

JAMES MACMILLAN b. 1959

Ostinato (1979)

This piece is based on a two-part ostinato which is heard quietly at the beginning. There is a constant time change from one bar to the next which gives the music an overall freedom in metre and a floating quality. The material written over the ostinato consists of a sinuous, syncopated, chromatic melody which is punctuated from time to time by three-note clusters, which later become an important feature of the music.

J.MacM.

MESSIAEN b. 1908

Le Baiser de l'Enfant-Jésus

Vingt Regards sur d'Enfant-Jésus was written in 1944. Four of the *Regards* were inspired by paintings, a tapestry and an engraving. No.15, *Le Baiser de l'Enfant-Jésus* was derived from an engraving of the child Jesus leaving his mother's arms to embrace St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

Vingt Regards is based on several themes: the theme of God, the theme of love — which also appears in the *Turangalila-Symphonie* — the theme of the stars and the cross and a theme of chords which has no particular significance, but is just decorative.

The main theme in *Le Baiser de l'Enfant-Jésus* is the theme of God, which begins the piece as a *berceuse* and is extended at the end.

O.T.

Olivia Teague *piano*

Next Concert: Thursday 31st January

THE TUNNELL CLARINET TRIO

LEWIS MORRISON *clarinet*
CHARLES TUNNELL *cello*
SUSAN TUNNELL *piano*

BEETHOVEN *Trio in B flat Op.11*
KENNETH LEIGHTON *Fantasy on an American Hymn Tune Op.70*
BRAHMS *Trio in A minor Op.114*

15 pence

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1979-80

THE TUNNELL CLARINET TRIO

LEWIS MORRISON *clarinet*
CHARLES TUNNELL *cello*
SUSAN TUNNELL *piano*

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 31 January 1980

BEETHOVEN 1770–1827

Trio in B flat major Op.11

Allegro con brio

Adagio

Theme and Variations

Little is known of the history of this work prior to its publication in 1798. It may have been commissioned by a particular clarinetist and Czerny goes so far as to say that the inclusion of a set of variations on a theme from Weigl's opera *L'Amor marinaro* (1797) was at the player's request.

To judge from the music Beethoven seems to have had little interest in the work and none of its movements reflects the particular combination of instruments. A straightforward Allegro is only occasionally disturbed by a less predictable change of key. The Adagio's theme is marked *con espressione* but its echoing of a minuet in an earlier piano sonata (Op.49 No.2) and the decorative keyboard writing that accompanies its return soon deflate its pretensions. The variations are a diverse group typical of the late eighteenth century with none of the cumulative power of Beethoven's later sets.

T.M.T.

KENNETH LEIGHTON b.1929

Fantasy on an American Hymn Tune Op.70

The Fantasy on an American Hymn-Tune (The Shining River) Op.70 is one of Leighton's most recent works, showing, as they seem to do increasingly, aspects of a personal *Weltanschauung* unfashionably religious in tone. The work was composed in 1974 to a commission from the Pleeth/Wallfisch/de Peyer Trio and first performed at the Cheltenham Festival and at the Edinburgh Festival. It has since been widely performed both here and abroad. The hymn, words and music of which were composed by the Rev. Robert Lowry in 1865, is "one of the most perfect examples of the union of words and music" (in Leighton's words) and has already attracted several composers including Ives, Rubbra and Copland. The key of C major is clear and unequivocal, although the note C itself is found only at the end, to the last word of the phrase "we'll gather with the saints by the river that flows by the throne of God". In the fantasy, this gravitational power of C major is as striking as any reference to the tune itself, which in any case is heard fully only in the final section, very slow.

The six sections are distinct. The first (I) begins with the C major chord around which some soft fanfare-like figures gradually transform into *ostinato* figures that rise to and fall from a climax. The section is introductory in manner, and listeners for whom the hymn-tune is unknown will be hearing snatches and phrases from it unknowingly. After a drop in tension, the second section (II) follows as a very fast scherzo, looking at first as if it is going to be fugal but in the event working more on rhythmic patterns, not the least exciting element of which is the constant change of dynamic level. A kind of trio section to the scherzo is more sustained (III); both refer to parts of the melody, the one in sharp rhythmic patterns (a paraphrase technique known in some of Bach's organ-chorales), the other in a longer melodic line; neither are simple or obvious variations on the tune.

The second scherzo section (IV) is itself a kind of variant on the first, playing with the opening notes of the hymn-tune, now faster still and gradually working to a climax in which the piano strides, the cello sings *con forza* and the clarinet runs up and down his characteristic arpeggio lines. A freer cadenza section follows (V) characterised by further arpeggios and trills, which in turn gradually calm down to the long-breathed, spacious finale (VI) in which the tune is heard slowly on cello (in B flat), then piano (A major), the keys disturbed and ambiguous until C major emerges. The final settling on to a C major statement of the hymn-tune, slow and peaceful, is (as it were) "hindered" by the chromatic participation of the clarinet, whose leaps recall earlier passages and which are only fully resolved in the final bar.

P.W.

INTERVAL

BRAHMS 1833–97

Trio in A minor Op.114

Allegro

Adagio

Andantino grazioso

Allegro

All four of Brahms's chamber works to employ the clarinet date from the composer's last years. Their inspiration was the artistry of Richard Mühlfeld, the clarinetist of the Meinigen orchestra, whom Brahms first heard in March 1891 and whom he described in a letter to Clara Schumann as 'absolutely the best I know'.

The fruits of this encounter are ripest in the Quintet, written immediately after the Trio in the summer of 1891. The latter is a more uneven work, particularly in its last movement — one of Brahms's less convincing juxtapositions of duple and triple metre. The composer is happier when exploiting the cantabile qualities of the clarinet, as in the middle movements, or its dark creamy tones, aptly suited to the predominant minor tonalities of the first Allegro. In these respects the cello's own lyricism and the typically rich piano writing make ideal partners. T.M.T.

Next Concert: Thursday 7th February

CHRISTOPHER HOWELL *piano*

HAYDN	Sonata in G minor Hob. XVI 44
SCHUBERT	Sonata in B major Op.147
STANFORD	Ballade in G minor Op.170
RAVEL	Valses Nobles et Sentimentales
PROKOFIEV	Sonata No. 3 Op.28

15 pence

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1979-80

CHRISTOPHER HOWELL *piano*

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 7 February 1980