

Biography



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“Howard’s is a voice of undeniable poise and power.” – *The Arts Desk*, 2016

“Howard excels in creating vast orchestral textures to conjure the breadth and mystery of the universe” – *BBC Music Magazine*, 2016

Emily Howard’s music is known for its particular connection with science. She first won critical acclaim with ***Magnetite*** (“a structural tour de force” – *AllMusic*) commissioned by Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Vasily Petrenko, the year she received the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Composers. Her works are commissioned, performed and broadcast internationally by festivals and ensembles including the BBC Proms, New Scientist Live, Wien Modern, the London Symphony Orchestra and Bamberger Symphoniker.

Current projects include ***The Music of Proof***, a collaboration with mathematician Marcus du Sautoy and the Piatti String Quartet for *New Scientist Live* 2017; a sci-fi chamber opera ***To See The Invisible*** with writer Selma Dimitrijevic and director Dan Ayling to premiere at the Aldeburgh Festival 2018; and a new large-scale work for orchestra.

Commissioned for premiere at the BBC Proms 2016, ***Torus (Concerto for Orchestra)*** gained wide critical acclaim and was described by *The Times* as “visionary” and by *The Guardian* as “one of this year’s finest new works”. Howard’s NMC Debut Disc ***Magnetite*** was released in Autumn 2016 and won four-star reviews in *The Observer* and *BBC Music Magazine*. BBC Radio 3’s Record Review described it as “a confident, major orchestral debut”, hailing its “scientific ideas brilliantly articulated”. The CD also features her string quartet ***Afference*** short-listed for a British Composer Award 2016.

Orchestral writing is key to Howard's work. LSO UBS *Soundscapes: Pioneers* commission **Solar** ("manages to suggest galactic power on a compact scale" – *The Financial Times*), received its world premiere with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Nicholas Collon at the Barbican Centre in 2010. In 2013 **Solar** was given its Australian premiere (West Australian Symphony Orchestra / Paul Daniel) and had a further performance by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Garry Walker; **Axon**, a BBC Radio 3 commission for the BBC Philharmonic and Juanjo Mena was first performed at The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester the same year. Further orchestral highlights include performances of **Magnetite** in the Musikverein (Tonkünstler Orchestra / Andrés Orozco-Estrada), **Solar** and **Calculus of the Nervous System** in the Wiener Konzerthaus (Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra / Sir James MacMillan) during Howard's international composer-focus at music festival Wien Modern 2011. WM Festival Commission **Calculus of the Nervous System** was given its UK premiere by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons at the 2012 BBC Proms while **Mesmerism**, a Diamond Jubilee commission for the Liverpool Mozart Orchestra with pianist Alexandra Dariescu, won a 2012 British Composer Award. More recently short orchestral work **sphere** received premiere performances given by the Bamberger Symphoniker conducted by Alondra de la Parra in Germany, March 2017.

Vocal music is another area of enormous interest. New Music 20x12 mini-opera, **Zátopek!**, a Second Movement commission for the London Cultural Olympiad, text by Selma Dimitrijevic, was described as "a tremendous opera" on BBC 2's *The Review Show*. Dramatic vocal work **Ada sketches**, text by Laura Tunbridge, received performances at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre given by Loré Lixenberg in 2012. Since then Howard has developed and led **Ada sketches** audience-interactive events with mathematician Lasse Rempe-Gillen at the Science Museum (*Critics' Choice, Time Out, London*), the Oxford Mathematical Institute (Ada Lovelace Symposium 2015) and with the Oxford e-Research Centre at the Science in the City Festival, Manchester European City of Science 2016. Other vocal works include Howard's 2013 songs for children **BIG BUMS** and **Pi (a Pie?)**, commissioned by Opera North, and most recently the wordless 'three-part song' **Threnos** (2015) recorded by Lucy Goddard and Simon Whiteley and described in *BBC Music Magazine* as exemplifying "a deep concern for the human and the raw power of sound".

Howard's chamber music includes **Masquerade** written for clarinettist Mark Simpson and clarinet quintet **Zugzwänge** (Quatuor Danel / Nicholas Cox). In 2015 string quartet **Afference** for the Elias String Quartet premiered at London's Wigmore Hall and **Leviathan** for Paris-based duo scapegoat received several performances including at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival and as part of a North American Tour in May 2015. Most recently **Chaos or Chess**, for solo microtonal tuba, was developed in collaboration with Berlin-based tubist Jack Adler-McKean at the Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music 2016 and premiered as part of Howard's 2016 BBC Proms Extra Composer Conversation.

A graduate in mathematics and computer science from Oxford University, Howard holds a Masters in Composition from the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) and a Doctorate in Composition from the University of Manchester. In 2010 she became the inaugural UBS Composer in Residence in conjunction with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Bridge Academy, Hackney, a post she then mentored. She was Leverhulme Trust *Artist in Residence* at the University of Liverpool's Department of Mathematical Sciences in 2015. Emily Howard is a Senior Lecturer in Composition at the RNCM and the Director of PRiSM, the RNCM Centre for Practice & Research in Science & Music. She is a Visiting Researcher at the University of Oxford's e-Research Centre and a Visiting Senior Fellow at the Faculty of Sciences and Engineering, University of Liverpool. Her music is available on several labels including Col Legno, Toccata Classics and NMC Recordings.