

# The Art of the Modern Trumpet • 1

ENESCU • HINDEMITH • HONEGGER • LIGETI  
MARTINŮ • MAXWELL DAVIES • WILLIAMS

Huw Morgan, Trumpet  
Patricia Ulrich, Piano





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Bohuslav Martinů • Peter Maxwell Davies • Christopher J.G. Williams**

The repertoire of *The Art of the Modern Trumpet* spans a period which can easily be described as the instrument's 'second golden age'. Almost 150 years after the pinnacle of the virtuoso clarino performer, whose agility in the upper register inspired some of the Baroque era's most celebrated works, the invention of the Périnet piston valve and the development of the cornet spawned an extraordinary resurgence in repertoire. With its ever-widening expressive palette, the trumpet began to flourish at the back of the orchestra, found popularity in jazz, and later – in the hands of great classical masters like Adolf Scherbaum and Maurice André – a uniquely soloistic voice. Our album views this renaissance through the prism of works for trumpet and piano; true masterpieces which have indelibly redefined the instrument's technical and musical capabilities.

We begin, fittingly, with an *Opus 1*: **Peter Maxwell Davies' Sonata for Trumpet and Piano**, written in 1955 for his fellow Royal Manchester College of Music students, Elgar Howarth and John Ogdon. With its stark, hectoring rhetoric, the *Sonata* is a synthesis of the youthful Maxwell Davies' burgeoning stylistic ideals: a pre-occupation with the varying musical durations of both medieval and Indian music; bars of ever-changing metre; and a complex twelve-tone system. Conceived for the brighter-sounding D trumpet, the ferocity of the angular, introductory theme is pitted against the piano's relentlessly percussive figures, and while the second movement interweaves sinewy melodic lines in a rather forlorn dialogue, the third returns to the turbulent discourse of the opening; juxtaposing playful episodes with cascading, aggressive chromaticism.

The year of Maxwell Davies' sonata also marked the death of **George Enescu**, considered by Pablo Casals to be 'the greatest musical phenomenon since Mozart'. Aside from two engaging *Romanian Rhapsodies*, inspired by the folk music of his native country, Enescu's works have been rather neglected in concert, though he remains a fêted cultural icon in his homeland. A prodigiously talented violinist, gifted conductor, and famed pedagogue (his students included Yehudi Menuhin, Arthur Grumiaux and Ida Haendel), Enescu studied in Vienna and Paris, eventually settling in the latter,

where he composed four *morceaux de concours* ('competition pieces') for the internal examinations of the Paris Conservatoire. Among these works, *Légende*, his single-movement concert piece written in 1906 and dedicated to the trumpet professor Merri Franquin, casts the instrument as a vehicle of poetic lyricism and dextrous virtuosity – qualities which had hitherto remained the domain of the cornet soloist. Although we are not privy to any explicit programmatic overtones, *Légende*'s rhapsodic brilliance – framed by two sublimely evocative ballads – hints at something mysterious and otherworldly, as the trumpet's increasingly fulsome declarations eventually succumb to a wistful, muted reverie.

Like Enescu, the Swiss composer **Arthur Honegger** spent much of his life in Paris. Alongside fellow students including Darius Milhaud and Francis Poulenc, he became part of a collective known as 'Les Six', whose loosely affiliated compositional ideals attempted to supplant Debussyan impressionism with an avant-garde musical syntax. Unlike many of his contemporaries, however, Honegger was an ardent disciple of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, from whom he developed a predilection for structural formality and a heavier, Germanic style. Such aesthetics are notably apparent in *Intrada*, commissioned in 1947 for the Geneva International Music Competition, with its distinct three-part form and weighty sonorities. As the title suggests, it is a declamatory work, beginning with a striking *Maestoso* reminiscent of the powerful trumpet parts in Honegger's *Second Symphony* and the dramatic oratorio, *Jeanne d'Arc*. An insistent, energetic *Allegro* follows, replete with brilliant flourishes, before the noble material of the opening returns, this time bringing the work to a stately close.

It was during Christmas 1939, whilst living in exile in Switzerland, that **Paul Hindemith** completed his *Sonata for Trumpet and Piano*. Since the accession of the National Socialists to power in his native Germany, Hindemith's position had become increasingly untenable: Joseph Goebbels publicly denounced him as a 'noise-maker', and his work was featured at a diabolical exhibition of 'Degenerate Music'. Despite this sombre backdrop, and the outbreak of

World War Two, Hindemith's remarkable creativity continued apace: 1939 was a particularly fruitful year, which included the birth of the *Violin Concerto* and sonatas for viola, clarinet, and horn (part of his series of substantial works to challenge serious amateur performers of virtually every solo instrument). Arguably, the *Sonata for Trumpet and Piano* is arguably the finest in the cycle – skilfully combining Hindemith's typically functional *Gebrauchsmusik* ('utility music') with modern elements of chromatic atonality – which the composer himself considered to be 'maybe the best thing I have succeeded in doing in recent times'. Powerfully idiomatic and tautly symmetrical in form, the opening movement, with its penchant for emphasising the 'perfect' consonant intervals, allows the soloist's dramatic proclamations to soar over the robust piano configuration (it is not for naught that Hindemith's dedication reads, 'for my kind and equally daring pianist!') The second movement contrasts a quirky, almost whimsical air with a sinister march, while the finale, *Trauermusik* ('funeral music'), uses the trumpet – so often an instrument of brilliance and celebration – as the main protagonist in a sombre lament. This troubled, meditative journey ends with a setting of the 17th-century Lutheran chorale, *Alle Menschen müssen sterben* ('All Men Must Die'), which Bach had intabulated in 1710 (*BWV 643*). In so doing, we hear the solemn intoning of man's mortality, but also the glorious promise of a heavenly, eternal life.

**Bohuslav Martinů's Sonatina for Trumpet and Piano** dates from early 1956, during which time he held teaching positions at the Mannes College of Music in New York, and the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia. Having fled Europe under the threat of Nazi oppression, Martinů felt that America offered the possibility of artistic freedom and bountiful economic rewards: he soon became a favourite composer of the Russian-born conductor Serge Koussevitzky, who commissioned and premiered many of his symphonic works with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Among an extraordinary plethora of chamber music, the *Sonatina* is a sunny, 'New World' miniature, fusing elements of jazz and folk music with a relentless, motoric energy. Unpredictable syncopations, bursts of flutter-tonguing, ecclesiastical chorales and a jocular polka are crisply juxtaposed in a pithy, almost satirical style, which owes as much to Martinů's Bohemian heritage as the neo-Classical principles of order, balance, and clarity.

Born in Wales, **Christopher Williams** graduated from Cardiff University and now leads a varied professional life as a pianist, composer, conductor, teacher and arranger. Williams is currently Assistant Director of the BBC National Chorus of Wales and a staff accompanist at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, as well as being in great demand as a chamber musician. The kaleidoscopic soundscape of *XX Mountains of Abstract Thought* is a musical illustration of 'Judgement', the 20th picture card of the Major Arcana in the Rider-Waite-Smith tarot deck, which depicts the resurrection of the body as described in 1 Corinthians 15:52, and so memorably set by Handel in his oratorio, *Messiah*: '[For] the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised...' Written in 2015 and premiered later that year at the International Trumpet Guild conference in Ohio, *XX Mountains of Abstract Thought* is a compelling, impressionistic dialogue: broad, lyrical strokes are interlaced in an almost improvisatory form, before the stillness of the opening is punctured by a terse, increasingly persistent mechanical cell. If the coda's initially exultant blaze suggests a triumphal conclusion, the listener is mistaken: in the stark desolation that follows, only two frail strands remain.

No anthology of contemporary music for trumpet and piano would be complete without **György Ligeti's** wildly theatrical *Mysteries of the Macabre*. Arranged by Elgar Howarth, the music binds together three coloratura arias sung by the character Gepopo in Ligeti's darkly surrealist opera *Le Grand Macabre*, written between 1974 and 1977, and premiered in Stockholm with Howarth himself conducting. Though much of the work's dramaturgy is concerned with a dizzying variety of existential tension, comic irony, and apocalyptic annihilation, these excerpts show Ligeti's pantomimic timing and skilful sleight of hand. As Chief of the 'Secret Political Police', Gepopo is tasked with informing Prince Go-Go and the inhabitants of Brueghelland that their planet is in danger of imminent destruction; but his convoluted message, paralysed with fear and paranoid hysteria, is almost unintelligible. Howarth's arrangement captures this through an absurd merry-go-round of shrieks, whistles, stamps, maraca shakes, and spoken gobbledygook: as Gepopo's convulsions escalate and his psychological dissemblage intensifies, the music lurches inexorably towards the abyss.

**Huw Morgan**



### **Huw Morgan**

Winner of the Prague Spring, Ellsworth Smith, Girolamo Fantini, Only Brass and Lieksa international trumpet competitions, Huw Morgan is principal trumpet of the Sinfonieorchester Basel, a founder member of brass ensemble Septura and assistant lecturer at the Musikhochschule Luzern. Solo highlights include concerto appearances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic and Irish Chamber Orchestra. In recital he performs at the Wigmore Hall, and the Cheltenham, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, International Trumpet Guild and Kaposvár festivals. As a guest principal, Morgan works regularly with many leading ensembles, including the London Symphony, NDR Elbphilharmonie and London Philharmonic orchestras, the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and the Nash Ensemble. He can be heard on over 30 commercial recordings, and is frequently invited to give masterclasses throughout Europe, America and Asia. Born in South Wales, Morgan studied at Chetham's School of Music, the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Zürcher Hochschule der Künste. His principal teachers included John Dickinson, Murray Greig, James Watson, Mark David, Robert Farley and Frits Damrow. Huw Morgan is a Yamaha Artist.



### **Patricia Ulrich**

Swiss pianist Patricia Ulrich graduated in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in music under the tutelage of Yvonne Lang at the Musikhochschule Luzern. This was followed by a Master in Performance with distinction under Konstantin Lifschitz (2010) and a Master in Lied Accompaniment with Edward Rushton (2013). She received further musical inspiration through masterclasses with highly regarded artists including Andrei Gavrilov, Geoffrey Douglas Madge and Juliane Banse. In addition to her chamber music performances, Ulrich is a member of Switzerland's renowned 21st Century Orchestra, a sought-after accompanist for masterclasses and competitions, and works regularly at the music academies in Basel and Luzern.

The first volume in this groundbreaking series explores the 20th and 21st centuries' most celebrated works for trumpet and piano; pieces which have allowed the modern performer to discover a kaleidoscopic palette of emotions and characters. From George Enescu's *Légende* to Christopher Williams' *XX Mountains of Abstract Thought*, the result is an exhilarating journey that surprises and enthralls the listener with tender lyricism, powerful sonorities and stunning virtuosity.

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**Peter MAXWELL DAVIES**  
(1934–2016)

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano,  
Op. 1 (1955) 6:54

- 1** I. Allegro moderato 1:42
- 2** II. Lento 2:54
- 3** III. Allegro vivo 2:14

**George ENESCU (1881–1955)**  
**4** *Légende* (1906) 6:28

**Arthur HONEGGER (1892–1955)**  
**5** *Intrada*, H. 193 (1947) 4:27

**Paul HINDEMITH (1895–1963)**  
Sonata for Trumpet and Piano  
(1939) 15:59

- 6** I. Mit Kraft 5:37
- 7** II. Mässig bewegt 2:32
- 8** III. Trauermusik. Sehr langsam 7:43

**Bohuslav MARTINŮ (1890–1959)**

**9** *Sonatina for Trumpet and Piano*,  
H. 357 (1956) 7:46

**Christopher J.G. WILLIAMS**  
(b. 1972)

**10** *XX Mountains of Abstract  
Thought* (2015) 9:15

**György LIGETI (1923–2006)**

**11** *Mysteries of the Macabre:*  
Three arias from the opera  
*Le Grande Macabre* (1988)  
(arr. Elgar Howarth, b. 1935) 8:19

**Huw Morgan, Trumpet**  
**Patricia Ulrich, Piano**



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