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CLASSICS

The Art of Dancing

*21st-century concertos for
trumpet, piano and strings*

Nimrod Borenstein
Geoffrey Gordon
Deborah Pritchard
Toby Young

Simon Desbruslais *Trumpet* | **Clare Hammond** *Piano*
English String Orchestra | **Kenneth Woods** *Conductor*



THE ART OF DANCING

21ST-CENTURY CONCERTOS FOR TRUMPET, PIANO & STRINGS

The Art of Dancing Toby Young *Suite for trumpet, piano and strings*

1	Prelude	[2.41]	5	Trance	[5.12]
2	Garage	[2.39]	6	Breakbeat	[2.53]
3	Acid House	[3.17]	7	Postlude	[1.42]
4	Drum & Bass	[3.28]			

8	Saint Blue Geoffrey Gordon	[9.41]
	<i>Double concerto for trumpet, piano and strings, after Kandinsky</i>	

Seven Halts on the Somme

Deborah Pritchard
For solo trumpet in C, harp and string orchestra

9	I. The Grand Mine	[1.57]	16	I. Allegro	[5.57]
10	II. Trônes Wood	[0.53]	17	II. Adagio	[5.17]
11	III. Pozières: The Moulin	[2.03]	18	III. Allegro	[7.51]
12	IV. Warlencourt Ridge	[1.42]		Total timings:	[63.02]
13	V. The Sucrerie: Longueval	[1.12]			
14	VI. Flatiron Copse	[1.45]			
15	VII. Guillemont to Ginch	[2.49]			

feat. Rita Schindler **Harp**

Concerto for piano, trumpet and string orchestra, Op. 74

Nimrod Borenstein

16	I. Allegro	[5.57]
17	II. Adagio	[5.17]
18	III. Allegro	[7.51]

Total timings: [63.02]

SIMON DESBRUSLAIS TRUMPET • CLARE HAMMOND PIANO
ENGLISH STRING ORCHESTRA • KENNETH WOODS CONDUCTOR

www.signumrecords.com

INTRODUCTION

By **Simon Desbruslais**

It has been almost three years since the launch of my debut concerto disc, *Psalm: Contemporary British Trumpet Concertos*. During that time I have been fortunate to work with two of its composers again on new commissions – John McCabe, who tragically passed away in 2015, wrote the tremendous *Sonata after William Byrd's 'Haec Dies' for Trumpet and Piano* (2014), while Deborah Pritchard evocatively showcased the trumpet in *Benedicite* (2014) with choir and *Seven Halts on the Somme* (2014) with piano. I also enjoyed meeting and working with many other composers, plotting new projects and bringing their new music to life.

This new disc, the second in my mission to expand the solo trumpet repertoire, is inspired by Dmitri Shostakovich, who originally conceived his First Piano Concerto as a trumpet concerto. What an important work to us trumpeters it would have been! Eventually he arrived at a final work that is not, strictly speaking, a double concerto, but a piano concerto with trumpet obbligato. It was by reflecting upon this seminal composition in conversations with conductor Kenneth Woods that I began to develop the next

phase in my journey: new music for the forces of trumpet, piano and string orchestra, where the soloists are treated as equal partners.

I initially suggested the double concerto idea to **Geoffrey Gordon**, who was inspired to write a vivid and powerful new work based on two paintings by Wassily Kandinsky entitled *Saint Blue*. It is particularly noteworthy for its central, extended cadenza section which moulds the forces of muted trumpet and piano with double bass. True to providing equal concerto roles, Geoffrey writes dense, often aggressive piano textures which form a balanced counterpart to his dynamic, bold trumpet writing. This work was partnered in the first recording session by **Toby Young's** *The Art of Dancing* after which this album is named. I first encountered Toby through connections at the University of Oxford – he was completing his doctorate at the time – and I was struck by his wide-ranging musical tastes and infectious positivity towards new projects. It was a particular joy, therefore, when he chose to write a double concerto that merged classical concepts with modern dance forms. In our various conversations I also encouraged the use of the piccolo trumpet, which receives novel treatment in the 'Garage' and 'Acid House' movements. In an almost exact reverse of Shostakovich,

Toby had originally conceived of writing a piano concerto, which after our conversations, became a double concerto!

I first met **Nimrod Borenstein** by wonderful coincidence following a performance of **Deborah Pritchard's** Violin Concerto *Wall of Water* at the National Gallery in January 2015. Nimrod's double concerto is particularly noteworthy for its extensive treatment of articulation – in fact, the various rapid quintuplet groupings were a new challenge that I had not faced to the same extent in existing trumpet music. I would visit his house to rehearse these sections, and I was struck by the expert precision and clarity of Nimrod's musical ideas. I also find a tremendous beauty to the soaring, extended melodies of the central movement, laced with melancholy. Deborah's solo trumpet concerto, after the same paintings by artists Hughie O'Donoghue that inspired her duo work for trumpet and piano, atmospherically contrasts the trumpet with strings and obbligato harp. It reminds me of when I was fortunate to visit the studios of Hughie, and to improvise in front of the paintings alongside Deborah. I performed and recorded both of these concertos in the newly-renovated Middleton Hall at the University of Hull, where I have assumed

the role of Director of Performance and have been relishing involvement with UK City of Culture 2017.

I am grateful to Kenneth Woods for his unwavering support and belief in my work, to my manager Matthew Peters, to Clare Hammond who is quite simply one of the most incredible people I have ever met, to the recording team at Signum Classics including Tim Oldham and Mike Hatch who showed exemplary professionalism, inhuman aural skills and unshakeably cheerful temperament during the intensity of the recording sessions, and finally to all four composers involved in this recording for producing instant classics for the trumpet and orchestral repertoire. I would like to dedicate the CD to the memory of three important musical figures in my life, who died in close proximity – Nick Gale, John McCabe and David Trendell.

“You must have chaos within you to give birth to a dancing star” Nietzsche

The Art of Dancing

Toby Young

- 1 Prelude
- 2 Garage
- 3 Acid House
- 4 Drum & Bass
- 5 Trance
- 6 Breakbeat
- 7 Postlude

The Art of Dancing is a modern homage to the baroque dance suite. The piece is a set of loose variations or embellishments on the opening prelude – a short arioso based on a pop-song I wrote for a Japanese boy band – with each movement hinting at a different style of electronic dance music. The first movement reflects UK Garage, a quirky dance style based on syncopation and rhythmic instability. The second, Acid House, showcases the psychedelic aspect of this drug-fuelled genre, moving into a short interlude recalling the opening prelude, acting as a type of refrain. Drum and Bass presents a fast, virtuosic movement for both soloists, before a hypnotic central nocturne, inspired simultaneously by the hypnotic

quality of trance music and Mahler's famous *Adagietto* from his fifth symphony. The sixth movement is an earthy *Totentanz*, beginning stately but gradually speeding up into a mad, possessed St Vitus' dance to the death. A final postlude recalls the opening one last time.

In spite (or perhaps because of) this piece's electronic influences, the orchestration reflects the baroque *concerto da camera*, with musical material being playfully passed between the two soloists against the body of ripieno strings. As the piece unfolds, there is a suggestion that the trumpet is trying to tempt the piano, leading it astray through a set of elaborate music games. The trumpet often steals the piano's melodies, becoming more and more dominant – indeed, the trumpet is metaphorically 'masked' (i.e. muted) through most of the work, only becoming unmasked to reveal his true identity at the very end of the sixth movement.

© Toby Young

8 Saint Blue

Double concerto for trumpet, piano and strings, after Kandinsky
Geoffrey Gordon

Inspired by the works of Russian visual artist and visionary, Wassily Kandinsky, *Saint Blue*

(a double concerto for trumpet, piano and strings) is divided into two contrasting sections, with the second essentially embedded in the first – a kind of sonic exploration of the sacred and profane – in a fairly straight-forward A-B-A design. The first section is a reaction to Kandinsky's 1911 *All Saints I* (part of the Stadtische Galerie's permanent collection in Munich), and features the soloists and full string orchestra in a shared expression of this colourful masterpiece. The contrasting B section draws the orchestra's principal double bass into a trio with the trumpet and piano soloists, creating a kind of extended, jazz-infused cadenza, after Kandinsky's *In Blue* (1925; part of the Kunstsammlung Museum's collection in Dusseldorf). An animated return to the tutti string orchestra and some (evolved) thematic music from *All Saints I*, concludes *Saint Blue*.

© Geoffrey Gordon

This work was commissioned by Arts Council England, on behalf of the English Symphony Orchestra.

First performance given by the English Symphony Orchestra, soloists Simon Desbruslais (trumpet) and Clare Hammond (piano), with conductor Kenneth Woods; Elgar Concert Hall, Birmingham, England, 13 May 2015

9 - 15 **Seven Halts on the Somme**
for solo trumpet in C, harp and string orchestra
Deborah Pritchard

- I. The Grand Mine
- II. Trônes Wood
- III. Pozières: The Moulin
- IV. Warlencourt Ridge
- V. The Sucrierie: Longueval
- VI. Flatiron Copse
- VII. Guillemont to Ginchy

Seven Halts on the Somme responds to the series of oil paintings by artist Hughie O'Donoghue that mark seven stopping points for British troops during the Battle of the Somme. It was written for the 2016 Lichfield Festival as part of the Sound and Music Embedded programme. The concerto begins with a solo trumpet playing expressive, and sometimes explosive, music over a bass pedal to resonate with the first painting:

I. 'The Grand Mine', a place where several explosions took place, leaving a vast crater. As the harp and upper strings enter the music transforms into II. 'Trônes Wood' through a strong and vigorous passage for strings to remember the fierce battles that took place in the darkness

of the woods. The trumpet then re-enters and the music moves to the next painting: III. 'Pozières: The Moulin', a place where many Australian soldiers lost their lives, as fast moving strings and an elegiac muted solo trumpet depict the moving sails of the windmill. The music then descends and slows down before the next painting: IV. 'Warlencourt Ridge' is marked by the return of the opening solo trumpet idea, transformed and placed against a richer texture. It is also a moment of sadness, remembering all those who lost their lives. The upper strings then heighten in intensity as the next image: V. 'The Sucrierie: Longueval' is introduced and the lower strings play an aggressive passage that suggests both the battle that took place there and the fiery reds of the sky in the painting. The solo trumpet and ensemble eventually becomes as one in an expressive, homophonic statement before moving to the penultimate painting: VI. 'Flatiron Copse'. This is depicted by a gentle, flowing harp that emerges out of the darkness, illuminating the rich golden colours of the painting and the peace of the military cemetery. The movement towards the light continues as the trumpet leads the ensemble in the final section of the work: VII. 'Guillemont to Ginchy', where the road between these two

stopping points is shown stretching out into the distance. The road becomes symbolic of a journey away from the conflict of the past towards hope of a peaceful future.

© Deborah Pritchard

16 - 18 **Concerto for piano, trumpet and string orchestra, Op. 74**
Nimrod Borenstein

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro

The concerto for piano, trumpet and string orchestra was composed during 2016 and premiered at the University of Hull's Middleton Hall (UK) on the 28th of October 2016. It is dedicated to Simon Desbruslais who gave the premiere with Clare Hammond and The English String Orchestra conducted by Kenneth Woods.

I am fascinated and inspired by the concerto form and this double concerto was my fifth visit to this great genre. It is in three contrasting movements (Allegro – Adagio – Allegro) lasting around 20 minutes in total. The first movement, which is essentially highly dynamic and rhythmical, also contains

contrasted moments of profound lyricism and others of almost mystical contemplation. The second movement could be called Mozartian as it is both at times light and pure and at other times tragic. The third concluding movement is fast and playful with an almost cheeky character – but still, as with the earlier movements, there is that contrast, with moments of great tension.

SIMON DESBRUSLAIS

Trumpet

Simon Desbruslais is a British trumpet soloist, whose performances have been critically acclaimed as “steel-lipped”, “musically compelling” and possessing “supreme confidence and flair”. Equally active in baroque and contemporary music, Simon has recorded extensively for Signum Classics, including *Psalm: Contemporary British Trumpet Concertos*, an album of trumpet works written for him by John McCabe, Robert Saxton and Deborah Pritchard. Radio and Television broadcasts form an integral output to Simon’s work and over the last four years he has performed live on BBC 1 Television, BBC Radio 3 & 4

I am interested in the idea of using complex juxtaposition of rhythms to create a multiplicity of different atmospheres. It is my strong belief that the creation of contrasts is one of the most powerful, profound aspects of Music, and Art in general.

© Nimrod Borenstein

and German Radio SWR2 to millions of viewers and listeners worldwide.

A crucial element of Simon’s career involves working with composers to create and champion new works involving the trumpet. This has ranged from chamber works, such as trumpet and piano, to full-scale concertos and more unusual combinations such as trumpet with choir, or with string quartet. Simon has a particular commitment to British music – composers who have written with his sound and technique in mind include, among others, Edwin Roxburgh, John McCabe, John Truill, Deborah Pritchard, Lola Perrin, Luke Bedford, Toby Young, Tomas Yardley and Tom Armstrong.



© Sophie Cheng

Since his breakthrough season in 2012/13, Simon has given concerto performances in China and Brazil, appeared as soloist with Royal Northern Sinfonia, English Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestra of the Swan, Charivari Agréable, Brook Street Band, Ensemble Diderot and London Concertante, and as a guest chamber musician with the Ligeti Quartet, Austral Harmony, Little Venice Ensemble and Ensemble Perpetuo. He has given solo performances

at the Ryedale, Wyndham, Bangor New Music, North York Moors, Deal, and Rheine Vokal festivals, and appeared as a concerto soloist on the natural trumpet at the Wigmore Hall. Simon is fortunate to maintain active duo partnerships with pianist Clare Hammond and organist Stephen Farr, among many other fine musicians.

Simon was educated at King’s College London and the Royal College of Music, winning numerous prizes and scholarships. He was subsequently a private student of Eric Aubier in the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Rueil-Malmaison. Keen to expand on the relationship between performance and musicology, Simon holds a doctorate from Christ Church, Oxford, on the music theory of Paul Hindemith, which will soon be published in monograph form. He is Lecturer in Music at the University of Hull, where he is also Director of Performance, and he has lectured at the universities of Bristol, Nottingham, King’s College London and Surrey.

Simon acknowledges the generous support of Arts Council England, Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust, Britten Pears Foundation and Help Musicians UK.

CLARE HAMMOND

Piano

Acclaimed as a pianist of “amazing power and panache” (The Telegraph), Clare Hammond is recognised for the virtuosity and authority of her performances and has developed a “reputation for brilliantly imaginative concert programmes” (BBC Music Magazine, ‘Rising Star’). She won the Royal Philharmonic Society’s ‘Young Artist Award’, in recognition of outstanding achievements in 2015. Highlights in 2016 included a performance at the Royal Festival Hall with the Philharmonia, and a concerto tour of Poland, with a newly discovered work by Josef Myslivecek, a mentor of Mozart. Clare also curated three concerts for the BBC at the Belfast International Arts Festival, which were broadcast as part of the BBC Radio 3 Lunchtime Concerts series.

Clare has released three discs with BIS which have been widely praised. The Observer described her as a “star interpreter of contemporary music” while Gramophone noted her “unflinching bravura and conviction”. In 2015 Clare performed at the Barbican Hall and made her film debut as the younger



version of Maggie Smith’s character, ‘Miss Shepherd’, in the Alan Bennett film adaptation, *The Lady in the Van*, directed by Nick Hytner. Contemporary music forms an important part of Clare’s work and she has given 35 world premieres to date, including those of major works by composers Robert Saxton, Michael Berkeley, John McCabe and Arlene Sierra.

GEOFFREY GORDON

Composer

Geoffrey Gordon has been described as a “rising star in contemporary music” (Le Monde). His list of works includes orchestral and chamber music-vocal and instrumental-as well as scores for theater, dance and film. Recipient of a host of awards and accolades, his music has been called “darkly seductive” (New York Times), “brilliant” (Boston Globe), “stunning” (Milwaukee Journal), “wonderfully idiomatic” (Salt Lake Tribune), “haunting” (Strings Magazine) and “remarkable” (Fanfare). The Chicago Tribune hailed Gordon’s *lux solis aeterna*, “a cosmic beauty... of acutely crafted music.” And Classical Review described his *Tiger Psalms* as “a very impressive and significant world premiere... the composer makes the music sing magnificently.”

A winner of the Aaron Copland Award, Mr. Gordon has twice served as composer-in-residence at the Aaron Copland House. He has received awards from numerous foundations including the American Composers Forum, the MacArthur Foundation, the Barlow Endowment, Concert Artists Guild, the Cheswaty Foundation and Arts Council England. He has been in residence



at La Napoule Arts Foundation in Cannes, and at the historic Cliff Dweller Club in Chicago. Nominated for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Elise Stoeger Prize, and recognized by the Academy of Arts and Letters, he has received academic fellowship support from Boston University, New York University and the Guildhall in London, and was shortlisted for the 2016 Mario Merz Prize for music composition. His works are performed by some of the best ensembles in the world, including The Philharmonia, Munich Philharmonic, Copenhagen

Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Malmö Symfoniorkester, Britten Sinfonia, Cleveland Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, JACK Quartet, Zeitfluss, Ensemble Meitar, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and the International Contemporary Ensemble.

He received the 2015 commission award from the American Music Project with a major new chamber work for clarinet and string quartet (the JACK Quartet and Anthony McGill, principal clarinet of New York Philharmonic) which premiered in New York City and Chicago. In December 2015, cellist Tøke Møldrup premiered Gordon's cello sonata, *FATHOMS*, after Shakespeare's *Tempest*, at Carnegie Hall in New York. His chamber vocal work *Winterleben* setting of texts by German poet Friedrich Rückert for horn, mezzo-soprano and piano was commissioned for Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra's principal horn, Andrew Bain, and premiered in August 2015 in Los Angeles as part of the 47th International Horn Symposium. Gordon's *ROCKS* involved a commission consortium of more than 20 university wind orchestras in US and UK. His song cycle for the baritone Tobias Greenhalgh (Peter Quince

at the Clavier) and earlier song cycle *Sonnets from Neruda* premiere at the Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna, March 2018. His choral work, *CRUCIFIXUS*, for double choir and solo cello, written for the Mogens Dahl Chamber Choir, premiered in Copenhagen in April 2017, and was broadcast worldwide by Danish Radio. Gordon has served as an advocate on behalf of ASCAP in support of digital rights in Washington, D.e., and worked extensively in classical radio broadcasting. He currently divides his time between the United States and the United Kingdom.

TOBY YOUNG

Composer

Toby Young is a composer whose work explores the boundaries between pop and classical music. After winning the Guardian/BBC Proms Young Composer of the Year (2006 and 2008) and International ABRSM Composition Competition (2009), Toby's music has been much in demand, with works being performed by renowned ensembles and orchestras including the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music, Fretwork, London Mozart Players, Britten Sinfonia and CHROMA. He has also formed close relationships with several instrumentalists and chamber groups, including pianist Melvyn Tan, clarinettist Julian Bliss, Sacconi Quartet, Navarra Quartet, cellist Guy Johnston, and mezzo-soprano Clare McCaldin.

Toby's music is particularly popular amongst choirs. He has been commissioned by numerous groups, including the choirs of King's College Cambridge, New College Oxford, Queens College Oxford, Westminster Abbey, the Choir of Royal Holloway, the Joyful Company of Singers, and the BBC Singers. Many of Toby's works have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Classic



FM, and he has been the featured composer at the Kings Lynn and Stratford Festivals. He is currently Composer-in-Residence with the Armonico Consort, following past residencies with the London Oriana Choir and Reverie.

Toby is also active as a researcher, exploring the relationship between creative practice and philosophy in his work as the inaugural Gianturco Junior Research Fellow at Linacre College, Oxford. He frequently gives public talks about this work, including a recent TEDx talk entitled 'Why Do We Warble?'

NIMROD BORENSTEIN

Composer

With many world premieres, scores of performances and multiple recordings of his music, British-French-Israeli composer Nimrod Borenstein is much in demand. Leading artists and orchestras who champion his work include Vladimir Ashkenazy, the Philharmonia Orchestra, Roberto Prosseda, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, the Oxford Philharmonic and many others.

The son of a renowned artist, Nimrod's first musical experience came as a child on holiday in France, when on a family walk through a forest they came across an outdoors concert. "I just stopped and refused to move until the concert was finished two hours later. And I told my parents then and there that I wanted to learn violin and be a musician." recalls Borenstein. A love affair with music started, with the young Borenstein challenging himself by listening to classical works on the radio, then turning the sound down halfway through and himself scoring the way he felt the next 30 seconds would continue (he was often more or less correct)! Aged eight he developed a twelve-tone system. "I was very



© Nataliya Gorbovskaya

pleased with myself, until someone told me that someone called Schoenberg had got there first," laughs Borenstein.

In 1984 he won the competition of the Cziffra Foundation and became one of its Laureats. He moved to London in 1986, to pursue his studies as a violinist with Itzhak Rashkovsky at the Royal College of Music. He was then awarded the highest scholarship from the Leverhulme Trust to study composition at the Royal Academy of Music (where he is now an Associate).

Every composer needs artists to perform their music. One of the most important for Borenstein has been Vladimir Ashkenazy, who took an interest early on. A first opportunity to work together arose when Ashkenazy conducted the Philharmonia Orchestra for a performance of *The Big Bang and Creation of the Universe* to great acclaim. This was quickly followed by a Philharmonia premiere, again with Ashkenazy, *If you will it, it is no dream*. The collaboration has continued, culminating in 2017 with the release on the Chandos label of a major album conducted by Ashkenazy, entirely devoted to Borenstein's music.

Borenstein's music continues to rise in popularity, with his *Suspended* Op. 69 in particular proving a huge international success with more than 100 performances (from the Edinburgh International Festival to the Taipei Arts Festival) since its premiere in January 2015 at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. The music was commissioned especially by Sean Gandini and Gandini Juggling for their ballet for jugglers and dancers *4 x 4 Ephemeral Architectures*. The piece continues to tour the world.

A full-orchestra recording of *Suspended* launched the Berlin-based Solaire label. Among the excellent reviews, The Arts Desk wrote, "Borenstein's transparent, athletic string writing is stunningly realised...glorious, singing lines...Borenstein's sense of fun is infectious".

Nimrod's substantial catalogue continues to develop and currently numbers more than seventy works including ballet, concertos, orchestral and chamber music as well as vocal and solo instrumental pieces.

DEBORAH PRITCHARD

Composer

Deborah Pritchard has been broadcast by BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, released commercially by NMC, Signum and Nimbus and performed by the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, London Sinfonietta, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Philharmonia Orchestra, English String Orchestra, Orchestra of the Swan, The Hermes Experiment, Chroma, Allegri String Quartet, BBC Singers and the Christ Church Cathedral Choir. She studied composition with Simon Bainbridge for her MMus Degree at the Royal Academy of Music, subsequently holding the post of Junior Manson Fellow, and was awarded her DPhil from Worcester College, Oxford where she studied with Robert Saxton. She teaches composition at the University of Oxford and Leeds College of Music. She was composer in residence at the Lichfield Festival, 2016 through the Sound and Music Embedded scheme.

She is a synaesthetic composer and her violin concerto *Wall of Water*, after the paintings by Maggi Hambling, was commissioned and first performed by the English String Orchestra with violin soloist Harriet Mackenzie, conducted by Kenneth Woods at LSO St Luke's in 2014 and



© Kayleigh Allenby

the National Gallery in 2015. It was held to critical acclaim by Gramophone as a “work that will take ones breath away”. Her orchestral piece “The Angel Standing in the Sun”, inspired by the painting by J.M.W. Turner, was first performed by François-Xavier Roth and the London Symphony Orchestra at LSO St Luke's in 2016 (Panufnik Scheme) then again the same year by Martyn Brabbins and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the Lichfield Festival, broadcast on BBC Radio 3. She has also been commissioned to paint a series of ‘music maps’ for the London Sinfonietta, reviewed in The Times as “beautifully illustrated...showing graphically how the music develops, while also paying visual homage to those wonderful medieval maps of the world.”

KENNETH WOODS

Conductor

Hailed by Gramophone as a “symphonic conductor of stature”, conductor, cellist, composer and author Kenneth Woods has worked with the National Symphony Orchestra (USA), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia and English Chamber Orchestra. He has also appeared on the stages of some of the world's leading music festivals, including Aspen, Scotia and Lucerne. In 2013, he took up a new position as Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the English Symphony Orchestra. In 2015 he became the second Artistic Director of the Colorado MahlerFest, the only American organization other than the New York Philharmonic to receive the Gold Medal of the International Gustav Mahler Society.

Woods was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra of the Swan in 2010 and during his tenure lifted that orchestra to a new level of international renown. With them, he recorded the first complete cycle of the symphonies of Hans Gál paired with those of



Robert Schumann, among the most widely praised classical recording projects in recent years, highlighted in National Public Radio's 'All Things Considered', Performance Today, BBC Radio 3, the Sunday New York Times, the Sunday Telegraph, Washington Post and was an 'Editor's Choice' in Gramophone. Among his other recordings are Schoenberg's chamber ensemble versions of *Das Lied von der Erde* and *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (for Somm) by Gustav Mahler, which won the coveted IRR Outstanding rosette from International Record Review, and *Spring Sounds, Spring Seas*, a MusicWeb 'Record of the Year'. His recordings with the English Symphony Orchestra and English String Orchestra include the Elgar Piano Quintet as orchestrated by Donald Fraser,

and the complete piano concertos of Ernst Krenek, a Sunday Times 'Best of 2016'.

A widely read writer and frequent broadcaster, Woods' blog, *A View from the Podium*, is one of the 25 most popular classical blogs in the world. He has spoken on Mahler on NPR's 'All Things Considered' and BBC Radio 4's 'Today Programme' and is a frequent commentator on BBC Radio 3.

ENGLISH STRING ORCHESTRA

The Worcestershire-based ESO, the International Orchestra of Elgar Country, is an ensemble which in recent years has become synonymous with artistic excellence, innovative and visionary programming, distinctive commissioning, ground-breaking recording, a welcoming and immersive concert experience, transformative youth programmes and service to the community. Since the appointment of Kenneth Woods as the orchestra's new Artistic Director and Principal Conductor in 2013, the orchestra has re-emerged as a major force in British musical life, presenting and recording the orchestra's first full-length opera (the world premiere of John Joubert's *Jane Eyre*) to overwhelming critical acclaim, presenting

the 2015 Classical Music Magazine "Premiere of the Year", and releasing a triumphant series of recordings including Donald Fraser's orchestration of the Elgar Piano Quintet (Classic FM Disc of the Week) and the Complete Piano Concertos of Ernst Krenek (Sunday Times Essential New Release).

Founded in 1980 by William Boughton, the ESO have a long and distinguished history of collaboration with legendary figures of British music making. Vernon "Tod" Handley became the orchestra's second Principal Conductor in 2007, and led the orchestra until his death. Over the years, the ESO has worked with a distinguished list of instrumentalists, composers and conductors, including Nigel Kennedy, Stephen Isserlis, Daniel Hope, Michael Tippett, Nicholas Maw and Yehudi Menuhin, who was appointed the ESO's Principal Guest Conductor in 1991, and led the orchestra on a number of international tours. British music has always been a central part of the orchestra's mission. Appropriately for an orchestra based in Elgar's home town, the ESO has made many acclaimed recordings of that composer's music, and that of major 20th-century British composers including Vaughan Williams, Britten, Butterworth and Bridge. The



ESO discography also highlights a commitment to the music of our time; in addition to the notable recordings which grew out of the orchestra's affiliation with Michael Tippett, are recordings of music by John Metcalfe, John Joubert, and Michael and Lennox Berkeley. John McCabe served as the orchestra's Composer-in-Association from 2013 until his death in 2015. Following this, the ESO appointed Philip Sawyers as "John McCabe Composer-in-Association" in 2015. Works being written as part of Sawyers' association with the ESO include a Violin Concerto, a Trumpet Concerto a Song Cycle and a Third Symphony.

In 2016-7, the ESO embarked on their most ambitious commissioning and recording

endeavour to date- The 21st C. Symphony Project, which will involve commissioning, premiering and recording nine new symphonies by leading composers. The 21st C. Project was launched with the premiere of Philip Sawyers' Third Symphony in February 2017 and continues with the premiere of David Matthews' Ninth in 2018.

Established in 1980 as the English String Orchestra, the orchestra's repertoire expanded to include the full breadth of orchestral music, and the ESO grew to also become the English Symphony Orchestra. Ever since then, "ESO" has served as an acronym with a dual meaning.

ENGLISH STRING ORCHESTRA PERSONNEL

Matthew Peters

General Manager

Violin I

Sara Trickey¹²
Tijmen Huisingh³⁴
Carl Darby¹²³⁴
Jacqui Allen¹²³⁴
Noriko Tsuzaki¹²³⁴
Jeremy Sampson¹²

Violin II

Angus Gibbon¹²
Eleanor Cooke¹²³⁴
Emily Adams¹²
Shulah Oliver¹²
Esther King Smith³⁴
Richard Laing³⁴
Jess Townsend³⁴

Viola

Helen Roberts¹²
Isobel Adams¹²
Julian Robinson¹²
Carl Hill³⁴
James Drummond³⁴
Julian Robinson³⁴
Fran Higgins³⁴

Cello

Peter Adams¹²
Corinne Frost¹²³⁴
Anna Joubert¹²
Alice McVeigh³⁴
Julian Metzger³⁴

Double Bass

Ben Griffiths¹²
Jeremy Gordon¹²
Stephen Warner³⁴

Harp

Rita Schindler³

Key:

Numbers indicate which works the performer appears on

1 – *The Art of Dancing* / Toby Young

2 – *Saint Blue* / Geoffrey Gordon

3 – *Seven Halts on the Somme* / Deborah Pritchard

4 – *Concerto for piano, trumpet and string orchestra, Op. 74* / Nimrod Borenstein



Simon Desbruslais, Clare Hammond, Kenneth Woods & the ESO during recording sessions for this CD.

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The Art of Dancing and Saint Blue recorded in the Elgar Concert Hall, University of Birmingham, UK on 18th September 2015.

Seven Halts on the Somme and Concerto for piano, trumpet and string orchestra recorded in Middleton Hall, University of Hull, UK on 29th October 2016.

Producer & Editor – Tim Oldham
Recording Engineer – Mike Hatch

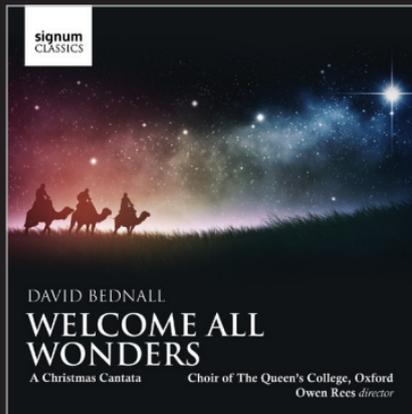
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