

# The Legacy of *Polyhymnia*:

Towards Understanding the Reception of a New Musical Work

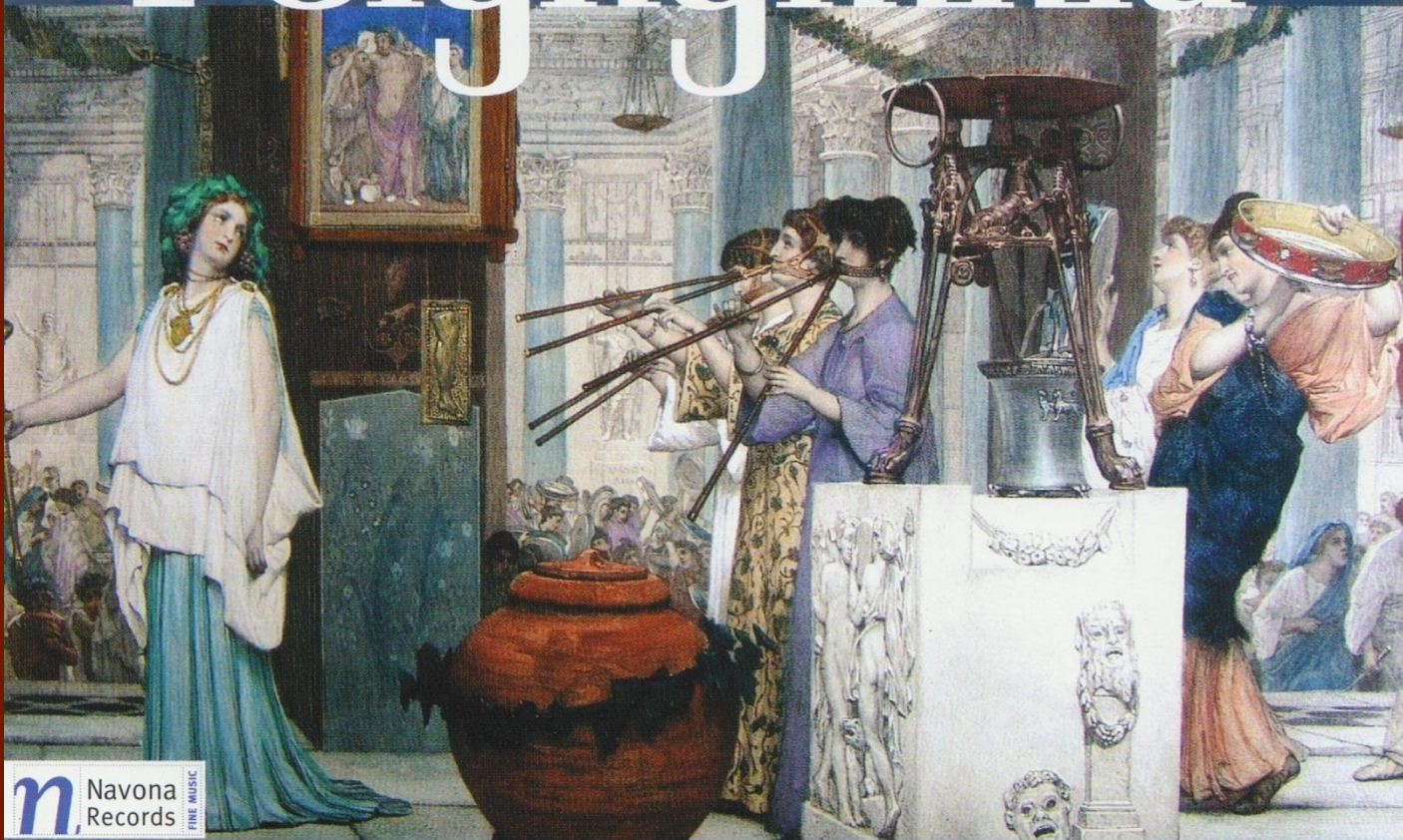
- The physical score & audio recording of *Polyhymnia* anticipated to be *ONE of FOUR* REF outputs – the other three being monographs.
- The challenge, in due course, is to put forward a best case for the “impact” of this new creative work (21 minutes in length, and written for “multi-divisi” string orchestra).

July 2012

JONATHAN LITTLE

STRING, ORCHESTRAL AND CHORAL WORKS OF JONATHAN LITTLE

# Polyhymnia



**n** Navona  
Records FINE MUSIC

MUSICIANS OF THE CZECH, KIEV, AND MORAVIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRAS

## The Legacy of *Polyhymnia*:

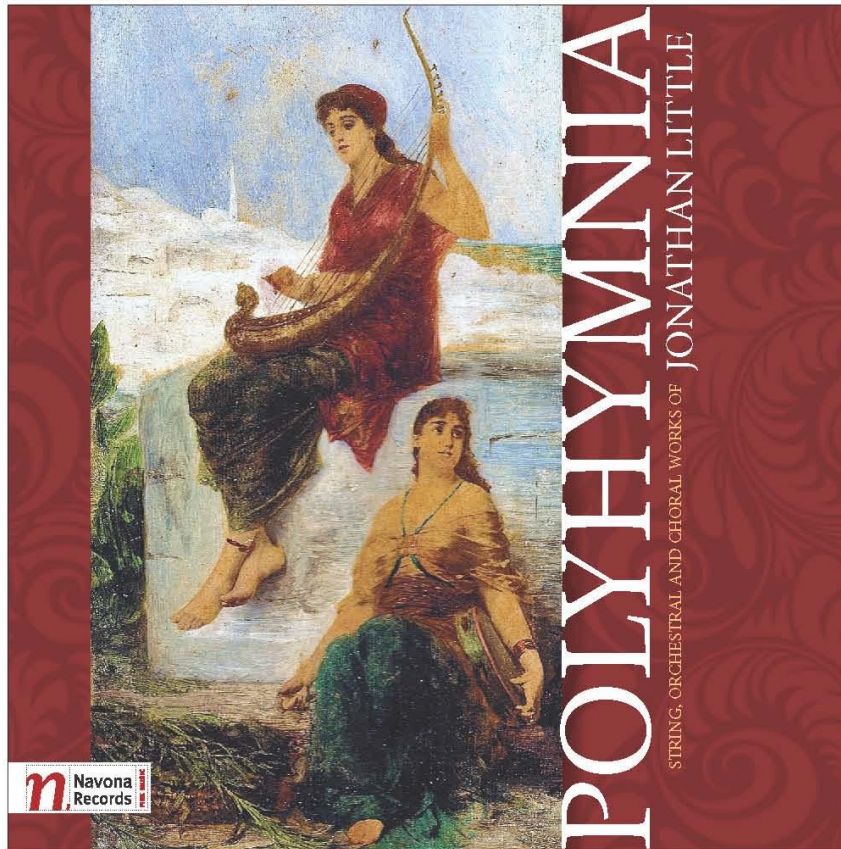
Concisely examining the initial ideas and other musical and extra-musical inspiration that lay behind the composition of *Polyhymnia*, this presentation briefly follows the process of its composition, recording and commercial release. It then focusses on the “life” of a newly-recorded musical work following release: embracing airplay, reviews and interviews – and what worldwide press and other feedback might have to contribute to any statement about its “impact” – and indeed what one might subsequently be able to deduce about a work’s and a composer’s place in the wider context of “serious” contemporary music.



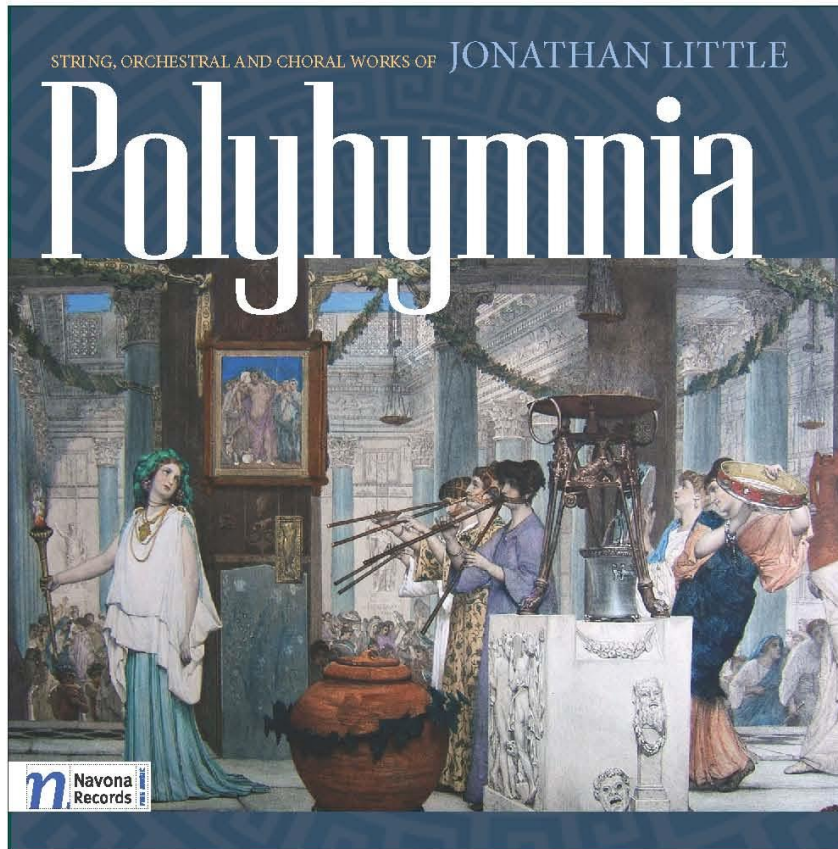
# **POLYHYMNIA =** latest completed musical project ...

**ALTHOUGH FURTHER REVIEWS & MARKETING continue to Dec 2012**

- String Orchestra work completed and published in Australia (May 2010: Full score and individual string parts)
- Recording undertaken in the Czech Republic & “first rough edit” delivered for comments (end of February 2011)
- Editing & mixing of the recording - to rectify balance issues, *etc.* (ca. March to July 2011); then artwork preparation ...
- Becomes title track of second major album of original string, orchestral and choral works (officially released: February 2012 – after advance marketing and review copies have been sent out at least six weeks beforehand, to radio and press)



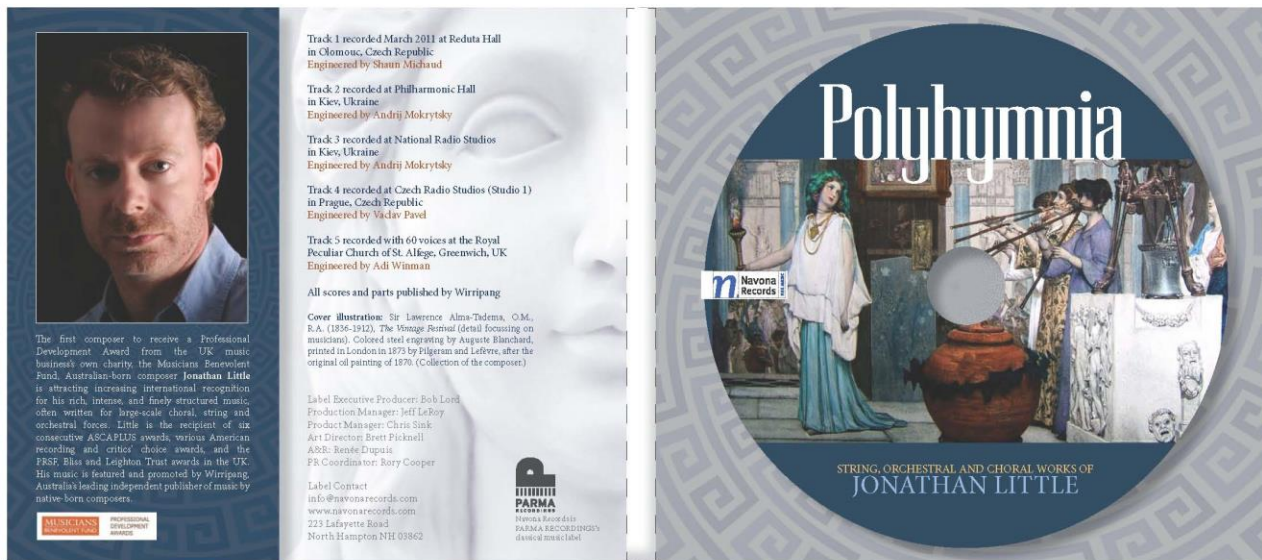
Concept A is using the image “Oriental Musicians.” The subject of the painting, women playing instruments connects with the idea of Polyhymnia. The original cropping of the image is largely intact. Though this is a more traditional style painting the impact is created by setting the title in all capitals a having it run the full length of the cover making it as large as possible. It is also white to give maximum contrast from the deep, red background. This red is sampled from the harpist’s cloths to create a consistent color pallet. The strong color is also very attention grabbing.



Concept B is using the image “Vintage Festival”. This image appears to be a traditional renaissance painting but on closer inspection we see the peculiar instruments being played. I think this is very engaging. It has antique quality while also having the gravitas we are looking for. The image is framed by a cool blue to match the overall hue of the image. I’ve also overlaid a Grecian key pattern to tie into the Greek Mythology of Polyhymnia. The type is white again for maximum contrast against the blue. I’m using a tall, condensed font to help create a classical feel. This type of lettering also allows for it to be quite large. This is important as a lot of today’s music buyers are purchasing from the internet and are only seeing a small image of the cover.



CONCEPT B



INSIDE LEFT / POCKET FOR BOOKLET

INNER RIGHT / DISC ART



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ARTIST/COMPOSER: Jonathan Little  
 PROJECT TITLE: Polyhymnia

PRESENTATION ROUND: 4

DATE: 10/18/2011

# Feb. 2012 onwards:

(50% creative time / 50% "marketing/gleaning" time!)

## "ONLINE PRESENCE" (album & composer information)

- **RECORD COMPANY WEBSITE (US):** [www.NavonaRecords.com](http://www.NavonaRecords.com)

- **MUSIC PUBLISHER WEBSITE (Australia):**  
[www.AustralianComposers.com.au](http://www.AustralianComposers.com.au)

- **AMAZON WEBSITES & numerous other online retailers (Worldwide) – both physical and digital distributors**



Worldwide distribution/availability via NAXOS  
[world's largest independent classical music distributor]

- **OWN ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT/WEBSITE, & own pages on sites of Professional Music Associations – e.g. BASCA (UK) , AMC (Australia). See esp.: [www.JonathanLittle.org](http://www.JonathanLittle.org)**
- **VARIOUS OTHER MUSIC REVIEW WEBSITES for interviews and reviews**  
**To date: 2 interviews (US & Australia), and 12 reviews – mostly US** (world's largest music market), **and also UK, Italy, Spain** (+ more expected from possibly Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Norway, ??)





# WIRRI PANG

*Home of Australian Composers*



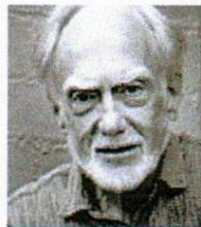
*Michael  
Atherton*



*Betty  
Beath*



*Colin  
Brumby*



*Nigel  
Butterley*



*Ann  
Carr-Boyd*



*Bruce  
Crossman*



*Houston  
Dunleavy*



*Miriam  
Hyde*



*Horace  
Keats*



*Jonathan  
Little*



*Paul  
Paviour*



*John  
Peterson*



*Andrew  
Schultz*



*Larry  
Sitsky*



*Margaret  
Sutherland*



*Phillip  
Wilcher*

**OWN PROMOTIONAL ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT /  
WEBSITE:**

**[www.JonathanLittle.org](http://www.JonathanLittle.org)**

*(MUSICAL EXAMPLES SHOULD COMMENCE PLAYING)*

*Description that I initially agreed to use, as being most apt:*

## PROMOTIONAL BIOGRAPHY

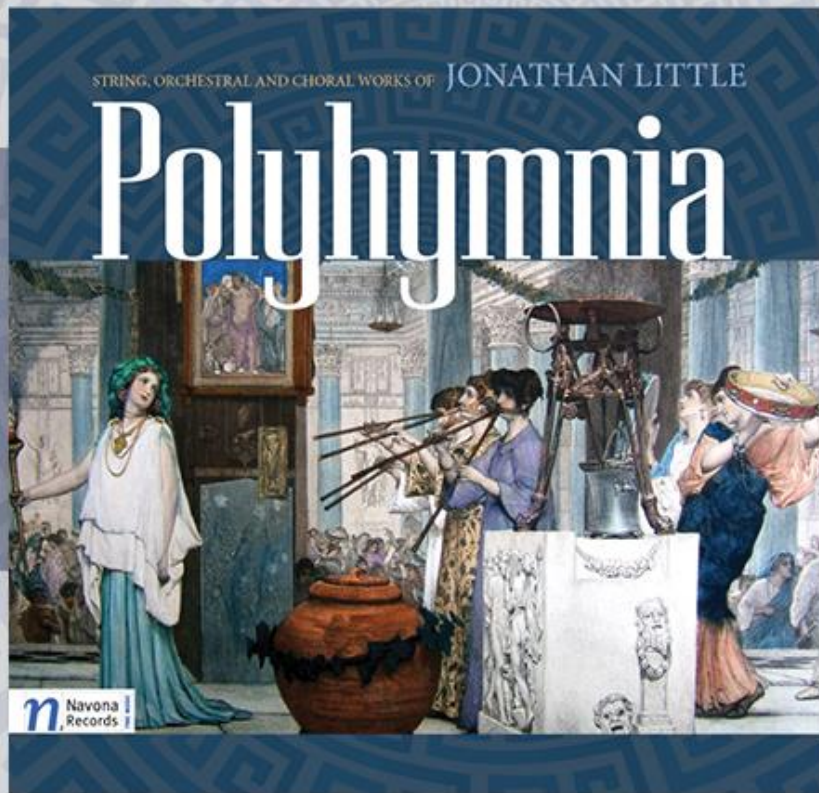
'The evocative music of British-Australian composer Jonathan Little is notable for its **mystical beauty, intensity and richness of material**. He studied Composition and Performance at the University of Melbourne, where he won the Lady Turner Exhibition for overall excellence. He holds the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in music for his research into the development of "exotic" 19th- and 20th-century orchestration. In 2011, the City of London's ancient Musicians' Company (established in 1500) bestowed upon him one of their highest honours – the prestigious Collard Fellowship – awarded to "a professional musician of outstanding ability" for "undoubted excellence in composition, research or performance". **Music producer and publisher Martin Anderson has defined Jonathan Little's compositional style as "Ecstatic Minimalism"** – blending art music, folk/Celtic, and other sacred and secular musical influences from as far back as the fourteenth century with new and innovative textures and orchestration. **Other critics have defined his musical style as "Archaic Futurism", or "Picturesque Archaism".**

*Alternative label ("-ism") favoured recently by an Italian critic (= ability to sound very old & very new at the same time)*

*Label ("-ism") recently used by a reviewer in America's leading record review magazine*



new release from  
**Navona Records**



With works described as “an inspired creation” (*Music & Vision*), “original and quite brilliant” (*Fanfare*), and “immensely poetic” (*Tempo*), Jonathan Little has planted himself as a luminary contemporary composer. On POLYHYMNIA, his first release on Navona Records, Little is able to transform traditional influences into rich, intense, and finely structured music that lives up to his reputation.

POLYHYMNIA features *Polyhymnia* and *Terpsichore*, two orchestral pieces from Little's Nine Muses series, along with the powerful *Fanfare*, the atmospheric string quintet *Sacred Prelude*, and the intricate polychoral *Kyrie*.

Available now through iTunes,  
Amazon, and Naxos of America

Nominated for “Best Album of the Year”

Reviews New Age, Spain

“Polyhymnia conjures up a heart-rending panorama: it is immensely poetic, almost otherworldly, and employs an exceptionally hypnotic array of musical colour.”

Tempo, UK (January 2012)

“as warm and fervent as religious poetry ... a sonic tour de force. Little is an expert orchestrator”

Infodad, USA (March 2012)

“full of rich string orchestra harmonies and based on some beautiful melodic ideas. The texture is rich, and the effect is quite moving”

American Record Guide (May/June 2012)

“Gorgeous, exciting, chilling and surprising ... an elegant gift to the ears ... the beauty, the elegance, the intensity ... A host of adjectives are insufficient to categorise this otherworldly recording”

Reviews New Age, Spain (February 2012)



JONATHANLITTLE is current holder of The John Clementi Collard Fellowship in Music – one of the most prestigious awards of The Worshipful Company of Musicians. He is the first composer to receive a Professional Development Award from the UK music business's own charity, the Musicians Benevolent Fund, and is recipient of ASCAP and Critics' Choice awards in the US, and PRS for Music Foundation, Bliss and Leighton Trust awards in the UK.

Current projects include the epic, multi-tableaux Greek mythological series, *The Nine Muses*. The first two of these musical portraits appear on his new album, POLYHYMNIA.

[www.jonathanlittle.org](http://www.jonathanlittle.org)



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Navona Records is the  
contemporary  
classical label imprint of  
PARMA Recordings

## REF AIM



To show particularly by reviews, interviews, & any awards attracted, that quality is of some international standing (and *innovation* and *importance* of work – in comparison to the work of other contemporary composers)

2. To pursue a “three-pronged” strategy of “impact” that can be evidenced *particularly* in these “territories”:  
**the UK, North America, and Australia**  
= important to maximise international presence and publicity



# CREATIVE AIM

## A MUSICAL "EVOCATION" of an ANCIENT GREEK MUSE

FROM THE EXPLANATORY NOTES (sample text that may be used for REF – explaining the **concept**, while also showing **innovation**, and – towards the end – **any recognition/commentary internationally**, too):

*'In Polyhymnia – a searing, many-layered "Lamentation for String Orchestra" (with soloists) – the melos or "melodic thread" often weaves between all parts, and is slow-moving throughout. Initially, it emerges like a cry from the deep. Tension is built, maintained, and released over long periods. ... [it] gradually builds up clusters of notes into evolving, ever-changing, and ultimately resolving chord patterns.*

The string orchestra is employed multi-divisi throughout: there are four individual violin lines (besides an extra four solo parts), ditto in the violas, eight individual cello lines, and two bass lines. This tends to create a thick, rich and complex texture, yet there are also some exceptionally lucid passages – for although Polyhymnia is also the Muse of Eloquence, She is sometimes characterised as a serious, pensive and meditative holy woman (whose main role is to sing praises to the gods). ... '



# THE NINE MUSES

are the Ancient Greek goddesses of  
**INSPIRATION, LEARNING, THE ARTS, AND  
CULTURE**

*According to ancient allegory,  
ZEUS (Almighty Creator and Father of the Gods)  
lay with MNEMOSYNE (Memory)  
and she gave birth to the Nine Muses:*

1. **Calliope** (The Fair Voiced) – muse of Epic Poetry
2. **Clio** (The Proclaimer) – muse of History
3. **Erato** (The Lovely) – muse of Love Poetry
4. **Euterpe** (The Giver of Pleasure) – muse of Lyric Poetry
5. **Melpomene** (The Songstress) – muse of Tragedy
6. **Polyhymnia (She of Many Hymns) – muse of Sacred Poetry**  
for multi-divisi string orchestra: completed 2009; recorded 2011 (21 minutes)
7. **Terpsichore** (The Whirler) – muse of Dance  
for large orchestra: completed 2007; recorded 2008 (15 minutes)
8. **Thalia** (The Flourishing) – muse of Comedy
9. **Urania** (The Heavenly) – muse of Astronomy

SUPPORTED BY THE MUSICIANS' BENEVOLENT FUND  
WITH FUNDING FROM THE WILLIS AND GRACE GRANT CHARITABLE TRUST

# Polyhymnia, Op.10

EVOCATION OF THE SIXTH OF THE NINE MUSES

*"She of Many Hymns"*

*or,*

*Muse of Sacred Poetry*

Violins I, II, III & IV (including 4 solo violins - but ideally with 4 extra)

Violas I, II, III & IV (including 4 solo violas)

Violoncelli I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII & VIII

Contrabass I & II

MINIMUM SUGGESTED BALANCED FORCES:

8 (+ 4) vlns / 8 vlas / 8 vc / 2 cb

(ca.21 mins.)

© 2010

# AWARDS TO DATE:

THAT CAN IN SOME WAY BE RELATED TO  
**POLYHYMNIA PROJECT - in part or whole**

- **2012 – Nomination for “Best Album of the Year” (Spain)**
- **2012 – PRS / Bliss Trust Composer Bursary (UK)**
- **2011 – John Clementi Collard Fellowship of The Worshipful Company of Musicians (UK)**
- **2011 – Elected in May 2011 to “Associate Artist” status of the Australian Music Centre (AUS)**
- **2009 – MBF Professional Development Award (UK)**



**MUSICIANS**  
BENEVOLENT FUND

PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
AWARDS

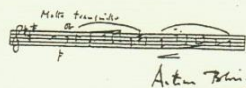
**ASCAP PLUS**



*The  
Worshipful  
Company of  
Musicians*



THE BLISS TRUST



## Holders of THE JOHN CLEMENTI COLLARD FELLOWSHIP

*Awarded on average every three years since 1931,  
being one of the most prestigious awards of  
The Worshipful Company of Musicians  
(established 1500)*

1931	Herbert Howells
1934	Constant Lambert
1937	William Alwyn
	Edmund Rubbra
1940	Sir Jack Allan Westrup
1943	Gordon Jacob
1946	Lennox Berkeley
1949	Alan Rawsthorne
1952	Priaulx Rainier
1955	Bernard Stevens
1958	Peter Racine Fricker
1962	John Gardner
1965	Adrian Cruft
1968	Alan Ridout
1971	Bernard Roberts
1974	Christopher Brown
1977	Hamish Milne
1980	Edwin Roxburgh
1983	Justin Connolly
1986	Alec Roth
1989	Benedict Mason
1992	Ann Mackay
1996	Robin Grant
2000	Ronald Woodley
2005	Mike Diprose
2008	Marcus Barcham-Stevens
2009	Férdia Stone-Davis
2011	Jonathan David Little



# SOME MUSICAL PRECURSORS:

**TOP TEN** large/multi-division string orchestra works of the last 100+ years (in no particular order & in a couple I cheated and included other instruments too):

1. Mahler – *Sym. No. 5* – slow mvt.
2. Wagner – *Lohengrin* Prelude to Act I
3. Wagner – Parsifal and the Grail Knights music
4. Mascagni – Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*
5. Barber – Adagio for Strings
6. Schoenberg – *Verklärte Nacht* - esp. Mvt.I
7. \* Richard Strauss – *Metamorphosen* – COMPARISON MADE BY ONE CRITIC  
(but harmonically quite a different basis)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS3VOASoOgQ&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=7&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS3VOASoOgQ&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=7&feature=plpp_video)

8. RVW – Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis
9. \*\*\* Franz Schmidt - Intermezzo from the opera, *Notre Dame*  
VERY thick texture, but it works!

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ts5t\\_5HeECE&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=9&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ts5t_5HeECE&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=9&feature=plpp_video)

10. Jonathan Little – *Polyhymnia*  
DIFFERENT type of thick texture & harmonic basis again

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUXjZNSeKrE&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=11&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUXjZNSeKrE&list=PL68B6AEE1E76F5BDB&index=11&feature=plpp_video)

## REVIEW HIGHLIGHTS TO DATE:

### SUCCESSSES:

- “Album des Mes en RNA (Febrero 2012)” (Album of the Month in *Reviews New Age*, Feb. 2012); & Nomination for “Mejor Álbum RNA de Año” (Best Album of the Year) (Spain)  
*WHO'D HAVE PREDICTED THAT ONE?! !* (P.S.: What a cultured people are the Spanish!)
- Major feature in Sept-Oct *Fanfare* magazine: 3,300-word interview + 3 substantial reviews (US)
  - Airplay in America – substantial portions of the album – 30 mins+ (US)
  - Record Company to put forward *Polyhymnia* for Grammy Award nomination 2013 (US)
    - Two widely-read articles on *Polyhymnia* published in Australia (AUS)
    - First reviews gained in countries outside the “Anglosphere” (= Italy, Spain)

### “Less than” SUCCESSES (!):

- No UK airplay whatsoever (or remote sign of) to date (e.g., Radio 3; Classic FM) (UK)
- No *Gramophone* or major broadsheet reviews to date (UK); nothing in France; Germany.
- [Just one major review in CUP's *Tempo* & a short one in *Classical Music* magazine, so far in UK]

# REVIEW SAMPLES 1 of 2 (solely from US *Fanfare*):

CRITICS CAN'T YET DECIDE ABOUT, OR CATEGORISE, THE MUSIC  
*CAN REF PANEL?! So what can be made of such material?*

NOTE THE NEED TO COMPARE – STATE WHAT IT IS “LIKE”:

\* \* \*

- ‘It’s obvious ... that Jonathan Little **issues from a similar school of sensibility to that of the “holy mystics” of Eastern Europe, composers like Arvo Pärt and Pēteris Vasks.**  
– Martin Anderson, “Polyhymnia ...”, in *Fanfare*, Vol.36, No.1 (Sept/Oct 2012) (USA)
- ‘When I first encountered Jonathan Little’s music in 2008, I gave it an enthusiastic review. He is quite obviously an excellent composer, in fact **a composer difficult to pigeonhole because his works span a wide and interesting array of styles.** ... I found it [*Polyhymnia*] to be the spiritual cousin of Strauss’s *Metamorphosen* for 23 strings ... **I liked *Polyhymnia* better, overall, than Strauss’s *Metamorphosen* ... Little’s music sounds like no one else’s ...**  
– Lynn Rene Bayley, “The Nine Muses ...”, in *Fanfare*, Issue 36:2 (Nov/Dec 2012) (USA)



## REVIEW SAMPLES 2 of 2 (solely from US *Fanfare*):

\* \* \*

- 'The notes quote one unnamed commentator as stating that **the music is "completely novel, yet hauntingly familiar."** This seems a fair assessment, in that **no other composer among the thousands whose music I've heard immediately comes to mind** ... Perhaps Górecki in certain of his more tonal works comes closest, although Little's music is about seven notches above the quality of that of the Polish composer ...'
  - **David DeBoor Canfield, "Polyhymnia ...", in *Fanfare*, Vol.36, No.1 (Sept/Oct 2012) (USA)**
- '[In *Polyhymnia*] melodic figures coalesce into an enormous tapestry of musical color. It's excellent music for dreaming! This music can waft the listener back to a pastoral scene in ancient Greece, where the gods spend lazy days basking in the sun on Mount Olympus.'
  - **Maria Nockin, "Polyhymnia ...", in *Fanfare*, Vol.36, No.1 (Sept/Oct 2012) (USA)**



# BUT OF COURSE YOU CAN JUST EXCERPT THE BEST:

## AND USE TO PROMOTE ...

- *'Polyhymnia conjures up a heart-rending panorama: it is immensely poetic, almost otherworldly'* – *Tempo, UK (Jan 2012)*
- *'as warm and fervent as religious poetry ... a sonic tour de force ... Little is an expert orchestrator'* – *Infodad, USA (March 2012)*
- *'an enormous tapestry of musical color ... Little composes with a great array of technical skills'* – *Fanfare, USA (Sept-Oct 2012)*
- *'full of rich string orchestra harmonies and based on some beautiful melodic ideas. The texture is rich, and the effect quite moving'* – *American Record Guide, USA (May-June 2012)*
- *'Gorgeous, exciting, chilling and surprising .. An elegant gift to the ears ... the beauty, the elegance, the intensity ... A host of adjectives are insufficient to categorise this otherworldly recording'* – *Reviews New Age, Spain (February 2012)*

**\*\*\* NOMINATED FOR "BEST ALBUM OF THE YEAR 2012" \*\*\***

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WITH FUNDING FROM THE WILLIS AND GRACE GRANT CHARITABLE TRUST

Polyhymnia, Op.10  
*"She of Many Hymns"*  
or,  
*Muse of Sacred Poetry*

EVOCATION OF THE SIXTH OF THE NINE MUSES

Lamentation  
for  
String Orchestra

Violins I, II, III & IV (including 4 solo violins - but ideally with 4 extra)  
Violas I, II, III & IV (including 4 solo violas)  
Violoncelli I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII & VIII  
Contrabass I & II

MINIMUM SUGGESTED BALANCED FORCES:  
8 (+ 4) vlns / 8 vlas / 8 vc / 2 cb

by

JONATHAN LITTLE

(ca. 21 mins)

© 2010



PUBLISHED IN  
AUSTRALIA



MAJOR  
SPONSORSHIP  
FROM  
U.K.



RECORDED  
(IN EUROPE)  
FOR A RECORD  
LABEL BASED IN  
U.S.

Finalised and published  
full orchestral score

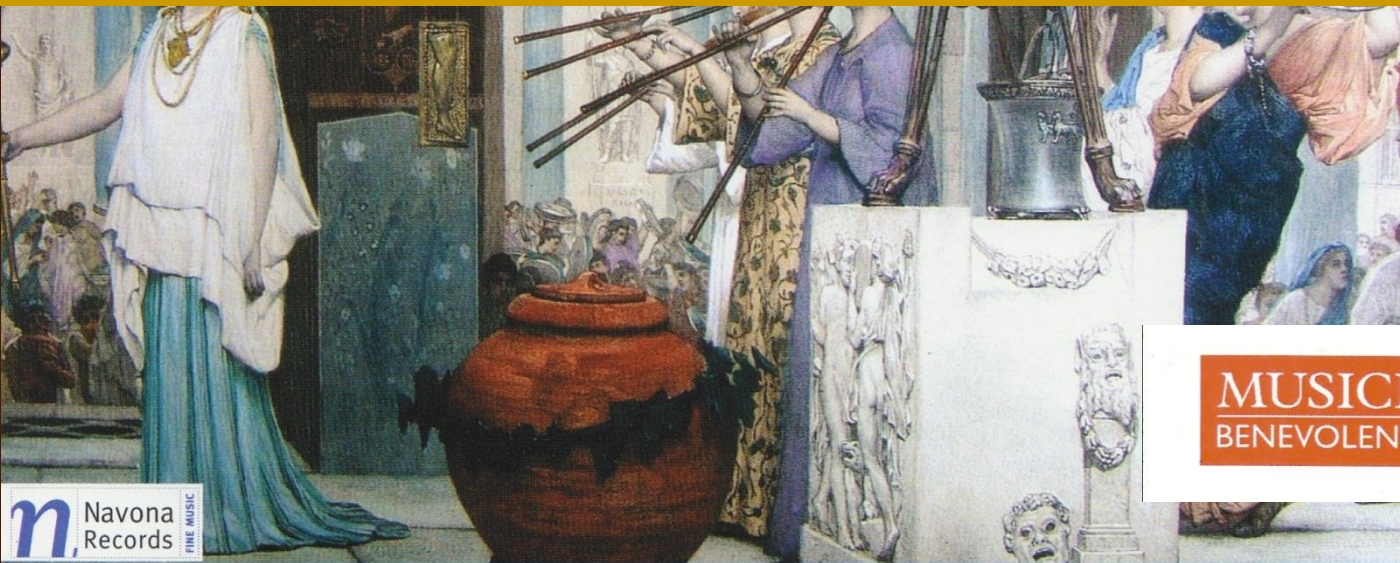


STRING, ORCHESTRAL AND CHORAL WORKS OF JONATHAN LITTLE

# Polyhymnia

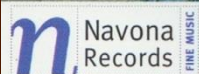


Released Feb. 2012 -- and continues its journey gathering critiques, and finding its "meaning", to the end of 2012 and beyond . . .



MUSICIANS  
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PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
AWARDS



MUSICIANS OF THE CZECH, KIEV, AND MORAVIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRAS