

# Soundings

for 15 brass instruments and electronics

*Soundings* is the third in a series of pieces reflecting on the spatial music of Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612), the others being *Canzon in Double Echo* (2020) and *Cori Spezzati* (2022).

The title *Soundings* refers to the fragments of Gabrieli's famous *Sonata Pian'e Forte* which are heard at different points in the piece (It. *sonata* = 'sounded') but also to the soundings used to measure ocean depths: the spatial aspects of the music are derived from the patterns of the Global Overturning Circulation, a system of ocean currents which move heat around the planet and are inextricably linked to the global climate. Musicians placed around the concert hall, together with electroacoustic sounds diffused over 8 loudspeakers, trace the course of these global currents, while muted and unmuted brass timbres convey their different depths, temperatures and salinity.

*Soundings* is both a celebration and a lament: a celebration of the divine design of our ocean systems, and a lament for humanity's slow destruction of them.

Coincidentally, *Soundings* is also the title of a 1988 piece for brass quintet by my predecessor at Bangor University, William Mathias.

I am grateful to my Bangor University colleague Professor Yeung Djern Lenn for the inspiration to use the Global Overturning Circulation to make music, and for her map which provided the template for the spatialisations. My thanks also to Mark Kellog and the Eastman Brass Guild, whose recording of Gabrieli's Sonata was used in the piece, and for whom the work was composed.