

Like Mark and Andrew I too have struggled to get my list to 8 pieces and a degree of cheating is required.....It is the age old problem of what do you leave out. I have very catholic tastes in music having studied composition with Jonathan Harvey and sang in the BBCSC where you are introduced to a large range of repertoire and lots of new commissions. On reflection, I think the below would keep up my spirits, allow me to emotionally wallow and have a good dance.

1. **Debussy Piano Preludes Books 1 & 2.** If I had to choose one it would be Bruyeres which is in the 2nd book. The pianist on the disc I have is Andrei Diev. Magical, clear playing. I was introduced to these when Book 1 was one of the O' level music set works in 1977. I could play the piano reasonably well when I was at school, though not as well as this youtube clip (!), and learned many of the preludes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Oy-Tu6Hjw4>
2. **Stravinsky Rite of Spring.** It is always very difficult for me to choose my favourite piece of Stravinsky. My alarm music when I worked was the Shrove Tide Fair from Petrushka. A great start to every day at 5.45am. I also particularly enjoy Dumbarton Oaks and the Symphony of Wind Instruments. Firebird has a place in my heart as well as it was my first National Youth Orchestra of Wales course and we gave a very exciting performance that only teenagers with a surfeit of hormones and musical confidence can. I have chosen the Rite, though, as I watched the Royal Ballet performing the Nijinsky version sitting in the Slips at the ROH when I was a student and will never forget the combination of the primeval energy of the dancing and the rhythm of the music. This is a version from the 2013 Proms with Francois-Xavier Roth conducting and Les Siecles with period instruments. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq1q6u3mLSM>
3. **Howells Hymnus Paradisi.** The recording with Sir Richard Hickox and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. I am a great fan of early 20th English choral music, and another favourite (unaccompanied choir) is Bax's Mater Ora Fillium. I was in the BBCSC for 26 years (in the last few years as Chairman) and had the opportunity to perform many interesting works in different venues. Selecting choral pieces was therefore difficult. This recording in a church in Tooting (not the most glam venue but the music making was fab) was one of my favourite projects and provides many happy memories. This is not the recording but is the BBCSC from the Proms. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=at-yv-BQAeA>
4. **Gwilym Simcock. Good Days at the Schloss.** A jazz pianist, he was a BBC Young Generation Artist a few years ago. Though he seems to have disappeared from circulation currently. I heard him playing first on Radio 3 In Tune; his playing always buoys me up. It was a choice of the Simcock or Miles Davis Kind of Blue for the jazz spot. I shared a house for 2 years with a jazz trumpeter as a student. The Miles Davis is more reflective/laid back jazz. This will give you a taster of the Simcock. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2Q9nQg4JmM>
5. **JS Bach. Double Concerto for Oboe and Violin.** Where do you start with Bach? Preludes & Fugues, 2 Part Inventions (played by oboe and bassoon naturally), Orchestral Suites/Concertos, the Cantatas and Passions. On balance I chose the Double Concerto for Oboe and Violin. Fun to play (most frequently with Andrew). We performed the 2nd Movement at my mother's memorial service. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGueH8VqHmE>

6. **Mozart. Oboe Quartet.** Again where do you start with Mozart? The later symphonies, Mass in C, the Operas (Mitridate, re di Ponto wonderful early Mozart). I chose the oboe quartet as I could play along with Nicholas Daniels (?!) and that is the recording I recommend. It also reminds me of my daughter. She played the quartet in Italy on a school music trip. However, I had to get her out of Heathrow quickly on their return after she was poured off the flight back having persuaded the air stewards she was 18 (she had just been made the music prefect). Unlike my son (see below) she has an oboe performance diploma and was a very talented oboist. Unfortunately she very rarely gets her oboe out of its case now. N.B. a piece that programmes well with the Mozart oboe quartet is Britten's Phantasy Quartet. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAg_wJGqCZQ

7. **Sibelius 5th Symphony.** One of my go to pieces when I need a bit of inspiration/uplifting. I would take a recording with Sakari Oramo conducting (a 2019 Prom with the BBCSO or there are earlier recordings with the CBSO). You can sing along to all the great tunes which of course we all know. My son played the French Horn badly at school (didn't practice, just enjoyed playing in ensembles though preferred hockey, cricket and CCF). He made the school orchestra and played 4th horn. He started his Leavers concert with the low 4th horn part at the beginning of the symphony - my proudest moment in his lack of musical career. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRS6dIgn_QI

8. **John Adams In Harmonium.** I was so lucky to sing this composition on a number of occasions with the BBCSC both at the Proms and the Barbican. The best performance was with John Adams conducting at the Barbican. I can't find a recording of this concert though I know it went out on Radio 3 and is highly recommended. Though I am a soprano I love the alto section "Rowing". The recording is from the Proms with Ed Gardner conducting (a favourite of mine). It is not the best performance as the choir was so large and the music needs to be very tight rhythmically which over such large forces was a challenge. On the whole it comes across well though it could have been more "wild" in "wild nights". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l-6z-ow6H1c>

I found it very difficult to limit myself to eight pieces, Desert Island Disc style as there are so many others that I could have chosen and many composers who I really enjoy who have been ignored, no Messiaen, Brahms, Strauss or Mahler. I would also need a couple of "pop songs" to dance to in addition to the Debussy and Stravinsky. This is always a difficult choice as I like West End Girls by the Pet Shop Boys. However, it must be "Everybody wants to Rule the World" by Tears for Fears as it was the first dance I had with my now husband.

If we follow the DID format I would like my oboe and an unending supply of reeds as my luxury so I could play along. To keep fit I could run, swim or dance. No bike for me as (Mark note) you would probably need rollers to go with a bike as I don't think you would get very far in the sand! Choosing a book is also very difficult as I would need something that would keep me occupied for some time. So though Austen is my favourite author (sorry not very original) I would probably choose CP Snow's Strangers and Brothers a series of 11 novels covering the period from 1914 to 1968.