

Skaila Kanga

Skaila Kanga was born in India and started learning the piano at the age of five. She won a Junior Exhibition to the Royal Academy of Music on piano and later studied there with Vivian Langrish. Her interest in the harp began at 17 years of age when she was given the opportunity to study with Tina Bonifacio, Sir Thomas Beecham's harpist in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Skaila began her career with the Festival Ballet Orchestra (now English National Ballet), the BBC Concert Orchestra and soon went on to freelance with many regional and all the major London orchestras under such eminent conductors as Boult, Kempe, Guilini, Monteux, Haitink, Maazel, Mehta, Barenboim, Previn, Solti, Klemperer, Svetlanov and Rattle. At this time she also worked extensively with Pierre Boulez in the BBC Symphony Orchestra alongside Sidonie Goossens and Maria Korchinska.

Skaila's solo career has included many performances of concertos and broadcasts at the same time as her flourishing work in the sphere of records, films and television. She has worked for artists such as Sinatra, Streisand, Elton John, Pavarotti, Joan Sutherland, Domingo, Carreras, Barbara Hendricks, Kiri Te Kanawa, Angela Gheorghiu, Scott Pilgrim, John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, Michel Legrand, James Horner, Pat Metheny, Michael Nyman and Richard Rodney Bennett and many more. In 1977 Tommy Reilly and Skaila formed a duo for harmonica and harp which spanned 22 years. They performed in concert and on television throughout Britain, Europe and South America. They recorded on the Chandos label for whom Skaila has also recorded all the major French chamber music repertoire with the Academy of St Martins in the Fields Chamber Ensemble.

Other solo albums include Britten's Ceremony of Carols for Naxos, a CD of violin and harp duos by Heifetz and Kreisler with Maxim Xue Wei, an album with Emma Johnson, clarinet, a duo album with Philippa Davies, flute, and two collections of Bax's chamber music for harp for Hyperion and Chandos with the Nash Ensemble and the Academy of St Martins respectively. Skaila has also recorded an album of traditional Irish music with the folk violinist Helen O'Hara. 1998 saw the release of Invocation, a solo album with Julian Lloyd Webber which reached the classical charts.

Skaila has also twice recorded Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto with Susan Milan and the City of London Sinfonia for Chandos and more recently with Edward Beckett and the London Festival Orchestra for ASV.

Alongside her classical career Skaila has always been very active in the pop world. She has worked with artists such as Paul McCartney, Boyzone, Eternal, Michael Ball, Jane McDonald, Sarah Brightman, Bjork, Pharaoh Sanders, Milton Nascimento, Manic Street Preachers and Sting with whom she recorded a solo track for the CD 20th Century Blues. Other album credits include artists such as Sumi Jo, James Galway, Joni Mitchell, Cliff Richard, Kylie Minogue,

Northern Line and Girl Thing, McFly, G4, Il Divo, Robbie Williams, Katherine Jenkins, Fra Alessandro, Seth McFarlane and Duel. Other artists include Zizi Possi, Michael Civisca, Jose Cura, Slava, Westlife, Samantha Mumba, Izzy Cooper and 2 wonderful CDs for Joni Mitchell. Skaila recorded and performed the Queen Symphony for EMI at the Royal Festival Hall and was recently featured in the 25th Anniversary Concert of Les Miserables at the O2 Arena and the 25th Anniversary of Phantom of the Opera at the Royal Albert Hall.

Skaila's many TV credits include countless TV series including Doctor Who, Father Brown, Cosmos, Breathless, the Prince's Trust Gala, Andrew Lloyd Webber's 50th Birthday Gala, Elizabeth Taylor's Birthday Concert and 16 Royal Variety Performances!

Skaila has performed on well over 500 sound tracks of films for more than 40 years. Some recent film credits include The Mummy Returns, The Hole, Chocolat, End Game, Crush, The Others, Sacrifice, Possession, From Hell, Return to Neverland, Harry Potter, Before you go, The Time Machine, The Guru, Shipping News, My Life as a Fairy Tale - Hans Christian Andersen, The Truth about Charlie, We Were Soldiers Once and Young Below, Talk to her, Ararat, Simon, 101 Dalmations 2, Swept away, Secret Passage, The Hours, Legend of Bhagat Singh, Life of David Gale, The Four Feathers, Die another Day, Teachers's Pet, The 25th Hour, Ghost Ship, Nicholas Nickleby, Cold Mountain, Troy, Shrek 2 and 3, Bridget Jones, Shark Tale, Alfie, Enduring Love, Harry Potter 1, 3, 5 and 6, Sahara, Batman Begins, Fragile, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Half Light, The Grooming, The Dark, The Wild and Wicked World of Brian Jones and An American Haunting, The Constant Gardener, The Curse of the Were-Rabbit, The Da Vinci Code, Volver, Basic Instinct (original) and 2, Le Grand Meaulnes, The Black Dahlia, The Invisible, Flawless, Casino Royale, Moliere, Sweeney Todd, Mr Bean's Holiday, 1408, The Nanny Diaries and The Water Horse, 27 Dresses, Made of Honor, Batman Returns, Hellboy 2 and The Mummy 3, Harry Potter 6, Nine, LeapYear, Prince of Persia, Robin Hood, How to train your dragon, Letters to Juliet, Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang, Iron Man 2, Shrek forever after, Broken Embraces, The Tourist, The King's Speech, There be Dragons, Gulliver's Travels, Black Swan, The Next Three Days, Tron Legacy, Narnia- Chronicles of the Dawn Treader, Gnomeo and Juliet, Bel Ami, Unknown White Male, How to train your Dragon, Puss in Boots, Hugo, Journey to the Centre of the Earth 2, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy, Avengers Assemble, Prometheus, Dark Shadows, Cloclo, Pirates! Evangelion3, Paranorman, Frankenweenie, Jack the Giant Slayer, Hotel Transylvania, Breaking Dawn, The Hobbit –an Unexpected Journey, Skyfall (James Bond) Hitchcock, The Croods, Turbo, Catching Fire (Hunger Games 2), Ten Furlongs, Turbo, One Chance, Flux, Anna Karenina, A most wanted man, The Butler, Romeo and Juliet, To Have and to Hold, Philomena, Cloudy 2, Tim's Vermeer, Walking with the Enemy, Before I go to Sleep, Two Faces of January, Seventh Son, The Whale, Robocop, Mr Peabody and Sherman, Maleficent, La Belle et la Bete, Disney –Bears, Captain America 2, Big Eyes, The Prophet, Jupiter Ascending, How to train your Dragon 2, Eliza Graves, Pawn Sacrifice, Flora's Letter, Into the Woods, Mune, Exodus, Hunger Games 3.

Skaila's numerous classical recordings include Lieberman's Flute Concertos with James Galway and the London Mozart Players, a CD of classical favourites with the same artists, a CD with Julian Lloyd Webber and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Passion 2 with Jose Carreras and

the Oboe Concerto by David Mullikin with Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Orchestra of which Skaila has been the principal harpist since 1971. Skaila is also the Principal Harp of the Sinfonia of London, the London Mozart Players and the LMP Chamber Ensemble. In 2006, Skaila recorded *Ecce Cor Meum* with Paul McCartney at Abbey Road Studios and has recorded the entire chamber works for harp by the eminent jazz harpist and composer David Snell. Recent concerts include English Chamber Orchestra with Julian Lloyd Webber and the concert series with the London Chamber Orchestra and Christopher Warren Green.

Skaila has given Composers' Workshops at City University and has taught since 1988 at the Royal Academy of Music where she was the Head of Harp Studies for nearly ten years. She received a Fellowship in 1994 and served on the Board of Governors for ten years. In February 2003 she was awarded Professorship of the University of London. Each year she has commissioned a new work for the students in her department. Past composers have included Adam Gorb, Melanie Daiken, Paul Pellay and Rhian Samuel and Joyce T Koh. In 2003 Gareth Wood wrote "Waterless Seas", a work for 12 harps which was performed at the RAM Harp Showcase concert. This event also included Kikta's Cantata for soprano and tenor soloists, chorus and orchestra of harps. 2003's commissions included a new solo work 'Bugs' by Paul Patterson, choral and harp works by Rhian Samuel and Gareth Wood and a Jazz Suite for 2 harps and rhythm section by Dick Walter. Further commissions for her Harp Department include 'Forbidden Gates' by Gareth Wood, 'Carillons' for 6 harps by Eric Crees and many more since. The harp commission for 2005 was 'Gabriel's Vision' for solo horn and 6 harps by Richard Bissill who also wrote a brilliant trio for flute viola and harp – Twisted Elegy, premiered in 2007. The Academy Harp Ensemble also gave the first performance of a new work 'Mandala' by Joby Talbot and joined the RAM Symphonic Brass in Gustav Holst's 'The Planets'. 2008's commissions included new works for the Academy Harp Ensemble by Paul Patterson, David Snell and Gareth Wood. Recent performances by the Academy Harp Ensemble included two new premieres by Celia Harper and Ruth Byrchmore at the Grove Park Music Festival in September 2012. Skaila has also commissioned new compositions by Richard Bissill, Gareth Wood, Rhian Samuel Philip White and Bruce Broughton. Skaila was the artistic director of many chamber concerts at the Royal Academy of Music in her time as Head of Harp. The London Harp Virtuoso Concert Series she has promoted became a unique part of the UK harp scene and always drew a capacity audience.

The Harp Open Day 2002 culminated in a masterclass given by Pierre Boulez. Other eminent Open Day guests have included Chantal Mathieu, Isabelle Perrin and Isabelle Moretti, Catrin Finch, Natalia Shameyeva, Park Stickney and Emmanuel Ceysson. Skaila's past and present students continue to flourish. In 1998 Lucy Wakeford was the first harpist ever to win the Young Concert Artists Trust Award was appointed to the Philharmonia Orchestra and most recently the Royal Opera House; Suzanne Willison is principal of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; in September 1999 Catrin Finch won first prize at the Lily Laskine Competition in Paris and in January 2000 won the prestigious Young Concert Artists Award in New York. Subsequently, Catrin was appointed Royal Harpist to HRH The Prince of Wales. Claire Jones, Skaila's student at RAM, took up the position in June 2007. Ruth Potter won the Park Lane Group Award for 2002 and is now principal of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra in Norway. and Laurette Pope was

1st Harp of the EUYO for many years and gave a series of recitals in September 2003 for the Countess of Munster Recital Scheme and Gwenan Gibbard won an award with Live Music Now. Victoria Davies won the London Harp Competition for two successive years. Catherine Derrick won 2nd Prize at the Martine Geliot Competition in 2013 and Elizabeth Bass 1st prize at the Camac Competition in 2014. RAM students are annually invited to perform for the Salvi Foundation and Holywell Music. Skaila also teaches regularly for the Jonde Nacional in Spain and has given master classes for the NYO and Morley Harps in Britain. Her past students continue to flourish in London and all over the world such as Hong Kong, Norway, South Korea and Germany.

In 2001 she was the first harpist to visit Italy for the Salvi Foundation's Masterclass Series in Europe. In March 2003 she was the guest of honour at the 4th Russian Harp Festival in Moscow where she gave a masterclass. She visited Salt Lake City in June 2003 as guest presenter of the American Harp Society where she performed a recital, gave a masterclass and a workshop on Cadenza composition. For the last 5 years, Skaila has visited Amsterdam Conservatoire on a regular annual basis to give two days of Masterclasses.

In her work with the Nash Ensemble, which has spanned 25 years, Skaila has received widespread critical acclaim. From 1977- 2002, she gave 32 premieres of new works and took part in countless series at the Wigmore Hall. She has performed at most major British music festivals including four solo appearances at the Proms, toured Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany, Israel, Hong Kong, and Venezuela. She has worked with composers such as Mark Anthony Turnage, Richard Rodney Bennett, Nicholas Maw, Simon Holt, Richard Causton, Elena Firsova, Julian Anderson, Jonathan Harvey, David and Colin Matthews. She has appeared at the Meltdown and London Jazz Festivals on the South Bank with the Matrix Ensemble, performed Britten's Ceremony of Carols at the Barbican with Carl Davis and toured Germany with Sir Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields in seven performances of Debussy's Danses for solo harp and orchestra. Her many Nash appearances at the Wigmore Hall have included works by Ravel, Bax, Debussy, Francaix, Saint-Saens and world premieres of Gordon Kerry's Blue Latitudes and John Tavener's A Sacred Dream and her own transcription of the Sonatine by Ravel for flute, viola and harp, first performed in 1994.

At the Nash Inventions series at the Purcell Room in 2001, Skaila performed works by Henze, Holt, Holliger, Beamish and Raising Sparks by James Macmillan which has been recorded for Black Box Records. In 2002 she performed works by Holt, Anderson, Debussy and Dallapiccola. April 2001 saw a Residency at Princeton University. In all Skaila premiered 32 new works with the Nash Ensemble from 1977-2002.

Skaila served as a jury member for the 5th American International Harp Competition in Bloomington and was a Guest Artist at the 6th IHC.

In 2002 she was on the jury for the Lily Laskine Harp Competition in Paris and also visited Arles in October 2006 as a jury member.

2002's concerts included a series with the London Mozart Players, chamber concerts with Nash,

LMP and ASMF chamber ensembles as well as the usual Nash Wigmore Hall Series in the autumn. In October 2002, Skaila performed Britten's Canticum V with Ian Bostridge at the Barbican.

In 2003 Skaila performed works by Cecilia McDowell and Lynne Plowman with the London Mozart Players, and with Joshua Bell and the Academy of St Martins. A recording project with Sarah Chang and Julian Lloyd Webber took place at Air Studios, London in 2005.

Skaila also collaborated with Rautavaara in the editing of his new harp concerto with Gareth Wood in his Concerto for Harp and Brass and with Paul Patterson's Avian Arabesques for harp Quartet.

In 2002 Skaila launched her own website to promote her 21 publications and innovative harp products. All information can be found at www.marukamusic.com

Skaila's compositions are also published by Alaw and are included in the prestigious Lyon and Healy catalogue in America and at all major harp retail outlets in the UK and Europe.

Recently published works by her publishing company Maruka Music are Towards the Light for solo harp, Minstrel's Gallery, (a collection of 30 easy pieces for non-pedal or pedal harp) and its sequels Minstrel's Holiday and Minstrel's Christmas, Pathways, (a suite for solo harp in the classical style) and Harp Songbook. In August 2004 Skaila published her own transcription of Mozart's Piano Concerto K414 in A major for Solo Harp which has received premieres in Moscow and London and was recorded in Russia by Maria Krushevskaya.

Recently released is her transcription of Ravel's Sonatine for flute, viola and harp, Mozart's Rondo K386 arranged for flute, viola and harp, My Dancing Days – a suite in 3 movements for beginners' harp ensemble, and most recently a complete double CD of the Minstrels series. .

Her commission for a piece for harp and bandoneon 'Sous les Ondes' for the great French harpist Marielle Nordmann was premiered in 2011 in Switzerland and London.

Skaila was invited as a Guest of Honour to the International Harp Competition in Bloomington, Indiana in July 2004 when she was also a featured artist in a recital of her own compositions. In August 2004, she gave a Masterclass at the 6th European Harp Symposium in Lyon and toured the Baltic Capitals as a recital soloist.

In Spring 2005, Skaila gave the Opening Recital of the Russian Harpists' Festival in Moscow followed by a highly successful coast to coast lecture/recital tour of American universities. She gave a presentation on 'The Harp in the Film and Recording Industry' at the World Harp Congress in Dublin in July 2005, which she repeated at the invitation of the 37th American Harp Society Conference in San Francisco in July 2006.

Skaila was the featured soloist with Richard Baker on P&O Oriana in October and returned on the Artemis in August 2006. In January 2007, Skaila visited Lausanne Conservatoire to give a recital and masterclass. Skaila was also invited to be a jury member of the new composition award for the 2007 USA Harp Competition in Bloomington. She also gave a masterclass on

Performance and Teaching at the European Harp Symposium in Cardiff in July 2007.

The inauguration of 'Harpmasters', her summer International Harp Academy in Switzerland, in collaboration with Professor Milda Agazarian of the Moscow Academy, took place in July 2006 and continued till 2013. In July 2014 she was the Guest Artist at the Young Artists Harp Seminar in Atlanta, Georgia.

Skaila was presented with the Joel Garnier Award for services to the harp world in April 2006. 2008's schedule included a 2-day masterclass at the Paris Conservatoire and she is now a regular visitor to the Amsterdam and Birmingham Conservatoires. Skaila has been invited to Russia, Japan and Italy to serve on juries and was the featured soloist and masterclass guest in the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong's Harp Extravaganza in October 2011.

Skaila's articles appear regularly in numerous magazines including WHC Review, Harp Column, American Harp Society Journal, BBC Music Magazine, UKHA magazine, Harp Today and she was recently featured in the Musicians' Union magazine's Hall of Fame.

Skaila has received awards in Russia, the USA and Wales for her contribution to the promotion of the harp worldwide and was honoured in January 2010 to be awarded the title Professor Emerita of Harp by the Royal Academy of Music, University of London.