



## New Release - Press Information

### **The Piano Music of Erik Chisholm Volumes 1-4**



Erik Chisholm (1904-1965) was the leading Scottish modernist composer and a promoter of modernist music of international significance. He was also a vital force in the revival of operas.

He brought Bartók, Hindemith and Casella to Scotland, rescued Walton in a performance of *Facade*; and it was for him Sorabji deigned to perform his *Opus Clavicembalisticum*. He was a founder of the Celtic Ballet.

In his compositions, his knowledge and use of Scottish traditional music remains unsurpassed. He was the first composer to absorb Celtic idioms into his music in form as well as content, his achievement paralleling that of Bartók in its depth of understanding and its daring.

His imaginative fertility and idiomatic adventure chased a restless muse whether in Scotland, the Far East or South Africa.

At a personal level, Chisholm saw himself as a Scot and an internationalist. He had strong left-wing leanings and a mind open to quality. He was reckless in his energies, ruthless in driving others towards achievements they scarcely thought possible, and he paid the price with his early death. His astonishing legacy as a composer and entrepreneur has never been properly presented, never mind assessed.

#### **Repertoire/Product Information:**

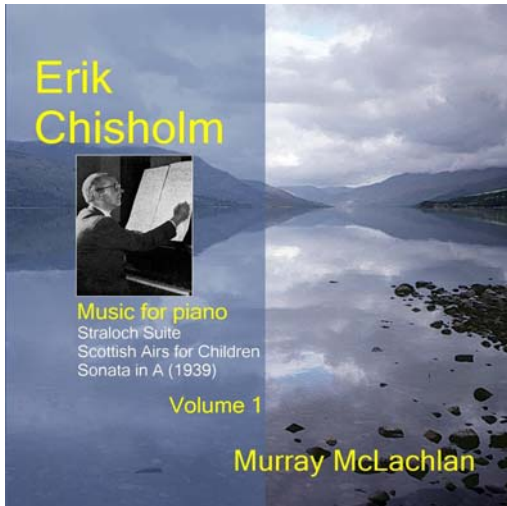
Presented here are the first four volumes of an anticipated complete edition of a total of eight discs of the piano music of Erik Chisholm, all performed by Murray McLachlan.

These volumes were previously released on Dunelm Records, and their transfer to the Divine Art imprint will make them generally available both in the UK and internationally for the very first time.



All are single discs, released in the UK at mid price [PPD £5.55] and contain detailed booklet notes and commentary by John Purser. UK release date is 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

### CD Information



#### **Volume 1 DDV24131**

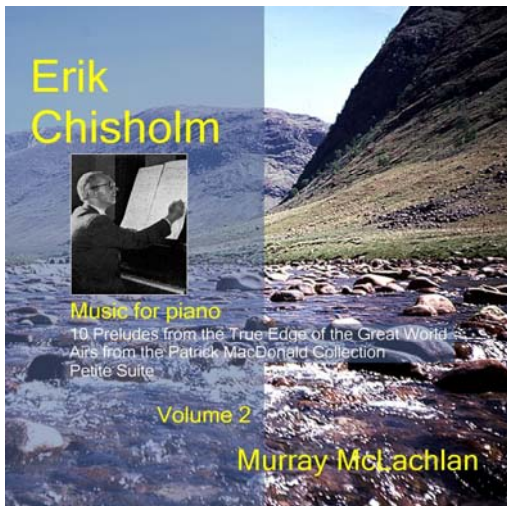
Bar Code 0809730413124

*Straloch Suite; Scottish Airs for Children (1-25); Sonata in A (1939) An Riobain Dearg "The Red Ribbon" – Première Recording of the abridged version(2004)*

Total Playing Time 77:24

#### *Extract of review by Martin Anderson*

*Chisholm's Scottish Airs for Children - 22 adaptations of originals from Patrick MacDonald's A Collection of Highland Vocal Airs (1784) - provide an ideal teaching resource, unite Scotland's present with its past and, not least, bring us a sequence of scintillating, exquisite miniatures. If McLachlan's proposed survey of Chisholm's complete piano music continues to reveal works of this standard, the history of British piano music will require radical reassessment.*



#### **Volume 2 DDV24132**

Bar Code 0809730413223

*From "24 Preludes from the True Edge of the Great World"; Airs from the Patrick MacDonald Collection; Petite Suite*

Total Playing Time 78:42

#### *Extract from review by Calum MacDonald*

*It is now clear that Chisholm...holds a highly significant position in the development of Scottish music in the first half of the twentieth century. Most of the melodies heard here come from just two sources (see the track list). The sheer attractiveness and inventiveness of all of this music is beyond question. This is turning out to be a very exciting series. So: excellent pianism, very acceptable recording, fascinating music.*



**Volume 3 DDV24133**

Bar Code 0809730413322

*Piobaireachd for solo piano; Sonatina no. 1; Sonatina no. 2; Two Piobaireachd Laments; Cornish Dance Sonata*

Total Playing Time 76:37

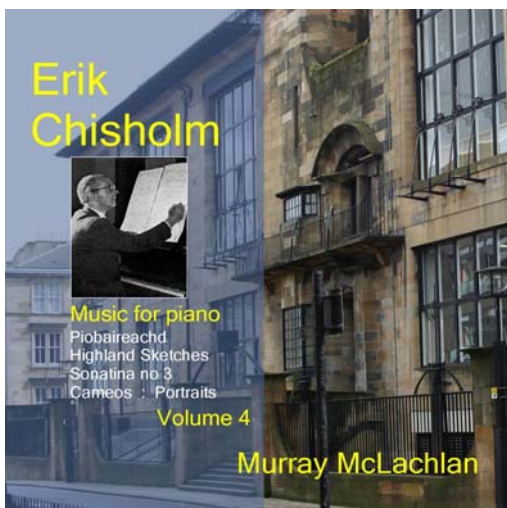
*Extract of review by David Hackbridge Johnson*

*The disc reveals an eclectic mix of mature works based on Scottish pibrochs, one large scale early sonata and 2 sonatinas based on 16th century music. Every work shows Chisholm as a resourceful surprising and vital; he was indeed a considerable force as a composer and whatever style he turns his fertile imagination to, he produces music that can change and move.*

*Throughout this disc Murray McLachlan shows himself well able to meet the challenge of playing what in the case of the pibroch inspired works must be some of the most complex piano scores of their time. The CD is well recorded and produced; it should add to the growing reputation of Chisholm - that passionate and vital Scottish modernist.*

*Extract of review by Calum MacDonald*

*Murray McLachlan's exploration of the piano music of Erik Chisholm for Dunelm Records continues to turn up gems or, at the very least, characterful and interesting works that deserve far better than the total obscurity in which they have been buried for so long. The picture continues to emerge of a composer who wrote in a highly individual style for the instrument and who essayed the tricky task of bringing Scottish piano music into the twentieth century by crafting an idiom that on the one hand thoroughly assimilated Impressionism and on the other used the folk music of the Gaelic western highlands and islands as the material for a revitalization similar - indeed, very similar - to Bartók's endeavours with eastern-European folk sources.*



**Volume 4 DDV24134**

Bar Code 0809730413421

*Piobaireachd for solo piano; Sonatina no. 3; Cameos; Highland Sketches (mostly from the MacDonald Collection); Six Portraits;*

Total Playing Time 76:09

*Extract of review by David Hackbridge Johnson (awaiting publication)*

*"Many of these pieces are quite short and they enable the listener to appreciate the concentration of Chisholm's musical thought. He is capable of writing with succinct economy and yet there are always surprising twists of*



*harmony and rhythm that avoid the commonplace. At his best Chisholm's piano music can hold its own among that of the first half of the twentieth century. . I recommend this disc wholeheartedly. Jim Pattison has made a fine recording using the Steinway at Cheatham's School, Murray McLachlan has produced some of his best playing and the booklet is packed with information. And the music? It simply demands to be heard."*

### **Artist Information:**

"Murray McLachlan is a pianist with a virtuoso technique and a sure sense of line. His timing and phrasing are impeccable, and his tone - full but unforced in the powerful passages, gentle and restrained in the more lyrical - is a perpetual delight" (BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE)

As a concert artist Murray McLachlan has received outstanding critical acclaim for intelligent and sensitive interpretations and superb technical ability. His prolific discography, much of it for Divine Art and Dunelm, has received long-standing international recognition and includes over thirty commercial recordings, including the complete sonatas of Beethoven and Prokofiev and many rarities.

McLachlan's repertoire includes over 40 concertos and he has appeared as soloist with most of the leading UK orchestras. His recognition has been far-reaching, bringing many invitations to perform abroad. In recent seasons his engagements have included performances in the USA, Scandinavia, South Africa, Poland, Byelorussia and Norway. In 1997 he was awarded a knighthood by the Order of St John of Jerusalem in recognition of his services to music in Malta. In 2003 he performed the complete cycle of 32 Beethoven Sonatas to critical acclaim in Manchester, and in 2004 his Wigmore Hall Erik Chisholm Centenary Recital and subsequent national tour attracted superlatives in the national press.

His intense schedule continued this year with a 'Shostakovich Centenary Recital tour', sponsored by the UK Shostakovich Society and including 15 concerts all over the UK. This included a return to the Wigmore Hall in September.

Murray McLachlan has given first performances of works by many composers, including Martin Butler, Ronald Stevenson, Charles Camilleri, Michael Parkin and even Beethoven! Recordings of contemporary music have won numerous accolades, including full star ratings, as well as 'rosette' and 'key recording' status in the latest Penguin Guide to CDs, and 'Disc of the month' and 'Record of the month' *MusicWeb* and *The Glasgow Herald*. He is Head of keyboard at Chetham's School of Music and tutor at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, as well as Artistic Director both of the Chetham's International Summer School and Festival for Pianists, an event which attracts outstanding musicians annually from all over the world, and the Manchester International Concerto Competition for Young Pianists, which began in 2007.

His website can be found at [www.murraymclachlan.co.uk](http://www.murraymclachlan.co.uk)

### **Additional Details & Marketing:**

The CD will be fully serviced to all UK classical music press and radio.

Advertising will include major classical music magazines and publications.

For more details, and to request review samples, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media Consulting Limited.