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**Performance**

**Title:** Production of: Foghorn Requiem

**Creators:** Autogena, L., Portway, J., Gough, O. and Hollinshead, R. Grit & Pearl

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**Official URL:** <http://foghornrequiem.org>

**Note:** Audience leaflet

<http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/6072/>





# FOGHORN REQUIEM

## FOGHORN REQUIEM

Foghorn Requiem is a performance, marking the disappearance of the sound of the foghorn from the UK's coastal landscape. Seventy-five brass players and more than fifty vessels will gather at Souter lighthouse to perform together with the lighthouse foghorn itself.

The sound of a distant foghorn has always connected the land and the sea; a melancholy, friendly call that we remember from childhood - a sound that has always felt like a memory. The sound of the foghorn is uniquely shaped by the landscape through which it travels. Very few sounds are so loud, and heard at such great distances. As a result the actual sound of the horn is almost always heard softened, smeared out and thickened by the innumerable echoes and reverberations of the landscape in which it exists. The characteristically haunting tone of a distant foghorn is the imprint of the land encoded into the sound itself, an embodiment of the landscape and history of a place.

We have tried to create an event that incorporates this sense of the landscape and history into a musical performance. New technology will allow ships horns several miles off shore to play together with musicians on shore, a gathering of three of the finest historical brass bands of the North East. In the performance sounds will be affected by distance, weather, and landscape, and so we have avoided using any kind of amplification. There will be extraordinarily loud moments, but there will also be very quiet periods. The performance of Foghorn Requiem is therefore a delicate sound experience that will depend on the silence and quality of attention of the audience.



## ORLANDO GOUGH AND THE FOGHORN REQUIEM BAND ENSEMBLE

Orlando Gough is the composer of Foghorn Requiem, and is an associate artist of the Royal Opera House. He writes music for theatre, operas, plays, dance pieces and music-theatre, and also creates large-scale projects for very unique sites. Previous works including *The Singing River* written for performance by 12 choirs, 18 boats, two cranes and a locomotive in Stuttgart; *Open Port*, the closing event of Stavanger 2008 European Capital of Culture, written for 750 singers, brass band and wooden trumpets; the site responsive dance piece *The Tree of Light*, choreographed by Charlie Morrissey for the Cultural Olympiad; and the site specific choral piece *XX Scharnhorst* for HMS Belfast, as part of the Thames Festival.

Conducted by Stephen Malcolm, the on-shore elements of Foghorn Requiem are performed by three Championship-level bands from the North East – Felling Band, NASUWT Riverside Band and the local Westoe Band. The ships' horns are tuned so that the brass bands and the ships' horns can speak in the same language - a conversation between land and sea. Like the sea itself, this music is sometimes queasy and disorientating, sometimes melancholic, sometimes warm and sentimental, and sometimes fierce, almost out of control, Gale Force 9 music.

On 22 June the cliff tops at Souter are witness to an extraordinary performance. Foghorn Requiem celebrates the passing of the foghorn from the British coastal landscape and into maritime heritage, and is an ambitious and unique musical performance featuring an armada of vessels positioned offshore, the Souter Lighthouse Foghorn and on-shore musicians.

## THE SPIRIT OF SOUTER

Foghorn Requiem is a considerable undertaking, achieved through the generous support and enthusiasm of the region's maritime community. But Foghorn Requiem's tribute to the role that Souter has played in the region has also inspired the wider community. Over the past few months artists, musicians and filmmakers led by The Customs House with Co Musica have been working with local schools and community groups in South Shields and Sunderland to explore some of themes within Foghorn Requiem – capturing memories of Souter and its foghorn, celebrating the landscape, flora and fauna of The Leas area around the lighthouse, and investigating why particular places hold such power in our imagination. These projects are being developed into an on-line legacy and education resource for use by schools and community groups.



An exhibition of artworks created by young people and community groups is currently on display at The Customs House until the 30th June.

The gallery is open  
10am - 8pm Mon to Sat  
11am - 8pm on Sun  
[www.customshouse.co.uk](http://www.customshouse.co.uk)



## THE MUSIC

What is Foghorn Requiem about? Here are some notes on the composition by Orlando Gough: The ships assemble, sounding their horns in a pattern that builds up as they get closer to each other, then each section of the piece is subtitled with a series of regions from the shipping forecast:

- 1 Procession: Humber, Thames, Dover**  
The bands appear from far away, processing towards Souter. The music is solemn and euphonious, and introduces a version of the sea shanty *Go Down You Blood Red Roses*.
- 2 Soundings: Wight, Portland, Plymouth**  
The beginnings of the land-sea conversation. A call from the lighthouse on soprano cornet. The ships reply to the cornet call, and the band and the ships exchange rich chords.

- 3 Warnings: Biscay, Trafalgar, Finisterre, Sole**  
Queasiness, unease. The ships' horns, like a distant foghorn, give a gentle warning. The bands gradually react. Then on alert. Increasing tension. Foul weather.

- 4 Cyclone : Lundy, Fastnet, Irish Sea, Shannon**  
Fierce and unrelenting, in a cyclic pattern. The fury of the sky and the sea.

- 5 Ma Nighean Donn As Bòidche: Rockall, Malin, Hebrides, Bailey**  
Calm after the storm. The ships' horns introduce the melody of the Gaelic song *Ma Nighean Donn As Bòidche*. In the original song the singer tells of his hardships at sea; by the time he returns home, the love of his love has gone off with another man.

- 6 Saltwater Lament: Fair Isle, Faroes, South Iceland**  
An epic, exhilarating, choppy, difficult voyage. The music is based on two Estonian seafaring folk songs which contemplate the likelihood of disaster.

- 7 Aftermath: Viking, North Utsire, South Utsire**  
A simple setting for ship's horns and flugelhorn of the German folksong *Aus Einem Seemannsgrab Da Blühen Keine Rosen*.

- 8 Wake: Forties, Cromarty, Forth, Tyne**  
A raucous, kick-out-the-jams celebratory romp. The sounds of a shipyard.

- 9 Soundings: Dogger, Fisher, German Bight**  
The cornets all play the call, independently, creating a melancholy miasma of sound. An exchange of chords, then the foghorn has the last word.

## SOUTER LIGHTHOUSE – THE INSPIRATION FOR FOGHORN REQUIEM

Opened in 1871 as a way to combat the hazardous coastline, Souter Lighthouse was at the forefront of technology, and the first lighthouse in the world to be powered by electricity.

At the centre of Souter is the Engine Room, a reliable and instant source of power which powered the site until 1952 when the National Grid began providing electricity. Souter Lighthouse was originally powered by Professor Holmes' state-of-the-art alternating current magento-electric generator which produced light by passing electric current between two 'pencils' of carbon to create a spark. This method was so effective and reliable that in the first eight years of use the emergency oil lamp was only used twice.

Working alongside the lighthouse, the Souter foghorn also played an essential role in shipping safety along the coast between the Tyne and the Wear. When visibility fell below two miles in the daytime or the lights from the Tyne and Wear piers couldn't be made out at night the foghorn let out a four second blast of sound every 45 seconds to alert nearby ships. The original single horn was pipe-shaped and angled to project sound straight out to sea, but this design was replaced by the twin-horns that can be seen at Souter today, in which the horns are angled to project the sound up and down the coast.

The National Trust acquired Souter Lighthouse when it was decommissioned in 1988, and opened it to the public in 1990.

In an era when foghorns are being decommissioned around Britain's coasts due to satellite global positioning systems, the foghorn at Souter is lovingly maintained by a team of National Trust volunteers and is preserved to allow future generations to experience a vital piece of maritime heritage. It was the artists' first site visit and meeting with these volunteers that inspired Foghorn Requiem.



# FOGHORN REQUIEM

Foghorn Requiem was devised by artists Lise Autogena and Joshua Portway with composer Orlando Gough, and produced by Grit & Pearl. This ambitious project was commissioned by the National Trust, South Tyneside Council and Festival of the North East with funding support from Arts Council England, Danish Arts Council, Sheffield Hallam University and The Customs House. The artists, producer and commissioners are also grateful to a wide range of technology and maritime partners for their support, without which the project could not have been delivered.

[www.foghornrequiem.org](http://www.foghornrequiem.org)

Foghorn Requiem is produced by Grit & Pearl and is funded by the project partners:



Foghorn Requiem has been made possible thanks to the support of:



## TECHNOLOGY

For Foghorn Requiem we wanted to create a piece of music that incorporated a whole landscape, but the unpredictable delays caused by the distances between the ships and the musicians would normally make playing music in time impossible. Sound only travels at about 300 metres per second, which means that the sound of a ship horn blown a kilometre out at sea takes more than a second to travel to a listener on the shore. To compensate for this we've built small custom designed computers and software to control the horns - each computer must calculate exactly how far in advance it needs to play a note so that it will be heard in time with the band.

Kockum Sonics have provided us with access to their full range of ships horns, but ships horns aren't designed to be used as musical instruments. To allow them to play conventional musical scales we've designed special tuning devices which modify the horns' natural resonance and allow us to change their pitch. But ship horns also take some time to get going — they don't make a noise the instant they are played. So as well as compensating for the distance to the listener, the control computers must also measure

and compensate for the start-up delay on each horn. Software development has been aided by Delta Acoustics and the Cultural, Communication & Computing Research Institute (C3RI) at Sheffield Hallam University.

As the ships gather for the performance, the control computers on board form a network – passing messages from ship to ship. As each ship joins the network it will communicate with the other ships around it and they will start to perform tests to calculate time delays and wind speeds. The ships will play test patterns of notes on their horns, then listen to the results with built-in microphones. In this way they learn to understand the response of the horn they are controlling and build up a map of the wind speeds around the ships. The process may sound a little similar to an orchestra tuning up.

Each control computer has a Global Positioning Satellite module which it uses to both track its position and as an extraordinarily accurate time signal. The time reference provided by the GPS allows the controllers to remain synchronised with each other



to an accuracy of a millionth of a second. Band Conductor Stephen Malcolm on shore will also be carrying a modified version of one of the control modules. This will track his position and broadcast it to the network of control computers. When the performance starts each controller continuously monitors its location relative to the conductor, and uses the information it has gathered to calculate exactly how far in advance it must play a note so that it can be heard in time with the band.

As a musician on shore plays a note on her trumpet, the sound from the ship horn – played several seconds before by a computer a couple of kilometres away – will sweep in from across the sea to meet her note at precisely the same moment. The two sounds then travel together so that the audience perceives them as if they were played at the same time.

## LISE AUTOGENA AND JOSHUA PORTWAY

Artists Lise Autogena (Denmark) and Joshua Portway (UK) have worked together since 1991. Their projects have been exhibited worldwide, and usually involve ambitious technological installations and large-scale collaborations with a diverse range of partners. Recent projects include Black Shoals, a planetarium which runs on a live feed from the world's stock markets; and Most Blue Skies, that uses live atmospheric data to continuously calculate and visualise the place on earth that has 'the bluest sky'. Lise Autogena is a Reader in Fine Art at Sheffield Hallam University.

[www.autogena.org](http://www.autogena.org)





**RESEARCH VESSELS**

**RV PRINCESS ROYAL**  
Operated by Newcastle University School of Marine Science & Technology, the 19m aluminium catamaran *RV Princess Royal* undertakes scientific and academic research from its mooring in Blyth. The university has been a partner in Foghorn Requiem since the very beginning and has assisted with testing the ships horns and specialist technology.

**NORTH EAST GUARDIAN III & ST OSWALD**  
The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries by securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits.

Northumberland IFCA contributes to the Foghorn Requiem with the *St. Oswald*, a 21m steel monohulled patrol vessel built at the Hepworth Shipyard, Hull in 2001 and based at Royal Quays Marina on the Tyne. *St. Oswald* is used to carry out inspections at sea between its base at Royal Quays in the Tyne and Scotland.

North Eastern IFCA is represented by *North Eastern Guardian III*, a patrol and research vessel equipped for acoustic ground discrimination, sub-sea surveying and biological habitat assessment. Based in Whitby, she operates from the Humber to the Tyne.



RV PRINCESS ROYAL



ST. OSWALD



NORTH EASTERN GUARDIAN III

**FACES OF THE TYNE**

**PRINCESS SEAWAYS**  
The largest vessel in the Foghorn Requiem armada, DFDS Seaways' cruise ferry *Princess Seaways* operates from Newcastle to Amsterdam, sailing 266 nautical miles each way 363 days of the year. Built in Germany in 1986 by Schichau Seebeckwerft *Princess Seaways* is 162 metres in length with a capacity of 1400 passengers and 600 cars.



SVITZER REDBRIDGE

**SIR BOBBY ROBSON**  
A Damon Multicat 1506 built by Mustang Marine in Wales for Port of Tyne, the *Sir Bobby Robson* was officially named in 2012 by the footballing legend's widow and son, Lady Elsie Robson and Andrew Robson. A versatile vessel sometimes used as a plough, general workboat, tug or as dive support, the *Sir Bobby Robson* is also a specialist dredger that keeps the Tyne navigable by larger vessels.



PRINCESS SEAWAYS



SIR BOBBY ROBSON

**SVITZER REDBRIDGE**  
Throughout its 170 year history Svitzer has been at the forefront of specialised marine activities, providing harbour, coastal, offshore and ocean towage as well as salvage operations and standby- rescue services. Svitzer is a major maritime presence worldwide including the Tyne where its four tugs are a familiar sight. Foghorn Requiem includes the 33m long *Svitzer Redbridge*, built in Hull in 1995.

**HISTORIC VESSELS**



RACHEL DOUGLAS

The North East Maritime Trust was formed to renew interest in traditional seagoing activities in the region, and its main emphasis is on the care, maintenance, restoration and reconstruction of wooden vessels.

The seine net fishing vessel *Rachel Douglas* was built in 1947 for Seahouses fishermen, later working from St Abbs until North East Maritime Trust members saved her for restoration to 1950s condition in 2002. *Sovereign* was the UK's oldest working fishing boat (in the over 10m category) when taken out of commission in February 2009. Built by Wilson Noble in Fraserburgh in 1936, during the war she was called up for naval service then subsequently fished out of Seahouses and North Shields. *Favourite* was formerly a seine net fishing boat, built in 1947 by Walter Reekie in Fife. During the 1950s and 60s she worked out of Seahouses then

St Abbs. *Favourite*, *Sovereign* and *Rachel Douglas* are on the National Register of Historic Ships.

One of three of the North East Maritime Trust's smaller vessels, *Royal Diadem II* is a general purpose motor cable with auxiliary sail – a distinctive Northumbrian vessel. She was built by Harrison's of Amble in 1948 and worked from Newton by the Sea, Craster, Boulmer, Blyth and South Shields. The *Irene Patricia* is a typical salmon coble of the middle twentieth century, and was built in the early 1970s by Harrison's for a fisherman working from Amble harbour. She is ideal for salmon fishing and is smaller than the cobbles used for more general purposes, though at one time there were many others of this size. *Peggy* is a typical Northumbrian coble, built by Harrison's in 1924 and working out of Beadnell, Seahouses, Amble then Hartlepool before



EXCALIBUR



WILLIAM D



NANCY TUCKET



NORDIC



FAIRWINDS



ODIN

Vessels are gathering at Lizard Point off Souter Lighthouse from around the region, travelling from numerous moorings from Amble in the North to Whitby in the South. Exact numbers and vessels will depend on the weather conditions on the day, but around fifty-five vessels are expected including delegations from Friars Goose Water Sport Club, Gateshead; Royal Northumberland Yacht Club, Blyth; Royal Quays Marina, North Shields; St Peter's Basin, Newcastle; Port of Tyne; and Sunderland Yacht Club, Roker.

Adventurer	Irene Patricia	Rachel Douglas
April Legend	James Cook	Red Seal 2
Aquarelle	Jordan Summerson	Spirit of Northumberland
Birti Slot	Julieanne	Wolseley
Blyth Venture	Katrina	Royal Diadem II
Bushy Barnaby	Kings Lodge	RV Princess Royal
Byker Belle	Lady Nicola	Self Expression
Caer Urfa	Latin Lady	She Nor
Charlotte	MVS Northumbria	Sir Bobby Robson
Delphick	Moondancer	Sovereign
Delta II	Nancy Tucket	Sparta
Eejae	Naughtie Bouyz	St Oswald
Excalibur	Nordic	Svitzer Redbridge
Fairwinds	North East Guardian III	Trekkaway
Faith	Northumbria	Upshot
Favourite	Odin	Waylander
Hlin	Our Frances	Wave Crest
Holly	Peggy	Will Hogg
Humber Stag	Princess Seaways	William D



JAMES COOK

**BYKER BELLE**  
A four oar 22ft rowing boat of the St Ayles design, *Byker Belle* was created within St Michael's Church in Byker over a 15 week period in 2012 by groups of adults recovering from alcohol and substance abuse. Operated by the Byker Community Rowing Club, *Byker Belle* now provides local people with affordable access to rowing under the bridges on the Tyne.



BYKER BELLE



NORTHUMBRIA

A number of local and regional organisations are working together to provide health and safety support to the Foghorn Requiem flotilla as well as representing an essential part of maritime life.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the charity that saves lives at sea, provides 24-hour lifeboat search and rescue service across the UK including North-East bases at Tynemouth, Sunderland, Cullercoats, Blyth, Newbiggin, Berwick, Seahouses, Craster, Amble, Hartlepool, Redcar bases. Tynemouth RNLI brings the Severn-class lifeboat *Spirit of Northumberland* and Sunderland RNLI are participating with the Atlantic 85 rib *Wolseley*.

Operating alongside the RNLI are the ribs *Jordan Summerson*, *Red Seal 2*, *Will Hogg* and *Kings Lodge*, crewed by Tynemouth-based Red Seal Rescue who provide marine safety training and event cover for a range of off-shore events.



RNLI SPIRIT OF NORTHUMBRIA



RED SEAL 2

The Northumbria Police Marine Unit is represented by *Northumbria*, which provides the force with diving and marine support as well as specialist training to other agencies.

Each of these safety and control vessels work in partnership with the on-shore command post, managed by Event Controller Louise Holman from South Shields Marine School. Lise Autogena has worked closely with the world-renowned Marine

School to plot individual locations for each vessel in Foghorn Requiem, using the School's virtual reality suite to test these plans in a variety of sea and weather conditions. Louise will be supported by the Marine and Coastguard Agency. The Foghorn Requiem partners are grateful for the support of all the advisors including Port of Tyne Harbourmaster Mike Nicholson and Herb Carol from MSTs.



SOVEREIGN



FAVOURITE



ROYAL DIADEM II



WAVE CREST



PEGGY



FAITH



OUR FRANCES



DELTA II



APRIL LEGEND



TREKKAWAY



LATIN LADY



ADVENTURER



HLIN



JULIANNE



LADY NICOLA



HOLLY



MOONDANCER



JULIANNE



HOLLY

RNLI WOLSELEY