

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

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Joyful noise as Sir James turns 60

SIR JAMES MACMILLAN celebrates his sixtieth birthday on Tuesday. He will be featured as *Composer of the Week* on BBC Radio 3, and next month the Edinburgh International Festival will celebrate his music by the hosting of five concerts, including the world premiere of his Fifth Symphony.

Tuesday also sees the publication of *A Scots Song: A Life of Music* (Birlinn), a short, elegant memoir and reflection on the things that have proved vital in his work: "An inescapable search for the sacred, the role of religious practice, tradition and identity, the influence of political motivation, for good or for ill, and the importance of music in the communities I hold dear."

MacMillan writes with almost unbearable attentiveness of the death of a beloved granddaughter, Sara. There are candid asides on the liberation that has come from the letting go of old certainties and camp loyalties, but there is a *cantus firmus*, too: a wary scepticism of the "transient fashions and banalities of the cultural mainstream".

In the early 1990s MacMillan began what



has been a fruitful collaboration with another artist experiencing the "exhausting but joyful chaos" of fatherhood, the poet Michael Symmons Roberts. They are both influenced by the Welsh poet David Jones' understanding of religion as a kind of binding, a securing of the creative imagination to something fixed, without which true freedom is impossible. "Far from feeling isolated, restricted or peripheralised in the world of music because of religion," MacMillan writes, "I have felt central in it and dynamically engaged, as a believer, with the swirl of ideas that surrounds us."

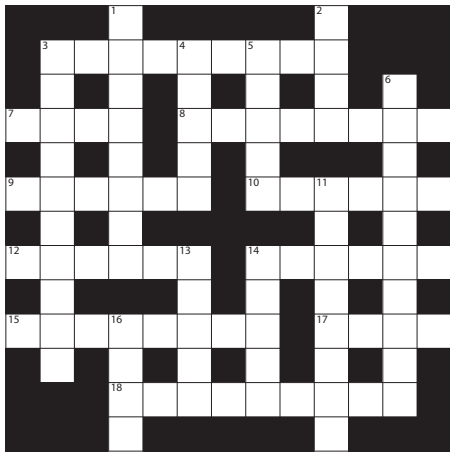
THE PIANIST, composer and writer Stephen Hough is still a couple of years short of his sixtieth. Like MacMillan, Hough is attached to something eternal and unbudging by the ligament of faith, although you sense the leash has been let out a little further. His forthcoming *Rough Ideas* (Faber & Faber) ("Hough: rhymes with rough," he begins by telling us) is a brilliant, effervescent collection of short reflections, some of which he confesses expand on notes jotted down in airports and hotel rooms, while others are polished to a good shine.

It includes plenty of religion: what it might mean to be "a Catholic pianist", how to become Jewish while staying Catholic, the story of Elgar's increasing disenchantment from the Church, and a moving account of Hough's own journey from "a happy yet somehow shrunken life" as an assiduous gay convert to the embrace of a radical iconoclasm that embraces the light of the Gospel in places where it might be least expected.

On 16 August, Hough will be performing Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No.1 on Queen Victoria's own piano – loaned by the Queen from the Royal Collection – in a special BBC Proms concert to mark the 200th anniversary of Victoria's birth. The programme also includes a selection of songs written by Victoria's husband, Prince Albert.

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 666 | Axe



Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 13 July, The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY. Email: thetablet@thetablet.co.uk, with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. A copy of *The Saints: A Short History*, by Simon Yarrow, OUP, will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random on Friday 26 July. The answers to this week's puzzles and the crossword winner's name will appear in the 3 August issue.

Across

- 3 Judean town associated with the man who donated Jesus' tomb (9)
- 7 Agent of 1 Down against priests in Nob (4)
- 8 Town south of Jerusalem where Asa destroyed a great army from Sudan (8)
- 9 Father of Tibni who unsuccessfully led an Israelite faction against Omri (6)
- 10 Son of Japhlet, descendant of Asher (6)
- 12 Town David rescued from Philistine attack (6)
- 14 Son of Joktan, and name of a district inhabited by his descendants (6)
- 15 One of Solomon's twelve governors in Israel (3-5)
- 17 Satan's work? (4)

18 Converted, evangelized (4,5)

Down

- 1 First monarch to rule a united Israel and Judah (4,4)
- 2 First of three divisions of the Hebrew Bible comprising the first five books as a unit (4)
- 3 King of Jerusalem at the time of Joshua's conquest (5-5)
- 4 One of five cities including Sodom and Gomorrah which rebelled against the northern kings (5)
- 5 Alternative name in the O.T. for Mt Sinai (5)
- 6 Name of Meremoth, son of Maani (or Bani in Ezra), as it may have been represented in 1 Esdras (10)

- 11 City destroyed by Joshua before moving on to Libnah (8)
- 13 River flowing through Halah where Hoshea deported the Israelites of Samaria (5)
- 14 One of three sons of Mahol whose wisdom was such it was compared with that of Solomon (5)
- 16 Town, the northern limit of the Southern Kingdom, fortified by King Asa (4)

SUDOKU | Challenging

	2		9					
4			7					5
			1	3	4			9
9	7							
	6						9	3
		4		7	6			
		9		2				4
			6					
5	2		4		3			1

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

6	7	2	3	8	5	4	1	9
8	4	3	9	1	2	7	6	5
9	1	5	4	6	7	8	2	3
7	6	1	5	2	3	9	8	4
2	8	4	6	7	9	5	3	1
3	5	9	8	4	1	2	7	6
1	9	8	7	3	4	6	5	2
4	2	6	1	5	8	3	9	7
5	3	7	2	9	6	1	4	8

Solution to the 22 June puzzle

Solution to the 22 June crossword No. 663

Across: 6 Nicene; Creed; 8 Kish; 9 Epaphras; 10 Ituraea; 11 Lent; 13 Cana; 15 Leonine; 18 Ebiasaph; 19 Moab; 20 Bartholomew.
Down: 1 Kiriath-Arba; 2 Becher; 3 Zebedee; 4 Friar; 5 Bethel; 7 Cain; and Abel; 12 Heshbon; 14 Arabah; 16 Nimrod; 17 Faith.
Winner: Liam Ó Brian, of Prestwich, Manchester.

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