

THE GREEN CHILDREN. (1990)

Nicola LeFanu (music)

Kevin Crossley-Holland (libretto)

The Green Children is a full-length opera designed to be performed and enjoyed by adults and children alike. As well as performing, children have the option of making up their own scenes, which can be incorporated into the opera: the score has 'windows' for this option.

It is based on the twelfth-century account of how two completely green children were found by the villagers of Woolpit, near Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk. Overriding the fears of the superstitious villagers, the lady of the manor takes the children in, and the priest teaches them English. The green girl gradually comes to terms with her new life, and the people about her befriend her and press her to stay with them. The little boy succumbs to homesickness, but the girl falls in love and marries.

THE GREEN CHILDREN was commissioned by the Kings Lynn Festival, and first performed there in July 1990.

There have been many subsequent productions, most using the option of extra 'window' scenes, to delightful effect.