

David Hackbridge JOHNSON

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME ONE

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN C SHARP MINOR, OP. 295

COMMUNION ANTIPHON NO. 14, OP. 359

MOTET NO. 2, OP. 257, NO. 2

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
Paul Mann

THE CONFESSION OF A SECRETIVE SYMPHONIST

by David Hackbridge Johnson

There was a ritual about my father's putting-on of records: the scrutiny of the sleeve, the careful handling of the vinyl ('never touch the surface!'), the semicircular sweeps of the cleaning cloth, and finally the dull crack as the stylus dropped into the groove. And what followed? More often than not, the sound of an orchestra: a late Mozart symphony or the Fifth of Sibelius, Elgar's 'Enigma' or a Bach 'Brandenburg'. I recall the sounds from the age of four, but they must have been there already at birth. From when I was around ten, the sound of the orchestra no longer remained silent after the record finished but continued in my head and has done so ever since, a more or less constant inner soundworld. At first I mentally replayed the works from my father's record collection but later found that they could be changed: material could go in different ways from those the composer had settled on. I had a particular obsession with Tchaikovsky and once was able to extend the coda of his Fourth Symphony for most of a somewhat insomniac night.

We had terrific local libraries in Sutton¹ (their classical-music sections have now been more or less obliterated) and I remember very well the earliest scores I brought back with my father: Mozart 39, Sibelius *The Swan of Tuonela*, Elgar *Serenade for Strings*. Dozens more scores followed in the years to come. The first concerts I was taken to were a series comprising the complete Violin Sonatas of Beethoven. I was seven and demanded a violin, later becoming a student of Louis Rutland. My piano lessons were with Martin Wilson, a student of Clifford Curzon. Orchestral concerts were memorable: Colin Davis conducting Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky, Previn at the Fairfield Halls, a superb Birtwistle Prom in the Albert Hall; these were incredible experiences as a child. My local primary school boasted a fine team of string tutors, all members of the Rutland family, and there were borough-run orchestras to join.

¹ I was born up the road in Carshalton in 1963 (both are suburbs of London and lie directly to the south of the capital).

I played with as many groups as I could and in my teens was able to earn money from pit-orchestra work.

By this time I already had many orchestral pieces under my belt. I feel I learnt how to write for orchestra thanks to the time spent inside one. My first orchestral work, written at the age of eleven, was a big piece called *Morte d'Arthur Symphony* (or did I call it *Symphonie*? – I don't know, since the score has long been lost). The manuscript was unusual: my father brought home from his office in Threadneedle Street (he was an investment manager for an insurance company) huge books called 'Stocks and Yield Ratios'; they were printed single-sided so that there was plenty of room on the blank side to rule my own scores. This I did for every page, filling several books over the years. For my Malory-inspired work, which was written on one of these improvised notebooks, I was thrilled when inspiration visited with a wonderful tune – and I was most put out to realise a few days later that I had simply regurgitated the hero's theme from Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*. It was a first lesson in failed assimilation.

I neglected my other school subjects and by so doing convinced myself I had no future in them. But I did enjoy reading and started to write poetry. I had written five symphonies by the time I was seventeen, but I 'de-numbered' them and started another which was labelled 'No. 1'. I showed some of these symphonies, both 'No. 1' and one or other of 'die Nullten' to a professor at the Guildhall – and was sufficiently discouraged by his response to keep quiet about symphonies for over 30 years. But I didn't mind, since I wrote them on the sly while I was also composing solo, chamber and choral pieces, which were sometimes taken up for performance. In any case, I was always very busy, as a singer (I took lessons from Fabian Smith, Arthur Reckless and Mark Wildman), occasionally as a conductor (I studied with George Hurst) or as a jazz drummer and pianist. Jazz drumming dominated about fifteen years of my life; hearing Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers at Ronnie Scott's in the early 1980s convinced me that the best use of my university grant money would be the purchase of a drum kit (my parents were less sure, but by then the kit was ensconced in my bedroom). After a migraine-inducing nine months of practice I was playing professionally. I began teaching and have done so ever since: I have taught at Charterhouse School in Godalming, Aiglon College in

Chesières-Villars (in Switzerland) and for 30 years at Nonsuch High School for Girls, in Cheam, where I am Composer in Residence. I kept up my studies, interspersed between teaching and jazz gigs; although self-taught as a composer, I recently completed a PhD in experimental music under the supervision of Tim Ewers at Kingston University. This course of study resulted in a multi-tracked opera set in the sci-fi language of Klingon in which I play all the instruments and sing all the parts. Over the years I have also acquired degrees from the Royal Academy of Music, Trinity College of Music and Roehampton University.

I kept busy with recordings (on my own label) of experimental music (including the Klingon opera), jazz and a series of CDs with pianists Yeu Meng Chan and Michael Jones exploring neglected baritone repertoire.

All this time I was steadily amassing a large list of unperformed works. But three composers gave me encouragement: Michael Garrett, Justin Connolly and Ronald Stevenson, their wise remarks tempering my sense of isolation as a composer. My visits to Scotland to see Stevenson were particularly memorable occasions along a journey to some kind of belief in what I was doing. The fact that he, too, was a lover of poetry meant we had much to discuss: word-setting, the 'epic' and 'lyric' modes and their relation to music, and the special problems of writing for piano. Michael Garrett and I have been swapping works for years and playing jazz together; Justin Connolly's humour and intellect have been a real inspiration.

In the early 1990s Georgina Roberts and David Elwin performed my Flute Sonata and in the mid-1990s, largely with the encouragement of my first wife, I showed a piano piece to Steven Gutman and he performed it – these were my first public appearances as a composer. Since then I have had piano works performed by Chisato Kusunoki, Nicholas Austin, Jonathan Powell and Miako Mori. But most years passed by without any performances at all. I was luckier abroad: I heard my *2 Advent Motets* performed in Hamburg by the NDR Chor conducted by Robin Gritton, and in Switzerland the cellist Mark Drobinsky with the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra conducted by Saulius Sondeckis gave three performances on consecutive evenings in the Grand Salle, Villars, of my *Aria* for cello and strings – a work that was written the day before the first

performance as a result of a pub challenge from Drobinsky. More recently Megumi Rolfe has played some of my solo-violin works.

These performances were very gratifying but addressed only of a tiny proportion of my works.² I think at various points I became overwhelmed by the sounds in my head; although I was writing them down, the bigger pieces resounded internally all the more insistently since there was no hope of their being performed.

The Ninth Symphony is one of those pieces that was clamouring to get out, and I wrote it between April and July 2012. The speed should not surprise, since it was in my head for so long and just wanted writing down. Often a piece appears as a blueprint, with all its sounds translated into a mental picture which acts as a kind of frozen form of the piece that requires little more than a bit of ‘warming up’ to come into being, at least on the page. For the Ninth Symphony I had a blueprint the properties of which said ‘C sharp minor’, and I lived with it for many years. The structure of three movements was clear from the start; I have always been attracted to the three-movement form that Bax often used. The first movement [1] presented itself as an unbroken span with driving rhythms and grinding brass chords; there are very few resting places. That the last two movements both end in passacaglias may seem unusual, but it was my feeling that the first passacaglia left unfinished business that the second might resolve. The last movement [3] came forward as a binary structure with another relentlessly fast and energetic section leading to the passacaglia. I can’t claim originality for this plan since Shostakovich has a similar fast/slow structure in the finale of his Fifth Symphony. I wasn’t thinking of anything extra-musical when I finally notated my blueprint, but since the music had been in my head for many years, it may reflect the fact that in 2004 my first wife had died and this was the first symphony I had accepted since her death. It was not written as a conscious memorial but on reflection it might have been an unconscious one.

My parents were both heavily involved in church music, my mother as a soprano and my father as a conductor. At St Boniface, Whitechapel, in the East End of London, I used to sit on the cold wooden floor of the organ loft and listen to masses by Lotti, Haydn,

² My worklist includes fourteen symphonies, seven string quartets, nineteen piano sonatas, four sonatas for violin and piano, over 100 songs and many choral works, including two Masses and a Requiem for choir, two horns and harp.

Mozart and those by lesser-known composers such as Methsfessel, Knussbaumer and Erb. At every Mass I was captivated by the communion antiphon which was heralded by bells. The bells would also be struck at the Elevation of the Host. You can hear the same bells today and their resonance never fails to bring stillness combined with drama. My *Communion Antiphon* No. 14, Op. 359 ('St Boniface, Whitechapel') [15], written in autumn 2016, is one of a series that explore this stillness and drama.

So far I have written eleven *Motets* for orchestra, the first in 2008. They are non-liturgical, but plainchant experts will gain as much as they wish from having the *Liber Usualis* on their laps as they listen. The *Motet* No. 2, Op. 257, No. 2 (2009) [16], spends much of its time in G minor, but like all of my uses of such terms what is really meant is a modal polarisation around a key-note.

AN UNSUSPECTED MASTER SYMPHONIST REVEALED

by Paul Mann

The three works on this disc were composed between 2012 and 2016, and all are receiving their first recordings here. Rather more exceptionally, this is very nearly the first time that their composer has heard any of his orchestral works in performance. Even without the benefit of such experience, David Hackbridge Johnson writes for the medium with complete mastery and meticulous craftsmanship, with no hint of awkwardness or impracticality, and packing above all an immense emotional punch. These scores bear witness to an uncommonly intense inward journey, one driven wholly by artistic compulsion, and would seem to be the perfect embodiment of Rainer Maria Rilke's axiom in *Letters to a Young Poet*, that 'a work of art is good if it has sprung from necessity'.

The Ninth Symphony is a bold, unflinching work, lasting almost fifty minutes and cast in three more or less equal parts so that, following the example of such works as Bax's Fifth or Prokofiev's Sixth Symphonies, there is no scherzo. It does, however,

most unusually, contain two passacaglias, a compositional risk which pays considerable dramatic dividends. The work as a whole dismisses at a stroke the oft-touted claim that the symphony has outlived its usefulness, proving that it is still possible to write one worthy of the name, making use of all the standard forms and yet rejuvenating them by means of an immediately accessible and appealing musical language.

The work roars out of the starting gate [1] – there are no preambles or atmosphere-setting slow introductions here. A deliriously insistent rhythmic figure is propelled by a driving bass-line, in music of vaulting vitality and tumultuous energy. Contained within the first bar is the motivic cell from which most of the material of the Symphony will be derived, a pair of descending perfect fourths (Ex. 1).

Ex. 1



But a degree of angst is strongly present in the searing harmonies, the combative timpani and menacing trumpets, and the even-handed metre is soon disrupted by interpolated $\frac{5}{8}$ bars, which the brass pugnaciously try to control. The horns announce their own variation of the opening theme, answered by trombones and tuba, and a canonic battle in the brass section ensues, with tense *tremolandi* in the violins and violas. The opening theme is heard again, but now sounds desperate – it is striking how quickly it has become embroiled and endangered. A violent climax is quickly reached, with swirling harp, biting offbeat accents in the trombones, and fragments of what will become the second theme, called out between the trumpet, horn, and trombone (Ex. 2).

Ex. 2

Musical score for Ex. 2, featuring three staves: Tpt. (Trumpet), Hn. (Horn), and Tbn. (Tuba). The music is in 3/8 time. The Tpt. part begins with a *ff* dynamic and a melodic line. The Hn. part follows with a *dim.* dynamic. The Tbn. part enters with a *f* dynamic. The score includes various articulations and dynamics.

As the music calms, the celesta is heard for the first time: with the harp and piano, it will come to play a defining role in the soundscape of the whole work. Along with the harp, it accompanies an edgy discussion between the woodwinds, and a short transition leads to the second subject proper, first heard in the cellos, doubled by cor anglais and bassoon (Ex. 3).

Ex. 3

Musical score for Ex. 3, featuring a single staff for V.C. (Violoncello). The music is in 3/8 time. The score is divided into three systems. The first system starts with a *mp dolce* dynamic and includes a key signature change to one sharp. The second system features a *mf* dynamic. The third system concludes with a *mp dim.* dynamic. The score includes various articulations and dynamics.

Fragments of the rhythmic figures from the first subject provide a constant undercurrent, as if all the tumult is not so easily dispelled, and the continuously sparkling celesta

enhances the emotional ambiguity and instability of the music. A richly lyrical sequence for the strings connects with a threatening passage in which a version of the second theme is transferred to the bass of the orchestra, attended by distant brass chords and slithering divided violins. The nervous energy is soon restored, and the exposition ends with a series of antiphonal brass fanfares and a confrontational, metrically disruptive stand-off which leaves the violins and violas shivering nervously.

The development begins in a lighter, more scherzo-like vein, in which a trio of bassoons and a playful bass clarinet combine the first and second themes. But as other instruments join, the atmosphere quickly becomes more highly charged, and by the time the strings re-enter with their own distorted combination of the two themes, the music is clearly headed for another conflict, which duly materialises in an extended passage of metrical unevenness with increasingly closely juxtaposed bars of $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{5}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{8}$. The maximum degree of tension is reached with the trumpets playing a canonic version of the first theme and the strings hammering out a tenacious *tremolando*, written in $\frac{6}{8}$ but accented as if in $\frac{5}{8}$.

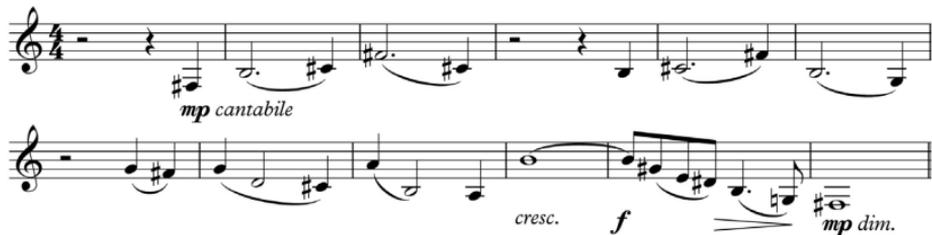
All this erupts in a brutalised version of the second subject, with the lyrical melody rendered as a shrieking grimace, accompanied by a ferociously driving bass-line. Suddenly all is silenced, and *pianissimo* chords from divided strings provide the backdrop for two ghostly recollections of the second theme in the piano, celesta and harp, separated by attempts from the bassoons to restore their *scherzando* from the beginning of the development. But the second of these recollections is quickly commandeered by the brass and, as the trumpets recall the opening theme, an insistent pounding in the bass announces the recapitulation.

It is a mark of Hackbridge Johnson's symphonic-dramatic skill that, although the recapitulation plays itself out fairly regularly, with only minor adjustments, the music now appears transformed by its experiences. The coda is heralded by a $\frac{5}{8}$ exchange in the low brass and a sequence of antiphonal fanfares similar to the one that ended the exposition. A passage now follows which might be understood as a grotesque parody of a Bruckner peroration, with a driving string ostinato accompanying a discordant brass chorale, culminating in contorted reminiscences of the opening theme. After a climactic

ritenuto, the music self-destructs, with wild sweeps in the harp, chromatic surges in the horns and aggressive snarls in the trombones. A hostile rearing-up in the brass is silenced by a woodwind shriek and a final single unison C sharp hammer-blow.

After all this high drama, the second movement [2] serves as the starkest possible contrast. Cast on a broad scale, as a set of nine variations and culminating *passacaglia*, the movement begins with a long-breathed theme which unfolds initially in the cellos, doubled by the bass clarinet, gently accompanied by the harp and violin/viola *tremolandi*. It is based entirely on the perfect fourths of the main theme of the first movement (Ex. 4).

Ex. 4



their chromatic chorale, threatening the metrical stability with triplets and quintuplets against the $\frac{4}{4}$ beat.

The lyrical Variation 4 [6] alternates rapturous phrases in the strings with brief, tender responses from the woodwinds. As the strings become more introverted, the harp and piano return to adorn the final phrase with gently arpeggiated chords, and the bass clarinet leads into Variation 5 [7], in which a tense string *tremolando* accompanies an insistent syncopated rhythm in the *pizzicato* basses, with the theme played by a solo horn. Brief and somewhat breathless phrases in the cor anglais and bassoon seem to recall the trombone chorale.

The distinctive texture of Variation 6 [8] is created by a trio of two flutes and piccolo weaving a long and somewhat metrically ambiguous line against a syncopated chordal accompaniment in the low woodwinds. The theme itself is sung out by the violas, doubled by a cor anglais. A triplet figure, first heard in the horns, suddenly invades the music, and will come to dominate the final group of variations.

Variation 7 [9] breaks out of the prevailing $\frac{4}{4}$ metre, forcing the music into $\frac{7}{8}$. A continuous woodwind *legato* provides the setting for an ominously grim brass chorale, which strongly recalls the conclusion of the first movement. Interpolated chimes from harp, celesta, piano and divided strings do nothing to dispel the dark atmosphere, and the triplet figure, first announced by the horns in Variation 6, now begins to overwhelm the music, its disruptive influence enhanced by the $\frac{7}{8}$ metre, which attaches itself to different parts of the bar in different parts of the orchestra like a virus.

Variation 8 [10] is once more lyrical, with the theme transformed into a poetic dialogue between the violins and violas, alternating with harp, clarinet and bassoon. (In spite of the large orchestra, it is remarkable how much of this movement retains the intimacy of chamber-like textures.) The music becomes increasingly withdrawn, and the final variation [11] is deeply touching, almost innocently childlike, as *pianissimo* string chords accompany a delicate picking-out of the theme, shared between harp, piano, celesta, piccolo and flute.

But the trombone chorale returns, and darkness immediately descends. The scene is now set for the first of the two passacaglias that will crown this symphony [12]. The theme

of this first passacaglia is itself based on the theme that has served for the variations, and is heard first in the harp. Its uneven bar-lengths combine with the original $\frac{4}{4}$ theme, first heard in the violas, to create a polymetric scheme which the composer ingeniously maintains throughout the long build-up which ensues (Ex. 5).

Ex. 5

The musical score for Ex. 5 is presented in three systems. The first system is for the Harp and Violas. The Harp part is in the bass clef, and the Violas part is in the treble clef. The Harp part starts in $\frac{5}{4}$ time, then changes to $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$, and $\frac{4}{4}$ time signatures. The Violas part starts in $\frac{4}{4}$ time, then changes to $\frac{5}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$ time signatures. The Harp part is marked *p cantabile*. The second system continues the Harp and Violas parts. The Harp part is in the bass clef, and the Violas part is in the treble clef. The Harp part is marked *cresc.*, *mf*, and *mp*. The third system continues the Harp and Violas parts. The Harp part is in the bass clef, and the Violas part is in the treble clef. The Harp part is marked *mp*.

There are, in all, seven statements of the passacaglia theme, of ever-increasing intensity and complexity. As the bounds of the structure are finally broken, the first few notes of the theme are sounded in the harp, and then in the tuba, before the music of the opening returns, now sounding utterly vulnerable after the immensity of its experiences. Over a distant rumble in the bass drum and timpani, the trombone chorale casts its darkness one final time, the impact clearly felt by a shuddering *tremolando* in the divided strings. The movement ends with three leaden arpeggiated chords in the harp and piano, and a brief solo bassoon threnody, the final note of which leaves the listener longing in vain for a tonal resolution.

The final movement [13] begins with a sharply rhythmic sequence, based on the descending fourths of the principal motif of the Symphony, but this time the metrical complexity goes far beyond anything that has yet occurred in the work. Groups of four are forced into $\frac{3}{4}$ bars, and $\frac{7}{8}$ bars are interpolated into the prevailing metre so that everything sounds syncopated, disjointed and unstable. The driving energy of the music is only once interrupted by lyricism, but even then it remains rhythmically taut, serrated and barbed, the material closely related to all that has gone before. Indeed, the climax, when it finally comes, turns out to be an intensified version of the same one that brought the first-subject group in the opening movement to a close. It dies away, only to be renewed with one final intensification which juxtaposes single bars or pairs of bars like a broken mosaic, and all that is left is for everything to collapse in a conflagration of trills and tam-tam strokes.

As the dust clears, a solo tuba is heard, and the same lamenting bassoon that brought the second movement to a close. The scene is now set for the second passacaglia [14], which begins as the first, in the harp, this time accompanied by the piano. The final bricks in this symphonic edifice are cast in the same material that has built the whole symphony, the perfect fourth (Ex. 6).

Ex. 6



There are fourteen statements of the passacaglia theme, and the music is of the utmost eloquence, unfolding as if in a continuous stream of developing melody. Only the eleventh variation varies the texture, with the theme relegated to a muted trombone, and a sudden shimmering of flutes, trumpets, piano, harp, celesta and cymbals, like a ringing of bells to signal the beginning of the end.

For the final variation, the strings settle upon a slowed-down version of their ostinato from the coda of the first movement, but this time the brass chorale is euphonious, with a final affirmation of the passacaglia theme announcing a colossally forceful coda. A final swirl from the harp, piano and celesta, coruscating chains of woodwind trills, and an overwhelming surge of affirmative ‘C-sharp-ness’ brings this immense symphonic journey to its profoundly uplifting conclusion.

The *Communion Antiphon No. 14* ^[5] is scored for a much smaller orchestra than the Symphony, but retains its distinctive trio of piano, celesta and harp, to which is added a glockenspiel, to recreate the ceremonial bells of the church of St Boniface in Whitechapel. As the work begins, these bell sounds are combined with string harmonics, evoking at once a sense of liturgical ritual and contemplative stillness and directly, and deliberately, recalling the ‘Carillon Nocturne’ in *Pièces Impromptues*, Enescu’s Third Suite for Piano. The first stanza of a chorale is heard in the woodwind against a more subdued version of the bell-ringing, and the listener may sense a passing nod to the ritualised Stravinsky of such works as *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. The melody is transferred to violas and bassoons, and the bells to *pizzicato* cellos and basses, and the

rest of the strings are added as the music intensifies and takes on a less ceremonial, more human quality.

A trio of trumpets takes over the bell music, which is set against a heavy syncopated tread in the harp, celesta and timpani, and the chorale is heard as a long violin cantilena which in turn dissolves into garlands of trills, building to a powerful climax. As the trills melt away, the bells are heard in their original form once more, this time attended by a softly prayerful murmuring in the low woodwinds and horns. In the closing bars, the *espressivo* violin cantilena is revived, but more intensely than before, and as it reaches its highest register is answered by a deep dark chord and two valedictory chimes.

David writes in his own notes that the *Motet No. 2* [6] is a non-liturgical work, but that 'plainchant experts will gain as much as they wish from having the *Liber Usualis* on their laps as they listen'. As with many composers, often as protective as journalists of their sources, he would not be drawn when I asked him for chapter and verse on possible plainchant origins of this work, and so I must content myself with less specific observations. The piece is a sort of orchestral essay, and indeed it shares something in its concept, if not in its musical language, with Samuel Barber's *Essays*, especially the powerful No. 2. Although the *Motet No. 2* is nominally in, or rather *on*, G, much of it is modal in character, and the musical argument is easy to follow. In particular, the final moments are possessed of a harrowing power which brings to mind the conclusion of Janáček's *Sinfonietta*. *Pace* the description of the work as non-liturgical, I would go further and regard it as anti-liturgical; there is too much earthly pain in this music for it to suggest any form of religious consolation.

Paul Mann is a regular guest-conductor with many orchestras throughout Europe, the USA, Australia and the Far East. His work as chief conductor of the Odense Symphony Orchestra in Denmark achieved considerable critical success, particularly in the symphonies of Beethoven, Elgar, Mahler, Schumann and Shostakovich; with them he also made numerous recordings of a wide range of repertoire, for such labels as Bridge, DaCapo and EMI.

He first came to international attention as winner of the first prize in the 1998 Donatella Flick Conducting Competition, as a result of which he was also appointed assistant conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. He made his LSO debut shortly afterwards and subsequently collaborated regularly with the Orchestra, both in the concert hall and recording studio. Special projects with the LSO included the Duke Ellington Centenary Concert at the Barbican Hall with Wynton Marsalis, and a famous collaboration with the legendary rock group Deep Purple in two widely acclaimed performances of Jon Lord's *Concerto for Group and Orchestra* at the Royal Albert Hall, the live DVD and CD of which remain international bestsellers. Among his more recent recordings is the first-ever studio account of Lord's *Concerto*, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, in collaboration with Jon Lord himself and a star-studded cast of soloists, and the live recording of *Celebrating Jon Lord*, a special concert which took place at the Royal Albert Hall in April 2014 with an all-star cast paying tribute to the late composer.

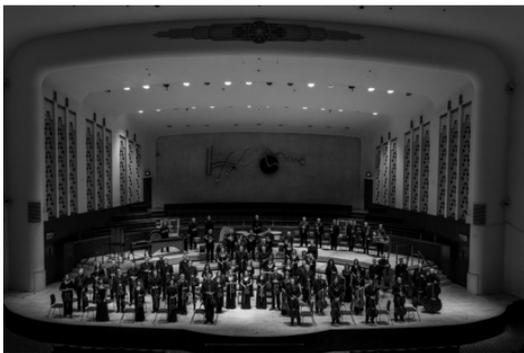
This is his seventh recording for Toccata Classics. The first featured the orchestral music of Leif Solberg (TOCC 0260) and the second, third and fourth (TOCC 0262, 0263 and 0299) presented the complete orchestral music of Charles O'Brien, recorded from Paul Mann's own editions, newly created for the purpose. His fifth was the first volume in a remarkable series of new works for string orchestra, *Music For My Love* (TOCC 0333), featuring music by Brahms (arranged by Ragnar Söderlind), Maddalena Casulana (arr. Colin Matthews), Brett Dean, Steve Elcock, Andrew Ford, Robin Holloway, Mihkel Kerem, Jon Lord (arr. Paul Mann), John Pickard, Poul Ruders and Ragnar Söderlind himself. A first volume of his recording of the complete orchestral music of the hitherto undiscovered English Romantic Henry Cotter Nixon (1842–1907), with the Kodály Philharmonic Orchestra, Debrecen, Hungary, was recently released on Toccata Classics TOCC 0373, and Volumes Two and Three (TOCC 0373 and 0374) are in preparation.



Photo: © Ugo Ponte

The **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** is the oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra in Britain, its origins dating back to 1840 when the Liverpool Philharmonic, as it was then, was founded by a group of Liverpool music-lovers.

Vasily Petrenko was appointed Principal Conductor of the Orchestra in September 2006 and in September 2009 became Chief Conductor. Now in its tenth year, his dynamic music partnership with the Orchestra has attracted world-wide acclaim and



drawn new audiences, including many young people, to live classical music. Petrenko joins a distinguished line of musicians who have led the Orchestra during its illustrious history, including Max Bruch, Sir Charles Hallé, Sir Henry Wood, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Sir John Pritchard, Sir Charles Groves, Walter Weller, David Atherton, Marek Janowski, Libor Pešek, Petr Altrichter and Gerard Schwarz.

The Orchestra gives over sixty concerts each season in its home, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, and in recent seasons has given premiere performances of major works by Stewart Copeland, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Einaudi, James Horner, Karl Jenkins, Sir James MacMillan Nico Muhly, Michael Nyman, Sir John Tavener and Michael Torke.

Recent additions to the Orchestra's recordings catalogue include Elgar's First Symphony, Rachmaninov's complete piano concertos and three symphonies, and Tchaikovsky's Symphonies Nos. 1, 2 and 5. The recording of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10, part of a complete cycle of the Shostakovich symphonies, was the *Gramophone* Awards 'Orchestral Recording of the Year' in 2011.

The Orchestra also performs widely throughout the UK and internationally, most recently touring to China, Switzerland, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Germany, Romania, the Czech Republic and Japan.

Its website can be found at www.liverpoolphil.com.



TOCCATA DISCOVERY CLUB

<p>David MATTHEWS COMPLETE STRING QUARTETS, VOLUME FOUR 1970-1980 COMPLETE BY THE AUTHOR REARRANGEMENTS 1980-1990 1990-2000 2000-2010 2010-2020</p> <p>Kristian Quartet</p>	<p>Heinrich Wilhelm ERNST COMPLETE WORKS, VOLUME FIVE 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Shankar Lally, violin Aniello Lanzetta, piano</p>	<p>Charles O'BRIEN COMPLETE ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME TWO 1850-1860 1860-1870 1870-1880 1880-1890 1890-1900</p> <p>Lisplatz Symphony Orchestra Paul James</p>	<p>Vlaslas JAKUBENAS THE SONG OF THE EXILES AND THE DEPORTED 1900-1910 1910-1920 1920-1930 1930-1940 1940-1950</p> <p>Vilnius Mendelg Choir, Jurga Mozila Nikolas Aligauskas, conductor</p>	<p>Pauline VIARDOT SONGS 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Ira Karkhava, soprano Ludvik Anglinski, piano</p>
<p>John WORGAN COMPLETE ORGAN MUSIC 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Timothy Robinson</p>	<p>Grigori FRID COMPLETE MUSIC FOR VIOLA AND PIANO 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Olga Arifmanova, viola Christopher Gable, piano</p>	<p>Leonid SABANEYEV PIANO MUSIC, VOLUME ONE 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Jonathan Powell</p>	<p>Guy ROPARTZ PIANO MUSIC 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Stephanie McCullum</p>	<p>Ernst KRENEK COMPLETE PIANO CONCERTOS, VOLUME ONE 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p> <p>Michael Kaufman English Symphony Orchestra Karelita Novotny</p>
<p>William Hummelers DAVAL 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p>	<p>Emil FRLAY 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p>	<p>Ferner PAPKAS 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p>	<p>Mervyn Rose RYZALL 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p>	<p>Joseph RYELANDT 1800-1810 1810-1820 1820-1830 1830-1840 1840-1850</p>

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DAVID HACKBRIDGE JOHNSON *Orchestral Music, Volume One*

Symphony No. 9 in C sharp minor, Op. 295 (2012)	49:04
1 I First movement: <i>Allegro molto</i>	15:36
II Second movement	18:28
2 Theme: <i>Lento</i>	1:11
3 Var. 1: <i>a tempo</i>	1:24
4 Var. 2: <i>a tempo</i>	0:43
5 Var. 3: <i>a tempo</i>	0:55
6 Var. 4: <i>Andante</i>	1:15
7 Var. 5: <i>Andante</i>	1:02
8 Var. 6: <i>Più mosso</i>	1:13
9 Var. 7: <i>L'istesso tempo</i>	1:29
10 Var. 8: <i>Andante</i>	1:31
11 Var. 9: <i>Andante</i>	1:11
12 Passacaglia I: <i>a tempo</i>	6:34
III Third movement	15:01
13 <i>Vivace energico</i>	7:30
14 Passacaglia II: <i>Andante dolente</i>	7:30
15 Communion Antiphon No. 14, Op. 359 ('St Boniface, Whitechapel') (2016)	5:33
<i>Lento</i>	
16 Motet No. 2, Op. 257, No. 2 (2009)	13:17
<i>Moderato</i>	
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra	TT 68:09
Paul Mann, conductor	FIRST RECORDINGS