



WEINBERG

Flute Concertos Nos. 1 and 2

12 Pieces for Flute and Orchestra

5 Pieces for Flute and Piano

Claudia Stein, Flute

Elisaveta Blumina, Piano

Szczecin Philharmonic Orchestra

David Robert Coleman

Mieczysław
WEINBERG
(1919–1996)

Complete Works for Flute

Flute Concerto No. 1, Op. 75 (1961)	14:59
① I. Allegro molto	5:21
② II. Largo	4:07
③ III. Allegro comodo	5:29
Flute Concerto No. 2, Op. 148b (1987)	19:54
④ I. Allegro	8:42
⑤ II. Largo	4:15
⑥ III. Allegretto	6:50
12 Pieces for Flute and Orchestra, Op. 29b (1947, arr. 1983)	17:33
⑦ Improvisation	1:37
⑧ Arietta	1:18
⑨ Burleske	1:10
⑩ Capriccio	0:41
⑪ Nocturne	1:37
⑫ Waltz	0:59
⑬ Ode	1:34
⑭ Duet	1:34
⑮ Barcarolle	1:46
⑯ Etude	0:49
⑰ Intermezzo	1:48
⑱ Pastorale	2:02
Five Pieces for Flute and Piano (1947)	16:01
⑲ Landschaft. Adagio	3:02
⑳ Erster Tanz. Allegretto	1:37
㉑ Zweiter Tanz. Allegretto con grazia e rubato	6:12
㉒ Melodie. Larghetto	3:01
㉓ Dritter Tanz. Presto	1:58

Mieczysław Weinberg (1919–1996)

Complete Works for Flute

Mieczysław Weinberg was born in Warsaw on 8 December 1919, where he emerged as a highly-regarded pianist who might well have continued his studies in the United States until the Nazi invasion forced him to flee to Minsk (in course of which his travel documents were inscribed as Moisey Vainberg, by which name he was 'officially' known until 1982). During 1939–41 he studied composition with Vasily Zolotaryov then, after the Nazi invasion, headed further east to Tashkent where he duly became immersed in numerous theatrical and operatic projects. There he also wrote his *First Symphony*, which favourably impressed Shostakovich and resulted in his settling in Moscow in 1943 where he was to remain for the rest of his life. Despite various personal setbacks (his father-in-law, the renowned actor Solomon Mikhoels, was murdered in 1948 and Weinberg himself was imprisoned for alleged 'Jewish subversion' then freed only after the death of Stalin in 1953), he gradually gained a reputation as a figure who was championed by many of the leading Soviet singers, instrumentalists and conductors.

Despite receiving various official honours, Weinberg's fortunes declined noticeably over his final two decades – not least owing to the emergence of a younger generation of composers whose perceived antagonism to the Soviet establishment secured them greater coverage in the West (where Weinberg was never to enjoy more than a modest presence even during his heyday) and his death in Moscow on 26 February 1996 went largely unnoticed. Since then, however, his output – which comprises 26 symphonies and 17 string quartets, together with seven operas, some two-dozen song cycles and a wealth of chamber and instrumental music – has secured an increasing number of performances and recordings, and is now held in great regard as a significant as well as personal continuation of the Russian symphonic tradition. Many works from the Soviet era were written with specific soloists in mind and Weinberg's pieces for flute are no exception, having mainly been conceived for the flautist Alexander Korneyev. Earliest among them is the set of

Twelve Miniatures with piano accompaniment from 1947, arranged for string orchestra as late as 1983 and re-designated as *Twelve Pieces*. The result in either instance is a series of character pieces that touches on a variety of moods, within a framework of objective restraint most often found in this composer's lighter music.

The opening *Improvisation* sets the tone for this sequence overall in its graceful arabesques and wistful flights of fancy, with the strings only making their entry at the final cadence. The *Arietta* then makes for a plaintive rejoinder, while the *Burleske* draws a mood of playful irony from the exchanges of flute and strings. The *Capriccio* is a brief yet exacting study in incisive syncopation, to which the bittersweet harmonies of *Nocturne* provide due contrast. An oblique French character becomes evident in the deft manner of *Waltz*, following which the sustained eloquence of *Ode* could hardly be more pronounced. The teasing interplay of *Duet* brings the most personal expression, whereas the graceful undulations of *Barcarolle* could hardly more archetypal in terms of the flute. The hectic and even headlong *Etude* duly finds its own complement in the musing inwardness of the *Intermezzo*, which leads without pause into the *Pastorale* – the most extended as well as melodically appealing of all these pieces, and hence an appropriate means for rounding off this slight though appealing opus.

Weinberg's *First Flute Concerto* was written in 1961, then premiered on 21 November that year by Korneyev with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and Rudolf Barshai. Unlike the imposing *Violin Concerto* from two years earlier [Naxos 8.572631], the present work is modest in length and genial as to content. Its pastoral qualities likely emanate from Nielsen's own *Concerto*, while a klezmer influence (most notable in the finale) doubtless stems from productions at Jewish theatres in which the teenage composer assisted his father prior to the Second World War.

A brief solo preamble, then the first movement sets off with an agile theme shared between flute and strings,

whose secondary idea takes on something of a martial profile. There is a terse and impetuous development, then the twin themes reappear in subtly altered guise prior to a headlong rush to the close. The slow movement focuses on a melody for the flute, made more so by its halting accompaniment on strings, which reaches the briefest of climaxes only to subside into nothingness. With minimal pause the finale begins – its main theme striking a tone of elegant bemusement often associated with this composer, while a contrasting idea brings with it a more robust response from the strings. The two themes are duly repeated to emphasise their contrast, then the music heads into a coda the more resolute for its concision.

The *Second Flute Concerto* is among Weinberg's last works. Completed in October 1987, it was also dedicated to Kornevych though he seems not to have played it. Indeed, the piece only found performance on 23 October 2001, Anders Jonhäll giving it with the Borås Orchestral Society and Thord Svedlund. On that occasion it was heard in the composer's arrangement for string orchestra, and this is the version recorded here. Compared to its predecessor, the mood is often introspective and even valedictory while sharing that earlier work's innate classicism.

The opening movement begins with one of its composer's most ravishing melodies, made the more so by its discreet modulation and confiding asides. At length the music heads into more expressively ambiguous territory, though without detriment to its underlying poise – not least when flute and strings initiate an impetuous *fugato* which is cut off towards its apex, only for the initial melody to resume emotionally unscathed. Strings soon resume their more offhand manner, however, and though the main melody once again returns, it cannot prevent a more fatalistic mood from setting in towards the close. The brief central movement proceeds as a gentle yet uneasy 'song without words', accentuated by the plangent harmonies of the strings – against which, the flute unfolds its line of delicate fragility through to a muted close. From here the finale starts up with a perky theme, given a discreet though pointed accompaniment which touches on more inward

expression. Once again, the music assumes an animated guise towards the centre, but this duly subsides into unexpected while somehow apposite allusions to two staples of the flute repertoire – the *Badinerie* from Bach's *Second Orchestral Suite*, and the *Dance of the Blessed Spirits* from Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*. From here the flute leads the way forward to a conclusion that feels the more affecting for its resigned aura.

The set of *Five Pieces* for flute and piano was written in 1947 and seemingly published in Moscow the next year, though the score has only recently been located. Coming from a period of increasing difficulty for Soviet composers (the infamous 'Zhdanov Decree' being only months away), this music exudes a distinctly utilitarian quality, but this does not preclude a high level of professionalism in terms of overall craftsmanship.

The opening *Landschaft* ('Landscape') makes free play with Debussy's *La fille aux cheveux de lin* while it embarks on a quizzical dialogue with the piano the more meaningful for their restraint. The *Erster Tanz* ('First Dance') centres on a nimble theme in which the piano comes into its own with repeated-note phrases and its lightly ironic tone. More than three times the length, the *Zweiter Tanz* ('Second Dance') feels only slightly more elaborate; indeed, this whole piece is essentially an arrangement of Weinberg's *Capriccio* for string quartet written four years before – witness its respectively nonchalant then quizzical themes which sound idiomatic in their new duo guise, the first of which brings about the deftest of endings. The *Melodie* ('Melody') returns to the winsome manner of the opening piece, the flute's free-flowing melodic line given full rein by the piano's lucidly understated accompaniment. Finally, to the *Dritter Tanz* ('Third Dance') and its fleet interplay between the two instruments which affords the most overtly virtuosic expression of the overall sequence but also a teasing humour which is maintained right through to the decisive closing flourish.

Richard Whitehouse

Claudia Stein



Photo: Sebastian Rosenberg

Claudia Stein studied flute at the Hochschule für Musik Dresden with Eckart Haupt and piano with Heidrun Richter, continued her studies in Karlsruhe with Renate Greiss-Armin. At the age of 23 she was appointed principal flute of the Staatskapelle Berlin by Daniel Barenboim. She has appeared with numerous international orchestras and performed regularly in the Bayreuth Festival orchestra. As a chamber music partner she has appeared at major European festivals, as well as in Israel, America and Japan. She has worked as a soloist with conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Philippe Jordan and Sebastian Weigle. Stein is a teacher and mentor in the academy of the Staatskapelle Berlin and as of 2015 she teaches in the Barenboim-Said Akademie, Berlin. She is also active in the Musikkindergarten Berlin, a unique project initiated by Barenboim, and worked on some of the pedagogical ideas leading to its foundation. A central element to Stein's extensive solo repertoire is new music, with composers such as David Robert Coleman, Sebastian Undisz and Michael Kleemann writing works especially for her.

www.claudia-stein.de

Elisaveta Blumina



Photo: Françoise Marshall

German pianist Elisaveta Blumina, an Echo Klassik Awards prizewinner and artistic director of the Hamburg International Chamber Music Festival, began her training at the Rimsky-Korsakov St Petersburg State Conservatory. She continued her studies at the Hamburg University of Music and Theatre and the Bern Conservatory. Her teachers have included prestigious artists such as Evgeni Koroliov, András Schiff and Radu Lupu. Blumina achieved international recognition with performances at New York's Carnegie Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, Beethovenhalle Bonn, and the National Concert Hall, Dublin. She is one of the leading interpreters of 20th- and 21st-century music, and her recordings of the works of Weinberg have won particular international acclaim. Blumina is one of the founding members of the Blumina Ensemble and is the regular piano partner of the Staatskapelle Berlin Wind Quintet. She is also regularly a guest at international festivals. Blumina is an adviser for the concert series of the Neue Synagoge Gröbzig Museum and, in 2015, founded her own chamber music festival, the Giluim Festival, in Schönebeck, which is dedicated to cultivating and preserving the forgotten Jewish musical tradition, 'Verfemte Musik'.

www.blumina.com

Szczecin Philharmonic Orchestra



Photo: A. Niemiec

The Polish Musicians' Association Symphony Orchestra was founded in autumn 1948 in Szczecin. Five years later it had developed into the State Philharmonic, which was named after their patron Mieczysław Karłowicz in 1958. Artistic directors of the ensemble have included Józef Witkomirski, Stefan Marczyk, Jarosław Lipke, Józef Radwan, Jerzy Salwarowski, Zygmunt Rychert and Mykola Diadiura. Over time the orchestra has performed with outstanding soloists, and enhanced its growing repertoire with works by popular composers associated with Szczecin written for the ensemble, and has given concerts outside of its headquarters in Poland and abroad. In 2012, Dorota Serwa became the director, and has been supported in artistic activities by conductors Michał Dworzyński and Ewa Strusińska. The orchestra is currently conducted by Rune Bergmann, who has held the position since the 2016–17 season. In the 2014–15 season, the Philharmonic took up residence in a revolutionary new building in Małopolska. Alongside its diverse repertoire, a special place is occupied by the music of the patron of the Philharmonic, Mieczysław Karłowicz. www.filharmonia.szczecin.pl

David Robert Coleman



Photo: Sebastian Rosenberg

Currently based in Berlin, David Robert Coleman was born into a German-English family in London in 1969. He studied at the Royal College of Music and King's College, Cambridge, and privately with George Benjamin and Wolfgang Rihm. He initially worked as an assistant conductor at the Southwest German Radio Symphony Orchestra Baden-Baden, then with Pierre Boulez at the Aix-en-Provence Festival and with Kent Nagano at the Bavarian State Opera. He has also assisted Daniel Barenboim at the Berlin State Opera. He has received invitations to guest conduct orchestras such as the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal. He has been commissioned to write works for Oper Frankfurt and Ensemble intercontemporain as well German regional orchestras. His works have been performed mainly under his direction by the Ensemble Modern, the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, among others. His work for soprano and orchestra *Looking for Palestine* was premiered by Daniel Barenboim and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra to critical acclaim at the Salzburg Festival 2018. www.davidrobertcoleman.de

Mieczysław Weinberg's works for flute were mainly conceived for the renowned soloist Alexander Korneyev. The earliest of these is the *12 Pieces* from 1947, a playful series of character studies that touch on a variety of moods. Also from 1947, the recently rediscovered *5 Pieces* draws on Debussy and the early string quartet *Capriccio, Op. 11* for its ironic good humour. The *First Flute Concerto* has a genial air with klezmer influences, while the *Second Flute Concerto*, among Weinberg's last works, is often introspective and valedictory in mood. This is the first complete recording of Weinberg's entire output for accompanied flute.

 Deutschlandfunk Kultur

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| 4–6 | Flute Concerto No. 2, Op. 148b (1987) | 19:54 |
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Claudia Stein, Flute

Elisaveta Blumina, Piano **19–23**

Szczecin Philharmonic Orchestra **1–18**

David Robert Coleman **1–18**

A Deutschlandfunk Kultur recording **19–23**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

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