

Mp3 John Billing - Stream



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Unique mix of folk/classical/new age 17 MP3 Songs NEW AGE: Solo Instrumental, CLASSICAL: Contemporary Show all album songs: Stream Songs Details: I was born in 1952 at Pond Hall in Hadleigh, Suffolk, UK. My father gave me a guitar for my 15th birthday in 1967; just in time for the Summer of Love! In 1968 I began a Foundation Year at the Medway College of Art in Rochester. I taught myself some folk and blues, played rhythm for friends playing lead but soon advanced to improvising my own lead by co-opting my long-suffering sister to play interminable 12 bar blues for me. Over the next few years it became obvious I had found my 'calling' and, I am told, I was the toast of Maidstone Folk Club for a while! By 1973 I had moved to more serious guitar playing after borrowing a friend's tape of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, which I listened to while painting my attic flat in Southampton. This 'Damascene moment' prompted me to teach myself to read and write music and to learn some classical playing. I re-learned classical guitar playing several times, once with the help of Simon Kunath. I shared life in a student hostel in Winchester with, amongst other people, Johannes Steuck. We were both at Art College there and were also in a band together. (The band had some small success after Johannes and I had left!). Through Johannes, I knew about the Camphill Movement and in 1976 I first met the modern lyre at Thornbury. While at Thornbury I gradually moved from carer to music teacher and director. My first instrument was still the guitar, the lyre remaining an anthroposophical accessory for some years. In the early '80s I studied music therapy in Berlin and also gave guitar and other music lessons. One day on my way to Kreuzberg on the U-Bahn, I was absorbed in composing music and only on my arrival did I realise that I had left my guitar on Nollendorf Platz, never to see it again. I had developed a daily practice routine of playing scales first thing in the morning and so, to avoid music-withdrawal symptoms, the next morning I did my practice on an old second-hand lyre. I was hooked! I moved to Australia in 1984, initially teaching

music at Mount Barker Waldorf School. In the first two years there, feeling the lack of music composed specifically for the lyre, I composed my 24 Preludes; a turning point in my compositional career. Between 1989 and 1993 I studied Composition and Music Theory at La Trobe University in Melbourne. To my great good fortune, Graham Leake began a Performance Art unit during this time, which enabled me to learn, in a university context, skills such as the organisation and planning of performance, relating to audiences and so on. Soon after completing my BA(Mus) I decided to launch my full-time career as a touring musician. At the time my main lyre was a Gaertner from Berlin, but on hearing my plans Peter Biffen, luthier, musician and good friend, said he would make me a special lyre. As good as his word, he designed and built my magnificent concert lyre. Since then I have toured extensively in Europe, Australia, Japan and the USA, and continue to do so from my home base in Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK. This bio is taken from my web site johnlyre

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