

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH CONCERT SERIES SPRING · SUMMER 2010

Concerts at The University

Tuesday 9 February 2010

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Programme of music performed by current music
students from the University of Edinburgh.



Nicholas Fletcher · piano

They can't take that away from me
from *Gershwin Arrangements (1975-88)*

Michael Finnissy (b.1946)

Michael Finnissy, often cited as a main player in the New Complexity School has a virtuosic piano technique, which often shows in his piano music. The *Gershwin Arrangements (1975-88)* are no exception. Familiar Gershwin tunes are woven around a complex harmonic and rhythmic framework. *They can't take that away from me* is like a thought process: the melody unfolds in a normal way, but is sporadically interrupted. Unlike any other of the arrangements, the harmony shifts quite suddenly between 'wrong' and 'right' chords, especially in the emotionally-charged ending.

Veni Creator Spiritus: Improvisation on a Gregorian Theme

Petr Eben (1929-2007)

Petr Eben was a Czech composer who is well known for his music for both Piano and Organ, of which 'cleaned up' transcriptions of his improvisations are an important part of his output. This improvisation on *Veni Creator* is atmospheric, at times recalling chanting monks, at others, bells tolling. It finishes with a joyful passage, which could have easily been written for organ.

N.F.

Rachel Shell · flute
John Kitchen · piano

Fantasia No.2 in A Minor (TWV 40:3)

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Grave – Vivace – Adagio – Allegro

Georg Philipp Telemann was a prolific composer, whose output is thought to outnumber that of most composers, even J.S. Bach. This huge number of compositions consisted of a variety of both sacred and secular music, instrumental and vocal. The twelve fantasies for solo flute were among a selection of Telemann's collections for unaccompanied instruments, including thirty-six for solo harpsichord, twelve for solo violin and twelve for solo viola da gamba. The set of flute fantasies were first published in Hamburg between 1733 and 1734. The collection is arranged in order of key, progressing more or less stepwise from A major to G minor, omitting keys that were difficult to play on the one-key flute. The A minor Fantasia is the second from the group and is made up of four short movements, all very different in character: a sombre opening, marked Grave, leading into a light Vivace, followed by a slow, stately Adagio and ending with a lively Allegro.

Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino

Paul Taffanel (1844-1908)

Andante Pastoral - Scherzettino

Paul Taffanel was a French flautist, conductor and teacher. He is regarded as being the founder of the French Flute School, which dominated much of the flute composition and performance during the early to mid twentieth century. After a lengthy and successful career as a performer, Taffanel became Professor of Flute at the Paris Conservatoire in 1893. Among his pupils was Philippe Gaubert, for whom he wrote the *Andante Pastoral et Scherzettino* in 1907, a year before his death. This piece demonstrates the new lyricism of the French Flute School and conveys Taffanel's principle of using the flute as a 'singing voice'.

R.S.

Naomi Baker · soprano

Iain McLarty · piano

Nuit d'étoiles

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

This solo art song was Debussy's first published work, dating from 1876, and set to a poem by Théodore de Banville. The refrain, sung three times, translates "Starry night, under your veils, under your breaths and your scent, sad, sighing lyre, I dream of past loves." The verses are less openly melodic, but flow naturally into the simple, repetitive refrain. The piano accompaniment matches the rippling vocal lines, and the final product is a perfect example of the sweetly melancholic French salon music of its time.

Beau Soir

Claude Debussy

Written circa 1880, the title translates as "A Beautiful Evening" and was transcribed by Jascha Heifetz. "Beau Soir" is a French art song and is a setting of a poem by Paul Bourget. Debussy was seventeen or eighteen when he wrote this song and his music was marked by the aesthetics of the period. Hushed tones are interwoven with a lush harmony which combine to create a lovely mood-impression.

Malven

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

This is the last song Strauss wrote; some call it his 'letzte Rose!' It is a beautiful Lied set to the poem by Swiss poet and novelist, Betty Wehrli-Knobel (b. 13 July 1934). Kiri te Kanawa's first performance of it with the New York Philharmonic on 10th January 1985 made it famous.

Cäcilie

Richard Strauss

This is the second in a set of four songs, Op.27. The words are from a love poem "Cäcilie" written by Heinrich Hart (1855-1906), a German dramatic critic and journalist who also wrote poetry. It was written for the poet's wife Cäcilie. Strauss composed this song at Weimar on 9 September 1894, the day before his wedding to the soprano Pauline de Ahna, as a wedding present to her.

N.B.

Nicholas Fletcher is in his fourth year at Edinburgh University and was a finalist in the 2009 Tovey Memorial Prize Competition. He has presented recitals in Harrogate, York and Edinburgh. Recently he has been much in demand as an orchestral pianist, accompanist and repetiteur, and is Assistant MD for Edinburgh Studio Opera. He conducts the Edinburgh University Music Society Sinfonia as well as guest conducting for ensembles such as the EUMS Chorus and the York Young Soloists.

Rachel Shell is in her final year studying music at the University of Edinburgh. As well as recital, Rachel is also studying Orchestration and Music in the Community, conducting weekly creative music workshops with young children with severe behavioural disorders. In her four years at Edinburgh, she has been studying flute with Alison Mitchell, and is currently working on material for her final recital in May. During her time in Edinburgh, Rachel has played in the orchestra for many shows, including: the Fringe 2008 world premier of 'Only the Brave', EUSOG's 2009 Fringe production of 'Rent', 'The Pajama Game', with Edinburgh University Footlights and this year is Assistant Musical Director for EU Footlights' production of 'Anything Goes'.

Naomi Baker is a final year music student in the University of Edinburgh, studying voice with Eric von Ibler. She has been largely involved in many University choirs, societies and productions over the past four years. She has recently sung in Edinburgh Studio Opera's *Opera Cabaret*, as Constance in *The Dialogues of the Carmelites* by Poulenc and Peaseblossom in Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and also their recent masterclass with Arlene Rolph. Naomi is working towards her final recital in May but will also be appearing in Leoš Janáček's *A Cunning Little Vixen* at the end of February and is the soprano soloist in the Edinburgh University Music Society's forthcoming concert of Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

Iain McLarty is currently studying for a Masters in Musicology having graduated last year with a degree in Maths and Music. He studied piano with Claire Haslin and is currently organ scholar at St Giles' Cathedral.