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Composers(s): Lennox Berkeley; Malcolm Arnold; Gordon Jacob; York Bowen; Edmund Rubbra
Repertoire: English Recorder Works
Artists: Jill Kemp (recorders)
Aleksander Szram (piano); Brodowski Quartet
Catalogue No.: MMC103
Bar Code: 5065001668036
Release Date: 8th April 2013
Format: CD1/Standard Jewel Case
UK Dealer Price: £8.40
UK Distribution: Discovery

Track listing

Lennox Berkeley: Sonatina; **Malcolm Arnold:** Sonatina op. 41; **Gordon Jacob:** Suite for Recorder and String Quartet; **Malcolm Arnold:** Solitaire; **York Bowen:** Sonata op. 121; **Edmund Rubbra:** Meditazioni sopra "Coeurs Désolés" op. 67; **Malcolm Arnold:** Fantasy for Recorder and String Quartet

Music & Media

Composer & Repertoire Information

Of the musical instruments brought back into use as a result of the early music revival in the 20th century, the renaissance of the recorder has perhaps been the most spectacular. Its use as a musical teaching aid in schools has not always endeared it to the general public or, indeed, the musical world, but it has gained a remarkable following.

Today it is widely played and enjoyed in an amateur context and also championed by an increasing number of acclaimed professional virtuoso players. That this is the case, however, must be attributed to a handful of recorder pioneers who in the years immediately before and after World War II not only consolidated its place in the realm of early music, but also sought to establish for it a contemporary repertoire.

The most eminent of these players was Carl Dolmetsch (1911-1997) probably the first acknowledged recorder virtuoso of the 20th century. In February 1939 Carl Dolmetsch gave his first recital at London's Wigmore Hall (the first in modern times dedicated to the recorder as a solo instrument) and in the absence of the sort of contemporary piece he was seeking played a new composition of his own. But he was beginning to find allies for his cause to expand the repertoire, particularly in the person of Manuel Jacobs (1910-1993) a recorder enthusiast and part-time music journalist. Under the pen name 'Terpander' Jacobs had written campaigning articles in *The Musical Times* extolling the virtues of the recorder as an instrument for contemporary music. In addition he had taken the practical step of inviting a group of composers of the then younger British school to write new works for the instrument. Among these, the *Sonatina* for treble recorder and piano by **Lennox Berkeley** was particularly appreciated, and as a result of Dolmetsch's personal enjoyment and esteem for the piece he gave its first public performance at his second Wigmore Hall recital in November 1939. It remains a frequently-played and favourite work in the 20th-century repertoire.

Sadly, the War years seriously disrupted progress of this initiative, but in 1946, with encouragement from Jacobs, Dolmetsch approached the composer **York Bowen**, whose *Sonata* Op. 121 for recorder and piano was premiered with the composer at the piano at Dolmetsch's Wigmore Hall recital in May the following year. Dolmetsch's quest for new works continued, and he contacted Edmund Rubbra to ask if he would compose a piece for the 1949 Wigmore Hall recital. **Rubbra's** *Meditazioni sopra 'Coeurs désolés'* Op. 67 is founded on a chanson by Josquin des Prés, the theme of which is announced over rich keyboard chords.

By the 1950s, a number of other distinguished recorder players were beginning to emerge and inspire composers to write for the instrument. One such was the larger-than-life, blind player Philip Rogers, for whom a key composition was **Malcolm Arnold's** *Sonatina* for treble recorder and piano Op. 41. It was completed in 1953 and is the work immediately following Arnold's Symphony No.2. The last movements of both works share much of the same ebullient character and indeed hints of thematic material. It was also during the 1950s that Dolmetsch began to seek new works that scored for the recorder with strings and the voice in a chamber music context, echoing the baroque but exploring new textures.

Gordon Jacob, whose skill at writing for wind instruments was well known, was approached by Dolmetsch with a request for a work for recorder and string quartet. Jacob rose to the challenge, and his *Suite* for treble recorder and string quartet (or small string orchestra) premiered at Dolmetsch's 1958 Wigmore Hall recital, received immediate critical acclaim. Dolmetsch had visited Jacob before composition began to acquaint him with the instrument, but Jacob's assimilation of its character was exceptional.

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Malcolm Arnold was among a number of composers (including Gordon Jacob) to be inspired by the playing of the Danish recorder virtuoso Michala Petri. Among his very last works is the *Fantasy* for recorder and string quartet Op. 140 composed for Michala in 1990.

In complete contrast, and by way of a bonus, is **Malcolm Arnold's** *Solitaire* played here on recorder and piano. For such a charming miniature, its history is somewhat convoluted. It was originally composed for a tobacco advertisement, but later arranged as a whistling tune for John Annis. Eventually it was published for flute and piano, but that was not the end of the story; the recorder player John Turner immediately realised its suitability for recorder, and sought and received the composer's approval to play it on this instrument, which it fits perfectly.

The music of the 20th century shows an astonishing diversity; from romanticism to atonality, and from the mainstream to the avant-garde, which is also reflected in the now substantial repertoire of that period for the recorder itself. The music presented here is firmly of the mainstream, a portion of the repertoire first encouraged by Dolmetsch and his recorder pioneering colleagues, and now much cherished by later generations of players.

Performer Information

Jill Kemp is firmly establishing herself as one of the finest wind players of her generation. Winner of numerous prizes, in April 2009 she gave her Carnegie Hall debut. In 2007 she won the Royal Over-Seas League Wind and Brass Competition, the first recorder player to do so in its 57-year history.

Jill has broadcast on radio and TV. She has given several hundred recitals throughout Europe and the USA. She was hailed in the press as "one of the top recorder players in the world" following her performance of four concerti with Red Priest, standing in for Piers Adams at 12 hours notice. Jill regularly performs commissions and world premieres and is passionate about raising the recorder's profile and proving it to be an exciting and versatile solo instrument. She studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Goldsmiths College, and with teachers including Michala Petri and Piers Adams. Jill has given masterclasses throughout Europe and America, including at Dartington International Summer School.

Jill has written articles on the recorder for *Classic FM Magazine*, *Music Teacher* and *Muso Magazine*. In 2004 Jill launched *Recorder Revolution®* an interactive concert experience that has already involved over 3500 young people. For more information, please visit www.jillkemp.com

"A highly accomplished recorder virtuoso" - The Guardian *"A musician of depth"* - The Recorder Magazine

Aleksander Szram enjoys a varied schedule of solo piano, concerto and chamber music performances across the world, having played in more than thirty countries over five continents. He is particularly interested in contemporary repertoire and has given first performances of works by Frederic Rzewski, Daryl Runswick, Edward Gregson, Dai Fujikura, Harris Kittos, Anthony Green and Danny Ledesma among others. He is one of few pianists who regularly accompanies from memory.

He has performed at major UK venues, including collaborations with numerous soloists. Aleksander is an enthusiastic composer. He now teaches piano and lectures at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London and has also guest-lectured at the Royal Academy of Music, York University, the Juilliard School, and the Manhattan School of Music.

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First Prize Winners of the 2008 Royal Overseas League Competition, the **Brodowski Quartet** are 'the new kids on the London scene', The Times. The quartet members (*Violin* - David Brodowski/*Violin* - Catrin Win Morgan/*Viola* - Felix Tanner/*Cello* - Vanessa Lucas-Smith), originating from Germany, Wales, Scotland and Holland are currently based in London. They are 'Associate Artists' at the Anvil Concert Hall in Basingstoke and newly appointed 'Artists in Association' at Bristol University and Warwick School. Since formation they have enjoyed performing in some of the foremost venues in the UK. They have performed extensively throughout Europe, and have appeared live on BBC Radio3's In Tune programme.

The Quartet is dedicated to educational work, giving concerts in association with Anvil Arts, The Philharmonia, and the Cavatina Chamber Music Trust whose invaluable work increases awareness of Chamber Music amongst young people.

"The brilliant Brodowski are a group to watch out for" - **The Independent**

Jill Kemp - Live Concerts

April 3rd 2013, 1pm London College of Music Recital with Ensemble Musae
April 6th 2013, St Mary's Church, Honley, W. Yorks Guest artist
April 9th 2013 Princess Alexandra Hall, London Royal Over-Seas League (CD Launch Event)
April 10th 2013, 1pm St Clave's Church, Hart Street, London Recital with Ensemble Musae
April 10th 2013, 7.30pm St Mary's Church, Perivale Recital with Ensemble Musae
May 1st 2013, 1pm St Clave's Church, Hart Street, London Solo Recital
July 10th 2013, 8pm Music at Leasowes Bank, Shropshire Recital with Aleks Szram
August 3rd-10th 2013 Dartington International Summer School

Marketing/Press Activity

The CD will receive a full service to press and initial marketing will include Gramophone, Classical Music, IRR and BBC Music. For review copies and any further information, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media/MMC Recordings, which is a division of Music and Media Consulting Limited.

If you would like to attend one of the scheduled concerts – particularly the concert on April 9th, please just let us know and you will be added to the guest list.

Jill is happy to be interviewed if required, and with Aleksander Szram also available for on-air performance.