

The Adventures of Toad

Words by Kenneth Grahame

Music by Ilona Sekacz

Programme note

Ilona's original version of *The Adventures of Toad* was performed in 1990 at the Chase High School in Malvern, Worcestershire. To coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the publication of Kenneth Grahame's classic children's book "The Wind in the Willows" in 2008 we decided to re-commission Ilona to rework her original ideas for a longer version and for a new generation of children. The result has the audience much more involved than before as they are required to sing three songs in addition to making sound effects at key points in the story. The piece follows the character of Toad who gets into many scrapes with his big ideas about caravans and motor cars. The story is narrated like *Peter and the Wolf* and similarly the brass instruments and melodies represent characters and ideas from the book.

Ilona Sekacz writes music for the theatre and films. Much of her work has been for the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre and the West End theatres. She has written scores for two Oscar nominated films, one of which, "Antonia's Line", won in the Best Foreign Language Film category in 1997. Ilona also coaches and conducts Coventry's "Singing City Choir" with whom she is engaged in a four year project to research old music, and create new music based on memory and place.