

Iain Ballamy

Iain Ballamy is internationally recognised as a saxophonist and composer.

He is a highly respected educator and has been described variously as urbane, original, melodic, freethinking and uncompromising.

Listed in the BBC's publication '100 Jazz Greats' between Count Basie and Chet Baker his work is contemporary with both strong jazz and classical references but un-encumbered by formality and tradition.

Ballamy was presented with the BBC Jazz Award for Innovation in 2001 and became the first jazz musician to receive the Paul Hamlyn composers award in 2007.

The award-winning trio 'Quercus' featuring legendary folk singer June Tabor with Iain Ballamy and pianist Huw Warren released 'Nightfall' their second album for ECM records in spring 2017.

As a composer, Ballamy has written soundtracks for two films directed by Dave McKean: 'Luna' and 'Mirrormask', the latter produced and released worldwide by the Jim Henson Company.

As a soloist, Ballamy has performed 'Concerto for Stan Getz' by Richard Rodney Bennett with the BBC Concert Orchestra and premiered Gary Carpenters Saxophone concerto 'SET' on Radio 3 with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra before recording it for CD release with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in 2018.

Ballamy has also written commissioned works including pieces for the London Sinfonietta, Apollo Saxophone Quartet and Joanna MacGregor.

Career highlights include playing with Loose Tubes, Bill Bruford's Earthworks, Hermeto Pascoal, Django Bates, Kenny Werner, Gil Evans, George Coleman, Cedar Walton, The Karnataka College of Percussion, John Taylor, Ian Shaw, Claire Martin, The Britten Sinfonia, Gay Dad, Everything but the Girl, Mike Gibbs, Carla Bley, John Dankworth etc.

In addition to teaching at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Ballamy was made the first conferred Jazz professor at Guildhall School of Music and Drama in April 2020 and was honoured with Hon ARAM by the Royal Academy of Music in 2014.