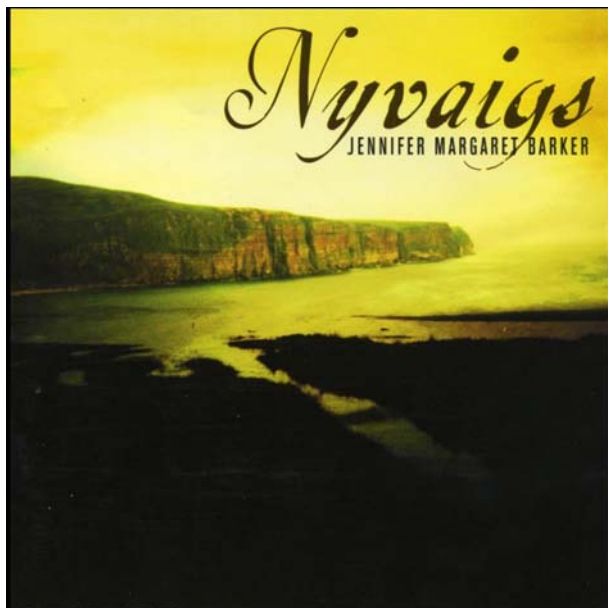


NWCR862

Jennifer Margaret Barker

Nyvaigs



1. *Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs* (1997) (9:57)
Narration selected from *The Highlander*,
a poem by James Macpherson
Laurie Baefsky, alto flute, piccolo, C flute; James
Richmond, alto saxophone, ocarina; Kay Krekow,
soprano; Jennifer M. Barker, piano; Daniel
Knipple, percussion; Tim Bishop, percussion;
Scott Jackson, percussion; J. Craig Barker,
narrator; Mark U. Reimer, conductor
2. *Earthtones* (1993) (6:14)
Jorge Aguirre, violin; Scott Jackson, marimba
3. *Geodha* (1992, rev. 1998) (11:10)
Poetry by Derick S. Thomson: "Geodha
air chùl na grèine" (A geo in the sun's shelter)
Eilidh Mackenzie, Gaelic soloist; Leslie Stewart,
violin; Wendy Williams Keyes, viola; James
Herbison, violoncello; Scott Jackson, timpano;
Mark U. Reimer, conductor
4. *Three Highbrows We* (1996) (3:55)
Lyrics adapted from Tessa, Vanessa, and
Egbert by Herbert Farjeon
Susan Arnold, Dianne Barton, Lisa Relaford
Costin, Kathleen Franz, Kimberly D. Lee,
Patricia Ricciarelli, Karen Scott, Tiffany A.
Temple, female vocalists; Marvin Western,
clarinet; Janice Bengtson, clarinet; Christopher
Fensom, trumpet; Peter DuBeau, tuba; Jennifer
M. Barker, piano; Mark U. Reimer, conductor;
David L. Means, vocal consultant
5. *The Enchanted Glen* (1993) (6:42)
Melanie Richards, clarinet; Jennifer M. Barker, piano
6. *Blue Waters* (1998) (13:55)
Heather Corbett, vibraphone
7. *Nobody Told Me* (1997) (5:33)
Poetry by Walter de la Mare: "Under the Rose
(The Song of the Wanderer)"
Angela M. Caesar, solo soprano; Kay Krekow,
solo soprano; Billye Brown Youmans, solo
soprano; Vanessa Angelone, Arthur Broadbent
III, Larry Enscoe, Kimberly D. Lee, Joey
Parrish, Jason Radford, Ann E. Scott, Tiffany A.
Temple, Kristen Wagner, Darrell Whitaker,
chorus; Christopher Fensom, trumpet; John
Whitelock, trumpet; William S. Brown,
improvised trumpet; James Richmond, alto
saxophone; Marvin Western, bass clarinet; James
L. Harney, baritone saxophone; Peter DuBeau,
tuba; Jennifer M. Barker, piano; Norm Frigault,
percussion; Catherine Hauke, percussion; Lance
Pedigo, percussion; Mark U. Reimer, conductor;
David L. Means, vocal consultant

Total playing time: 57:26

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Notes

Jennifer Margaret Barker is a musical pilgrim on a completely original path. In her music, one hears the passion and strength of her Celtic heritage, yet the colors are fresh and her style engaging. The greatest of the Celtic influences found in Barker's music is the overwhelming sense of national pride felt by the Scots. The opening work on this CD, *Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs* (1997), is also the most dramatic and narrative. It depicts the eleventh- and twelfth-century Celts of ancient Scotland as they struggle against the fierce hands of the Norse and Danish Vikings. The calm of the opening narration sets the stage for the impending sea battles that were fought up and down the west coast of Scotland. The music brightens in hue and intensity as the performers

engage in an ever-growing sense of urgency, depicting the Celts' gain over the Vikings. Because of the invention of a mid-ship rudder on the *Naibh Beags* (Gaelic for "little ships"), the Scots were able to maneuver more quickly than the Vikings, whose *Drakaars* had a starboard-mounted rudder that was little more than a steering oar. In 1156, the two fleets fought for two days with the *Naibh Beags* out-maneuvering the *Drakaars* and winning. The battle is portrayed by Barker through the rising intensity of the music. The eventual decline of Norse influence culminated in 1263 with the Battle of Largs when the Norsemen were, at last, expelled from Scotland. The music fades to the quiet strains of its beginning as the Vikings retreat up the East Kyle onto the Burnt Isles in the Kyles of Bute where they cremated their dead.

Little grows on the Burnt Isles to this day, an island inhabited only by sea gulls and the lost souls of the Viking dead. Throughout *Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs*, there is a haunting air of authenticity. Ancient history is blended with modern musical expression, to depict a terrifying chapter in the long and bloody history of Scotland. *Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs* was commissioned by American saxophonist James Richmond.

The Scots have always felt a profound love of nature, especially of the breathtaking beauty of their beloved homeland. *Earthtones* (1993) is a suite of vignettes that depicts the vibrant colors of the earth—orange, brown, red, and emerald green—through ever-changing musical colors and levels of intensity. Each instrument explores its full range of dynamics and technical capabilities; yet, the musical timbres interweave much like the elements of nature itself. Although composed in a rather strict form and with traditional notation, *Earthtones* possesses the freshness and whimsicality associated with unbridled improvisation.

Geodha (1992, rev. 1998) is embedded with pure Celtic folk tradition. The plaintive yet soaring melody portrays a more gentle side of Scotland, and the listener might readily envision the country's jagged inlets, deep bays, and mist-filled lochs and valleys. The melody comes from an earlier work, *Geodha air chùl na grèine* (1987), for Gaelic soloist, choir, string orchestra, and folk band. The poem is of and read by the celebrated Scottish poet, Derick S. Thomson. *Geodha* was premiered by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra String Trio on the island of Hoy in the Orkney Isles, Scotland, to an audience of over two hundred fishermen, farmers, and island families who made the journey from neighboring islands clinging to the sides of fishing boats.

A particularly poignant aspect of Celtic heritage which Barker also encompasses in her music is the charming and clever wit of the Scots. *Three Highbrows We* (1996) is a musical setting of a farcical text by English poet Herbert Farjeon. The poem bemoans the fact that society places more value on the culture of Mickey Mouse than on works by the world's greatest artists, authors, and musicians. Staged in a dialogue between three stodgy and inane women—Tessa, Vanessa, and Gertrude (changed from Farjeon's original male character, Egbert)—these ladies snub the classics while expressing their heartfelt passion for Mickey Mouse. Although tongue-in-cheek, the music leaves no doubt to the listener as to the intentions of the poet. *Three Highbrows We* was commissioned by the Christopher Newport University Chamber Performers.

The Enchanted Glen (1993) is a creative and playful tableau intended to encourage children's imagination of fairies, goblins, castles, and magical landscapes. The performers engage in music that is rich in color and fresh in rhythmic drive. *The Enchanted Glen* won the 1996 Cambridge Contemporary Music Festival Composition Competition.

Blue Waters (1998) depicts the calm, spiritual elements of nature and, in particular, the one element of nature—water—most associated with the land inhabited by the Scottish people. The work was commissioned by percussionist Heather Corbett.

Nobody Told Me (1997) is a setting of an evocative text by the English writer Walter de la Mare. The music is heavy swing, reminiscent of the dance bands of the 1940s. *Nobody Told Me* demands from the performers extremes in range, technique, and style. The work was commissioned by the Christopher Newport University Chamber Performers.

—Mark U. Reimer

In remaining active as a Scottish composer on both sides of the Atlantic, **Jennifer Margaret Barker** has received commissions and awards from ensembles, soloists, and musical organizations in the United States and Europe. Her works have been perform-

ed by, among others, the Virginia Symphony with the Virginia Children's Chorus, the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bearsden Burgh Choir with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Brass and Percussion Ensembles, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra String Quartet, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra String Trio, the Holywell Ensemble, Marimolin, the Hardwick Chamber Ensemble, the American contemporary music ensemble We Don't Get Out Much!, Penn Theater Arts, and numerous solo artists. This is her premiere recording.

Currently she is director of theory/composition at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia. She holds a Ph.D. and a master's degree in music composition from the University of Pennsylvania. She holds master's degrees in piano performance and music composition from Syracuse University and an honors bachelor of music degree from the University of Glasgow in Scotland. Barker has studied composition with composers George Crumb, Melinda Wagner, and John Maxwell Geddes.

Mark U. Reimer, conductor, is director of music at Christopher Newport University. The author of numerous published articles on wind literature, he received his doctorate of music degree from Indiana University, master of music degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and a bachelor of music in education degree from Drake University. Reimer has appeared as guest conductor with the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Virginia Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, the Williamsburg Symphonia Chamber Ensemble, the Hampton Bay Days Festival Ensemble, and the Zuid Nederlands Jeugd Fanfare Orkest, and he is the conductor of the contemporary music ensemble, We Don't Get Out Much!

Scottish Artists:

J. Craig Barker, a founding member of the Scottish blues band Big Vern 'N The Shootahs, currently performs with the British soul band, The Chain Gang. An experienced trumpeter, singer, and public speaker, he has been invited to speak on topics both musical and legal throughout Europe, North America, and Asia. Barker is a lecturer in Public International Law at the University of Reading, England. Highly sought after for his expertise in the area of Diplomatic Law, he has been interviewed on *News with Brian Williams* for MSNBC and by the Associated Press.

Heather Corbett, section principal percussion with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, is renowned throughout the United Kingdom as a soloist and champion of contemporary music. A truly remarkable cimbalom player, she has toured Europe playing solo cimbalom with Pierre Boulez in *Eclats/Multiples*, and has been featured in performances at the Royal Festival Hall under Boulez's baton. In 1995 she performed the world premiere of Howard Blake's *Diversions* for marimba and chamber orchestra, and in the same year the United Kingdom premiere of Gabriela Ortiz's *Concierto Candela* for percussion and orchestra. Her orchestral credits include appearances as guest principal with the London Philharmonic, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Eilidh Mackenzie, the renowned Scottish Gaelic folk singer, recently joined forces with her two younger sisters, Gillian and Fiona, to create the vocal trio, Mackenzie. The trio recently released its debut album, *Camhanach*, on the Macmeanma label to rave reviews. In 1992 she signed with Temple Records and released her first solo album, *Eideadh na Sgeulachd*. She then joined Gaeldom's first supergroup, Mac-talla, and released the album *Mairaidh Gaol is Ceol*, which was voted "Best Gaelic Album of the Year." She has sung in Barcelona and Provence at the invitation of the British Council, and has given concert performances and made television and radio appear-

ances in Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Canada, Sweden, and Scotland.

Derick S. Thomson (Ruairaidh MacThomais in Gaelic), Scotland's leading Gaelic poet, was born in 1921 on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides. He has published seven collections of his Gaelic poetry with English translations, including his *Collected Poems* (1982) and *Meall Garbh/The Rugged*

Mountain (1995). Professor of Celtic at the University of Glasgow in Scotland from 1963–91, Thomson has also authored numerous academic books and articles. In 1951 Thomson was a prizewinner in the Festival of Britain poetry competition, and in 1974 he was awarded the Ossian Prize by the FVS Foundation in Hamburg.

Text

1. *Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs*

Selected from *The Highlander*, a poem by James Macpherson
Heaven's opening portals shot the beam of day;
Earth changed her sable robe to sprightly grey;
To west's dark goal the humid night is fled;
The sun o'er ocean rears his beamy head;
The splendid gleam from Scottish steel returns
Each clan their standards from the beam unbind;
They float along, and clap upon the wind;
The hieroglyphic honours of the brave

Acquire a double horror as they wave.
A ship escaped the flame, within a bay,
Where bending rocks exclude the rougher sea,
Secure from stormy winds in safety rides,
And slowly nods on the recoiling tides;
Thither they bend, and launching to the sea,
Plow with the crooked beak the wat'ry way;
Their sable journey to the North explore,
And leave their sleeping friends upon the shore.

3. *Geodha*

Geodha air chùl na grèine by Derick S. Thomson

Tha fèath air a' bhàgh a-nochd, 's an sruth dol thar na maoile
cobhar air a' chreig bhàite, is falpanaich air stalla,
gàir aig an tonn tha fad às, is siubhal dian aig na cuantan,
ach tha 'n cuan tha seo 'na thàmh gun bhat' aig cala.

Far na chladhaich e linne rèidh le an-shocair nan làithean,
geodha air chùl na grèine, 's a mhol gun ghrùid,
far an rachadh bliannachan geal na gealaich seachad siar air,
air chuthach, gun iaradh, a' sireadh ceann-uidhe gun ùidh.

Thrèig am bradan an cuan ann an linn a' bhàigh chiùin seo,
a' lorg na h-aibhne òig ud, 's nan gluaiste clach
reubadh beithir airgeadach beò a' ghliocais 's an eòlais
uisgrachan balbha criostail nan sgarbh 's nan lach.

Tha leac an seo air an tràigh far am biodh na mnathan a' feitheamh
nan eathraichean beaga iasgaich nuair thigeadh sian;
is tric a bha ulaidh a' chridhe is ulaidh a' chuain às an aonais,
is a gheibheadh iad blas dearg a' bhradain searbh air am beul.

Gu tric 'nan seasamh a' coimhead na mara far na chailleadh an cuid,
's 'nan suidh anns na taighean san d'fhuair an daoine bàs,
an do rinn iad bàgh air an rachadh an iargain 's an ciùrradh seachad,
's am fuiricheadh freumh an duiligs luraich an sàs.

Ach ged bheireadh miann an duiligs duine a thaobh car ùine,
tha 'm bradan lainnireach sint' fo shàmhchar dorch,
is ma bheir mi an sgobadh sin air an àit sam bi e
bidh maistreadh fairg ann, is cearcaill sith 'na lorg.

A geo in the sun's shelter

English translation by Derick S. Thomson

There is peace in the bay to-night, and the tide swings past the
headland;
foam on the hidden rock, wave-lapping at the cliff;
the distant wave cries, and the seas go coursing swiftly,
but this sea is at rest, with no boat at harbour.

Where it dug out a quiet pool with the un-ease of days past,
a geo in the sun's shelter, its pebbles unstained,
where the white years of the moon might pass beyond it,
lunatic, unresting, desirelessly seeking a haven.

The salmon left the sea when this quiet bay was made,
seeking the fresh river—if one moved a stone
the quicksilver lightning-flash of wisdom and knowledge
would tear the still crystal waters of the ducks and the scarts.

At a rock here on the shore the women awaited
the return of the small fishing-boats in storm;
often losing treasure of sea and treasure of bosom,
and feeling the red taste of the salmon salt on their lips.

Often standing watching the sea where their share was lost;
and sitting in houses where their kin had died,
did they make a bay that longing and hurting could by-pass,
where the root of the darling dulse could keep its hold?

Though desire for dulse might for a time entice one,
the shining salmon lies in dark repose,
and if I quickly thrust where he lies hidden,
the water, churned, will leave its rings of peace.
Permission granted by the poet, Derick S. Thomson.

4. Three Highbrows We

Adapted from *Tessa, Vanessa, and Egbert* by Herbert Farjeon.

One, two, three
Highbrows we
Tessa,
Vanessa,
And Gertrude;
Choice and chaste
In our taste,
Tessa,
Vanessa,
And Gertrude;
We can only bear the best,
Bach and Wagner we detest,
Masefield has no true technique,
Gilbert Murray should learn Greek;
Bernard Shaw
We abhor,
Tessa,
Vanessa,
And Gertrude;
H.G. Wells
Somehow smells
To Tessa,
Vanessa,
And Gertrude;
Aldous Huxley we've dismissed

As a sentimentalist,
Poor old Epstein's in a rut,
John is worse than Sickert, BUT
We do like Mickey,
Oh, we do like Mickey,
Yes, we do like Mickey—Mickey
Mouse!
He's so fundamental!
And so transcendental!
So intensive!
Comprehensive!
And so very inexpensive!
We've exploded D. H. Lawrence,
We are through with Rome and
Florence,
And Stravinsky—well, you might as
well say Strauss!
And the classic composition
Philistines applaud in Titian
Is not a patch on Mickey—Mickey
Mouse!
As a clique
We're unique
Tessa,
Vanessa,

And Gertrude;
What we do
Must be new
To Tessa,
Vanessa,
And Gertrude;
We talk Freud instead of smut,
Even that is boring, BUT
We do like Mickey,
Oh, we do like Mickey,
Yes, we do like Mickey—Mickey
Mouse!
He's so exotic!
And he's so generic!
And so dext'rous!
Deeply dext'rous!
And we're sure he's ambisextrous!
We have done with Keats and Shelley,
We have seen through Botticelli,
And we wouldn't have a Goya in the
house!
While Whistler, Watts, and Watteau,
Giorgione and Giotto
Were not a patch on Mickey—Mickey
Mouse!

Permission granted by Gervase Farjeon,
Trustee for the Joan Farjeon Estate

7. Nobody Told Me

"Under the Rose (The Song of the Wanderer)"

by Walter de la Mare

Nobody, nobody told me
What nobody, nobody knows;
But now I know where the Rainbow ends,
I know where there grows
A Tree that's called the Tree of Life,
I know where there flows
The River of All-Forgottenness,
And where the Lotus blows,
And I—I've trodden the forest, where
In flames of gold and rose,

To burn, and then arise again,
The Phoenix goes.
Nobody, nobody told me
What nobody, nobody knows;
Hide thy face in a veil of light,
Put on thy silver shoes,
Thou art the Stranger I know best,
Thou art the sweetheart, who
Came from the Land between Wake and Dream,
Cold with the morning dew.

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Production Notes

Publishing:

Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs: Jennifer Margaret Barker

Earthtones: Southern Percussion

Geodha: Jennifer Margaret Barker

Three Highbrows We: Jennifer Margaret Barker

The Enchanted Glen: Vanderbeek & Imrie Ltd.

Blue Waters: Southern Percussion

Nobody Told Me: Jennifer Margaret Barker

Naibh Beags/Nyvaigs: Music recorded in the John W. Gaines Theatre, Newport News, Virginia. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer. Narration recorded at No Machine Studios, London, England. Recording engineer: Neil Sadler.

Earthtones: Recorded in the John W. Gaines Theatre, Newport News, Virginia. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer.

Geodha: Instrumental component recorded in the John W. Gaines Theatre, Newport News, Virginia. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer. Poetry reading and solo voice recorded at Carlton Studios, Glasgow, Scotland. Recording engineer: Kevin Burleigh.

Three Highbrows We: Recorded in the John W. Gaines Theatre, Newport News, Virginia. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer.

The Enchanted Glen: Recorded at Sony Music Studios, New York, NY. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer.

Blue Waters: Recorded at Ca Va Sound Workshops, Glasgow, Scotland. Recording engineer: Geoff Allan.

Nobody Told Me: Recorded in the John W. Gaines Theatre, Newport News, Virginia. Recording engineer: Andreas Meyer.

Assistants for the John W. Gaines Theatre recording sessions: Daniel A. Jasinski, William J. Lackey, Robert Carrol Smith.