

BRAHIM KERKOUR composer

Brahim Kerkour is an Anglo-Moroccan composer currently based in London. His work explores the possibility of a musical expressivity based on the intersections of sound, movement, and space. Current research focuses on the sculpting of sound, the notion of instruments as resonating bodies, as well as relationships between memory and the perception of musical space, energy, and temporality. After studying composition and music technology at Connecticut College with Noel Zahler, Brahim went on to complete a doctorate in composition at Columbia University in 2010 with Fabien Lévy and Tristan Murail. Participation in Royaumont's Voix Nouvelles composition session, and the courses for new music at Darmstadt have complemented his training. His work has been performed at festivals and concerts including the MATA Festival at Le Poisson Rouge (New York), ACA American Music Festival at Symphony Space (New York), Festival de Rabat (Morocco), and Royaumont's Voix Nouvelles (France). From 2010-11, he was a resident composer at Royaumont's Transforme, "Se prolonger," professional training course for choreographers, directed by Myriam Gourfink and Kasper T. Toeplitz. For 2011-12, Brahim is Manchester Camerata/Sound and Music Embedded Composer-in-Residence.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

MUSIC OF LOVE

Thursday 26 April 2012, 7.30pm

WEBERN	Langsamer Satz
BRAHMS	Liebeslieder Waltzes
DVORAK	Love Songs Op.83
TCHAIKOVSKY	Souvenir de Florence

This programme of classics by the great Romantic composers explores love in all its shapes and forms.

Gábor Takács-Nagy conductor
Anna Stephany mezzo soprano

For tickets contact the box office on 01229 587140

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Catch our special coach from Ulverston and experience Manchester Camerata at The Bridgewater Hall!

Saturday 26 May 2012 7.30pm

Elgar Introduction and Allegro / **Vaughan Williams** The Lark Ascending / **Vaughan Williams** Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis / **Haydn** Symphony no.94 *Surprise*

Gábor Takács-Nagy conductor
Giovanni Guzzo violin

Tickets: £33, £27, £21, £16, £10
(concessions available until 26 April. Special discounts for groups of 10+ available)
Box Office: 0161 907 9000

COACH TRAVEL

Cost: £10.00 return
Booking: Coach seats have to be booked separately from concert tickets. Please call Paul or Sue on 0161 226 8696 to check availability and reserve your seats, and then post a cheque made payable to Manchester Camerata Ltd to: Manchester Camerata, RNCM, 124 Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RD



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CAMERATA AT THE CORO

MANCHESTER CAMERATA

Gábor Takács-Nagy Inaugural Season

SCHUBERT OCTET

THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2012

ULVERSTON CONCERT SERIES

#CamerataUlverston

DANZI	Bassoon Quartet
BRAHIM KERKOUR	Moment Translucent
STRAUSS arr Hasenohrl	Till Eulenspiegel Einmal Anders!
SCHUBERT	Octet

Manchester Camerata Principal Players

FRANZ DANZI (1763-1826)

Quartet in B flat Op.40 No.3

- I Allegro moderato
- II Larghetto
- III Minuetto
- IV Allegretto

Vivaldi was one of the first major composers to realise the expressive and delicate capabilities of the bassoon. And while in the twentieth-century the instrument has been cast in something of a Falstaffian role, Vivaldi's legacy as lover and respecter of the bassoon was built upon by a generation of subsequent composers, Franz Danzi among them.

Danzi was a cellist, conductor, arranger and composer whose father had played in the famous orchestra at Mannheim. Danzi the younger was described by one contemporary as a 'plump little man with a rounded head and sharp, clever eyes that always seemed good-humoured.' Alongside reams of stage, vocal, chamber and symphonic works, he wrote two concertos for the bassoon, a Sinfonia Concertante for two bassoons and orchestra, and three quartets for bassoon and string trio.

Which prompts the question, why so many bassoon works when Danzi was originally a string player? Well, we probably have Jacques Hartmann to thank for them. He was a wealthy factory owner and amateur bassoonist who commissioned a plethora of works for his instrument and to whom Danzi's quartets are dedicated.

The last of the three was probably finished some time in 1814. As in its two predecessors, the bassoon is cannily used as both accompanist to the strings and as a melody instrument. The three also follow the same four movement pattern with an expansive opener, tender slow movement, standard 'Minuet and Trio' and gregarious, quick finale. Of particular note in the third quartet is the prominence of the bassoon in the 'Trio' section of that third movement, but also the way Danzi treats his strings as individual voices in his closing Allegretto with a 'contrapuntal' episode that's not only musically interesting but also brilliantly engaging.



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BRAHIM KERKOUR (b.1980-)

Moment Translucent

Composed specifically for tonight's programme, "Moment translucent" is an attempt at exposing the underlying energy of a short passage from Schubert's Octet. The type of energy under observation is the general impression of tension and relaxation generated from transactions of sonic information, rather than the energetic quality associated with a work's surface. Using a structure that echoes theme and variations form, the piece opens with the first five measures from Schubert's Octet, and is followed by a series of repetitions which progressively transform the instrumental sound colour of the passage. In the process, the surface of Schubert's music is gradually peeled away, allowing the audience to descend through a moment suspended in time, until finally reaching the fluid inhaled and exhaled of raw colour at its core. The instruments that make up the ensemble, as we understand them in the style of Schubert, will also slowly morph into some other resonating body. Unlike its geological correlate, the musical process used in this piece doesn't follow a scientific truth, but is rather a figment of interpretation; something more translucent than transparent.

Programme note by Brahim Kerkour © 2012

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

arr. Franz Hasenöhrl (1885-1970)

Till Eulenspiegel – Einmal Anders!

Richard Strauss's tone poem Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks is a sumptuous orchestral rollercoaster-ride scored for over seventy musicians. But tonight, in the manner of a startling conjuring trick, we hear it played by just five. In one of the most staggering acts of distillation in musical history, the Viennese composer and musicologist Franz Hasenöhrl transcribed Strauss' piece for a quintet in the mid twentieth century, creating what has been described as 'a joke on a joke'. He called his piece Till Eulenspiegel – Another Way.

Another way indeed, and yet the miracle of the transformation is that, while much is changed, not all that much is lost – not in terms of wit, anyway. Strauss's original piece tells of the impish little scoundrel Till, who German mythology dictates was born in Kneitlingen some time around 1300. The orchestral tone poem introduces

him with his characteristically cheeky little theme (heard first on the horn), before he rides a horse through the market causing havoc, taunts those who trust in religion and academia, seduces women and is hunted down and executed before resurrecting himself as a final raspberry-blow in the face of a narrow-minded, unenlightened society.

Fistfuls of orchestral wit and colour create this picture in sound in Strauss's original version, and if anything, Hasenöhrl has even more fun compressing the material. He does so in both a chronological and textural sense; it's not just the instrumentation that's reduced, but also the duration (from around fifteen minutes to approximately eight). Despite that, the narrative sweep of the original is somehow retained. Among some of the most delicious passages of chamber ensemble writing of the 20th century, listen out for how Hasenöhrl has the double bass act as the percussion section, and to his uncanny marrying of the horn and violin (heard right at the start).

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Octet in F major, D803

I Adagio – Allegro

II Adagio

III Allegro vivace – Trio

IV Andante – Variazione 1-7

V Menuetto (Allegretto) – Trio

VI Andante molto – Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven had changed the nature of the wind sextet by adding a cello and bringing it indoors; Beethoven's celebrated Septet of 1799 was a piece that combined the entertaining feel of an outdoor 'Divertimento' with the gravitas of music that should be listened to quietly and attentively. His Septet became popular among professional and amateur musicians and also among audiences. So much so that a quarter of a century after it was first heard Count Ferdinand Troyer, chief steward to Archduke Rudolf and an amateur clarinettist, asked Franz Schubert for a septet 'exactly the same as Beethoven's'.

Schubert didn't fulfil the brief. Not to the letter, anyway: he wrote for eight instruments rather than seven, adding

a second violin. Structurally though, the Octet is laid out pretty much on Beethoven's floorplan. There's a fourth movement consisting of a theme and variations with a minuet and a scherzo on either side, while the first and last movements similarly begin with slow introductions approximately the same length as Beethoven's (one of many structural parallels). In keeping with the tradition of amateur music making in which friends liked to test and impress each other, Schubert also weaves virtuosic elements into each instrumental part (notice how hard the first violin has to work in the variation movement, for example).

The melodic and rhythmic shapes of the first movement's slow introduction hint at what's to come when the main body of the movement begins proper with the declaration airing of the outgoing main theme. The gorgeous, singing line of the following Adagio is heard first on the clarinet which was played originally by the commissioner Troyer; it remains obvious throughout the whole piece that Schubert wanted to put a smile on Troyer's face by gifting him some of the octet's most satisfying moments. There follows an incessantly rhythmic Scherzo, and then Schubert's variation movement which takes as its theme a tune from Schubert's opera The Friends of Salamanca. One commentator has pointed to the 'village fair' character of the following Minuet, which comes before a glorious finale in which an anguished slow introduction prefaces a lively march.

Blends of contrasting styles like this are found all over the Octet. It gleams brightly but is never too far from delicacy, introspection or an emotional twist, whether realised through harmonic nuance or a subtle shift in the assured scoring. We know Schubert was deeply troubled at the time he wrote it, but we also know from contemporary accounts that his efforts on the piece totally absorbed him. This really is music born of Schubert's innermost being.

Programme notes by Andrew Mellor © 2011

MANCHESTER CAMERATA

After 40 years of performing around the globe, Manchester Camerata is acknowledged as one of the UK's leading chamber orchestras. With a reputation for fresh and imaginative interpretations of a diverse range of chamber orchestra repertoire, Camerata is truly a product of its creative environment - a 21st century orchestra in one of the most exciting cities in the world. The orchestra is based in Manchester, presenting an annual series at The Bridgewater Hall, and Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) where they are in residence. The orchestra also performs throughout the North West region and enjoys flourishing residencies in Stafford, Ulverston, Colne and Doncaster.

The orchestra recently appointed Gábor Takács-Nagy as Music Director, a post he took up in September. Nicholas Kraemer, our Permanent Guest Conductor has been making music with the orchestra for over 25 years and Venezuelan/Italian violinist and rising star Giovanni Guzzo was appointed as Leader in July 2010. A central part of Manchester Camerata's work is an innovative, vibrant and award-winning learning and participation programme. Often inspired by the orchestra's work on the stage, the off stage work uses music as a way of enabling creative learning in many different educational and community settings.

Manchester Camerata's live CD recordings of Beethoven, Mahler and Mozart have received great acclaim and are available from all good record shops and online. The orchestra has just finished a long-term project to record the complete Beethoven Symphony cycle with Douglas Boyd, Beethoven Symphonies no.6 and no.8 was released in July 2011 and the Symphony no.9 Choral will be released shortly.

ORCHESTRA LIST

VIOLIN 1

Giovanni Guzzo

CLARINET

Fiona Cross

VIOLIN 2

Paula Smart

BASSOON

Laurence Perkins

VIOLA

Richard Williamson

FRENCH HORN

Naomi Atherton

CELLO

Hannah Roberts

DOUBLE BASS

Daniel Storer