

80th Birthday Concert for Hugh Wood



Friday 26 October 2012

The Recital Room
Churchill College, Cambridge

1. **Air from the third orchestral suite
BWV 1068** Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)
arr. N Cherniavsky

2. **Paraphrase on ‘Bird of Paradise’
Op 26** Hugh Wood (b.1932)

3. **Concerto for four violins
in C major TWV 40:203** Georg Philipp Telemann
(1681–1767)
arr. Werner Thomas-Mifune
Adagio; Grave; Allegro

4. **The Glove (Der Handschuh)
on a ballad by Friedrich Schiller** Graham Waterhouse
(b.1962)

5. **Pieces for cello and piano** Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924)
Romance, Op 69
Papillon, Op 77
Après un rêve, Op 7 no 1

— short interval —

6. **Trio in A minor, Op 114** Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Allegro; Adagio; Andante grazioso; Allegro

Hugh Wood

Hugh Wood was born at Parbold, Lancashire, on 27 June 1932. His mother was a pianist, and music was an active force in his early life. After military service in Egypt, he read History at New College, Oxford, where he dedicated much of his time to composing for the theatre. In 1954, he began to study composition with William Lloyd Webber and Mátyás Seiber amongst others. He taught music at Morley College (1958–67), the Royal Academy of Music (1962–75), Glasgow (1966–70) and Liverpool (1971–75) Universities, and finally Cambridge (1976–99), where he was a Fellow and Director of Studies in Music at Churchill. He is a well-known broadcaster and writer on music, especially as a polemicist against hack criticism, and an apologist for music that he admires. A book of Hugh's collected writings, *Staking out the Territory*, was published in 2008.

Hugh has composed much chamber music. An early string quartet was performed at the Cheltenham Festival in 1959, since when he has written five further string quartets, two piano trios, a flute trio and a horn trio; also a quintet for clarinet, horn and piano trio, a Chamber Concerto commissioned by the London Sinfonietta and the brass quintet *Funeral Music* commissioned by the 1992 Three Choirs Festival. His orchestral writing includes concertos for cello, violin and piano; the symphonic cantata *Scenes from Comus* (1962–5) based on Milton's masque; a Symphony; and a set of Variations, written for the BBC Symphony Orchestra and performed at the Last Night of the Proms in 1998. Another large-scale orchestral work is the deeply personal Serenade and Elegy for string orchestra and string quartet, written in memory of his daughter. Song-writing has always been important to Hugh. *Wild Cyclamen*, commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Society and the BBC, gained Hugh a British Composers Award 2006 in the category of Vocal Music.

Many of Hugh's works have been commercially recorded, including his symphony and *Scenes from Comus* (BBCSO and Sir Andrew Davis on NMC), all three concertos (on Warner Classics and NMC), four string quartets (Chilingirian Quartet on Conifer), *The Kingdom*

of God (St Paul's Cathedral Choir on Hyperion), his horn trio (Pyatt, Donohoe and Chilingirian on Erato) and his piano and clarinet trios (on Toccata Classics).

[Adapted by Alan Findlay from Hugh's web page at Chester Music]

About this evening's programme

Adrian Bradbury writes: When I met up with Hugh to talk over repertoire ideas for tonight's programme he insisted "not too much of my stuff please, for pity's sake just give the Fellows the sort of thing they want!" Hence, just one piece by the birthday boy: **Paraphrase** (composed in 1985 for clarinet and piano, based on a song he wrote two years earlier to a poem by Robert Graves). In a bid to reflect the fact that his tenure attracted so many budding young cellists to "Churchill College Cambridge" — anagram "Mr Hugh laced big cello circle" — are included four-cello arrangements of Bach's **Air** (tonight in its proper key, not on the G string) and the **Concerto** by Telemann, who was godfather and namesake to Bach's son Carl Philipp Emanuel. Hugh's teaching is referenced by one-time pupil Graham's **The Glove** for speaking voice and cello, a "...kind of melodrama in the tradition of spoken narrative to instrumental accompaniment, such as ballads by Robert Schumann and Richard Strauss..." The three **Pieces** for cello and piano by Fauré are a nod to Hugh's once declared soft spot for that composer; and the 1891 **Trio** (for clarinet, cello and piano) is given pride of place because Hugh reveres Brahms "as much as any composer."

Hugh's favourite story, one which haunts him and which brings our programme full circle, is of Brahms's meeting with the young Zemlinsky who had written a string quintet which he took to Brahms: "...to talk to Brahms was no easy matter. Question and answer were short, sharp, seemingly cool and often very ironic. He took my quintet through with me at the piano. At first correcting gently, considering one part or another most carefully, never really praising or encouraging me, and finally getting steadily more emphatic. And when timidly I tried to defend part of the development section which seemed to me to be rather successful in

the Brahmsian manner, he opened the score of the Mozart quintets, explained to me the perfection of this ‘unsurpassed formal design’ and it sounded quite to the point and inevitable when he added *‘That’s how it’s done from Bach to me!’* “

Lowri Blake (items 1 & 3) **Undergraduate 1976–79**

As cellist, singer and broadcaster, Lowri Blake enjoys a particularly diverse musical career. As soloist, Lowri has broadcast over one hundred and fifty recitals and concertos on BBC Radio and Television, and has recorded numerous CDs; her recording of Saint-Saëns’s sonatas received a Diapason d’Or. Her own CD label Lowri Records shows the diversity and eclecticism of her musical interests. For many years she was a writer and presenter of features on the popular programme CD Review, and more recently she has presented the series Page to Performance on BBC Radio 4. Until her move to the south of France in 2005, Lowri was professor of cello at the Royal College of Music and Trinity College of Music, London. She now hosts and directs Cellos at Belle Serre, courses which attract cellists from all over the world. Recent concert performances have included the première in March 2012 of French composer Pierre Caner’s concerto for voice, cello and orchestra, and recitals in the Auvergne, Paris and the Midi-Pyrenees.

Lowri writes: Hugh’s first sight of me was with my head inside a grand piano exclaiming “Skitter,” very loudly and with even grander piano reverberation, from David Bedford’s Albion by Moonlight, at the old music school in Downing Place — and Hugh has never let me forget that I was wearing “a boiler suit.” In my final year, Hugh invited me to sing his Laurie Lee Songs, this time in the new music school, and not into a grand piano, but beside one, in a rather more seemly fashion, as befitted his wonderful music.

Adrian Bradbury (items 1, 3, 5 & 6) **Undergraduate 1985–89**

After being principal cello in the National Youth Orchestra (NYO), Adrian went on to read Veterinary Science and Music at Churchill College before further study at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM)

and in Berlin. He is now the cellist in Composers Ensemble (winners of the Royal Philharmonic Society Chamber Award, 2002), Jane's Minstrels, Trio Gemelli, Touchwood Piano Quartet and Chamber Domaine, involving regular appearances at major festivals all over Europe together with a busy recording and broadcasting schedule.

Adrian is also in demand as guest principal with orchestras such as London Sinfonietta and the Royal Philharmonic, and he collaborates with neuroscientist Professor Alan Wing to carry out conservatoire-based research into string playing. Adrian is regularly invited to be Cello Tutor for the NYO, and to teach and examine at the RAM, where he is also Music and Science Coordinator.

Adrian recalls: My first musical encounter with Hugh was playing the Sonata by Frank Bridge with him in a college concert; I was nervous and managed to burn my arm ironing my shirt — I showed Hugh and his language turned A \flat minor, which relaxed me totally; it remains one of my favourite pieces.

Penny Driver (items 1, 3 & 5) Undergraduate 1980–83

Penny performs all over the world with a wide variety of ensembles and orchestras in the major concert venues. She was co-principal with Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, and plays with the London Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. She is also much in demand as a teacher and is Professor of Cello at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and a Specialist Tutor at Wells Cathedral School.

Penny read Russian at Churchill whilst studying the cello with Ralph Kirshbaum. She then won a Countess of Munster scholarship to continue her studies at the Royal Northern College of Music and with Marc Johnson of the Vermeer Quartet in the USA.

Penny remarks: I have known Hugh since the age of 11 when I was at school with his daughters and I was delighted to see his friendly face when I arrived at Churchill to read Russian. Our cosy chats in the bar almost made me want to change to music!

Stephen Gutman (items 2, 5 & 6)

Stephen has performed in the Royal Festival Hall, the Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Weill Hall in New York, Ueno Bunka Keikan in Tokyo, and throughout Europe. He has given numerous first performances including British premières of work by Sir Harrison Birtwistle, and has commissioned pieces from leading and younger British composers including Julian Anderson and Simon Holt. His enthusiasm for the music of the French Baroque led to his recent acclaimed recording of the complete keyboard works of Rameau played on the modern piano. Active as a player of chamber music, he has performed with distinguished artists including György Pauk, Yfrah Neaman, Karine Georgian and soprano Sarah Leonard and has worked with many ensembles including Composers Ensemble, Endymion, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, the Esbjerg Ensemble and the Verbier Festival Ensemble.

Stephen was fortunate to have been a friend of Hugh's daughter, Jenny.

Lynsey Marsh (items 2 & 6) Undergraduate 1988–1991

Lynsey studied at Chetham's School of Music, Churchill College, and as a postgraduate at the Guildhall School of Music with Thea King and Joy Farrall. After a year of private lessons in Paris, she joined the orchestra of English National Opera. In 1996, she became a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and has been Principal Clarinet with the Hallé since 2001. A keen soloist and chamber musician, she has given recitals for BBC Radio 3 and appeared at festivals throughout Britain, including Aldeburgh and Cheltenham. Lynsey has performed with the Wind Soloists of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe in New York and Tanglewood and is a member of the Marais Ensemble, which hosts an annual festival in Potton, Bedfordshire.

Lynsey's fondest memory of supervisions with Hugh is an afternoon when they abandoned work on her own "pastiche" attempts at Part 1B Tonal Composition, and enjoyed playing through Brahms Op

120 sonatas together, with Hugh at the piano.

Graham Waterhouse (items 1, 3 and 4) Undergraduate 1981–1984, Musician By Fellow 2008

Graham Waterhouse was born in London into a musical family and has been based in Munich since 1992 where he is active as free-lance cellist and composer. He was educated at Highgate School, Cambridge University and at Music Colleges in Essen and Cologne.

Among his recent works are *Rhapsodie Macabre* for piano and *String Quartet* written for the Munich Liszt Bicentenary celebrations, *Gestural Variations* for clarinet, cello and piano, *Epitaphium* for string trio, first performed in UK at the Wigmore Hall and *Red Champion* for solo clarinet premiered in October 2012 by Emma Johnson at the Stratford Festival. His quartet *Chinese Whispers* won the Birmingham Society Chamber Music Prize 2012.

For more than ten years, Graham has organised a series of chamber concerts at the Gasteig Arts Centre, many of them with members of the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra. His music has appeared on CD, notably on the Meridian Label with music for string orchestra (English Chamber Orchestra) and for wind ensemble (Endymion).

Some memorable early encounters with Hugh:

- The jubilation on receiving the first underlined “very good” for a three-part canon, with the remark underneath, “I don’t write that very often,”
- followed two weeks later by “this is all Rhabarb-Kontrapunkt” — German off-stage chorus all murmuring “Rhabarber, Rhabarber” (never quite understood the reference, but still found it funny).
- The hushed and reverent explanation of “APNs” as meaning “Advanced Passenger Newts.”
- The immediate retort, “quod licet jovi non licet bovi” when confronted with a purple passage by J S Bach as an attempt to justify a purple passage of one’s own.
- The remark “what the musician needs is a mixture of enthusiasm and integrity.”