**The Trumpets of the Angels**

**New Performing Edition**

*The Trumpets of the Angels* is a large-scale work, scored for seven solo trumpets (or cornets), brass band and percussion (deploying ‘dark’ instruments such as three tam-tams, bass drum and two sets of timpani). The genesis of the work is a quotation from the Book of Revelation .*.. and I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.*

Thus the idea behind the work is highly dramatic and I have tried to achieve this by the spatial deployment of seven solo trumpets around the band. Trumpet 7 remains separate from the band throughout and, indeed, has the most dramatic and extended cadenza, representing the words of the seventh angel … *and time shall be no more*.

The work opens with a four-note motif announced by off-stage horns and baritones and answered by fanfare figures on four solo trumpets. In turn, each then play cadenzas before joining together, independently playing their own music. This leads to a sung *Kyrie Eleison* with accompanying solos for Flugel Horn and Baritone, after which we hear the entry of solo trumpets 5 and 6 with music that is more urgent and rhythmic, describing the Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

The music reaches another climax, more intense this time, with the horns and baritones (now on-stage) again sounding the transformed motif, before subsiding into what might be described as a lament of humanity - slow, yearning music, which builds from low to high, from soft to loud, with a melody that is both simple and poignant. At its climax, Trumpet 7 makes a dramatic entry, playing the opening four-note motif, but expanded to almost three octaves. This cadenza (to the partial accompaniment of 3 tam-tams, representing the Holy Trinity) introduces new material and foreshadows the ensuing Scherzo, introduced by antiphonal timpani before the band enters with music that is fast and foreboding. Despite the somewhat desolate and ‘unstable’ mood of this music, it slowly moves towards an optimistic conclusion, transforming the ‘humanity’ music into an affirmative and triumphant statement.

The original version of *The Trumpets of the Angels* was commissioned by the Fodens Band for their centenary concert at The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, in 2000, and contained an important part for organ. In 2015 I was asked by Nicholas Childs to create a New Performing Edition for the Black Dyke Band; without organ, and including newly composed material. This New Performing Edition was given its first performance at the European Brass Band Festival in Lille in April 2016. The work is dedicated *In tribute to Olivier Messiaen.*

**Edward Gregson 2016**