

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 2006-2007

Frank Wasser

Wednesday, November 8th 2006

The Lenthall Concerts:
coming next

Wednesday, December 6th 2006 7.30pm

Paul Arden-Taylor (oboe)
Michael Bochmann (violin)
Helen Roberts (viola)
Peter Adams (cello)

Mozart arr Derek Smith: Oboe Quartet in B flat (after the String Quartet K172)
Schubert: String Trio movement in B flat
Christopher Ball: Pagan Piper / Pan Overheard
Mozart: Oboe Quartet in F, K370
Dohnanyi: String Trio, Op. 10 ("Serenade")
Malcolm Arnold: Oboe Quartet, Op. 61

Tickets £9 advance from stewards or
01993 822412; £3 students; 50p under-18s

The Burford Singers

Handel

Judas Maccabaeus

The Cotswold Chamber Orchestra
leader: Kate Bailey

Bibi Heal - soprano Frances Bourne - mezzo
Andrew Staples - tenor Quentin Hayes - baritone

Conductor: Brian Kay
7.30pm Sunday 26th November 2006

Burford Parish Church

*Tickets reserved at £15.00 (students £7.50);
Unreserved £10.00 (students: £5.00)*

from

*The Red Lion Bookshop, 122 High Street,
Burford
(01993 822539)*

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, November 10th 7.30pm

Wood Green School

Rebecca Raffell

(contralto)

Marc Verter

(piano)

*Rebecca was a winner in the 2005 Thames Valley
Young Musicians' Platform and has both concert and
operatic experience. Her future plans include a
series of recitals in New Zealand with pianist Richard
Liu.*

Tickets: £9/£7.50 (Children/WOC students £1)
from Music Stand, High Street;
C Greenway (Antiques), Corn Street; or at the door
Lenthall Members receive a further concession of £1.00.

Frank Wasser piano

Programme

Chorale: Ich rufe zu Dir, O Herr BWV639

Johann Sebastian Bach transcribed *Ferruccio Busoni*
(1685-1750) (1866-1924)

Busoni was famed more as a pianist than a composer during his lifetime, but his compositions have been revalued in the past fifty or so years and rescued from their reputation as florid and rather reactionary. He was born in Italy but came at an early age under the influence of the German musical tradition, and was well schooled in Bach's works as a child. He would therefore have been thoroughly familiar with many of the hundreds of Chorales which Bach wrote: little pieces based often on hymn tunes. *Ich rufe zu Dir, O Herr* is one of Busoni's most famous transcriptions: certainly one of the ones most often recorded.



Busoni

Sonata in C sharp minor op.27 no.2 (Moonlight)

Ludwig von Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Adagio sostenuto
Allegretto
Presto agitato

At the turn of the eighteenth century Beethoven, although professionally and financially well established, was subject to great fits of depression on account of his worsening deafness. He wrote:

You can scarcely believe what an empty, sad life I have had for the last two years. My poor hearing haunted me everywhere like a ghost; and I avoided all human society. I was forced to seem a misanthrope, and yet I am far from being one. This change has been brought about by a dear charming girl who loves me and whom I love ... and for the first time I feel that marriage might bring me happiness. Unfortunately she is not of my class.

The "dear charming girl" was almost certainly the 17-year-old Countess Giulietta Guicciardi, who was doubtless flattered by the attentions of so eminent a composer and musician; but in November 1803 she married a better-placed, if artistically inferior, admirer: the composer Count Wenzel Robert Gellenberg. In the meantime Beethoven had dedicated this sonata to her, prompting more than one commentator to assume that the limpid first movement somehow reflected Beethoven's romantic feelings, and the poet Ludwig Relstab to call it to mind on a moonlit night on the banks of Lake Lucerne. He it was who coined the name by which it has been known ever since.

In fact, the solemnity of the opening movement was ascribed by one of Beethoven's biographers as reflecting the feelings of the composer as he sat by the bedside of a dying friend. Certainly the mood is one of deep meditation, and Beethoven marked it "*delicattissimamente*" as if to steer it clear of luxurious sounds. He also acknowledged the departure from traditional sonata form by including the phrase "quasi una fantasia" in the title of the work. The second movement is very short and skippy,

and serves as a bridge to the final movement, where the weight of the sonata really resides. This is a long way from Lake Lucerne or, if not, the wind has got up somewhat. The music is tempestuous from the word go, and keeps up its furious pace for the whole of its seven-plus minutes. There are tiny pauses, notably one right at the end, as if Beethoven was catching his breath for the final onslaught, but not a sign of moonlight.

Toccatà op.7

Schumann's Toccata in C seems to have been started in 1829, the year he matriculated from the university of Heidelberg, and completed the following year under the title of *Etude fantastique en double-sons*. But Schumann reworked it in 1833 and it was published a year later as op.7 as we now know it.

The term *toccatà* seems to elude precise definition fairly comprehensively, and one suspects composers of using it as a sort of fall-back for pieces that don't quite match more conventional forms. Toccatas are almost invariably for keyboard instruments, and demand considerable virtuosity. So do many other pieces for keyboard, of course. What goes on under the bonnet of a toccata can however be anything from a fugue to a sonata, or indeed in totally free form.

Most toccatas are characterised by their energy, and Schumann's is an excellent example of this. It probably owes much to the finales of Beethoven's sonatas, with rapidly alternating double-notes and propulsive rhythms. It is in sonata form with a lengthy development section following a fairly short exposition, all powered by an unflagging *moto perpetuo*.

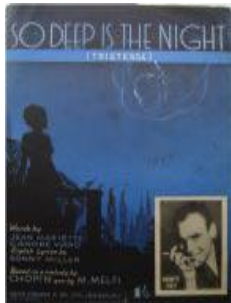
Robert Schumann

(1810-1856)



Schumann

Three studies op.10 nos.1,3 & 12



One tends to call Chopin's set of studies "études", and they were indeed first published in Paris, after the composer had left his homeland in the autumn of 1831, but some of them - including probably the first two in tonight's selection - were written before he left Poland.

No. 1 is in C major, and is perhaps the most study-like of the set. It covers the keyboard from end to end with extended arpeggios requiring a stretch of as many as six notes between adjacent fingers and the use of the index finger as a pivot.

No. 3 in E major was subtitled "Tristesse" by one of its publishers, and contains the melody said to have been the

composer's favourite. When one of his pupils played it at a lesson, Chopin sighed sadly, "Oh, my homeland." Certainly it has captured the imagination of lyric writers through the years, and has been seized on by Tin Pan Alley more than once.

No. 12, in C minor, is known to all as the "Revolutionary" étude. It was supposedly inspired by the November Uprising in 1830-1, an armed rebellion against Russia's rule in Poland, started by a group of young conspirators from the army's officer school in Warsaw. The revolution was soon joined by a large part of Polish society, before it was put down by the superior Russian forces.

The piece has become an irresistible choice for virtuoso pianists, and many are those who have recorded it - including, as those old enough to remember Children's Choice on Saturday mornings will doubtless recall, the practice-phobic Sparky, courtesy of his Magic Piano.

Interval

Six preludes (from Book 1)

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

Debussy wrote the first set of twelve *Préludes* in 1909-10, and followed these with another twelve 2-3 years later. They are short, very impressionistic pieces to which the composer appended graphic titles, sparing the listener some imaginative effort, or at least restricting the imagination to predetermined fields. The complete titles from which this evening's selection will be made are:

Danseuse de Delphes; Voiles; Le vent dans la plaine; 'Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir'; Les collines d'Anacapri; Des pas sur la neige; Ce qu'a vu le vent d'ouest; La fille aux cheveux de lin; La sérénade interrompue; La cathédrale engloutie; La danse de Puck; Minstrels.

Paganini Variations (Book 2)

Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

In the early 1860s Brahms was much engaged in writing pieces for smaller forces. Much of his chamber music dates from this period, and some substantial pieces for solo piano, including three major sets of variations: on themes by Schumann, Handel and Paganini. The last of these was (one is tempted to say "of course") the finale of Paganini's *Caprices op.24*, the demonic little theme that has attracted more composers to develop it than is statistically likely, from Brahms through Rachmaninov to Andrew Lloyd Webber. The variations (two books of fourteen each) pose a formidable challenge technically to any pianist - Clara Schumann called them "Witch Variations" and refused to play them. The pianist Jean Yves Thibaudet said of the work "It contains every imaginable difficulty. You get the feeling that Brahms set out to stretch the performer to the limits.... Once you've got to grips with this work, there won't be much left that your fingers can't get round."

Frank Wasser

Frank Wasser studied the piano with Professor Georg Sava in the Berlin Hochschule for the Arts. In addition, during this time he was very influenced by the personality of Aribert Reimanns who was also an expert in the interpretation of Lieder. For many years he has been busy both as soloist and chamber musician in Germany and abroad with repertoire from the Baroque to the modern.

He is much in demand as a teacher, giving master classes for piano and piano-chamber music and is also active as juryman on international piano competitions.

Not far from Berlin in the picturesque area of the Havelland Frank Wasser has brought the "Havelländischen Musikfestspiele" into being. This is not only for the enjoyment of local audiences but also to bring those used to concert going in Berlin to come to hear the great works of classical and modern music in the lovely Havelland and



The Lenthall Concerts

The Lenthall Concerts are supported by grants and sponsorship from:

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West Oxfordshire District Council
The Burford Garden Company
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To these, and all our advertisers, the Lenthall Concert Society gives grateful thanks. Thanks also to Burford School and Community College for the continued use of the venue.

WEEP UP WADMI!

cargo

BARN WEEKEND

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10.00am - 3.00pm
Sunday 4th December

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