



Jonathan Dove

In Praise of London
Overture for Orchestra
Commissioned by Christopher Everett
for the Massed Schools of the Skinners Company

When I moved to Bethnal Green in 1994, I suddenly found myself surrounded by places I had previously only known in song: Stepney, Whitechapel, Shoreditch and Bow – all names that ‘rang a bell’ from the old nursery-rhyme:

‘Two sticks and an apple’ say the bells of Whitechapel,
‘When I grow rich’ say the bells of Shoreditch,
‘When will that be’ say the bells of Stepney,
‘I do not know’ says the great bell at Bow.

(I only recently discovered that the Bow in question is actually St. Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside.)

Walking around the East End and the City, I’d often find this tune running through my head, almost as if the city itself were singing to me. I liked the idea that this song, which is over 250 years old, is still being sung today; like the old churches of the City of London that still stand, nestling among the modern cathedrals to Finance. So I have used *Oranges and Lemons* to make a celebratory portrait of the City of London: by slowing the tune down, speeding it up, turning it upside-down and sometimes using just its first two notes, I hope I have managed to suggest the City waking up and coming to life – and, of course, the sound of all those church bells.

Peters Edition Limited
Hinrichsen House
10-12 Baches Street London N1 6DN
Tel: 020 7553 4030 Fax: 020 7490 4921
e-mail: newmusic@editionpeters.com
internet: www.editionpeters.com

