

James Wood, conductor

James Wood is known for his wide-ranging activities as composer, conductor, and formerly as virtuoso percussionist, and for a close association with an exceptionally broad spectrum of music from the middle ages to the present day.

In 1981 he founded the highly acclaimed New London Chamber Choir, of which he was principal conductor for over 25 years until his move to Germany in April 2007. With NLCC he has recorded over 25 CDs of music including Stravinsky, Janacek, Poulenc, Xenakis, Scelsi, Dallapiccola, Saariaho, Feldman and Wood himself, as well as music from the fifteenth century.

During the last 10 years he has worked regularly with the Netherlands Radio Choir, RundfunkChor Berlin, RIAS Kammerchor, SWR Vokalensemble, Champ d'Action and musikFabrik, and is also in demand as guest conductor from many international ensembles, choirs and orchestras throughout Europe. James Wood has enjoyed close working relationships with many distinguished composers such as Iannis Xenakis, Mauricio Kagel, Kaija Saariaho, György Kurtág, Alejandro Viñao, Steve Reich, Jonathan Harvey and Karlheinz Stockhausen (First Performance of *Engel-Prozessionen* (from *Sonntag aus Licht*) with the Netherlands Radio Choir at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw). In June 2008 he conducted two concerts in the Holland Festival – the first with the Netherlands Chamber Choir (Stockhausen) and the second with the Radio Chamber Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Choir and Netherlands Childrens Choir (Tallis, *Spem in alium*, Kutavicius, *The Last Pagan Rites* and Nono, *Caminantes... Ayacucho*).

As a composer his interests have led to a wide range of works for almost every conceivable genre. He has realised commissions from such diverse sources as the Arditti Quartet, IRCAM, the ARD, Percussions de Strasbourg and the BBC Proms. Major works include *Séance* (1996) for soprano, mixed choir, MIDI-vibraphone and electronics, *Jodo* (1999) for soprano, percussion solo and electronics, *Autumn Voices* (2001) for violin and electronics, and *Journey of the Magi* (2000), commissioned by the Nouvel Ensemble Modern and Percussions de Strasbourg. His opera, *Hildegard* (commissioned by Percussion Group the Hague, Champ d'Action and NLCC) was first performed with huge success in the Cathedrals of Norwich, St. Davids, Salisbury and London, and later in the Musica Sacra Festival in Maastricht.

Major awards include the 1993 Gemini Fellowship, the 1995/6 Arts Foundation Fellowship for electro-acoustic composition, and a Holst Foundation Award. James Wood's many-sided achievements are documented on a wide range of CDs. His website is www.choroi.demon.co.uk