

*All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances.*

POETRY



**MICHAEL
CAINE**



**DAME JUDI
DENCH**



**JOHN
CLEESE**



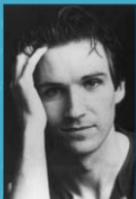
**IOAN
GRUFFUDD**



**JULIET
STEVENSON**



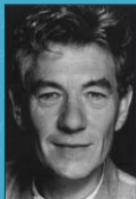
**CATHERINE
MCCORMACK**



**RALPH
FIENNES**



**DAME GLENDA
JACKSON**



**SIR IAN
MCKELLEN**



**EMMA
FIELDING**

seven ages

AN ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY WITH MUSIC

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE: Sir Ian McKellen•Catherine McCormack•Dame Glenda Jackson
Gayle Hunnicutt•Mark Rylance•Prunella Scales•Connie Booth•Ralph Fiennes•Juliet Stevenson
Stella Gonet•John Cleese•Andrew Sachs•Joss Ackland•Leo Sayer•Emma Fielding•John Sessions
Ioan Gruffudd•Jenny Agutter•Michael Williams•Michael Caine•Timothy West•Terence Stamp
Michael Maloney•David Suchet•Art Malik•HRH The Duchess of Kent•Felicity Kendal•Clark Peters
Janet Suzman•Hannah Gordon•Robert Lindsay•Samuel West•Charles Dance•Pete Postlethwaite
William Houston•Dame Judi Dench•Robert Powell•Lord Owen•Ed Bishop•Robert Hardy

A SEÁN MURPHY PRODUCTION

seven ages

from **As You Like It**,
Act II, Scene VII

William Shakespeare

TRACK 2

read by
SIR IAN MCKELLEN

*All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
Then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour; sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunken shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.*

- 1 *Vivaldi: Autumn from 4 Seasons. Takako Nishizaki, Capella Istropolitana, Stephen Gunzenhauser. Naxos 8.550056.* 01:35
- 2 Seven Ages – from As You Like It by William Shakespeare (1564-1616) read by **Sir Ian McKellen** 02:08
- 3 *Dowland: A Fancy. Jacob Heringman, lute, Rose Consort of Viols. Naxos 8.553326.* 00:16
- 4 **INFANT (Sir Ian McKellen)** 00:17
- 5 Baby Song – Thom Gunn (1929–2004) read by **Catherine McCormack** 00:57
- 6 The Victory – Anne Stevenson (1933–) read by **Dame Glenda Jackson** 01:05
- 7 Surgeons – Emily Dickinson (1830–86) read by **Gayle Hunnicutt** 00:20
- 8 Fancy – from The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Mark Rylance** 00:51
- 9 The Guppy – Ogden Nash (1902–71) read by **Prunella Scales** 00:21
- 10 The Quangle Wangle's Hat – Edward Lear (1812–88) read by **Connie Booth** 02:30
- 11 I Remember, I Remember – Thomas Hood (1799–1845) read by **Ralph Fiennes** 01:22
- 12 The Fairies – William Allingham (1824–89) read by **Juliet Stevenson** 01:55
- 13 A Parental Ode – Thomas Hood (1799–45) read by **Ralph Fiennes** 02:39
- 14 My Shadow – Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–89) read by **Stella Gonet** 01:26
- 15 The Owl and The Pussy Cat – Edward Lear (1812–88) read by **John Cleese** 01:26
- 16 Sneezes – A. A. Milne (1882–1956) read by **Andrew Sachs** 01:28
- 17 The Walrus and The Carpenter – Lewis Carroll (1832–98) read by **Joss Ackland** 04:12
- 18 Jellyfish – Ted Hughes (1930–98) read by **Leo Sayer** 00:29
- 19 The Donkey – G. K. Chesterton (1874–1936) read by **Emma Fielding** 00:57
- 20 The Common Cormorant – Anon read by **Andrew Sachs** 00:28
- 21 Where Go The Boats – Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–89) read by **Stella Gonet** 00:37
- 22 Crab – Ted Hughes (1930–98) read by **Leo Sayer** 00:33
- 23 The End – A. A. Milne (1882–1956) read by **Catherine McCormack** 00:38
- 24 *Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream (Uphill Down Dale).*
London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Barry Wordsworth. ♪ Virgin Classics. 00:34
- 25 **SCHOOL (Sir Ian McKellen)** 00:14
- 26 To Any Reader – Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–89) read by **John Sessions** 01:03
- 27 Under Milk Wood – Dylan Thomas (1914–53) read by **Ioan Gruffudd** 03:07
- 28 The Collier – Vernon Watkins (1906–67) read by **Ioan Gruffudd** 02:18
- 29 Sick – Shel Silverstein (1932–) read by **Catherine McCormack** 02:04
- 30 Boring – John Whitworth read by **John Cleese** 01:32
- 31 from The Barefoot Boy – John Greenleaf Whittier (c.1807–92) read by **Jenny Agutter** 01:27
- 32 Full Fathom Five – from The Tempest by William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Dame Glenda Jackson** 00:38

- 33 Rosa Mystica – Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) read by **Michael Williams** 01:04
- 34 A Smuggler's Song – Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) read by **Michael Caine** 02:33
- 35 Walking Away – C. Day Lewis (1904–1972) read by **Timothy West** 01:29
- 36 Tarantella – Hilaire Belloc (1870–1953) read by **Terence Stamp** 01:23
- 37 Macavity – T. S. Eliot (1888–1965) read by **David Suchet** 03:09
- 38 If – Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) read by **Michael Caine** 01:57
- 39 This Above All – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Michael Maloney** 01:31
- 40 *Dowland: M George Whitehead his Almand.*
Jacob Heringman, lute, Rose Consort of Viols. Naxos 8.553326. 00:31
- 41 **LOVER (Sir Ian McKellen)** 00:12
- 42 The Arrow – W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) read by **Art Malik** 00:44
- 43 The Arrow and The Song – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–82)
read by **HRH The Duchess of Kent** 00:53
- 44 They Who Are Near To Me – Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) read by **Art Malik** 00:31
- 45 The First Day – Christina Rossetti (1830–96) read by **Felicity Kendal** 01:11
- 46 The Song of Torrismond – Thomas Lowell Beddoes (1803–49) read by **Janet Suzman** 00:52
- 47 My Delight and Thy Delight – Robert Bridges (1844–1930) read by **Ralph Fiennes** 01:07
- 48 Sonnet 43 – Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–61) read by **Hannah Gordon** 01:24
- 49 The Virginity – Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) read by **Terence Stamp** 01:36
- 50 The Longest Journey – Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) read by **Samuel West** 00:51
- 51 We Have Known Treasure – Anon read by **Charles Dance** 01:11
- 52 Sonnet 138 – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Robert Lindsay** 01:01
- 53 Echo – Christina Rossetti (1830–96) read by **Dame Glenda Jackson** 01:13
- 54 Delusions I Did Cherish – Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) read by **Art Malik** 00:42
- 55 Sonnet 18 – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Dame Glenda Jackson** 01:10
- 56 When I Was One-And-Twenty – A. E. Housman (1859–1936) read by **Pete Postlethwaite** 00:41
- 57 The Mermaid – W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) read by **Juliet Stevenson** 00:24
- 58 Upon the Nipples of Julia's Breast – Robert Herrick (1591–1674) read by **Terence Stamp** 00:52
- 59 My Love Is Like a Red, Red Rose – Robert Burns (1759–96) read by **John Sessions** 00:57
- 60 Sonnet 116 – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by **Robert Lindsay** 01:00
- 61 New Year's Eve – D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930) read by **Michael Maloney** 01:22
- 62 Green – D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930) read by **Michael Maloney** 00:34
- 63 A Thing of Beauty Is a Joy Forever – John Keats (1795–1821) read by **Mark Rylance** 01:04
- Music: Semper Dowland, Semper Dolens by John Dowland. Fretwork. ♫ Virgin Classics.*
- 64 *Stravinsky: A Soldier's Tale – Naxos 8.553662.* 00:52

65	SOLDIER (Sir Ian McKellen)	00:18
66	Prologue from King Henry V – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by Mark Rylance	03:22
67	Into Battle – Julian Grenfell (1888–1915) read by Juliet Stevenson	00:25
68	An Irish Airman Foresees His Death – W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) read by William Houston	01:13
69	Once to Every Man and Nation – James Russell Lowell (1819–91) read by Dame Judi Dench	00:33
70	Whatever You Say, Say Nothing – Seamus Heaney (1939–) read by William Houston	05:49
71	In Flanders Fields – John McCrea (1872–1918) read by Robert Powell	00:55
72	Perhaps – Vera Brittain (1893–1970) read by Dame Judi Dench	01:29
73	Anthem for Doomed Youth – Wilfred Owen (1893–1918) read by Robert Powell	01:02
74	Dulce et Decorum Est – Wilfred Owen (1893–1918) read by Lord Owen	01:46
75	Pluck – Eva Dobell read by Felicty Kendal	01:16
76	from In Memory of W. B. Yeats – W. H. Auden (1907–1973) read by Art Malik	01:01
77	At a War Grave – John Jarman (1911–44) read by Michael Maloney	00:48
78	El Alamein – John Jarman (1911–44) read by Michael Maloney	02:08
79	Handbag – Ruth Fainlight (1931–) read by Prunella Scales	00:43
80	Salvage Song – Elsie Cawser (1915–) read by Prunella Scales and Michael Maloney	00:40
82	England – Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) read by Michael Caine	00:18
82	Dover Beach – Matthew Arnold (1828–88) read by Michael Williams	02:21
83	Written with a Pencil in a Sealed Wagon – Dan Pagis (1930–86) read by Janet Suzman	00:48
84	No Man Is An Island – John Donne (1572–1631) read by Ed Bishop	00:42
85	<i>Luis de Narváez: Fantasia. Shirley Rumsey, lute. Naxos 8.550614.</i>	00:57
86	WISDOM (Sir Ian McKellen)	00:22
87	The Quality of Mercy from The Merchant of Venice – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by Ralph Fiennes	01:05
88	What is Good – John Boyle O'Reilly (1844–90) read by Dame Judi Dench	00:56
89	Leaves of Grass – Walt Whitman (1819–92) read by Art Malik	00:56
90	Addendum to the Ten Commandments – Anon read by Michael Caine	00:16
91	A Student – Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?–1400) read by Emma Fielding	01:31
92	Abou Ben Adhem – James Leigh Hunt (1784–1859) read by Robert Powell	01:09
93	from The Song of Hiawatha – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–82) read by Clark Peters	03:29
94	My Heart Leaps Up – William Wordsworth (1770–1850) read by Robert Hardy	00:34
95	Auguries of Innocence – William Blake (1757–1827) read by Timothy West	00:21
96	The Tyger – William Blake (1757–1827) read by Timothy West	01:18
97	Of All The Souls That Stand Create – Emily Dickinson (1830–86) read by Gayle Hunnicutt	00:48
98	Chorus of Spirits – Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) read by Prunella Scales	01:40

99	Kubla Khan – Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834) read by Pete Postlethwaite	02:32
100	A Man's a Man for A' That – Robert Burns (1759–96) read by John Sessions	01:46
101	The Road Not Taken – Robert Frost (1874–1963) read by John Cleese	01:09
102	The Bleed'n' Sparrer – Anon read by Michael Caine	01:03
103	<i>Dowland: The King of Denmark's Galiard. Fretwork.</i> ♣ <i>Virgin Classics.</i>	00:38
104	SIXTH AGE (Sir Ian McKellen)	00:29
105	Politics – W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) read by Michael Caine	00:47
106	Peekaboo, I Almost See You – Ogden Nash (1902–71) read by David Suchet	01:39
107	Samson Agonistes – Ogden Nash (1902–71) read by David Suchet	00:21
108	Sea Fever – John Masefield (1878–1967) read by Terence Stamp	01:11
109	The Exultation – Emily Dickinson (1830–86) read by Gayle Hunnicutt	00:32
110	We Have Been Here Before – Morris Bishop read by Charles Dance	01:14
111	from The Brook – Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–92) read by Janet Suzman	02:11
112	Upon Westminster Bridge – William Wordsworth (1770–1850) read by Robert Hardy	01:03
113	A Song of a Young Lady To Her Ancient Lover – John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647–80) read by Janet Suzman	01:41
114	John Anderson, My Jo – Robert Burns (1759–96) read by Stella Gonet	02:00
115	In Praise of Cocoa, Cupid's Nightcap – Stanley J. Sharples (1910–) read by Emma Fielding	00:47
116	The Way Through the Woods – Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) read by Art Malik	01:07
117	from Uphill – Christina Rossetti (1830–94) read by HRH The Duchess of Kent <i>Music: Mendlessohn – A Midsummer Night's Dream.</i> ♣ <i>Virgin Classics.</i>	00:59
118	LAST SCENE (Sir Ian McKellen)	00:24
119	Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night – Dylan Thomas (1914–53) read by Ioan Gruffudd	01:33
120	Song – Christina Rossetti (1830–94) read by Jenny Agutter	01:01
121	Code Poem for the French Resistance – Leo Marks read by Ralph Fiennes	00:41
122	This World is not Conclusion – Emily Dickinson (1830–86) read by Gayle Hunnicutt	01:16
123	Requiem – Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–94) read by John Sessions	00:39
124	Sleeping at Last – Christina Rossetti (1830–94) read by Dame Judi Dench	01:13
125	Fear No More from Cymbeline – William Shakespeare (1564–1616) read by Sir Ian McKellen	01:40
126	Evolution – John Banister Tabb (1845–1909) read by Mark Rylance <i>Music: Vivaldi – Autumn from Four Seasons (Reprise).</i>	01:36

Total time: 2:33:45

A NOTE FROM

seán murphy

*'All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.'*



John Cleese with Seán Murphy



Photographer: ELISA MURPHY

HRH The Duchess of Kent
recording with Seán Murphy

So starts William Shakespeare's speech from 'As You Like It'. David Owen saw – in the framework of 'infant, school, lover, soldier, wisdom, sixth-age, and last scene' – a structure on which to build a very personal anthology of his favourite poetry **Seven Ages** (Penguin).

David, and his wife Deborah, give their royalties from sales of the book to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children in London, for helping to save the life of their eldest son. It was this fact, when invited to make an audiobook of the anthology, that moved me to ask all these wonderful readers, and to select the poetry from the anthology specifically for each voice.

I further illustrate the change from age to age with music that has a relationship with the poetry and the music of the spoken voice.

A limited edition of this recording was rush-released as a Dedication to Diana, Princess of Wales, who was President of the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children when I started this work. It won the record industry Talkies Award and was warmly welcomed by all Diana's family. Our royalties, producer and readers, go to Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity.

My special thanks to all performers for free and fantastic performances; to the poets who granted free use of their poetry; to all representatives of the poets and readers and to everyone at Abbey Road Studios; to Elsa, my hard-working P.A.; and to David and Deborah Owen for tireless support.



Joss Ackland



Jenny Agutter



Ed Bishop

the players



Michael Caine



Charles Dance



Connie Booth



John Cleese



Judi Dench



Emma Fielding



Ralph Fiennes

the players



Stella Gonet



Hannah Gordon



Ioan Gruffudd



Gayle Hunnicutt



Glenda Jackson



Robert Hardy



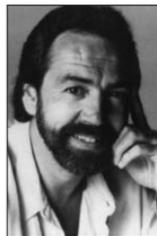
William Houston



HRH The Duchess of Kent



Felicity Kendal



Robert Lindsay



Art Malik



Michael Maloney



Catherine McCormack

the players



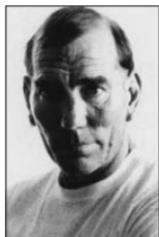
Sir Ian McKellen



Lord Owen



Clark Peters



Pete Postlethwaite



Robert Powell



Mark Rylance



Andrew Sachs

the players



Leo Sayer



Juliet Stevenson



John Sessions



David Suchet



Janet Suzman



Terence Stamp



Michael Williams



Timothy West



Prunella Scales



Samuel West

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Faber and Faber for Macavity by T. S. Eliot

Paul Berry (literary executor) for Perhaps by Vera Brittain from Verses of a V.A.D.

Curtis Brown for In Memory of W. B. Yeats, by W. H. Auden

Peters Fraser and Dunlop for Walking Away by C. Day Lewis

A. P. Watt for The Arrow, The Mermaid, An Irish Airman Forsees His Own Death by W. B. Yeats

Rabindranath Tagore's Estate for They Who Are Near To Me and Delusion I Did Cherish by Rabindranath Tagore

Lord Bridges for My Delight and Thy Delight

Jonathan Cape for When I Was One And Twenty by A. E. Housman

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the bleed'n' sparrer

Anon

TRACK 102 read by
MICHAEL CAINE

*We'ad a bleed'n' sparrer wot
Lived up a bleed'n' spabt,
One day the bleed'n' rain came dahn
An' washed the bleeder abt.*

*An' as 'e layed 'arf drabnded
Dan in the bleed'n' street
'E begged that bleed'n' rainstorm
To have 'is bleed'n' feet.*

*But then the bleed'n' sun came abt -
Dried up the bleed'n' rain -
So that bleed'n' little sparrer
'E climbed up 'is spabt again.*

*But, Ob! - the crewel sparrer'awk,
'E spies 'im in 'is snuggery,
'E sharpens up 'is bleed'n' claws
An' rips 'im abt by thuggery!*

*Jist then a bleed'n' sportin' type
Wot 'ad a bleed'n' gun
'E spots that bleed'n' sparrer'awk
An' blasts 'is bleed'n' fun.*

*The moral of this story
Is plain to everyone -
That them wot's up the bleed'n' spabt
Don't get no bleed'n' fun.*

echo

Christina Rossetti

*Come to me in the silence of the night;
Come in the sparkling silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream;
Come back in tears,
O memory; hope, love of finished years.*

*O dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter sweet,
Whose waking should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brimfull of love abide and meet;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.*

*Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again though cold in death:
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago.*

TRACK 53

read by
DAME GLENDA JACKSON

the road not taken

Robert Frost

TRACK 101 read by
JOHN CLEESE

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler; long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

sonnet 43

from Sonnets from the Portuguese

Elizabeth Barrett
Browning

TRACK 48

read by
HANNAH GORDON

*How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being an ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, - I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! - and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.*



WINNER OF THE
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TALKIES AWARD

*All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.'*

seven ages

AN ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY WITH MUSIC

William Shakespeare • Emily Dickinson • Ted Hughes • Dylan Thomas
Oscar Wilde • Rudyard Kipling • W. B. Yeats • Percy Bysshe Shelley
A. E. Housman • Robert Burns • D. H. Lawrence • John Keats
Seamus Heaney • Wilfred Owen • Matthew Arnold • John Donne
Walt Whitman • Rabindranath Tagore • William Blake
William Wordsworth • Ogden Nash • Christina Rossetti
and many others.

Music by Vivaldi, Dowland, Mendelssohn, Stravinsky.

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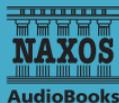
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THE INDEPENDENT

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Recorded at Abbey Road Studios, London
Engineer: David Flower, Assistant Engineer: Robbie Kazanjian
Editing Engineer: Paul Bailey, Production Assistant: Esa Murphy

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