

# JOHN WALLACE

## *Biography*

*John Wallace (b.1949) grew up in the Brass Band tradition in Scotland. In 1965 he toured Europe as soloist in the Haydn Trumpet Concerto. After taking a music degree at King's College, Cambridge, John went to the Royal Academy of Music in London as a composition student of Alan Bush, and thence to York University as a student of David Blake.*

*John played second trumpet on tour with the Festival Ballet and Northern Sinfonia to finance his composition studies. Eventually it dawned on John that the trumpet was superior as a money earner to composition and the economic imperative of supporting a family meant that John practised the trumpet alone in a darkened room for 9 hours a day until he got himself recognised as a contender for trumpet jobs. And so, after periods as assistant principal trumpet with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra, John went on to become principal trumpet and vice-chair of the council of the Philharmonia Orchestra.*

*In 1981, John's career took an opportune twist after he played at the Royal Wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer with Kiri Te Kanawa. During his subsequent trumpet career, John played concertos with such conductors as Simon Rattle, Andrew Davis, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Leonard Slatkin, and premiered new works by Malcolm Arnold, Peter Maxwell Davies, Harrison Birtwistle, James Macmillan, Tim Souster, Robert Saxton, Mark Antony Turnage, HK Gruber, Dominic Muldowney, and Robert Saxton, amongst many others.*

*In 1986, John created his flexible brass interest group, The Wallace Collection, which undertook a wide variety of performance tours and innovative musical projects, making as a byproduct some 40 solo and ensemble CDs for Nimbus, EMI, EMI Toshiba, Collins Classics, JVC, BIS, Deux-Elles and Linn Records.*

*John returned to Scotland in 2002 to become Principal of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. He transformed this by the time he left in 2014 into the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, an interdisciplinary institution of Drama, Dance, Production, Screen and Music, standing at the number three position in the international league tables for performing arts education. He left in 2014 to resume composing and playing, and re-formed The Wallace Collection to pursue the educational potential of kids learning musical instruments in school.*

*John has written lots of music for brass including a Symphony and three comic operas – Opsnizing Dad, They Twa' Fush, so much hot air... all with brass accompaniment. He is published by Ricordi, Faber, Nimbus, and The Music Company (UK) Ltd. He co-edited*

*the Cambridge Companion to Brass Instruments (1997) with Trevor Herbert, and the Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Brass Instruments (2018) with Trevor Herbert and Arnold Myers and, with Alexander McGrattan, wrote The Trumpet, a history of the instrument, published in 2012 by Yale University Press.*

*John was awarded the CBE in 2011 for services to Dance, Drama and Music. In 2021 he was awarded the Queen's Medal for Music by Queen Elizabeth II.*

*He has enjoyed an Indian summer in his later career both as player and music education activist. Since 2019 The Wallace Collection has been active in Fife (the part of Scotland he was born in) primary schools in the St Andrew's Music Participation (StAMP) project preparing kids to meet their destiny as the brass players of the future by joining local brass bands. And since 2020 John and The Wallace Collection have recorded (on nineteenth century period brass) the complete quintets (twelve) of Jean-François Bellon, the complete quintets and septets (also twelve) of Auguste Mimart, and twenty Haydn string quartets transcribed for brass quintet by Julien Tollot. These last by Mimart and Tollot were uncovered/discovered by ITG member Sandy Coffin, who is doing a PhD at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. As Convenor of the Music Education Partnership Group in Scotland he was influential in steering the Scottish government to their decision to make musical instrument tuition free in all Scottish schools in 2021. The centrality of Music to education is an endless life-long mission yet to be concluded. He married Liz in 1971 and they have a son and a daughter – Cosmo and Esme.*