

# WOEFULLY ARRAYED

SACRED & SECULAR CHORAL & POLYCHORAL  
WORKS OF JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE  
INCLUDES WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS



**n** Navona  
Records

WOEFULLY ARRAYED  
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WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS



**JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE** was the first Australian-born composer to win the Collard Fellowship of the Worshipful Company of Musicians – one of Britain’s most coveted musical awards. His current honors include a Royal Philharmonic Society “ENCORE Choral” Award, and Special Distinction in the ASCAP Rudolf Nissim Prize 2017.

Several of the sublime and powerful large-scale choral works on this album feature intricate “polychoral”-inspired techniques (multi-part, multi-divisi, solo, and unusual spatial effects) – or contemporary “*cori spezzati*”.

“The lost potential of the acoustics of performing spaces begins to be rediscovered in these works.”

## FEATURING

Vox Futura, Boston (USA) | Andrew Shenton conductor  
Noel Smith director; Heinrich Christensen organ  
Thomas Tallis Society Choir, Greenwich (UK) | Philip Simms conductor  
Stanbery Singers, Cincinnati (USA) | Paul John Stanbery conductor

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**WINNER (UK): "ENCORE CHORAL" AWARD: BBC Radio 3 / Royal Philharmonic Society**

**NOMINATION (USA): "BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC RECORDING": Inaugural RoundGlass Global Music Awards 2018 (26th January, Edison Ballroom, New York)**

**NOMINATION (AUSTRALIA): "CHASS AUSTRALIA PRIZE for DISTINCTIVE WORK": Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (29th Oct., Storey Hall, Melbourne)**



FANFARE MAGAZINE (USA) –  
FEATURE ARTICLE:

<http://eprints.chi.ac.uk/2871/1/1.%20ColinClarke-LITTLEWoefullyArrayedFANFARE2017.pdf>



Royal Philharmonic Society  
**"ENCORE CHORAL"**  
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CHASS  
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**2018**

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**CATEGORY**

BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC RECORDING

**NOMINEES**

- Ovidiu Marinescu, Vanderbilt Strings & Robin Fountain: The Sea Knows
- Goetz Oestlind: Sonata No.2 in D-Flat Major, Op. 7/1 (1st Movement: Andante appassionato)
- David Labovitch: River of Life
- Charles Denler: Moment at Dawn
- Thomas Tallis Society Choir, Philip Simms: Kyrie
- Michael Lewin: Estampes: III. Jardin sous la pluie (Claude Debussy)

Celebrating enlightened musicians from around the globe, who create music to make this world a better place



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# JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE

(b.1965)

<http://www.jonathanlittle.org/>

## WORLDWIDE CRITICAL REACTION: POLYCHORAL MUSIC CREATION & RECORDING PROJECT

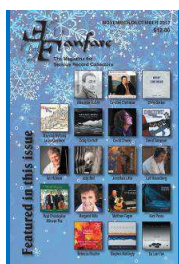
**WOEFULLY ARRAYED** (issued on NAVONA NV6113, 2017)

[USA, UK, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, ITALY, FRANCE]

<http://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6113/>

<http://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6113/booklet---woefully-arrayed---jonathan-little.html>

### Fanfare (USA)



- ***‘The disc of sacred and secular choral and polychoral music by Jonathan David Little, Woefully Arrayed ... is nothing short of remarkable. Stunningly recorded, the pure sonic joy is visceral. On a personal level, I haven’t experienced such revelation in choral terms since the Tallis Scholars’ first recording of the Allegri Miserere. ... Woefully Arrayed is a masterpiece ... radiant ... full and reverberant ... magnificently handled ... A superb disc ... shot through with spiritual light and which speaks on a very deep level to the listener.’***
  - Colin Clarke, “The Profundity of Polychoralism: Exploring the work of Jonathan David Little” (extended interview), and “Little, *Woefully Arrayed* ...” (CD review), in *Fanfare*, Vol.41, No.2 (Nov./Dec. 2017) (USA)
- ***‘Jonathan David Little’s music walks the same path as that of Arvo Pärt and Morten Lauridsen ... and Little’s style is natural and organic. He does not offer a contrived veneer of ethereality, but rather employs polychoral-inspired and spatial techniques to create a warm wash of sound with some substance behind it. ... Little uses familiar musical materials and processes to craft music that is at once simple and complex. ... The music’s underlying structures provide a solid framework compositionally, and Little is surely adept at writing for voices; this music is lush, relaxing and meditative. As enjoyable as the music is for listeners, I suspect that it is even more rewarding for the choirs. It is easy to imagine any one of the selections on this disc becoming a perennial favorite for choirs of all kinds, from amateur community choirs to professional ecclesiastical ensembles.’***
  - James V. Maiello, “Little, *Woefully Arrayed* ...” (CD review), in *Fanfare*, Vol.41, No.2 (Nov./Dec. 2017) (USA)

### Audiophile Audition (USA)



- ***‘This album is a delight on all fronts. ... Little achieves unique and beautiful effects through spacing and arrangement of vocal groups. It seems that Little’s techniques are well grounded in both very careful construction of harmonies and voicing as well as in acoustics and the physics of sound. ... In fact, two of the most fantastically beautiful works in this collection—Gloria, op.18 and Wasted and Worn, op. 6, also have atypical and unique placement of the singers. ... Of the six selections herein, I would be hard pressed to pick a favorite ... When I hear music of this sort it reminds in the best possible ways of when I have actually had the pleasure of hearing music by Tallis or Dunstable in a large old marble clad cathedral ... The three groups performing here—Vox Futura, the Thomas Tallis Society, and The Stanbery Singers—are all amazing; some of the best groups you will ever hear. Very enjoyable, highly recommend!’***
  - Daniel Coombs, “Jonathan David LITTLE: Sacred and Secular Choral & Polychoral Works”, in *Audiophile Audition*, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 (USA)



## Cinemusical (USA)

Reviewing great classical and film music

Recording: \*\*\*\*/\*\*\*\*

Performance: \*\*\*\*/\*\*\*\*

- *‘One need look no further than the excellent essay by Hugh Keyte which appears in this new Navona release to further discover some historical perspective on this unique sound. ... Each of these moments sort of bursts forth from the slowly-built verses in rather beautiful colors. ... the stunning quality of the work ... has this sense of coming into one central space only to go the far reaches of the space. Carefully-managed dissonance also adds to the emotional depth of the piece. ... The album is filled with this rather engaging music ... The polychoral approaches are managed well in the recording and in fact, the well-thought-out booklet even describes placement of singers for each piece. The overall production is rather stellar with excellent art work and overview of the style of music. It is a most fascinating release.’*

– Steven A. Kennedy, “Polychoral Music by Jonathan David Little”, in *Cinemusical*, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 (USA)

## Choir & Organ (UK)

# CHOIR & ORGAN



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- *“Little writes very much in the manner of the renaissance masters, creating what a modern sensibility would identify as ‘immersive’ music of strongly mystical aspect. That mysticism and muscularity can go hand-in-hand is confirmed by the title piece, which is reprised in condensed form at the end of the disc. ... The pieces are performed in very different acoustics ... [which] makes sense of the sacred/secular split and of the virtuosic disposition of voices.”*

– Brian Morton, “Woefully Arrayed ...” (CD review), in *Choir & Organ* (Nov./Dec. 2017) (UK)

## Gramophone (UK/NORTH AMERICA)

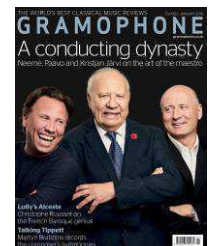
# GRAMOPHONE

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- *‘The Australian-born composer has cast his resplendent sacred and secular pieces in the polychoral style of the Renaissance and early Baroque, calling for choral forces to be placed in various configurations and spaces to achieve the intended sonic and expressive effect. Although much of the impact can be discerned through speakers or earbuds, hearing them in an actual acoustic environment would add even more lustre.*

*The booklet notes include drawings of the different placement of voices, helping greatly to convey what Little intends. ... What is most important is the music itself, which sounds at once ancient and modern. Little shows masterly command of the choral idiom in the luminous interweaving of voices and occasional solo flights. ... The repertoire is performed by Vox Futura (Boston), The Stanbery Singers (Cincinnati) and the Thomas Tallis Society Choir (Greenwich, London), all of whom sound mesmerised by Little’s engaging music.’*

– Donald Rosenberg [Editor, *Early Music America*], “LITTLE Woefully Arrayed ...” (CD review), in *Gramophone*, Vol.95 (Jan. 2018) [North American edition, “Sounds of America” supplement, iii] (UK/NORTH AMERICA)

## Limelight (AUSTRALIA)



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- *‘Little has been particularly influenced by the polychoral writing of the late Renaissance, which he blends with the often blurred, slow-moving harmonic architecture of minimalism. This style is further enhanced by resonant acoustics and an often high vocal tessitura to create a sense of the other worldly. This programme features sacred and secular works with performers from America (Vox Futura, Boston and The Stanbery Singers, Cincinnati) and England (The Thomas Tallis Society Choir, London). The most substantial piece is Woefully Arrayed, a 25-minute setting of an early Passiontide poem, in which the verse refrain structure allows for the alternation of varying textures and an effective, cumulative build-up of ecstatic utterances. ... this is carefully crafted and considered music ... ’*

– Tony Way, “Back to the future sees a postmodern take on polychoral” (CD review), in *Limelight* (Jan./Feb. 2018), p.97 (AUSTRALIA)

## Kathodik (ITALY)



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“Tra le varie etichette che sono state affibbate al compositore di origine australiana, ma ormai da tempo stabilizzatosi in Gran Bretagna, Jonathan David Little (classe 1965), quella di “minimalismo estatico” mi sembra la più appropriata, quanto meno in riferimento ai lavori corali presentati in questo notevole – anche per ciò che concerne la veste grafica e il corposo booklet – Cd della Navona. A partire dal brano che dà il titolo alla selezione, *Woefully Arrayed*, per proseguire con le altre composizioni sacre e profane, a colpire è innanzitutto la luminosità delle linee vocali – anche laddove il tema è dolente –, la cui ripetizione si arricchisce, gradualmente, di decorazioni strumentali e delicate increspature ritmiche. Il linguaggio armonico è principalmente modale, ma la scrittura di Little si avvale delle più disparate e raffinate tecniche, dalla “poli-coralità” di ascendenza rinascimentale ai contemporanei “cori spezzati”, che aggiungono effetti di avvolgente spazialità a una musica già di per sé emozionante e personale.”

- *‘... remarkable ... the first thing to strike one is the luminosity of the vocal lines ... Little's writing takes advantage of the most disparate and refined techniques – from its "polychoral" Renaissance ancestry stem contemporary "split choir" procedures, which create effects of spatial envelopment within a music, which is, in itself, already intimate and exhilarating.’*

– Filippo Focosi, “Jonathan David Little ‘Woefully Arrayed’” (CD review), in *Kathodik* (2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2017) (ITALY)

## Music & Vision (UK)



- *‘trance-like ... well-crafted and original ... also features two fascinating secular choral works ... This really is Australian music with a difference ... sheer beauty.’*

– Keith Bramich, “Practical Experiments? ...” (CD review), in *Music & Vision* (27<sup>th</sup> June, 2018) (UK)

## Des Chips et du Rosé / Nova Express (FRANCE)



- *‘... c'est tellement beau’ [“so beautiful”]*

– *Des Chips et du Rosé / Nova Express* (20<sup>th</sup> August, 2017) (FRANCE)

## La Scena Musicale (CANADA)



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- ***‘Little’s musical proposition is to write in the manner of polyphonic composers of the Renaissance such as Palestrina and Josquin des Prés.***

*However, Little is not content to imitate the language of his predecessors. He absorbs the general technical characteristics, like contrapuntal writing and melismas, but takes some liberties in his own writing by introducing, for example, strong dissonance between the voices. Additionally, Little is inspired by the Venetian tradition of polychoral singing, and creates dynamic interaction between different choral groups. ... The composer also uses astute means of playing with the acoustic properties of the recording space. The placement of singers within that space is meticulously calculated to create certain sonorities. ...*

*In summary, Little’s musical style is arrestingly beautiful, and manages to strike a delicate balance between tradition and innovation.’*

– Arnaud G. Veydarier, “Jonathan David Little, Woefully Arrayed ...” (CD review), in *La Scena Musicale* (Feb./Mar. 2018), p.32 (CANADA)

## Review Graveyard (USA)



- ***‘The sound is strikingly contemporary, yet also intertwined with choral traditions of the past ... Fans of choral music are in for a huge treat ... Several of these beautiful and moving settings of profound and poignant texts feature intricate “polychoral” techniques: multi-part, multi-divisi, solo, echo and spatial effects. ... This is a truly sensory rich album. You won’t regret adding this to your collection.’***

– Darren Rea, “Woefully Arrayed: Sacred & Secular Choral & Polychoral Works”, in *Review Graveyard*, 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2017 (USA)

## Infodad (USA)

**INFODAD.COM**

- ***‘Kyrie and Gloria on this CD are both sonically impressive and show understanding of older vocal forms ... On the secular side of things, Wasted and Worn, intended as a memorial to painter John William Godward (1861-1922), features some beautiful vocal writing ...’***

– Infodad (6<sup>th</sup> July, 2017) (USA)

## iTunes (USA)



- ***‘Another time, another place! When it comes to transporting you to a different place, WOEFULLY ARRAYED is in a class of its own! I’m taken to a faraway place and age with so much tranquility and peaceful feelings there, assisted by the smooth transitions in the music. It’s a lovely composition, beautifully performed with detailed dynamics keeping one gently engaged - lovely!’***

– Grammy-Award winning composer and flautist, Wouter Kellerman (18<sup>th</sup> October, 2017) (USA)

# STATEMENTS of SUPPORT for JONATHAN DAVID LITTLE Contemporary Polychoral Music

*“Jonathan has an acute ear for timbre, thoroughly understands how to write for choirs, and has developed a fascinating compositional style that incorporates aspects of early polychoral techniques (space used constructively) and harmonic idioms while remaining unmistakably of our own time. I unreservedly endorse the enthusiastic press reviews ... which you will have seen, and especially admire the way that these works defy convention in exploiting a basically tonal palette (with free use of modality and dissonance) and their hypnotic expressive power. This last is rare in any polychoral music: as a rule of thumb, the larger the forces the less overtly expressive the effect, but Jonathan has achieved the kind of meaningful expression of the text that Mendelssohn achieves in his little-known four-choir motet and Strauss (to a lesser extent) in his two four-choir works: yet the emotional world of Jonathan's music is entirely sui generis, with none of the overt drama of those German works and none of the deliberate revivalism of – say – Vaughan Williams' G minor Mass.*

*A great deal of early polychoral music was written with very particular, often unique, dispositions of forces, and Jonathan's works are similarly experimental in juxtaposing strongly contrasted groupings of voices and instruments in carefully judged locations. ... a unique voice ploughing a brave and potentially very fruitful furrow – very much at odds with the vast amounts of effective but too often derivative choral music that is churned out by so many contemporary composers.”*

**HUGH KEYTE (UK) [2018]**

Former BBC Radio 3 Music Producer, Music Researcher and Editor;  
Visiting Research Fellow, Girton College, Cambridge;  
Consultant to Robert Hollingworth's musical group, I Fagiolini.

*“Jonathan Little's choral music shows an imaginative and exciting individual voice, while remaining practical and realistic for ambitious choirs.”*

**[UK PREMIÈRE NOW AGREED – with 140 massed voices in Chichester Cathedral]**

**JONATHAN WILLCOCKS (UK) [2018]**

Conductor and Composer (son of Sir David Willcocks)  
Musical Director, Guildford Choral Society and [Chichester Singers](#),  
Musical Director, Southern Pro Musica (professional chamber orchestra)  
Festival Conductor of the [Leith Hill Musical Festival](#)

***“I have received unpublished and published scores by email and snail mail from close to 12,000 composers. Yours seem particularly interesting.”***

**HAROLD ROSENBAUM (USA) [2018]**

FOUNDER: [The New York Virtuoso Singers](#), [The Canticum Novum Singers](#),  
[ChoralFest USA](#), The Harold Rosenbaum [Choral Conducting Institute](#),  
[Virtuoso Choral Recordings](#)

EDITOR: G. Schirmer: The Harold Rosenbaum Choral Series;  
Peermusic Classical: New Voices Choral Series

AUTHOR: *A Practical Guide to Choral Conducting* (New York & Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge, 2018)  
Professor Emeritus: The University at Buffalo  
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For immediate release

25 September 2018

## 2018 CHASS Australia Prizes Shortlists Announced

The Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) has announced the shortlists for its prestigious 2018 Australia Prizes, which will be presented on 29 October in Melbourne.

For the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize for a Book, the shortlisted titles are Bernadette Brennan, **A Writing Life: Helen Garner and Her Work** (Text Publishing), Judith Brett, **The Enigmatic Mr Deakin** (Text Publishing) and Kate Cole-Adams, **Anaesthesia: The Gift of Oblivion and the Mystery of Consciousness** (Text Publishing). The winner will receive \$3,500. Sponsored by Routledge, the Book Prize is for an Australian author whose non-fiction book, published between January and December 2017, contributes most to Australian cultural and intellectual life.

For the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize for Distinctive Work, the finalists are **Defiant Lives** (Sarah Barton and Liz Burke), **International Polychoral Music Research, Creation and Recording Project** (Jonathan David Little) and **The Harmonic Oscillator Project** (The Cad Factory). The winner will receive \$3,500. Sponsored by Routledge, the Distinctive Work Prize is for a performance, exhibition, project or a specific advance in policy development in any Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) field between January and December 2017.

For the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize for a Future Leader, the finalists are **Billy Griffiths, Olga Oleinikova** and **Pichamon Yeophantong**. The winner will receive \$2,000. Sponsored by Future Leaders, the Future Leader Prize is being awarded to an individual aged under 30 demonstrating clear leadership and potential in any HASS field.

For the 2018 CHASS Australia Prize for a Student, the finalists are **Rachel Franks** (The University of Sydney), **Michele Jarldorn** (Flinders University) and **Zhenjie Yuan** (The University of Melbourne). The winner will receive \$500. Sponsored by CHASS, the Student Prize is for a student project, performance or exhibition that best exemplifies the contribution of HASS areas to our understanding of our nation and us.

“We would like to congratulate all the finalists, and thank jury members for their tireless efforts in selecting such strong candidates from an exceptional pool of nominations. We would like to thank all nominators and nominees for the high standard and diversity of the 290 nominations received this year. We look forward to seeing the finalists and jury members at the Prizes Dinner, and invite colleagues in the HASS sector to come along and show their support,” said Emeritus Professor Steven Schwartz AM, Patron of the annual Australia Prizes.