First Prize: Will Harmer: Lullaby; Summer Dance

Composer's note: Lullaby is a setting of a poem of the same name by American poet and editor Harriet Monroe (1860-1936). Its harmonic language was influenced by some of Peter Tranchell's lighter songs; I use a largely tonal palette with some jazzy inflections and chromaticism. The lilting accompaniment figures also resonate with the era of show-tunes and parlour songs, of which I was reminded when researching Tranchell's songs.

I use the first 6 bars of Tranchell's Lullaby melody from the thematic catalogue in my piano introduction. The motif later punctuates other points in the structure. For me, the key of E flat major, which Tranchell chose for his song setting, has a comforting, warm sound which suited Monroe's text very well.

Lullaby

Harriet Monroe (1860-1936)

My little one, sleep softly
 Among the toys and flowers.
 Sleep softly, O my first-born son,
 Through all the long dark hours.
 And if you waken far away
 I shall be wandering too.
 If far away you run and play
 My heart must follow you.

Sleep softly, O my baby,
 And smile down in your sleep.
 Here are red rose-buds for your bed—
 Smile, and I will not weep.
 We made our pledge—you had no fear;
 What then to fear have I?
 Though long you sleep, I shall be near;
 So hush—we must not cry.

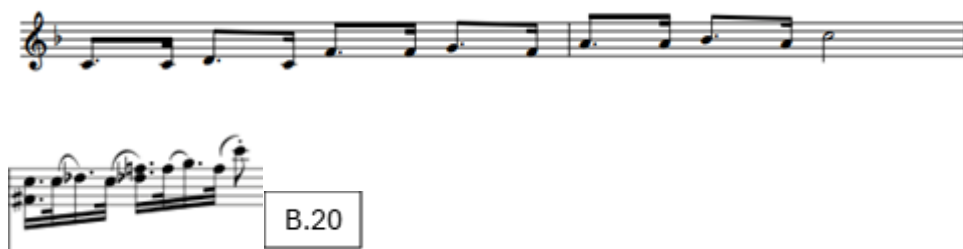
Sleep softly, dear one, softly—
 They cannot part us now;

Forever rest here on my breast,
My kiss upon your brow.
What though they hide a little grave
With dream-flowers false or true?
What difference? We will just be brave
Together—I and you.

Summer Dance sets William Blake's poem *The Fly*, which describes the dancing motion of a fly in summer, leading the narrator to compare his human life with that of his insect companion.

This piece bears resemblance to some of Peter Tranchell's lighter works, which often had a humorous element pervading both words and music. Some of the piano figures and repetitions of words create an exaggerated quality which Blake's text invites. Another element of Tranchell's music that influenced me was the improvisatory quality of his piano writing – in the same way, my piece should be performed with a feeling of spontaneity in the dialogue between voice and piano.

Tranchell's melody for 'Summer Dance' appears subtly in the piano midway through my song. Despite undergoing diminution and a change of mode, the contour and interval pattern are the same as Tranchell's motif (see example below).



The Fly

William Blake (1757 - 1827)

Little fly, Thy summer's play
My thoughtless hand
Has brushed away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance
And drink and sing,
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength and breath,
And the want
Of thought is death,

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live,
Or if I die.

Friendly Grotesques (1953) piano duet, two movements:

2 Rumboid *and* 4 Pas à quatre mains gauches

In a letter to his parents dated 29 June 1953, Tranchell wrote:

“I wrote four amusing & witty piano duets, called ‘Friendly Grotesques’. These were played at the Fitzwilliam House Mayweek concert, & so delighted the audience that the last of the four had to be played again. The rest of the programme consisted of Handel, so my pieces came as a refreshing change. The players were Thurston Dart & Allen Percival, the former of 3rd programme & harpsichord fame, the latter the music-director of Homerton.”

The final titles of the four movements are I : Tempo di Turkey-Trot; II : Rumboid; III : Valse d’Ivresse; IV : Pas à quatre mains gauches

which come from a page later added to the MS. The original title page bears, in very faint almost-illegible pencil, crossed out, titles of the movements (as far as can be made out) thus:

1 Tempo di turkey-trot

2 Collapso: en stile di Rhumboid

3 Valse hoquetteuse* (crossed through, with ‘Ivrigue’(?) to replace it in a different hand)

4 Foxtrot

(*French for ‘hiccupping’.) The programme for the Fitzwilliam premiere gives titles very similar to these. There is no trace of these titles within the manuscript. The first movement also appears as no IV ‘Epilogue’ in *Four Voluntaries for Organ* (1952), as revised in 1964, with the title ‘During the sermon’ crossed out and bearing the instruction “NB Before starting: The door of the organ-loft should be locked from the inside.”

The work had several performances over the years until possibly its last outing in 1963, in a concert in Caius: “I & the organ-scholar* played them, – not without quite a bit of practising, as they’re rather difficult” (* probably Martin Neary though it might have been John West).

One of the movements was borrowed to be incorporated in the ‘Images of Love’ ballet (Royal Opera House 1964).

A Tedious Affair (Child’s Play 1958)

There are some passing references in Peter’s letters home in 1958 to his contributions to a revue called *Child’s Play* for the Players’ Theatre. This was a well-established music hall/theatre club, founded in 1936 and initially occupying space beneath Charing Cross station. The revue was scheduled for September 1958 and was to be a private performance for members. Peter wrote four songs, to words by someone else (unknown). Two of the songs exist in finished form; this one as rough sketches which have been reconstructed by Crispin Flower with reference to Peter’s recorded performance (which can be found on YouTube). The fourth one may be the work known as ‘Tenement Cantata’ which is very fragmentary. Some at least of the lyrics of the other songs seem to echo works of literature: *An Old Number* is précis of the entire plot of Arlen’s *The Green Hat* in song form, and *A Near Thing* is very reminiscent of Betjeman’s *How to get on in society* (‘Phone for the fish knives, Norman’ becoming ‘Fetch me the pistols, Alfred’).

We would be delighted to hear from anyone who can identify a seed for this:

The fever's over now; the telephone
can't make me shiver now, he's gone, he's gone.
No furred umbrella dangles in the entrance hall;
no bowler bulges boldly from the wall.

It really was a tedious affair;
and life has been a tiny bit unfair;
for he had a face that fits in the background at the Ritz,
but he never, never, never took me there:
it really was a tedious affair.

I loved his country suits for city chaps,
I loved his pukka boots, his ratting caps.
So clean, so strong, so masterful, so male,
with all the pent up passion of a snail!

It really was a tedious affair;
though once or twice he stooped and stroked my hair
and there was that little trifle, the day we climbed the Eiffel,
but that was due to vin très ordinaire.
It really was a tedious affair;

I tried to be a chum, Oh goodness I tried!
I screamed from scrum to scrum, I cheered every side
and spent whole afternoons knee deep in 'mud',
I wore a pink, a plastic, pixie hood.

It really was a tedious affair;
that dinner for the boys to meet the Mayor;
when he got a little skittish, so fundamentally British,
and slipped an ice between me and the chair:
it really was a tedious affair;

He took me to a show, but Cruft's of course,
he taught me all I know about the horse;
the point to point, the rally and the ball,
I played kid sister to him at them all.

It really was a tedious affair;
that orgy when he asked if I could care!
We sat drinking champagne ciders,
the hydrangeas, the spiders,
on an olde mouldy cold baronial stair.
It really was a tedious affair;

He showed me racks of pipes, they all had names,
Albums of bods and types, and dogs and dames,

he spoke a lot of Jane; I feared a hitch,
but Jane turned out to be a pedigree bitch.

It really was a tedious affair.
I knew I'd lost the day I saw belle mère;
Yes, I knew my time had come on the day that I saw 'Mum',
like a battle axe with silver in its hair:

No wonder I feel something worse for wear.
It really was a tedious affair;
For this nauseating trinket is all that Amor Vincit:
it really was a tedious affair.

Two duets from **The Mayor of Casterbridge** (1951):

In 1949 Tranchell was in his first job after leaving Cambridge – Deputy Director of Music at Eastbourne College. He was very involved in the life of the school but was also starting serious work on his Hardy opera based on *The Mayor of Casterbridge* – as suggested by his friend Jane Scott (an aspiring novelist, who became Elizabeth Jane Howard). An outline had been submitted in 1949 to the Arts Council competition for an opera to be performed as part of the Festival of Britain in 1951, but it was rejected. Patrick Hadley, Professor of Music at Cambridge, was very supportive of the project and it's possible he 'arranged' for Peter to be appointed an Assistant Lecturer in the faculty (he was certainly invited to let his name go forward and did not need to apply) so he could work on it under Hadley's wing and undistracted by schoolmastering.

The libretto was written in collaboration with Peter Bentley, who also produced the performance which was – just about – ready for the amateur production at the Cambridge Arts Theatre in July 1951 as part of the Cambridge Festival. It was met with considerable, though not unanimous, acclaim – Eric Blom wrote very enthusiastically in *The Observer* and carried that over into the 1954 edition of *Grove's Dictionary*, which he edited. Peter submitted the score as his 'thesis' for a competitive Fellowship at King's College Cambridge in 1952. The Electors' voting records show he was a very strong candidate, despite a damning report on the opera from Benjamin Britten, until the last round when it seems his candidature was torpedoed in a somewhat mysterious fashion.

The Mayor of Casterbridge was revived in 1959, slightly revised, and conducted at the Arts Theatre by a young Guy Woolfenden. Despite considerable interest it has not been heard since.

The novel tells of the rise and fall of Michael Henchard, who, starting from nothing after abandoning his wife and daughter, gains prosperity and respect and is reunited with his family only to lose everything through his own wrong-headedness, his vengeful nature, and a spate of bad luck.

Hardy's novel was originally published in weekly parts during early 1886. Hardy himself felt that in his efforts to get an incident into almost every weekly instalment he had added events to the narrative somewhat too freely, resulting in over-elaboration.

The News Chronicle said of the opera "Hardy's tragedy has been reduced to fit into three acts; which means that only the bare bones remain. These Mr. Tranchell has clothed with effective music, true operatic music, romantic and rich."

Eric Blom in *The Observer*: "His second act is a near-masterpiece, with music apt to situation, full of atmosphere, making shapely composition without distorting the action and, above all, full

of really personal and striking invention, often daringly harsh, but never sacrificing musical to ostentatious effect. The rest, with very difficult crowd scenes, is not quite on the same level, but those scenes are on the whole very skilfully managed ... it is an English stage work of exceptional quality.”

When the flow’r is in the bud (Act II Scene 1) – Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane; Parlour of the King’s Arms, Casterbridge, 1825. Farfrae is having supper, served by Elizabeth-Jane. This is a reprise of what PAT and Hadley referred to as ‘the Jacobite tune’. Elizabeth-Jane has previously listened to Farfrae (a Scot) singing the song to other guests in the inn. She starts singing part of the song, believing herself to be alone, and is surprised by Farfrae who enters and picks up the song.);

EJ: When the flow’r is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree, the lark shall sing me hame...

F: To my ain countree.

[Flirtation...]

F: It’s hame, and it’s hame, oh hame fain would I be.

EJ: Hame, hame, hame

F: Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree.

EJ: To my ain countree.

F: There’s an eye that ever weeps, and a fair face will be fain, as I pass thro’ Annan Water, with my bonny bands again.

EJ: With my bonny bands again. When the flow’r is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree, the lark shall sing me hame...

F: When the flow’r is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree,...

EJ: When the flow’r is in the bud, when the flow’r is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree, the lark shall sing me hame... the lark shall sing me hame, to my ain countree!

F: To my ain countree. When the flow’r is in the bud, when the flow’r is in the bud, and the leaf upon the tree, the lark shall sing me hame, to my ain countree!

The ‘Jacobite song’ words were at first thought by Peter to be by Hardy, and therefore there would be no authentic tune, but PAT discovered the source and no longer thought Paddy might have composed it himself.

PAT: ‘Hadley was very insistent the Jacobite song should not be omitted or messed around in my use of it. “If there’s one single Scotsman in the theatre, & the song doesn’t get across to him, – then we have failed,” he said.’

Wedding night duet (Act III Scene 3 Early summer the next year; the back of Henchard’s house. It is the wedding-night of Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae)

EJ: Donald! My heart is overflowing! Joy of love!

F: Sweet my love!

EJ: Silent is the hillside, and there the lonely elm trees repose! Darkling breezes have borne afar the small ling’ring sounds of evening.

F: Quiet stands the grey woodland, fields lie unmurm’ring.

EJ: Loneliness descends to calm the tumult of the day. All is rest. The night will heal with solitude.

F: No birds are singing. The nightingale is dumb, and all is still. Past unrest is allayed. And we are here!

Old sorrows have left us. And with the dawn, our lives will start anew!

EJ: See on high the stars call us to lifelong peace!

F: Ah! breathe this fragrant stillness! My heart is full of joy and peace!

Two duets from *Zuleika* (1954)

Originally titled 'Zuleika Dobson' after the Max Beerbohm novel it was based on, by the time the musical came to be performed in the Cambridge Arts Theatre by the Musical Comedy Club in October 1954 it was known simply as 'Zuleika'. The book and lyrics were by James Ferman, an American visiting scholar. He was a difficult person to work with and the show had an unhappy gestation. However despite the problems it was enough of a success to be taken up by Donald Albery, in the face of some competition, with a view to a provincial tour followed by a London run. Peter Hall was initially engaged as producer, but had a falling out with Albery; Osbert Lancaster designed the sets; a young Charles Mackerras was Director of Music; Diane Cilento was cast as Zuleika but jumped ship in Oxford to run away to Italy, and was replaced by Mildred Mayne, best known as an underwear model. Rupert Hart-Davis said after the first night she 'is quite without looks, charm or talent ... With someone like Marilyn Monroe it would run for ever.' The run finished at the Saville Theatre after 124 performances, closing on 27 July 1957.

The plot centres on the devastatingly attractive Zuleika Dobson, who after some success as a conjurer visits her grandfather, the Warden of Judas College Oxford. All the undergraduates who see her fall instantly in love with her, including the Duke of Dorset KG, an immensely talented undergraduate at Judas. Zuleika's problem however is that she cannot love anyone who loves her. She is initially fooled by Dorset's aloofness and falls for him, but once he declares his love for her and proposes marriage, she rejects him. Dorset decides to commit suicide over her rejection, but changes his mind when he learns that every Oxford undergraduate, besotted with Zuleika, plans to commit suicide as well. However he receives a telegram from his butler at his country seat, informing him that the legendary owls who appear to foreshadow the death of every Duke have been seen and heard that very night, so he realises his death cannot be avoided. At the climax of Eights Week he jumps to his death in the Isis, and every undergraduate except one coward follows suit. There are none left to attend the Bump Supper.



Zuleika (Mildred Mayne) visits the Duke of Dorset (David Morton) in his rooms as he is about to have his portrait painted in the robes of a Knight of the Garter.

The maid (Patricia Stark) arrives with the fateful telegram.

(Photo by David Sim from the 1957 Saville Theatre production, reviewed in *Theatre World* June 1957)

All Over Again (lyrics by Maurice Holt)

Zuleika and the Duke of Dorset are together in his lodgings. Dorset has just declared that he does not after all love Zuleika, which makes her able to love him...

Skies of grey
May dull the day
But then some ray
Breaks through all over again,
Horizons are bright
And hearts become light
For dreams of love are not in vain.

Winter may
Seem here to stay
But soon gives way
to Spring all over again.

Just as the sun
Must soon over-run
The rain.

Then hearts will start to glow,
Melting like winter's snow.
Somewhere a new star is born,
And night gives way to dawn!

Hopes once high
May seem to die
But time goes by
And now, the doubting is past – at last!

Fate is defeated,
History's repeated too.
For — love will live whatever
love may do.

Dialogue

Skies of grey
Once dulled the day
But then one ray
Broke through, all over again.

Horizons were bright
And hearts became light
But dreams of love were all in vain.

Dialogue with telegram

Skies of grey
Once dulled the day
But then some ray
broke through – but never again!

Horizons were bright
And hearts became light
But dreams of love were all in vain.

Winter may
Have seemed to stay
But then gave way
To Spring – but never again!
Gone is the sun
That might over-run
The rain.

Then hearts began to glow
Melting like winter's snow.
Somewhere a new star was born,
But night brought forth no dawn.

Hopes once high.
Seem all to die
For time goes by
And now the moment is past, at last.

What can be said Now love's dream is dead
– and gone?

Love may die but still the memr'y lingers
on!

The Beerbohm novel ends with Zuleika planning a visit to Cambridge, with a hint that she intends to repeat her Oxford 'triumph'. Ferman decided to invent a final episode in Cambridge as an echo of the Oxford dénouement – but here the new Duke of Dorset, an undergraduate of King's who has succeeded his brother to the title, sees it his duty to remove her from circulation, as a Menace to Society. He proposes marriage but makes it clear he does not love her – which enables her to accept and declare her love for him.

Zuleika's Entry at Cambridge – she has arrived on a private train to visit her great-uncle, the Provost of King's.

Dorset and Chorus of undergraduates
There's no girl in the world like Zuleika,
There's no other as lovely as she!
All the world is in love with Zuleika!
All the world has good reason to be!
There's no creature so fair as Zuleika,
Every feature is rare and refined!
The Cleopatras of the past
will be forgotten at the last
She's left them completely behind!
With one accord we all believe
That when the Lord created Eve
He had only Zuleika in mind!

Zuleika
What a pretty compliment!
Is it really true?

Can it be that you find me so appealing?
How revealing!
I never knew I should meet
men like you
So many wonderful men like you!

Ah! Delight!
Finding men like you!

Buffet Reception

**Please leave the church by 21:15 to enable clearing up
in preparation for services tomorrow.**



PAT at the piano in 1951

The Peter Tranchell Composition Prize competition, supported by the Foundation, was held earlier this year.

The Brief: Peter Tranchell's Lost Songs

Tranchell wrote hundreds of songs – see the complete list of songs in the Classified Handlist. Many of the songs have gone missing, and are known only from Tranchell's own lists, such as the Thematic Catalogue, which also contained musical motifs. We are inviting composers to use the titles of these lost works as inspiration for new songs. Two or more songs should be submitted, using titles from the list of lost songs; Lyrics may be derived from any source, or newly written for the works. Where the Thematic Catalogue includes a musical motif from the original song, composers may make use of it in any way they like, but are not required to. We would like composers to draw additional inspiration from the following:

Peter Tranchell's musical works
and any aspect of Peter Tranchell's music or life.

The First Prize is £500 and a performance at this concert.

The judging panel comprised a group of acclaimed composers, performers and directors/conductors: David Hill (Chair), Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Mary Bevan, William Vann, Lucy Colquhoun, Jonna Wikeley, and last year's winner Dónal McCann.

The results were announced on 26 September 2024; in view of the quality of the entrants the panel awarded the following prizes:

First Prize: Will Harmer, for his songs *Lullaby* and *Summer Dance*.

Second Prize **Ian Shaw**, for *Songs for Peter* (Catholic Church, Words cannot express, Lullaby) - £250 awarded

Guy Turner, for *Three in Three* (Lace yourself tighter, Lucy; Malky's Chapel; Arlington Road Valse) - £100 awarded.

Special commendation to the following:

Alexander Edward Ling, for *21st Century News* (Love, Cherish, Obey; I'm the Minister; No hunting; Catholic Church; Advice to young ladies; Lullaby)

John Whittaker, for *Summer Dance* and *C'est La Vie*

Ian Coleman, for *Stipulatinus* and *The Five Four Tune*

A particular commendation is also offered to:

Denise Langley, for *C'est La Vie* and *The Five Four Tune*

The other 11 entries all showed impressive talent and imagination in their responses to the brief.

The Peter Tranchell Foundation Composition Prize will now be awarded on an annual basis. This initiative is being made possible through the generous support of subscribers and donors. The 2025 competition will be launched in January, and will again set a brief based on some work or set of works by PAT

Biographical Notes

Praised by Opera for her “dramatic wit and vocal control”, British soprano **Mary Bevan** is internationally renowned in baroque, classical and contemporary repertoire, and appears regularly with leading conductors, orchestras and ensembles around the world. She is a winner of the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Young Artist award and UK Critics’ Circle Award for Exceptional Young Talent in music and was awarded a MBE in the Queen’s birthday honours list in 2019.

Bevan’s many recent concert appearances have included her Carnegie Hall debut as Dalinda *Ariodante* with the English Concert, *Creation* at the Barbican with the Academy of Ancient Music, Sally Beamish *The Judas Passion* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and her return to the 2022 BBC Proms with Mass in B Minor. Bevan’s wide-ranging discography includes her art song album *Voyages*, Lieder by Schubert, Haydn and Wolf with pianist Joseph Middleton, and *Handel’s Queens* for Signum Records, with whom her latest disc, a recording of French Song entitled *Visions Illuminées*, was released in 2023.

James Gilchrist began his working life as a doctor, turning to a full-time career in music in 1996. His musical interest was fired at a young age, singing first as a chorister in the choir of New College, Oxford, and later as a choral scholar at King’s College, Cambridge.

James’ extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in major concert halls throughout the world with conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, Bernard Labadie, Harry Christophers, Harry Bicket and the late Richard Hickox. Recent highlights have included Britten’s *Church Parables* with performances in St Petersburg, London and at the Aldeburgh Festival, Handel’s *L’Allegro il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with the Mark Morris Dance Group at the Teatro Real, Madrid, *Solomon* with Les Violons du Roy, Schumann’s *Das Paradies und die Peri* and *Die Schöpfung* at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Britten’s *Nocturne* with the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo and *War Requiem* with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. In J.S. Bach’s great Passions of *St John* and *St Matthew*, James works consistently at the highest level and is recognised as the finest Evangelist of his generation; as one recent BBC Proms reviewer noted, ‘he hasn’t become a one-man Evangelist industry by chance’.

A multiple-prize winning and critically acclaimed choral, orchestral and opera conductor and song accompanist, **William Vann** is equally at home on the podium or at the piano and is particularly renowned for his revival performances and recordings of lost and lesser-known works of vocal and choral music by British composers.

Born in Bedford, he was a Chorister at King’s College, Cambridge and a Music Scholar at Bedford School. He subsequently read law and took up a choral scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he was taught the piano by Peter Uppard, and studied piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music with Malcolm Martineau and Colin Stone.

He has recorded over twenty discs with Albion, Champs Hill, Chandos, Delphian, Etcetera, Navona and SOMM, including a recent ground-breaking four-disc set of Vaughan Williams folk song settings on Albion with Mary Bevan, Nicky Spence, Roderick Williams and Jack Liebeck.

In addition to his performances of standard song repertoire, he has also either commissioned or given the first performances of new songs and song cycles by Christian Alexander, Joseph Atkins, Martin Eastwood, Ian Venables, David Nield and Graham Ross (the latter two at Wigmore Hall). He recently conducted Roderick Williams and the London Mozart Players performing his own arrangement for chamber orchestra of George Butterworth’s *Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad*.

Lucy Colquhoun is in demand as a recitalist throughout the UK including the Purcell Room Southbank, St John’s Smith Square, Royal Philharmonic Society, Park Lane Group, Oxford Lieder Festival, Britten-Pears Foundation, Worshipful Company of Musicians, St James’s Piccadilly, St-Martin-in-the-Fields, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Royal Albert Hall’s Elgar Room, 22 Mansfield Street, Brighton Festival, Perth Festival, Fidelio Orchestra Café, Conway Hall, Little Missenden Festival, International

Festival of Sacred Music Bogotá and Durham University accompanying Sir Thomas Allen. She released her debut album with Champs Hill Records last year with Rowan Pierce and Julien Van Mellaerts. She is a BBC Music Magazine Rising Star. She has broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Colombian National Television and played for five singers in the Ferrier Awards finals (2019–2022) at Wigmore Hall including all prizewinners. She is a staff member at the Royal College of Music and adjudicated Birmingham Conservatoire's Piano Recital Prize. Lucy studied at Royal College of Music with Roger Vignoles winning all major accompaniment prizes and numerous scholarships (Kendall-Taylor Scholarship, Douglas and Hilda Simmonds Award, Walter Deakin Award, Knights of the Round Table). She won the Somerset Song Prize, RJ Forbes Prize for Accompaniment (RNCM) and is a Britten-Pears and Samling Artist.

Will Harmer is a London-based composer and pianist. As a collaborative pianist, Will has performed recitals at Cheltenham Festival, St James' Piccadilly, SJE Arts Oxford and Queen's College Oxford. He was the St Hilda's College Graduate Musician-in-Residence 2021-22, performing a series of solo recitals at the Jacqueline Du Pré Music Building. He has worked as an accompanist for Temple Church, Oxford Youth Choirs, Primrose Hill Choirs, Cambridge Holiday Orchestra and Oxford Music Faculty. As a composer, Will won the BBC Proms Inspire Composition Competition and has been commissioned by the BBC Singers, Oxford International Song and Ludlow English Song festivals. His composition 'Cetus' for Annemarie Federle was premiered on BBC television as part of the BBC Young Musician competition. He was a 2023-24 National Youth Choirs Young Composer and his pieces 'Fireworks' and 'Three Madrigals' were released on NMC Records as part of the scheme, the latter published by Stainer and Bell in their Choral Now series. Will is also active in the London choral scene and performs regularly with St Martin's Voices, having been a 2023-24 Emerging Artist with the group. Will recently completed an MMus in composition at the Royal Academy of Music, having previously studied at Worcester College, Oxford.

Ian Shaw was born in England in 1960. He studied music at Cambridge University, where he was an Organ Student at St John's College and a John Stewart of Rannoch Scholar in Sacred Music. On leaving Cambridge in 1982, he became Sub-Organist at Durham Cathedral and, for three years, continued regular lessons in organ and improvisation with Piet Kee in Amsterdam.

Since 1991, while continuing in the sphere of sacred music, he has also worked as a pianist in ballet, music theatre and, especially, opera.

As a composer, his earlier works included incidental music for *Othello* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a symphony for organ *The Temptation of Christ*, which Kevin Bowyer performed, and the song-cycle *A Breath of Nothing* (Rainer Maria Rilke) for soprano and piano, first sung by Rebecca Bottone. Commissions for choral music came from the BBC, St John's College Cambridge, Magdalen College Oxford, The Southern Cathedrals Festival and others.

During the pandemic, he returned to composition and has since won prizes for seven works. Among these, *Solomon and the Gnat*, the first of his Rumi-based tone-poems for organ, won the 'Music and Message' competition at Syracuse University in New York, where it was played by Alexander Meszler.

Guy Turner was born in 1955 and brought up in north London. He read Music as a Choral Exhibitioner at Caius from 1974 to 1977, thus singing for Peter Tranchell. In 1975 he founded the St Michael's Singers, a student chamber choir. Nearly fifty years later, SMS continues to meet for singing days and Cathedral residencies.

From 1979 until 2010 he was a music teacher, in Surrey, Somerset and finally Nottingham. He conducted various choirs including both Surrey and Somerset County Youth Choirs, and Egham and Bingham Choral Societies. From 2008 until July 2024, he was a lay clerk in the choir of Southwell Cathedral.

Since teaching, his freelance activities have included being the archivist of the Eric Thiman Collection, choral outreach projects, restaurant piano playing, and writing and verifying questions for TV quizzes, most notably Only Connect and Mastermind.

He has been an active composer, mostly writing choral and vocal music, including a Requiem and other choral works, lots of church music, and many light, close-harmony-style numbers. His *Tequila Samba* and

his arrangement of *Over the Rainbow* (both in OUP volumes) are choir standards. He adapted Terry Pratchett's *Wyrd Sisters* as a musical (Pratchett attended). He has had a long association with the close harmony group Cantabile, and both Voces8 and the King's Singers have also performed and recorded his arrangements. When writing lighter songs, he usually writes his own lyrics.

PETER TRANCHELL



PAT in 1951

Peter Tranchell was born on 14 July 1922 in Cuddalore and educated at the Dragon School (Oxford), Clifton College (Bristol) and King's College Cambridge where he studied Classics and then Music – his undergraduate career was interrupted 1942-1946 by Army service in the Royal Signals, which took him to Malta and then Greece. He was awarded the MusB in 1949 with reputedly the highest distinction ever given for his performance of Liszt's Sonata in B minor. After teaching for a year at Eastbourne College, Tranchell returned to Cambridge in 1950 as a lecturer in the Faculty of Music and Director of Studies at Fitzwilliam, taking up a fellowship and the post Director of College Music at Gonville & Caius in 1960, where he succeeded Patrick Hadley as Precentor in 1962. He retired in 1989 and died in 1993.

The Secretary of the Old Cliftonian Society wrote to him in August 1988 soliciting news and this is taken from his reply:

The (by now very old) former Headmaster of Clifton "appears to have heard a broadcast of a Prom. in which the pianist Peter Frankl played Beethoven's 4th piano concerto & assumed it was me."

He has not, however, kept up his piano-playing. "The die was cast partly by the war — for me it was four years of enforced abstinence from any proper piano practice. During the ensuing years (46-49) as a Kingsman, I resumed indeed, and learned several taxing works including the Liszt B-minor piano sonata. But it was an awful grind, and there were so many other things to be done. I rather saw my metier as a composer.

"The other part of casting the die occurred when I found myself in the academic field. I was taken on as 2 i/c Music at Eastbourne College [1949] by the H.M. without very much more ado than a short interview in a London hotel lounge (The Rembrandt, I think, near the Brompton Oratory) — seven minutes at most. During that time he made up his mind about me & offered the job there & then ... circa March 50, I was rung up by the Faculty of Music as to why I hadn't applied for an Assistant Univ. Lectureship at Cambridge. Would I let my name go forward?" He was duly appointed, without actually having to apply, send a CV or attend an interview.

“It would be otiose to plod through my academic career year by year itemising the various compositions. Everything I have written has been for an occasion and has been duly performed... Suffice it to say I was engaged on composition with an annual output till 1960, when one day in June that year I was rung up by the Secretary of Caius College council to ask if I would accept a Fellowship. I did, and found myself embarked on a new phase of life even more time-consuming than before [lists college posts and compositional demands of the choir, finishing] My Magnificats cum Nunc Dimittises in C, B, and B flat are quite good.”

But although “this work is not of wider interest ... there are rewards. I was heartened when a group of undergraduates (not from Caius) asked to hear a rather poor tape I have of the revival of ‘The Mayor of Casterbridge’. I sat them down with vocal scores apiece (& glasses of claret) and we proceeded — with proper intervals — through the work. At the end, one of the undergraduates dissolved into inconsolable tears and all the rest were speechless with emotion, — as indeed the audience is intended to be, at the end of the tragedy. (I don’t think it was the effect of the claret.) That was in June 1986, which means that the thing written in 1951 was still effective twenty-five [*sic* – actually 35] years later.

“Then one is rewarded when people see the jokes in one’s lighter output. Recently I turned that odious tune which heralds and concludes the soap-opera ‘Neighbours’ into a psalm-chant. Two of the lads in the choir recognized it and gave me significant oeillades during practice. Nobody else noticed anything..

“So one is kept busy. However, I suppose you want something to report about me. But alas, there is nothing salient at all. Life has gone on much the same for the past 28 years.”



The Mayor of Casterbridge (1951) Act III Scene 3 – the end of the opera. Henchard (Robert Rowell) speaks his last words to Whittle (David Rye):

Let them not bury me in consecrated ground.
Nor let a sexton toll the bell.
Let nobody be wished to see my dead body.
Let no mourners walk behind me at my funeral.
And let no flowers be planted on my grave.
And – (*almost whispering*) let no man remember me.

The Peter Tranchell Foundation is a *Charitable Incorporated Organisation* which was registered on 17 Mar 2021 – Charity number 1193849. Full details of our aims, and how we are spending the money raised through donations, can be found at <https://peter-tranchell.uk>



The website has links to making a donation and to free downloads of a large amount of Peter Tranchell's music.

Key activities of the Foundation include:

- The annual Peter Tranchell Composition Competition
- A programme of editing and typesetting to ensure all significant Tranchell choral, orchestral and instrumental works are available in performing editions
- Support for performances and recordings of Tranchell works

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the donors and subscribers page on the website.*

We would like to express our thanks to Fr Alan Gyle, Vicar of St Paul's Knightsbridge, and his team for kind permission to use their magnificent church and help with arrangements for the evening.



Peter Tranchell at Caius in 1992

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