

Professor Skaila Kanga

Skaila studied piano and singing as a Junior at the Royal Academy of Music and at 17 started the harp with Tina Bonifacio and later with Marisa Robles. She quickly became established freelancing with all the major London and regional orchestras.

Skaila is renowned for her extensive career in both classical and pop music recording, films and television including a list of over 1400 film soundtracks to date. Her credits include four Harry Potter films, the Disney musicals such as Into the Woods, Beauty and the Beast, Mary Poppins Returns, The Little Mermaid, Aladdin, all the James Bond films since the The John Barry days and all the Hunger Games and Avengers films.

A full list of film credits can be found on Skaila's website www.skailakanga.com

Her album and concert credits include artists such as Elton John, Paul McCartney, Sting, Robbie Williams, Jerry Goldsmith, Michel Legrand, Henry Mancini, John Williams, Pat Metheny, Frank Sinatra, Joan Sutherland, Pavarotti, Domingo, Katherine Jenkins, James Galway, James Taylor Quartet, Gregory Porter, Josh Groban, Boyzone, Westlife, Kylie Minogue, Andre Bocelli and many more.

For 25 years Skaila was the solo harpist of the prestigious group the Nash Ensemble and since 1971 till 2000 was the principal harpist of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields under Sir Neville Marriner and principal harpist of the London Mozart players from 1993 till 2019.

For over 20 years Skaila and Tommy Reilly, virtuoso Harmonica player performed, wrote and recorded many new works for their unique duo. Her solo recordings are available on Naxos, Chandos, ASV and Hyperion labels.

Skaila began teaching at the Royal Academy of Music in 1988 and in 2004 was awarded the title of Professor of the University of London. She was Head of Harp from 1999 till 2010. Her former students are globally renowned and many have solo orchestral positions worldwide. She was promoted to Professor Emerita of Harp in 2010. In 1993 she established the Academy Harp Ensemble and has commissioned over 36 works for the harp department. Each year she has arranged and presented two seasons each year of highly successful chamber concerts for the students of the Royal Academy in a variety of venues across London.

Skaila is regularly invited to sit on juries worldwide and in July 2019 she was the President of the Jury of the USA International Harp Competition in Bloomington, Indiana. In 2025 she was invited to be the President of the Jury in the Hong Kong international harp competition where she also gave masterclasses, workshops, film and radio interviews and extensive private lessons. She has also given lecture recitals and masterclasses in Russia, across Europe and extensively in America.

Parallel to her performing and teaching career Skaila has composed and arranged 25 books of harp music of all levels, many of which are on the ABRSM, Guildhall and Trinity exam syllabus. Skaila worked closely with the ABRSM as harp consultant for several years.

Her publications are available at www.marukamusic.com

Her transcription of the famous Bach Chaconne in D minor has been chosen as the set work in the 2028 USA International Harp Competition.

Skaila's articles have appeared in the Gramophone, BBC Music Magazine, WHC Review, AHS Journal, Harp Column, Harp Today and the UKHA magazine.

Skaila was honoured to be featured in the Musicians' Union magazine's Hall of Fame article in 2010.

www.skailakanga.com