John C. Bispham (PhD)

Music Psychologist; Lyric Bass; Singing Teacher

www.johnbispham.com
www.classicalsinging.co.uk

Personal Details:

Date of Birth: January 6, 1979.
Place of Birth: Basel, Switzerland.
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Languages:

Fluent in **English** (Native) and **German** (C2), Intermediate **French** (B2), and basic **Italian** (A1).

University Education:

- BMus – **Music / Composition** (2:1 – Distinction in Dissertation), University of Birmingham (1998-01)
- PGDip – **Classical Singing** (Lyric Bass). Vocal/Opera Studies, Royal Northern College of Music (2007-09)
- MSc – **Psychology** (Distinction), Department of Psychology, University of Nottingham (2024-26)
- MPhil – **Music and Science** (1st). Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge (2002-2003)
- PhD – **Biological Anthropology** – 'The Human Faculty for Music: What's Special about it?' Department of Biological Anthropology/Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge. (2018)

Performance Diplomas

- ATCL – Piano Performance. (2018)
- LTCL – Piano Performance (in preparation, [2026])

Publications – www.cambridge.academia.edu/JohnBispham

- Bispham, J.C. (In Preparation) – The Human Faculty for Music; What's special about it? To be submitted for publication in 'Music Perception'.
- Bispham, J.C. (2021/22). Music, Evolution and the Experience of Time. Book Chapter in 'Oxford Handbook of Time in Music' (Oxford University Press).
- Bispham, J.C. (2018). The Human Faculty for Music: What's special about it? PhD Thesis, Department of Biological Anthropology, University of Cambridge.
- Bispham, J.C. (2012). How musical is Man – An evolutionary perspective. Chapter in "Sound Musicianship: Understanding the Crafts of Music. - 1/7 Meaningful Music Making for Life". Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Bispham, J. C. (2010). Modelisation de la musique – motivation, pulsation et tonalités musicales. In 'Musique et Evolution' Eds. Deliege, I., Vitouch, O. PSY Mardaga.
- Bispham. J.C. (2009) – Music's "design features": Musical motivation, musical pulse, and musical pitch. Musicae Scientiae, special issue: music and evolution.
- Cross, I., Bispham, J., Himberg, T. &Swaine, J. (unpublished) – Evolution and Musical Rhythm. Submitted to Evolutionary Anthropology. https://www.academia.edu/7348590/Evolution_and_musical_rhythm.
- Bispham, J.C. (2007) – Music as socio-affective confluential communication? Response to 'a commentary on Bispham' (2006). Music Perception, 25;2
- Bispham. J.C. (2006) - Rhythm in Music: What is it? Who has it? And Why? Journal of Music Perception, special issue on rhythm perception and performance, 24;2, 125-134.
- Bispham, J.C. (2006) - Music means nothing if we don't know what it means – lead review of 'The Singing Neanderthals' by S. Mithen. Journal of Human Evolution, 50, 587-593.
- Bispham, J.C. (2004) – Bridging the Gaps – Music as a Biocultural Phenomenon. Commentary on 'In time with the music: The concept of entrainment and its significance for ethnomusicology' by Clayton, M., Sager, R., & Will, U. ESEM Counterpoint 1.

Selected Academic Presentations – **https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-bispham-674b3b409/**

- Bispham, J. C. (2004) - Music and Evolution. Department of Biological Anthropology Seminar Series, University of Cambridge, UK.
- Bispham, J. C. (2005) - Rhythm in Music: What is it? Who has it? And Why? Rhythm Perception and Performance Conference II, Ghent, BE.
- Bispham, J. C. (2005) - Evolution, Ethology and Entrainment. Poster Presentation at 'Music and Neuroscience Conference IV', Leipzig, DE.
- Bispham, J. C. (2005) - The Human Skill of Interpersonal Music al Entrainment. International Network of Musical Entrainment Studies Workshop I, Ohio State University, US.
- Bispham, J. C. (2006) - Evolution and Musical Rhythm. International Network of Musical Entrainment Studies Workshop II, Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.
- Bispham, J. C. (2007) - Towards a model of musicality: Species-specificity, domain-specificity and universals. Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies Seminar Series, University of Cambridge, UK.
- Bispham, J. C. (2012) - Music's Evolutionary Design Features: Musical Pulse, Musical Tone and Musical Motivation. SEMPRE International Conference on Music, University of Western Australia, Perth, AUS.
- Bispham, J. C. (2016) - Time in Music: Pulse, Pitch and Attentional Architecture. International Conference on 'Time in Music', Faculty of Music, University of Oxford, UK.

Further Academic/Teaching Roles:

- Invited Peer Reviewer and Editor for Music Perception, Psychology of Music, Musicae Scientiae, Science and Music, Oxford University Press, and Cambridge Scholars Publishing (2006 – 2021).
- Examiner for MPhil theses (University of Cambridge, 2020).
- Affiliated Researcher (Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge, 2016-2020)
- University Teacher/Supervisor for 'Music Psychology', 'Music and Science', and 'Dissertation'; Cambridge University, Department of Music (2004 – 2007/2018).
- Classroom Teacher (Music/TEFL) at Houghton-le-spring Secondary School, Durham, UK. (2001- 2002); Studio School Cambridge (2002 -2004); Vocal Arts Centre, Manly, AUS. (2011 – 2013).
- School Administration at Cambridge International Examinations, Cambridge (2015 – 2017); Department of Music, Cambridge University. (2004 – 2005); Centre for Expertise and Performance, Sydney, AUS (2011-13).

Vocal Recordings – **www.soundcloud.com/john-bispham-947223733**

- Selected Songs and Arias – Basso Cantante (2020 – 2026)

Selected Singing Teaching History – **www.classicalsinging.co.uk/about**

- Private Singing Studio, Sydney, AUS. (August 2009 – 2013).
- Vocal Arts Centre, Manly, AUS. (2011 – 2012).
- Private Singing/Piano Studio, Cambridge, UK (2013 – Present)

Selected Professional Vocal Performances – **www.johnbispham.com/performance**

Chorus (Bass II) (2009-2013)

- Opera North, Leeds UK; RNCM Opera Chorus; St James Church Choir, Sydney, AUS; St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, AUS; Cantillation, Sydney, AUS; Pinchgut Opera, AUS.

Operatic Roles (2007-2020)

- *Colline* (La Boheme) Co-Opera Co. *Collatinus* (Rape of Lucretia); *Archbishop* (King Roger); *Speaker/2nd Armed Man* (Zauberflöte) Elemental Opera; *Monk/Chorus* (Don Carlos) Opera North; *Dikoj* (Katya Kabanova) *Boris Godunov* (Boris Godunov [Act 2]); *Masetto* (Don Giovanni); *Olin Blitch* (Susannah [Act 3]); *Don Inigo Gomez* (L'Heure Espagnole) RNCM. *Policeman* (Pirates of Penzanze); *Don Pasquale* (Don Pasquale) Bollington Festival. *Zoroastre* (Orlando); *Sam* (Un Ballo in Maschera); *Bartolo* (Nozze di Figaro) Opera Loki.

Concert Bass Soloist (2007-2020)

- St. Matthaus Passion; Magnificat (Bach); Chandos Anthems; Messiah (Handel); Nelson Messe; Die Schöpfung (Haydn); Requiem; Messe in C (Mozart); Messe in C (Beethoven); Messe in A^{b} (Schubert); Requiem (Faure); Te Deum (Bruckner); Stabat Mater; Petit Messe (Rossini); Messa di Gloria (Puccini); Requiem (Verdi).

Appendix

Further Affiliations:

- Cambridge Wind Band – Bassoon II (2023 →)
- City of Cambridge Symphony Orchestra – Bassoon III (2025 →)
- City of Cambridge Cycling Club (2026 →)
- City of Cambridge Chess Club – [FIDE rating: 1912] (2004-2007)

Further Professional Training

- Private voice study with Michelle Wegwart (Opera National de Paris) (2014-2020)

Language Qualifications

- German - A level (A*) (1995)
- French - DALF, C1 (in preparation [2027])
- TEFL - Teaching Certificate (A) (2002)

Academic Scholarships

- PhD (full scholarship) – University of Cambridge Millennium Fund (2004-07)
- PGDip (partial funding) – Royal Northern College of Music Trust (2007-09)

ABRSM Music Exams

- Grade 8: **Bassoon** (in preparation [2026])
- Grade 8: **Piano** (Pass, 2001)
- Grade 8: **Clarinet** (Merit, 1995)
- Grade 5: **Singing** (Treble) (Merit, 1991)

Selected Non-vocal Repertoire (performed):

Clarinet
Mozart, W.A. - Clarinet Quintet
Brahms, J. - Sonata in E^b, Opus 120/2

Bassoon/Contrabassoon
Holst, G, - Sextet in E minor
Glinka, M. - Aria (Susanin) from 'A life for a Tsar'
Whitacre, E. - October
Zemlinsky, A. - Die Seejungfrau

Piano (solo)
Bach, J.S. - Partita no. 2 in C minor, BWV 826
Haydn, J. - Sonata in E^b major, Hob XVI/49
Schubert, F. - Impromptu in B^b major (Op. 142/3)
Rachmaninov, S. - Preludes no. 4 & 6, Op. 23
Grainger, P. - To a Nordic Princess

Piano (accompaniment)
Various - ABRSM performance exams (singing)
Vaughan-Williams, R. - Selection from 'Songs of Travel'

Compositions

Gale off the Longship's Lighthouse (2001) – for Chamber Orchestra (performed by Birmingham Contemporary Music Group [BCMG])

Teaching Materials (Composed)

- Auld lang syne (arr.) – student/teacher piano duet (with opt. bell)
- Morning is broken (arr.) – student/teacher piano duet
- Gazing at the moon – song for young singers
- Can't help falling in love (arr.) - Song for beginning singers

Longer-term goals (2029 →)

DELF B1/2 - Italian
FTCL - Piano Recital
A/LRSM - (Contra)Bassoon Recital (2029)
Various - Composition