

Alec Roth – THE BIG WASH CYCLE (WITH SHORT SPIN) – words by Jo Shapcott

for solo voice (or voices) with chamber orchestra, or ensemble (trio), or keyboard
commissioned by the South Bank Centre for the "Boom Room" Series of Family Concerts
first performed by Geoffrey Dolton (baritone) and Claire Daniels (soprano) with members of Chamber Music Company, Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, 17 December 1994; chamber orchestra version first performed by Stewart Collins (baritone) with the Bournemouth Sinfonietta conducted by the composer, Wadebridge Sports Centre, 24 May 1997

1. Introduction: The Big Wash Cycle
2. The Song of the Red Tee-shirt in the Washing Machine
3. The Song of the Lonesome Sock
4. The Battle-Hymn of the Fresh Clean Hankies
5. The Lullaby of Madam le Duvet
6. Underpants
7. The Song of the Blue Jumper who Can't Jump
8. Short Spin
9. Finale: The Washing Line Chorus Line

A "gloriously funny" cycle of songs – ideal for family or children's concerts.

Just what does your dirty linen get up to in the washing machine? And why is there always one lonesome sock? *The Big Wash Cycle* takes the lid off the laundry basket in an audacious exposé of wash-day drama and passion. Thrill to the battle-hymn of the fresh clean hankies; warm to the voluptuous embrace of Madame le Duvet; discover your underpants' most secret ambition; and why the blue jumper is so blue. Finally, emerge fresh from the short spin to join the pride of wash-day on the washing-line chorus-line.

There is provision for optional audience participation in No. 4, No. 8, and No. 9. The participation is designed to be spontaneous, needing little or no rehearsal, both music and words being very easy to pick up.

DURATION

Total: ca. 25 minutes

The songs may be performed individually or in selections as well as the complete cycle

FORCES REQUIRED

Solo Voice with Keyboard, or Instrumental Ensemble (Trio), or Chamber Orchestra

One or more solo singers may be used (a male/female duo is effective) and the songs divided up amongst them appropriately (Nos. 1, 4, 8 and 9 can be realized as ensembles)

Keyboard version: the songs may be performed with Keyboard alone, using the Vocal Score

Ensemble (trio) version: Clarinet doubling Bass Clarinet; Cello; Keyboard

Orchestral version: 1(+picc) 0 2(2nd+bass) 0 – 2 1 0 0 – 1 percussion (marimba, large bass drum, pedal bass drum, side drum, suspended cymbal, hi-hat, tam-tam, triangle, cowbell, ratchet, flexatone, rain-stick) – strings

PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Vocal Score (Bass-clef and Treble-clef versions of the Vocal Score are available)

Trio version: Parts for Clarinet and Cello (the Keyboard player uses the Vocal Score)

Chamber Orchestra version: Full Score and set of Orchestral Parts

SCORE SAMPLE

Click here for sample pages of the [Vocal Score](#) (treble clef)

The Big Wash Cycle is also available in a Catalan version (*La Gran Bugada*), translated by Miquel Desclot