

James Wilson

(1922-2005)

“Music is the nearest thing that we know to magic: its powers have still to be understood. In my own work, I seek for clarity and economy and, above all, for the quality of lyricism.”

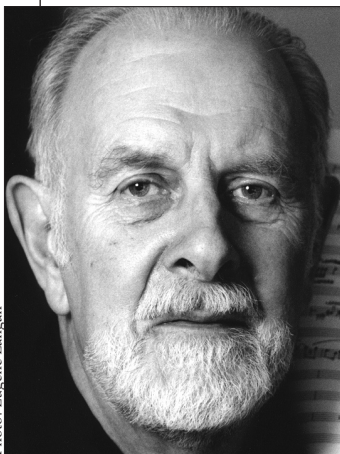


Photo: Eugene Langan

James Wilson was born in London and came to live in Ireland in the late 1940s. He was professor of composition in the Royal Irish Academy of Music and was also for many years a course director of the Ennis/IMRO Composition Summer School. His extensive output has been performed and broadcast throughout Ireland, the UK

and Scandinavia and includes seven operas, twelve concertos as well as numerous vocal, chamber and instrumental works.

James Wilson received the Marten Toonder award in 1997. In 2000 a CD of his orchestral music was released on the Marco Polo label and a second CD of his songs and chamber music with soprano Jane Manning and Concorde was released in 2003. A recent CD of three Hans Christian Andersen fairytales set to music was issued on the Focus Productions label. He was a founder-member of Aosdána, Ireland's state-sponsored academy of creative artists.

Selected Works

ORCHESTRAL

Symphony No. 3 (2001)

3333 4331 timp 4 perc pf str
RTÉ 37'

Premiere: 4 March 2003. National Concert Hall, Dublin. National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra (1999)

cl-solo, 2222 2110 2 perc hrp str
MS 18'

Commissioned by RTÉ.
Premiere: 28 January 2000. National Concert Hall, Dublin. John Finucane (cl), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Alexander Anissimov.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Concerto 'For Sarajevo' (1996 rev. 1998)

vn-solo, va-solo, vc-solo, 2222 2200 timp + perc hrp str
MS 25'

Commissioned by RTE.
Premiere: 12 December 1997. National Concert Hall, Dublin. Alan Smale (vn), Constantin Zanidache (va), Aisling Drury-Byrne (vc), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Concertino (1993)

3333 4331 timp 4 perc hrp str
MS 10'

Commissioned by RTE.
Premiere: 15 April 1994. National Concert Hall, Dublin. National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce.
Recording: *James Wilson: Orchestral Music*. National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce. Marco Polo 2000. 8.225027.

Pearl and Unicorn (1989)

vn-solo, 1111 1100 hrp str
MS 23'

Premiere: 17 December 1990. National Concert Hall, Dublin?. Alan Smale (vn), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce.
Recording: *James Wilson: Orchestral Music*. Alan Smale (vn), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce. Marco Polo 2000. 8.225027.

Menorah (1989)

va-solo, 2222 2210 timp perc str
MS 25'

Commissioned by Rivka Golani with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 18 November 1991. National Concert Hall, Dublin. Rivka Golani (va), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce.
Recording: *James Wilson: Orchestral Music*. Constantin Zanidache (va), National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, conductor Colman Pearce. Marco Polo 2000. 8.225027.

Angel One (1987)

str [3.3.3.2]
MS 12'

Premiere: 8 March 1992. Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin. String section of RTE Concert Orchestra, conductor Colman Pearce. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Symphonic Variations (1980)

pf-solo, 2222 4220 timp perc hrp str
MS 22'

Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

ENSEMBLE

Quintet for Clarinet and Strings (1993)

cl-solo, 2 vn, va, vc
MS 25'

Premiere: 12 May 1996. Irish Museum of Modern Art, Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin. John Finucane (cl), RTE Vanbrugh Quartet.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Further information on this and other composers is available on the CMC web site at www.cmc.ie

Nighttown (1982)

Op. 86
cl, bcl, 2 sax, 2 bn, 2 tpt, 2 trb, 2 perc, harmonium+gui
MS 11'
Premiere: 24 January 1983. National Concert Hall, Dublin.
Dublin Sinfonia, conductor William York.

Quintet for Accordion and Strings (1967)

free bass acc-solo, 2 vn va vc
MS 18'
Premiere: May 1968. Brussels, Belgium. Mogens Ellegaard (acc),
Copenhagen Quartet.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

SOLO INSTRUMENTAL

Sonata (1998 rev. 2001)

Op. 150
hrp
MS 15'
Commissioned by Andreja Malir with funds provided by the Arts
Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 19 April 2000. 'Composers' Choice', John Field Room,
National Concert Hall, Dublin. Andreja Malir (hp).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Capricci (1969)

pf
MS 12'
Recording: *New Piano Music from Ireland*. Nicholas O'Halloran
(pf). Goasco 1985. GXX 003-4.

VOCAL AND CHORAL

Virata (1999)

An opera in four scenes
S-solo, 2 Treble-solo, 2 Mez-solo [2nd opt.], 5 T [5th opt.] 2 Bar-
solo [2nd opt.], satb 1111 1110 timp perc hrp pf str
MS 120'

A Passionate Man (1995)

Opera in Two Acts
3 S-solo, 2 Mez-solo, 2 T-solo, 4 Bar-solo, B-solo, cl+bcl, hn, pf,
synth+perc, 2 vn va vc
MS 135'
Commissioned by St Patrick's Hospital, Kilmainham, Dublin
with funds provided by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle
Ealaíon.
Premiere: 21 June 1995. Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College,
Dublin.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Vigil (1993)

voice, ob, cl, hn, tpt, vn, vc, db
MS 25'

Nine Very Small Songs (1991)

S-solo, fl+picc, cl+bcl, hn, vn, vc
MS 15'
Premiere: 12 April 1996. John Field Room, National Concert
Hall, Dublin. Concorde.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Wildwood (1990)

S-solo, va / S-solo, vn
MS 9'

The King of the Golden River (1987 - 1992)

Opera in two acts
S-solo, 2 T-solo, 2 B-solo, s a chorus, 1111 1111 hrp perc str
Text: James Wilson, John Ruskin
MS 62'

Griming at the Devil (1986)

Opera in two acts
Mez-solo, Bar-solo, satb, 2222 4222 timp perc hrp str
Text: Elsa Gress
MS 105'
Commissioned by Riddersalen Theatre, Copenhagen.
Premiere: 23 February 1989. Riddersalen Theatre, Copenhagen.
Edith Guillaume, John Cashmore, Daimi, Ars Nova vocal group,
conductor Verner Nicolet, director Anne Makower. Recording:
CMC Sound Archive.

Emily Singing (1985)

S-solo, 1111 1100 timp+perc hrp str
Text: Emily Brontë
MS 19'
Commissioned by The Ulysses Ensemble with funds provided by
the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.
Premiere: 22 May 1986. St Stephen's Church, Mount Street
Crescent, Dublin. Virginia Kerr (S-solo), Ulysses Ensemble,
conductor Colman Pearce. Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Letters to Theo (1982)

Opera in one act
Bar-solo, satb, 1111 1110 perc hrp str
Text: Vincent va Gogh
MS 50'
Premiere: 26 November 1984. St Stephen's Church, Mount
Street Crescent, Dublin. John Cashmore (Bar-solo), The Ulysses
Ensemble, The Camerata Singers, conductor Colman Pearce,
director Anne Makower.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

The Windhover (1979)

S-solo, cl
Text: Gerard Manley Hopkins
MS 8'
Premiere: 29 March 1983. Wigmore Hall, London. Jane Manning
(S-solo), Alan Hacker (cl).

Nativity Ode (1978)

treble voices, satb, tpt perc hrp org dancers
MS 64'
Premiere: 26 January 1985. St Stephen's Church, Mount Street
Crescent, Dublin. Camerata Singers, conductor David Milne.

The Rape of the Lock (1978)

satb, acc
Text: Alexander Pope
MS 19'
Commissioned by The William Byrd Singers with funds provided
by the Arts Council of Great Britain.
Premiere: 1979. Manchester, England. William Byrd Singers,
conductor Stephen Wilkinson.

The Táin (1971)

Monodrama
S-solo, perc, pf
Text: The Book of Leinster, adapted Ian Fox
MS 35'
Premiere: 29 June 1972. Examination Hall, Trinity College,
Dublin. Veronica Dunne (S-solo), Courtney Kenny (pf), Jeffrey
Cosser (perc). Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Irish Songs (1970)

S-solo, pf
MS 25'
Premiere: 4 March 1971. Goethe Institute, Dublin. Veronica
Dunne (S-solo), John O'Connor (pf).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Another Direction (1969)

S-solo, cl pf
MS 25'
Premiere: 29 September 1972. Dublin. Violet Twomey (S-solo),
Gillian Smith (pf), Brian O'Rourke (cl).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Twelfth Night (1969)

Opera in three acts
2 S-solo, Mez-solo, 3 T-solo, 4 Bar-solo, B-solo, 1111 1111 perc
hrp str
Text: William Shakespeare
MS 150'
Premiere: 1 November 1969. Wexford Festival Opera, Theatre
Royal, Wexford. Irish National Opera, players from the RTE
Symphony Orchestra, conductor Hans Waldemar Rosen.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

A Canticle for Christmas (1967)

sa, pf [4 hands], perc, 2 treble instr., 1 bass instr., org/hmn
MS 25'
Premiere: Cecilian Singers, conductor Colman Pearce.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin (1967)

satb, fl, hn, perc, 2 vn, va, vc
Text: Robert Browning
MS 60'
Commissioned by RTE for the Prix Italia 1968.
Premiere: 1968. Wexford Festival Opera, White's Hotel, Wexford.
RTE Singers, players from the RTE Symphony Orchestra,
conductor Hans Waldemar Rosen.
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Carrion Comfort (1966)

Bar-solo pf
Text: Gerard Manley Hopkins
MS 50'
Premiere: 21 November 1968. Belfast Festival. Herbert Moulton
(Bar-solo), Havelock Nelson (pf).
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.

Tam O'Shanter (1965 rev. 1977)

satb, pf, perc
Text: Robert Burns
MS 25'
Recording: CMC Sound Archive.