

John C. Bispham (PhD)

Lyric Bass; Singing Teacher; Music Psychologist

www.johnbispham.com

www.classicalsinging.co.uk

Personal Details:

Date of Birth: January 6, 1979.

Place of Birth: Basel, Switzerland.

Nationality: British.

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Languages:

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

University Education:

- **BMus (Hons) – Music/Composition** (2.1 – distinction in dissertation). University of Birmingham (1998-01)
- **MPhil – Music and Science** - (1st class – distinction in dissertation). ‘Cross-disciplinary study on the Evolution of Human Musicality’. Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge (2002-2003)
- **PGDip/MA– Voice/Performance** (Lyric Bass). RNCM (2007-2009). (with support from a RNCM financial award) [also private voice study with Michelle Wegwart (Opera National de Paris) (2014-2020)]
- **MSc (in progress) – Experimental Psychology** - (pred. 1st class), University of Nottingham (2024-2026)
- **PhD – Music Psychology/Anthropology** – ‘The Human Faculty for Music: What’s Special about it?’ Department of Biological Anthropology/Centre for Music and Science, University of Cambridge. Supervised by Prof. Ian Cross. (2004-2007/2018). (Supported by a full University of Cambridge Millennium Scholarship)

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 ‘Behavioural Brain Sciences, CUP
- 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 tonalites musicales. In 'Musique et Evolution' Eds. Deliege, I., Vitouch, O.
- 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 confluent 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 – www.johnbispham.com/research

- 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 Musical 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. SEMPRES 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 (in preparation 2025)

Selected Singing Teaching History – www.classicalsinging.co.uk

- 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* (Ballo in Maschera); *Bartolo* (Nozze di Figaro) Opera Loki.

Concert Bass Soloist (2007-2020)

- St. Mattheus Passion; Magnificat (Bach); Chandos Anthems; Messiah (Handel); Nelson Messe; Die Schöpfung (Haydn); Requiem; Messe in C (Mozart); Messe in C (Beethoven); Messe in Ab (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 (2027 →)
- City of Cambridge Chess Club – [FIDE 1912] (2004-2007/2028 →)

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 Eb major, Hob XVI/49
Rachmaninov, S. - Preludes no. 4 & 6, Op. 23
Grainger, P. - To a Nordic Princess

Piano (accompaniment)

Various - ABRSM performance exams (singing)
Vaughn-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 →)

DELFB1/2 - Italian
FTCL - Piano
A/LRSM - (Contra)Bassoon Recital (2030)
Various - Composition