

biography

JAMES MACMILLAN, COMPOSER-CONDUCTOR



"A towering performance by the BBC Philharmonic under the composer James MacMillan. He is proving a conductor of daunting ability." The Sunday Times

James MacMillan is one of today's most successful living composers and is also internationally active as a conductor. His musical language is flooded with influences from his Scottish heritage, his Roman Catholic faith, social conscience and close connection with Celtic folk music, blended together with influences from Far Eastern, Scandinavian and Eastern European music.

MacMillan first became internationally recognised after the extraordinary success of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* at the BBC Proms in 1990. His prolific output has since been performed and broadcast around the world, placing him in the front rank of today's composers. His major works include *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*, the percussion concerto which has received more than 400 performances, a cello concerto for Mstislav Rostropovich, a major choral-orchestral work *Quickening*, and three symphonies. His recent major works include his new opera *The Sacrifice*, premiered by Welsh National Opera and conducted by MacMillan, and his *St John Passion*, premiered by the London Symphony Orchestra and Sir Colin Davis in 2008, with performances in 2009 and 2010 by co-commissioners the Concertgebouw Orchestra, Boston Symphony and Rundfunkchor Berlin.

MacMillan was appointed Affiliate Composer of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in 1990, and between 1992 and 2002 he was Artistic Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra's *Music of Today* series. In January 2005 MacMillan was the focus of a major retrospective in the BBC Symphony's annual composer weekend at London's Barbican Centre, where he conducted concerts with both the BBC Philharmonic and BBC Symphony Orchestras.

MacMillan is in demand internationally as a conductor and was recently announced as Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie, following 9 years as Composer/Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic. Recent guest conducting successes include concerts with the Baltimore Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, NHK Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Melbourne Symphony.

During the 2008/09 season MacMillan conducts the Rotterdam Philharmonic as part of '*James MacMillan: The Story so Far*' - a season long focus on his music in Rotterdam. As part of this he also conducts the Royal Flemish Philharmonic and a performance of his large scale work *Quickening* with local university and conservatoire students, as well as various other performances of his music across the season. Other conducting highlights this season include at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw as part of the prestigious Saturday Matinee series with the Netherlands Radio Kamer Filharmonie, his music theatre work *Parthenogenesis* at the Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre with Britten Sinfonia, as well as with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, RTE National Symphony Orchestra and at the Wratistlavia Cantans Festival in Poland. He also conducts various projects with the BBC Philharmonic, including a concert at the Bridgewater Hall in celebration of MacMillan's 50th birthday.

James MacMillan has directed many of his own works on disc for Chandos, BIS and BMG; his latest releases include an LSO Live disc of his *St John Passion* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis, and a Chandos recording of his large scale work *Quickening* and *The Sacrifice: Three Interludes*. He was awarded a CBE in January 2004.

James MacMillan is represented by Intermusica. www.intermusica.co.uk/macmillan.

The works of James MacMillan are published by Boosey & Hawkes.

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