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# MUSIC UNWRAPPED GUIDE

## MUSIC FOR HARP AND TENOR

**ALISON BJORKEDAL, HARP**  
**JON LEE KEENAN, TENOR**

### PROGRAM

***Eight Folksong Arrangements for Voice & Harp***

**Benjamin Britten**

***A Birthday Hansel, op. 92***

**Benjamin Britten**

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### ABOUT BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, England, in 1913. His mother, a keen amateur singer, was thrilled that her youngest was born on 22 November: the feast day of St Cecilia, the patron saint of music. She hoped he would – after Bach, Beethoven and Brahms – become the ‘Fourth B’.

He did indeed become a global musical figure. In just 63 busy years Britten wrote some of the most appealing classical music of the twentieth century, was hailed as one of the all-time great opera composers, and had his music performed around the world.

For more information on Benjamin Britten, visit [www.britten100.org/home](http://www.britten100.org/home)

## ABOUT ALISON BJORKEDAL



Alison Bjorkedal, harp, is a freelance musician who teaches and performs in the Los Angeles area. She is a member of Southwest Chamber Music, Golden State Pops Orchestra and MUSE/IQUE. She has performed with the San Diego Symphony, Pasadena Symphony/Pops Orchestra, and Long Beach Symphony.

Named "excellent player" and "enterprising young harpist" by the Los Angeles Times, Alison's notable chamber music performances include the world premieres of William Kraft's Encounters XII; Anne LeBaron's HSING and "Some Things Should Not Move"; and Wadada Leo Smith's Ten Freedom Summers. Her US premieres include Gabriela Ortiz's Rio de las Mariposas; Ton That Thiet's Les Jardins De Autre Monde; Nguyen Thien Daos' Au Dessus de Vent; and Unsuk Chin's Cosmigimmicks. In the studio, Alison has performed for pop music artists, as a chamber musician, and for the motion picture and television industry. Notable recordings include Southwest Chamber Music's Complete Chamber Music of

Carlos Chávez, Volume 4 and William Kraft's Encounters, both Latin-Grammy nominated. She accompanied singer Andrea Bocelli in the PBS Special "David Foster and Andrea Bocelli's My Christmas".

Alison was born and raised in Kennewick, WA. She earned her Masters and Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in harp performance from the USC Thornton School of Music. While at the Thornton School, Alison studied with JoAnn Turovsky and was a teaching assistant for the beginning harp class. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Oregon (magna cum laude).

## ABOUT JON LEE KEENAN



Jon Lee Keenan, tenor, is a native of Las Vegas, Nevada, where he grew up being exposed to a wide variety of musical genres. Finding himself interested in a variety of music ranging from rock to bluegrass to classical, Jon began studying piano at age eight and was playing guitar by age twelve. While attending the Las Vegas Academy of Performing Arts Jon played guitar in Jazz Band, led an all-original 8-piece Rock/Ska band, and began his vocal studies, serving as section leader of the Nevada All-State honor choir and receiving top scores in the Nevada State Solo and Ensemble vocal competition. Having been asked to join the top local collegiate chamber vocal ensemble while still in High School, Jon chose to continue his musical studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, eventually earning a triple major in Vocal Performance, Vocal Music Education, and Jazz Studies as a double bassist.

In 2005, after graduating from college, Jon moved to Los Angeles to pursue advanced study of Choral Conducting and Vocal Pedagogy in the Three Summer Masters Program at Cal State University of Los Angeles. Jon then went on to attend the University of Southern California, earning Masters and Doctoral Degrees in Vocal Arts. In 2007, Jon joined the Los Angeles Master Chorale where he has been a featured soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Maria Theresa Mass*, and the west coast premiere of Magnus Lindberg's *Graffiti* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, singing under the batons of Grant Gershon and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

## **Musical Vocabulary** (from the California Standards for the Arts)

**DYNAMICS** are various degrees of volume in the performance of music, such as loud and soft.

**EXTENDED TECHNIQUES** are unconventional, unorthodox techniques of playing musical instruments, in order to expand and explore the possibilities of different instruments.

**HARMONICS** are the series of different notes than can be played by fingering one fundamental note and changing air speed/embouchure to reach the higher ones. There is a different harmonic series for each fundamental fingering.

**IMPROVISATION** is the spontaneous creation of music.

An **INTERVAL** is the distance in pitch between two tones.

A **MELODY** is an organized sequence of single notes.

The **METER** is the grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured. !

**PEDAL slides** are achieved by moving a pedal immediately after playing a string. When the string is still vibrating, the half-step change is audible.

**RHYTHM** is the combination of long and short, even and uneven sounds that convey a sense of movement in time.

A **SCORE** is the written form of the entire composition. All players have a part of the score for their instrument, unless they have memorized the notes.

**SOUND PERCEPTION** is how you interpret what you hear and where you hear it.

**TAPPING** on the soundboard is a common technique. The harpist can tap with either hand, using fingers or fingernails, knock with the knuckles or slap with an open hand.

The **TEMPO** is the pace at which music moves according to the speed of the underlying beat; fast and slow.

**THUNDER** is produced by using the open hand to strike the strings and immediately moving away to let the sound resonate.

The **TIMBRE** is the tone color or character of sound heard.

The **TONALITY (KEY)** is the tonal center of a composition.

**TUNING** is to adjust a music instrument to the desired frequency or pitch.

For more information about the musicians, visit:

[www.alisonbjorkedal.com](http://www.alisonbjorkedal.com)

Try to create your own composition at:

[www.creatingmusic.com](http://www.creatingmusic.com)

Another excellent interactive website for kids with information about instruments is:

[www.playmusic.org](http://www.playmusic.org)



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