

Dogoda Quintet

Maurice Ravel 1875-1937 'Le Tombeau de Couperin' for Piano (1918)
Arranged for wind Quintet by Mason Jones (1919-2009)

Prélude. Vif

Fugue. Allegro moderato

Menuet. Allegro moderato

Rigaudon. Assez vif

Musically, 'Un Tombeau' is a piece written in memory of someone. Ravel's original six movement piece for piano is patriotically titled as being in memory of François Couperin (1668-1733), who established a distinctively French keyboard style of composition; but each of the movements is also dedicated to the memory of a different close friend killed in the first world war. When war broke out Ravel was working on his piano trio, the symphonic poem *La Valse* and a few other projects including *Le Tombeau*. He completed the piano trio in five weeks and then volunteered for service. His several attempts to enlist as an aircraft pilot were turned down on health grounds, but he finally became a driver in the motor transport corps. Despite the death in January 1917 of his mother, who was perhaps the only person to whom he was emotionally attached, Ravel finished the six pieces of *Le Tombeau* and planned to perform them. When bombing postponed the initial performance, Ravel used the time to create an orchestral version of four of the original six movements.

Notes by Chris Darwin.

Sally Beamish b1956

Adagio and Variations after Mozart, for Flute, Cor Anglais, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon (2011)

Sally Beamish studied Viola and Composition at the Royal Northern College of Music where her composition tutors were Anthony Gilbert and Lennox Berkeley. She has written chamber music, symphonies and concertos. In 2020 she was awarded the OBE for services to music. Sally Beamish now lives in Sussex.

The New London Chamber Orchestra asked Sally Beamish for an arrangement of Mozart's Adagio for glass harmonica, flute, oboe, viola and cello (K617). She wrote "I wanted to try to capture some of the strange beauty of the instrument. I used cor anglais...to give a warm, dark quality to the quintet - when I'd finished I had the impulse to launch into a set of variations and here I cast each of the five instruments in turn as a soloist, sometimes with a duo partner. The Adagio theme returns at the end with each player adding a fragment from its own version".

Notes by Helen Simpson

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909 - 1969)

Wind Quintet (1932)

Allegro

Air. Andante

Allegretto

Vivo

Grażyna Bacewicz was born in Poland. Her father was Polish and her mother Lithuanian. Her musical tuition began at home and continued at the Warsaw Conservatory with violin and composition studies. Her composition tutor was Nadia Boulanger. During the occupation of Poland Bacewicz and her family were in Warsaw where she wrote to her brother "the situation is spiritually dire". Nevertheless she continued to compose and perform with friends. Later, in 1956 the Warsaw Autumn Festival featured three of Bacewicz's compositions.

The quintet to be played today won the First Prize in the Concours de la Société "Aide aux femmes de professions libres" Paris 1933.

Allegro. This is cheerful, light and athletic. All five parts are equally important and they pass the motifs around freely.

Air. Andante. A more reflective mood is shown here and as in the first movement this is moving towards atonality.

Allegretto. A bright folk-like melody is worked over here. It is a controlled rendition and not overly rustic.

Vivo. This, like the opening movement, shows her witty light touch and the elegant instrumental lines now draw the piece to a close.

Notes by Helen Simpson

Krzysztof Penderecki (1933 - 2020)

Prelude for Solo Clarinet (1987)

Penderecki was Polish and he studied at the Academy of Music in Kraków, graduating in 1958. He subsequently taught there and it was then that his well known piece *Threnody to the victims of Hiroshima* was written. In the 1970s Penderecki moved to Yale School of Music in the USA. During his lifetime he won many awards and he is one of Poland's best known composers. His influence is wide and much of his music can be heard as film soundtracks.

The Prelude for Solo Clarinet was given to the British composer Paul Patterson on his 40th birthday. The first performance was given in Manchester in 1987. It is improvisatory in character and is written with no bar lines. However one can discern the A B A structure with the middle section's chromatic runs and trill - like thirds which contrast with the sparseness of the opening and closing sections.

Notes by Helen Simpson

Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

Quintet for Flute, Oboe / Cor Anglais, Clarinet, Horn & Bassoon Op 43 (1922)

Allegro ben moderato

Menuetto

Praeludium: Adagio. Tema con variazioni: Un poco andantino

Carl Nielsen was the seventh of house painter and amateur musician Niels Jørgensen's 12 children. Why Nielsen rather than Jørgensen? Although the Danish aristocracy had long used hereditary surnames, many ordinary Danes stuck with the old patronymic system until the late 19th century. Carl followed his father in playing the violin and cornet, and composed from the age of 8. But his family did not encourage him to study music, apprenticing him aged 14 to a shopkeeper, who fortunately went broke almost immediately. Carl then became an army bugler and trombonist, and composed some works for brass ensemble. He was introduced to the composer Niels Gade, Professor at the Copenhagen Conservatoire, who took to the young man, and at 19, Nielsen began studying with him. After graduation, Nielsen taught violin and also played violin in the Royal Danish Orchestra.

Although he is now best known for his concertos and his six symphonies, in which brass instruments figure prominently, he also wrote some chamber music, most notably four string quartets and today's wind quintet.

The quintet is a relatively late work and was inspired by a phone call to a pianist friend who happened to be rehearsing the Mozart Sinfonia Concertante with four wind players. The piece was written very much with those overheard individuals in mind; it reveals the personalities both of the instruments and of the players, sometimes alone, more often in conversation or argument. The work is genial and entertaining, often with a Poulenc-like playfulness.

The last movement is the most complex. Like the last movement of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, it is a set of variations. They are introduced by a short Prelude in which each instrument makes a cadenza-like statement – the oboe being replaced briefly by the cor anglais. The variations are based on Nielsen's own chorale tune 'My Jesus, make my heart to love thee'. He describes them as '... now gay and grotesque, now elegiac and solemn, ending with the theme itself, simply and gently expressed.' The reprised theme, marked *Andante festivo*, is in the more chorale 4/4 time rather than the opening version's 3/4 - a joyfully serious end to a warm-hearted piece.



Notes by Chris Darwin.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 - 1791)

La Ci Darem La Mano, Duettino from Don Giovanni, Act 1 (1787)

Arranged for Wind Quintet by Raj Bhaumik (b2004)

Raj Bhaumik the Clarinetist in this quintet has arranged the very well known seduction aria sung by Don Giovanni to Zerlina. Mozart sets the Don's teasing words and Zerlina's responses that offer little hesitation and which accelerate the departure of the pair off stage for further persuasion. Lorenzo Da Ponte's text for the opera takes the well known archetype and in this duet he shows that Zerlina is fully in control and through her repetitions and extensions of the Don's phrases she confidently tells him what he wants to hear. Today's instrumental arrangement of the aria will demonstrate this personal interplay despite there being no words in the performance.

Notes by Helen Simpson