Described in The Guardian as “one of today’s leading composers for the voice”, award-winning British composer Joanna Marsh has since 2007 divided her life between Dubai and the UK. Joanna’s life in the Middle East has led to many unique musical opportunities including writing an orchestral work to celebrate the building of the Burj Khalifa, a commission for the BBC Symphony Orchestra for the BBC Proms in Dubai, and a fanfare for the Queen’s visit to Abu Dhabi. Her first opera, a collaboration with librettist David Pountney entitled My Beautiful Camel, was also inspired by Dubai life.

Recent commissions include a set of four choral songs for I Fagiolini (“The World is Charged”, “Geocentric”, “Metachoral in Blue” and “i lay (with everywhere around)”), a seasonal piece In Winter’s House for Tenebrae, and the string work Another Eden for the United Strings of Europe and Gandini Juggling. Her 2021 choral piece All Shall Be Well, commissioned for the ORA Singers, won the choral section of the Ivors Composer Awards 2022.

Joanna’s most substantial work of the 2022 season was a 20-minute BBC Radio 3 commission for the BBC Singers called SEEN, written for choir and electronics. For this Joanna commissioned a text by writer and broadcaster Fiona Lindsay. The première was held at Milton Court on 20 May 2022, conducted by Sofi Jeannin and with electronics created by Glen Scott.

Joanna was Composer in Residence at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge from 2015 through to 2020. During that time she wrote a number of works for the college’s choir and organ. She is a Co-Founder of ChoirFest Middle East in Dubai, an annual celebration of the region’s choral music scene that reached its tenth anniversary in March 2020. She is also Founder of the Dubai Opera Festival Chorus: a large body of singers set up for the BBC Proms in Dubai that continues to undertake concert performances of various types across the UAE.

Joanna was an undergraduate at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and subsequently organ scholar at Sidney Sussex College Cambridge. She studied composition with Richard Blackford and Judith Bingham.