Charlotte Bray
Composer

British composer Charlotte Bray is one of the most esteemed and in-demand composers of her generation. Exhibiting uninhibited ambition and desire to communicate, her music is exhilarating, inherently vivid, and richly expressive with lyrical intensity. Championed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Aurora Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, her music has been performed at festivals in Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Tanglewood, Aix-en-Provence and Verbier and with renowned conductors including Marin Alsop, Sir Mark Elder, [Sakari Oramo](https://www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/sakari-oramo), [Oliver Knussen](https://www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/oliver-knussen-1952-2018), Jessica Cottis, Daniel Harding, Duncan Ward, and Karina Canellakis.

Bray’s *Ungrievable Lives* for string quartet (2021/22) has beenperformed by the Castalian Quartet at the Elbphilharmonie, [Wigmore Hall](https://harrisonparrott.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=37281bc11ebda8016de0b7f80&id=d96250cbf1&e=9e0f565eec), Konzerthaus Wien, Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. The piece was inspired by a new installation by artist Caroline Burraway, comprising 13 children’s dresses handmade from discarded refugee lifejackets. Other recent premieres of solo and chamber works include *The Earth Cried Out to the Sky* (2022), performed by mezzo-soprano Esther Valentin and pianistSteffen Schleiermacher at Kissinger Sommer Music Festival, and *From the Innermost Places* (2022), a piece for cellist Anssi Karttunen which was performed at Aldeburgh Festival as part of a concert series celebrating Oliver Knussen. *Crossing Faultlines*, a song cycle commissioned by soprano Samantha Crawford and pianist Lana Bode, which sets specially commissioned text by Nicki Jackowska about women’s experiences in the workplace, was premiered at Oxford Lieder Festival 2021.

Recent orchestral world premieres include *Forsaken* (2022), which was performed by Philharmonisches Orchester Hagen and conducted by Joseph Trafton at Stadthalle Hagen in Germany. The work focussed on one of Bray’s central concerns in her work: the human influence on nature. *Landmark* (2022), for orchestral winds, percussion and basses, was commissioned and premiered by the Dresdner Sinfoniker conducted by Jonathan Stockhammer. Other orchestral highlights include the premiere of *The Flight of Bitter Water* (2022) which was broadcasted on Ö1, conducted by Marin Alsop and performed by Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien, and *Where Icebergs Dance Away* (2021), an orchestral miniature commissioned by WDR Sinfonieorchester (Cristian Măcelaru) and also performed at the BBC Proms by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sakari Oramo. The second performance of Bray’s triple concerto *Germinate* was given by Ensemble 1010 under Catherine Larsen-Maguire (2023). Her cello concerto *Falling in the Fire,* commissioned by the 2016 BBC Proms, was premiered by Guy Johnston and the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sakari Oramo.

Further commissions include *A Lost Place* for string trio, commissioned by Spannungen Festival where Bray is the 2023 Composer in Residence, and a new orchestral work for the Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (2024). L’Orchestre de Chambre de Genève named Bray as composer-in-residence 2023-2026 and will perform several of her works over the 3 years. She also looks forward to visiting Kuhmo International Chamber Music Festival in 2023 as Composer in Residence where six of her works will be performed.

In 2019, Bray was awarded an Ivor Novello Award for *Invisible Cities.* Winner of the Lili Boulanger Prize (2014), Critics’ Circle Award for Exceptional Young Talent (2014) and Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Prize (2010), *At the Speed of Stillness* featured in the ISCM World Music Days Festival 2017 in Vancouver. Bray was selected as a MacDowell Norton Stevens Fellow (2015-16) and interviewed as part of BBC Radio 3’s Composers’ Room series in 2015. She is an Honorary Member of Birmingham Conservatoire, named as their Alumni of the Year 2014 (Excellence in Sport or the Arts), and also listed in The Evening Standard's *Most Influential Londoners* (2011). Composer in Residence with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/Sound and Music (2009/10), Oxford Lieder Festival (2011) and Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival (2015), her residencies include MacDowell (2013, 2015), Liguria Study Centre Bogliasco (2013), and Aldeburgh Music (2010, 2015).

Portrait discs of Bray’s music have been recorded on RTF Classical (2018) and NMC Records (2014). Her work also features on several discs including *Tecchlers Cello* by Guy Johnston (King’s College Cambridge 2017), *Oberon Celebrates Shakespeare* by the Oberon Trio (Avi-music and SWR 2016) and *Upheld by Stillness* by the choral ensemble ORA Singers (Harmonia Mundi, released February 2016).

Originally from High Wycombe, Bray (b.1982) graduated from Birmingham Conservatoire with First Class Honours, having studied composition with Joe Cutler, and then completed a Master’s in Composition with Distinction from the Royal College of Music, studying with Mark-Anthony Turnage. She went on to participate in the Britten-Pears Contemporary Composition Course with Oliver Knussen, Colin Matthews and Magnus Lindberg and studied at Tanglewood Music Centre with John Harbison, Michael Gandolfi, Shulamit Ran and Augusta Read-Thomas. Her music is published by Birdsong. She lives in Berlin.

