

## **DAVID C F WRIGHT**

Linda Karen Dowson, MMus

David C F Wright was born on 21 June 1946, a relative of Sir Ivor Atkins, the organist at Worcester Cathedral for fifty years, and the conductor of the Three Choirs Festival and said to be a friend of Elgar.

Dr Wright's mother was Edith Violet Atkins (1919-2002) whose antecedents came from Wales and Birmingham, and Charles Henry Wright (1913 -1983). Edith's father, Henry Atkins (1872-1936) was a fine musician as was her brother Horace.

Charles was a brave marine during World War II and was awarded with many medals, but he was of those who came back from the war which Britain promptly forgot and Charles became a builder's assistant.

As a boy, David was a head chorister at St Michael and All Angels, Swanmore, Ryde, on the Isle of Wight, and sang solos in many cathedrals and at festivals. He learned the piano and organ and gave his first organ recital at the age of eleven. In his teenage years he played all the Beethoven piano sonatas and concertos at various Musical Festivals. In 1962 he met the composer Humphrey Searle and had private lessons with him and, later with Sir Adrian Boult, Pierre Boulez and Alan Rawsthorne. He received his BMus and DMus by study and examination. During this time he met many famous musicians and actors which has enriched him. He was present at rehearsals of orchestral concerts with such conductors as Boult, Norman Del Mar and Bryden Thomson

He developed into being a fine musician both as a pianist and conductor. Malcolm Arnold insisted that Dr Wright's performance of his Symphony no. 4 was the best ever!

In his teens, Dr Wright conducted the Ventnor String Orchestra, leader Flora Muller, and gave concerts to raise funds for charity.

Since 1961, David Wright has composed over 80 works from intimate chamber pieces to three symphonies, five string quartets, six piano sonatas, a violin concerto, an oboe concerto, a Cello Concerto and a Concertante work for flute and piano and sonatas for violin and piano and viola and piano respectively. There are two solo sonatas for cello and two for cello. There are two String Trios, the second is dedicated to his friend and fellow composer John Veale, and is a protest at the UK's illegal invasion of Iraq.

Dr Wright writes about music and specialises in less familiar composers. His String Quartet no 2, written for his Irish girl friend, won a prodigious prize.

He has his own website [wrightmusic.net](http://wrightmusic.net). The purpose of his site is:

1. to introduce readers to such composers
2. to present the composers as human beings and not as gods or as infallible. Dr Wright believes that the life style and character of the composer is inherent in some of his music and quotes, as examples Haydn for his wit and diplomacy, Schubert for his laziness and plagiarism, Bruckner for his Catholic spirituality, Elgar for his pride and pomposity and Britten for his homosexuality and pederasty.

One of Dr Wright's famous saying is, "Some people would rather believe a beautiful lie than an ugly truth."

The composer, Ruth Gipps, wrote that she only met two truly sincere and knowledgeable musicians and one of those was David Wright. The Irish composers, Gerard Victory and James Wilson, have written similar sentiments. Reginald Smith Brindle said that he only recommenced composing due to Dr Wright's encouragement.

Because Dr Wright has the original letters that Elgar wrote to Sir Ivor Atkins, he has produced a definitive article about Elgar which truths have upset Elgar fans. On the reaction and feedback services on some sites

he has been libelled and abused without mercy for his courage in telling the truth about composers. He wrote for a long time for Music Web International and then was shabbily treated because he was honest about composers. This site did not like him writing that Gesualdo was a triple murderer, that Britten was a paedophile, that Eric Coates piano accompaniments to his songs were better than the vamping accompaniments to some Schubert songs.

But in his writings, Dr Wright has told us about neglected and 'unknown' composers and it is true that these articles have put some of these composers on the map and produced some premiere recordings.

David Wright has received many degrees and awards for his service to music. Composers and performers regularly seek his advice and many composers have dedicated works to him such as John Veale (Symphony no. 3), Richard Hall, Reginald Smith Brindle, James Brown (Summer Idyll and Prelude and Fugue), Derek Bourgeois (Symphony no. 30) and Antonin Tucapsky (Four Songs).

Dr Wright's efforts have secured recordings of rare music. He has from his own resources produced CDs of world premiere recording of songs. He does not only write about music but pays to get performances. His first CD is Discovered Songs, seventeen world premieres and, the second CD is of the songs and piano music of W B Moonie, well known in Edinburgh between the wars.

He has worked in the legal profession, industry and as a teacher of English, History and Music. He lectures on history and music often to put right what may be existing wrong concepts. He works hard for children's rights and women's rights. He has conducted orchestras and choirs and is highly regarded, but has also subject to libel, hatred and abuse by devotees of composers because of the proven truths he writes about them. Some people would rather believe a beautiful lie than an ugly truth.

As I have indicated, there are other writers on music who object to Dr Wright's articles out of jealousy and/or because his writings are scholarly, definitive and reliable and, consequently, other writers may feel diminished.

He has two daughters from his first marriage and, in recent years, has had major health problems.

He also writes on both moral issues and theology with a powerful but easy to understand style. Some of these writings, as well as his writings on music, are used in universities from the USA to New Zealand. He is both a BD and DD. His first work was the biography of Dr W Graham Scroggies (1877-1958)

Many people will find his Christian and moral writings obnoxious since Christianity and morality are no longer valued. However, his articles exposing the lies of Richard Dawkins, David Icke, Betty Shine, the nonsense of evolution, how Darwinism led to fascism and how spiritualists and psychics are fraudulent have won him deserved praise. He has also written about the Virgin Birth with an enviable clarity and other Biblical subjects.

As to his music it is succinct. He does not go in for long winded music. It falls into three categories, the tonal, his own brand of serialism which is the hardest discipline to write in, and a combination of the two. There are several works based on colours and some intimate short chamber works which show a gift for counterpoint.

His first major work is the Violin Concerto which combines nervous energy with sweet lyricism. His String Quartet no. 1 and other works are inspired by Rosalind, the first love of his life but it is the profoundly moving Cello Concerto that is very important. It was written for his Vietnamese girl friend who died from a virus she caught in a swimming pool and has caused Dr Wright to provide a convincing article proving that you can catch viruses in swimming pools such as HIV. Only the slow movement was completed and the work lay dormant for thirty years, In 2010 he wrote his Vietnam Concertante for two cellos which includes the Vietnamese national anthem.

His brief but scintillating Toccata for piano was written for Lisa Fuchsova. His Night Music for orchestra shows how he can produce evocative music, as also displayed in his Requiem for a Bride for high voice and orchestra to a poem by Matthew Arnold. The Oboe Concerto, the dramatic Passacaglia for organ and

the formidable Concertante for flute and piano shows his own brand of serialism but the music remains basically tonal.

There are two Irish works, Rustic Ireland to words by Patrick Kavanagh for SATB and piano and the award winning String Quartet no 2 written for an Irish girl friend who betrayed him by cheating and deception.

Many of his works are memorial pieces such as the powerful String Quartet no. 4 subtitled For the children of Beslan. His Symphony no. 2 is dedicated to the memory of a schoolgirl who died at 14. Dr Wright has a heart and it is a big one.

His recent Dance Rhapsody written for Graham Lloyd has won the dedicatee's approval as has his Soliloquy for solo clarinet written for Graham Frudd.

He has edited ten songs by Erik Chisholm and edited piano music and songs by W B Moonie for a CD. There are many arrangements of the works of others such as Jerome Kern's The Way You Look Tonight for SATB and piano and songs by Haydn Wood.

Outspoken he can be, but always in a courteous way. He abhors falsity and objects to articles and sayings about composers and those in the music world which are untrue and prejudicial. He has, for example, proved that the accusation that Sir William Glock was against modern tonal music is untrue.

He has taught children for many years and this is shown in his String Quartet no. 5 (Childhood) a simple, endearing and effective piece. His String Quartet no 6 is very difficult.

Although most of his works are small they always have a purpose. His Elegy for small orchestra is strangely beautiful

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- op. 1. Three pieces for organ
- op. 2. Aubade for string trio
- op. 3. Soliloquy for recorder
- op. 4. Two Carols for voice and piano
- op. 5. Black for ensemble
- op. 6. Navy Blue for three instruments
- op. 7. Pink for ensemble
- op. 8. Valediction for piano
- op. 9. Violin Concerto
- op. 10. Piano Sonata no. 1
- op. 11. String Quartet no. 1
- op. 12. Cello Concerto
- op. 13. Ballade for piano
- op. 14. Toccata for piano
- op. 15. Sonata for solo violin no. 1
- op. 16. She weeps over Ragoon, for voice and piano
- op. 17. Aphorisms for piano
- op. 18. Doubles for two violins
- op. 19. Sonata for viola and piano
- op. 20. Inamorata for piano
- op. 21. Into my heart for voice and piano
- op. 22. Fuga giocosa for harpsichord
- op. 23. Madrigalia for three violas
- op. 24. Poems of Love and Rain for voice and piano
- op. 25. Sonata for solo cello no. 1
- op. 26. Night Music for orchestra

- op. 27. Requiem for a Bride for high voice and orchestra
- op. 28. Wide open for brass
- op. 29. Oboe Concerto
- op. 30. Passacaglia for organ
- op. 31. Concertante for flute and piano
- op. 32. Rustic Ireland for SATB and piano
- op. 33. In Nomine for string quartet
- op. 34. Leilani for flute and cello
- op. 35. Oreston for brass band
- op. 36. Cerise for ensemble
- op. 37. Epigrams for solo viola
- op. 38. White for piccolo, two flutes, horn and viola
- op. 39. An unexpected glimpse of lemon for two clarinets and horn
- op. 40. Green for flute clarinet and horn
- op. 41. Miniskit for woodwind quartet
- op. 42. Evergreen for flute and viola
- op. 43. Another mini skit, for string quartet
- op. 44. String Quartet no. 2
- op. 45. Angry Music for orchestra
- op. 46. Choral songs
- op. 47. Chloe for flute and piano
- op. 48. Ashwell for piano
- op. 49. String Trio No. 1
- op. 50. Two Scottish Dances for Highland band
- op. 51. Emma for oboe and piano
- op. 52. Sonata for violin and piano
- op. 53. Symphony no. 1 for string orchestra
- op. 54. String Trio no. 2
- op. 55. Four Modern Moods for solo violin
- op. 56. On seeing Lucy Owen read the news, for oboe
- op. 57. String Quartet no. 3
- op. 58. Piano Sonata no. 2
- op. 59. Sonata for solo violin no. 2
- op. 60. Piano Sonata no. 3
- op. 61. Sonata for solo cello no. 2
- op. 62. Piano Sonata no. 4
- op. 63. Piano Sonata no. 5
- op. 64. Piano Trio
- op. 65. Elegy for clarinet and piano
- op. 66. Study for bassoon and piano
- op. 67. Soliloquoy for oboe and piano
- op. 68. String Quartet no. 4 For the children of Beslan
- op. 69. Symphony no. 2
- op. 70. Piano Sonata no. 6
- op. 71. The Forsaken Brownie for string quartet
- op. 72. Twelve preludes for piano
- op. 73. Twelve preludes for piano (second set)
- op. 74. Dance rhapsody for piano
- op. 75. String Quartet no. 5 (Childhood)
- op. 76. String Quartet no. 6
- op. 77. String Quartet no. 7
- op. 78. Symphony no 3
- op. 79. Lucinda for violin and piano

- op. 80 Soliloquy for solo clarinet
  - op. 81 Elegy for small orchestra
  - op. 82 VietNam Concertante for two cellos
  - op. 83 Three Songs for girls choir
  - op. 84 Nonsense for junior girls choir
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