
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Spring - Summer 2016

Friday 5 February 2016

1.10pm

Greyfriars Kirk

Students from the Reid School of Music

Programme of works by BRAHMS, J.S. BACH,
VLASOV and MILHAUD.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Kathryn Humberstone · clarinet Ailsa Aitkenhead · piano

Clarinet Sonata No.2 in E-flat major Op. 120, No. 2

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

- I. Allegro amabile
- II. Appassionato, ma non troppo allegro
- III. Andante con moto - allegro

Late in 1890, Brahms declared his retirement from composition, intending to revise existing works but compose nothing new. A performance by Meiningen clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld however, inspired Brahms to defer his retirement, leading to the composition of works heavily featuring the clarinet. The two clarinet sonatas, both completed in 1894 and premiered in Meiningen the same year, and were of special significance in the development of the clarinet repertoire.

The second sonata beautifully explores the tonal and technical potential of the clarinet. Interestingly, the work is in three movements rather than the traditional four, and the tender, *amabile* first movement embraces the warm colours of the clarinet. The lyrical, winding theme which opens the first movement is continually developed, undergoing subtle harmonic shifts at the end of the recapitulation, leading to the *tranquillo* coda. This highly atmospheric section reveals a changing emphasis in Brahms' later works towards colour, and sound just for the enjoyment of sound – almost a precursor to the impressionistic composing of Debussy. The second movement is a fiery *scherzo*. The passionate outer sections fully utilise the expressive abilities of the clarinet and the richness of the piano. These enclose a reverential *sostenuto* trio where the more sombre colours of the clarinet's tone are explored. The third movement is a set of six variations on a *grandioso* dotted theme and plays with ambiguity of phrasing and ending with a *piu tranquillo* coda in the sonata's home key.

K.H.

Pàdruig Morrison · accordion

Prelude and Fugue in C minor BWV 549

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

arr. P. Morrison/D. Gajic

This *Prelude and Fugue in C minor* is thought to have been composed around 1705, while Bach was in Arnstadt. The Prelude sets the austere mood of the piece with passages that foreshadow the famous *Toccatina and Fugue in D minor*. The Fugue continues with a similar mood, building towards a flamboyant ending.

Five Views on the Gulag Stat

Victor Vlasov (b.1936)

- II. Prisoners Walking

Five Views on the Gulag State presents vivid pictures of the Gulag Labour Camps in the USSR. Each movement presents a different aspect of the camp: the environment, the prisoners walking, the criminals, the tree cutting, and the slave drivers. Prisoners were mentally and physically worn down by hours spent on meaningless tasks such as tree cutting, marching and quarrying; an aspect which the second movement seeks to depict.

P.M.

Roanna Tait · violin Sophia Turner · clarinet Marianne Sice · piano

Suite Op. 157b pour violon, clarinette & piano

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

- I. Ouverture
- II. Divertissement
- III. Jeu
- IV. Introduction et Final

Darius Milhaud was a French composer and teacher, born to a Jewish family in Marseilles. He began studying the violin at a young age and went on to study violin at the Paris conservatoire for a short while before deciding to pursue a career in composition.

Suite for violin, clarinet and piano was composed in 1936 and is written in four highly contrasting movements. The *Ouverture* is light and playful and contains a very memorable melody. The violin and clarinet often play in unison, octaves and runs whilst the piano is alone. The second movement, *Divertissement*, opens with a dialogue between the clarinet and violin that is based on short rising and falling motives. The two instruments are shortly joined by the piano where all three instruments create a polyphonic texture.

The third movement, *Jeu*, is particularly significant as the piano is entirely tacet leaving only a duet between violin and clarinet. Milhaud uses this movement to showcase the two instruments in a playful manner. Both melody instruments span a similar range of notes, which could be seen as a problem. Yet the composer uses this as an opportunity to work with their individual sounds and colours in an intricate and creative way. It has two distinct contrasting sections, the first being lively and light-hearted and the second being lyrical with a slightly slower tempo.

The fourth movement opens with a mournful yet dramatic *Introduction* which flows into the *Finale*. This section has a memorable, bright melody throughout which is cleverly passed between all three instruments, sometimes being heard identically and sometimes in different octaves with variations. It ends with a sense of ambiguity; Milhaud recalls the mournful mood of the *Introduction* finally emerging in a tierce de picardie as the final chord is yet still overshadowed by the unresolved seventh and ninth.

Although this combination of instruments is unusual, Milhaud utilises it effectively in his *Trio for violin, clarinet and piano* Op. 157b making it an important piece for chamber music repertoire.

R.T., S.T., M.S.

Kathryn Humberstone is in her final year of study at the Reid School of Music. Since completing her Trinity diploma in 2015, she has performed in concerts both in Edinburgh and at home in London, and is keen to be involved in music here in Scotland on graduating from university.

Pàdruig Morrison was born in the Outer Hebridean island of North Uist in 1996 and began the accordion at the age of eight. A Gaelic speaker, he was raised with a strong cultural inheritance in the oral tradition which has taken him to play and teach at festivals in Germany, Holland and Austria. He began studying Classical Accordion with Djordje Gajic when attending St Mary Music School, Edinburgh in 2012. In 2013 he was the winner of the school concerto competition, and the first accordionist to reach the final of the Edinburgh Competition Festival concerto competition, resulting in two performances with orchestras, working with conductors William Conway and David Watkin respectively. In his first year studying music at Edinburgh University, Pàdruig was successful in gaining the Sir Thomas Beecham Scholarship for best instrumental performance, and the Guthrie Watson scholarship for overall performance. Pàdruig has particular interests in composition (composing the soundtrack to a 60-minute BBC Alba documentary film in 2014) and Scottish ethnomusicology, as well as being a crofter of pedigree Hebridean sheep.

Roanna Tait is a third year BMus student at the University of Edinburgh. She studies piano with Nicholas Ashton and violin with Angus Ramsay, maintaining both instruments as a joint first study. As a violinist she has performed in the BBC Proms and toured to China with NYOS. She has also played a solo duet with Nicola Benedetti in the Usher Hall. This year she is the leader of the Edinburgh University Music Society's Symphony Orchestra. Her favourite aspect of music making as a chamber musician is performing with her friends and fellow students as part of the 'Milhaud Trio'.

Sophia Turner is a third year BMus student at the University of Edinburgh. Sophia's first study is clarinet but she is also committed to and very much enjoys her second study, piano. Sophia has a passion for orchestral playing and has played with Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra, The Meadows Chamber Orchestra and Edinburgh University Music Society's Sinfonia this academic year. As well as performing with EUMS Sinfonia and Chorus Sophia has thoroughly enjoyed her position on the committee as Treasurer. Sophia has a great fondness for Milhaud's trio and has enjoyed rehearsing the Milhaud trio fully and hopes to continue with chamber music of this nature in the future. She is very grateful to the music department for helping her find confidence and love in performing and hopes to take Recital in fourth year.

Marianne Sice is currently in her third year studying music at the University of Edinburgh. Specialising in performance, she maintains piano and voice as joint first study. Although a classically trained pianist, Marianne enjoys exploring a variety of different musical genres and is currently training for a Diploma in Piano Studies (DipABRSM) with a programme consisting of contemporary and experimental 20th century-music. Marianne is also passionate about musical theatre and was given the role of first pianist in the stage production of *Barnum* in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2015. She very much enjoys playing and working with other musicians and ensembles as a collaborative pianist as well as a soloist, and is looking forward to continue playing and developing repertoire with the presently titled 'Milhaud Trio'.