



Edward
GREGSON

Instrumental Music

Three Matisse Impressions

Serenata Notturna

Cameos • Oboe Sonata

Alarum • Love Goddess

Divertimento • Tributes

**Soloists from the Hallé
and BBC Philharmonic
orchestras**

Paul Janes, Piano



Edward
GREGSON
(b. 1945)

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Three Matisse Impressions (1993) (version for flute and piano, 2020) 10:07	Oboe Sonata (1965) 11:31
1 No. 1. Pastoral 2:41	12 I. Allegro giocoso 2:55
2 No. 2. Lux, Calme et Volupté 4:04	13 II. Andante doloroso – Più mosso – Tempo I 4:42
3 No. 3. La Danse 3:17	14 III. Allegretto con brio – Doppio movimento – Tempo I 3:50
4 Serenata Notturna (1998) 8:37	15 Alarum (1993) 8:06
Cameos (1987) 13:14	16 Love Goddess (2020) 7:34
5 No. 1. Intrada 1:15	Divertimento (1968) 7:02
6 No. 2. Serenade 1:42	17 I. Moto perpetuo 2:39
7 No. 3. Canon Dance 1:11	18 II. Canzona 2:42
8 No. 4. Alla Marcia 1:26	19 III. Scherzino 1:36
9 No. 5. Song with Variation 2:49	Tributes (selection) (2010) 10:08
10 No. 6. Danse Macabre 2:08	20 No. 3. To Igor Stravinsky (for Linda Merrick) 3:10
11 No. 7. Paeon 2:33	21 No. 2. To Gerald Finzi (for John Bradbury) 3:48
	22 No. 5. To Béla Bartók (for Michael Collins) 3:03

Soloists from the Hallé and BBC Philharmonic orchestras

Amy Yule, Flute **1**–**3** • Jennifer Galloway, Oboe **12**–**14**

Sergio Castelló López, Clarinet **20**–**22**

Gareth Small, Trumpet **5**–**11** • Katy Jones, Trombone **17**–**19**

Ewan Easton, Tuba **15**

Yuri Torchinsky, Violin **4** • Tim Pooley, Viola **16**

Paul Janes, Piano **1**–**14** **16**–**22**

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Introduction by the Composer

During the process of deciding about the choice of soloists for this recording, my thoughts turned to the fact that since 1996, when I took up the role of principal of the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, I have enjoyed a rather special relationship with the two symphony orchestras in the city: the Hallé and the BBC Philharmonic. I have fulfilled commissions for both orchestras and have enjoyed many performances and recordings of my music with them; and so with this in mind I approached John Summers (Hallé) and Simon Webb (BBC Philharmonic) to see if they would agree to the idea of using some of the principal players from their orchestras as soloists for this recording – something to which they both readily and enthusiastically agreed.

Regarding the choice of repertoire, I wanted to reflect my life-long interest in writing instrumental music. From my earliest dabbling as a teenager, through my student days when I wrote an *Oboe Sonata* (de facto my *Op. 1*), to the present day (*Love Goddess*), I have always been attracted by the idea of writing for solo performers, indeed sometimes transferring a solo instrument onto a larger canvas (i.e. concertos). I have also written educational music, perhaps better described as music for young musicians, something I believe all professional composers have a duty to fulfil, and which two of the great 20th-century composers – Bartók and Britten – achieved so memorably. On this recording, *Cameos* and *Divertimento* represent that aspect of my creative output.

I should like to thank the eight principal players from the two orchestras featured on this recording for their commitment and enthusiasm. The rehearsals and recordings took place in somewhat difficult circumstances because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but everyone overcame the challenges with good humour and fortitude! In particular I must thank Paul Janes, who took over the considerable responsibility of pianist at very short notice, learning a lot of notes in a very short time.

Finally, my thanks to sound engineer Ben Sharpe and producer Paul Hindmarsh for achieving such outstanding results in the recording; to the staff at Hallé St Peter's for all their assistance, and to Clare Knight for administering the complicated practicalities so efficiently.

Edward Gregson

For over 30 years the professional life of Edward Gregson followed parallel paths, one to the top tier of music education and the other towards the international reputation he now enjoys as a composer. Nurturing the skills of future generations of composers, teachers, and performers at Goldsmiths, University of London (1976 to 1996) and as principal of the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester (1996 to 2008) brought him deep satisfaction. His music, however, has never existed in an academic 'ivory tower'. His wide-ranging work list includes commissions from leading orchestras, choirs and soloists at home and abroad. He has also continued to raise the bar of artistic ambition for amateur and young musicians through his highly regarded contribution to the contemporary band and instrumental repertoire. This representative selection curated by the composer ranges across his entire career thus far, from the youthful exuberance of his *Oboe Sonata* to specially prepared versions of two of his most evocative works, *Three Matisse Impressions* and *Love Goddess*.

Three Matisse Impressions (1993) (version for flute and piano, 2020)

At the turn of the 20th century the neo-Impressionist master Henri Matisse (1869–1954) was turning heads with his groundbreaking approach to colour and realism in his landscape paintings. In this captivating suite, originally composed in 1993 for recorder, Gregson responds to three of his favourite, and very different images, by presenting three contrasting perspectives of the same core material – simple, memorable melodic shapes derived from the rise and fall of a perfect fifth in the home key of C major.

Gregson's interpretation of the pastel shades and relaxed 'family' atmosphere of the group of nudes at the centre of the missing masterpiece *Pastoral* (1905) derives from the open tones of the flute. A luminous C major is intensified by raising the fourth degree of the scale a semitone from F to F sharp – the Lydian fourth, so called after the ancient Lydian mode (expressed as an octave beginning on F using only the white notes of a keyboard). In *Lux, Calme et Volupté* (1903) Matisse is working with a limited but vibrant colour pallet, simplified shapes and forms. Gregson adds an appropriate piquancy to the open tones of C major by using an octatonic scale. Replacing the traditional major and minor configuration with alternating semitones and tones enables him to emphasise harmonic ambiguity, creating chord clusters that distort the 'reality' of the melodic material. Matisse applied his paint at speed in a series of dots and dashes of pure pigment best viewed from a distance. Gregson's music retains a calm surface throughout, but as listeners we should also 'stand back', as it were, and listen across the gaps in the melodic line of his pointilliste waltz to appreciate fully its seductive melodic allure.

In his famous painting of 1910, *La Danse*, Matisse limits himself to three striking colours – red, blue and green – to depict the bacchanalian revels of a group of dancing nude figures. The contrast is stark, the vitality palpable. Gregson responds to its brilliance and energy by transforming his core themes into an exuberant reel, which begins with a dancing flute and then gathers to a whirlwind conclusion on piccolo.

Serenata Notturna (1998)

The score of *Serenata Notturna* is prefaced by a quotation that makes clear Gregson's expressive intentions for this haunting dreamscape: 'Out of darkness cometh light'. A sense of foreboding below the surface of the pensive opening section is intensified as the music gradually becomes more agitated. Dream turns to nightmare in a demonic and dissonant *danse macabre*, full of double- and quadruple-stops and rushing semiquavers. Energy spent, tension and turmoil quickly subside. Having organised the first part of the work around a twelve-tone

series, Gregson resolves the musical dreamscape into a disarmingly simple and tranquil lullaby, signifying the approaching dawn, perhaps.

Cameos (1987)

Over the three decades since they were commissioned for a series of pedagogic publications, these seven miniatures have become ever present in practical examinations for budding trumpeters. The *Cameos* are widely contrasting in character and technical challenge, each one progressively more demanding than the last. Yet they retain a coherence and logic when performed as a suite, from the heraldic simplicity of *Intrada*, via a smooth *Serenade*, prancing *Canon Dance* in 5/8 time, robust *Alla Marcia*, and an elegant, modal *Song with Variation*, to a dashing *Danse Macabre*. A final sonorous *Paean* reveals how far in technical terms any young player who has mastered its sustained lines and powerful fanfare finish has developed since learning to play its thematic 'cousin' back at the start of the journey.

Oboe Sonata (1965)

Gregson was a 19-year-old student when he wrote his *Oboe Sonata*, which, had he used opus numbers to identify his work, would be his *Op. 1*. Its attractive, exuberant quality tells us much about the mature composer to come. The structure is carefully organised and balanced respecting classical models he admired. He responds to an eclectic array of influences. The main theme and lyrical second subject of the compact first movement are modal in character. The thoughtful second movement takes on the 'smoky' flavour of the blues, while the canonic middle section responds to the 20th-century mainstream. In the second episode of the spritely rondo, the infectious syncopations of Latin dance are parodied, with more than a hint of Leonard Bernstein's song *America* – *West Side Story* that was all the rage in the early 1960s.

Alarum (1993)

Alarum is an old English term for a 'call to arms'. Gregson presents a powerful primeval twist, opening this virtuosic

work at 'full bore' with a tribal-like intensity. For much of the piece, the soloist behaves like two characters, a dominant 'personality' presenting a succession of contrasting lyrical 'calls' at the top of the register and a second one responding with brusque, nervous rhythmic gestures at the bottom of the compass. A calmer melodic section follows the aggressive opening. The climax high lyrical 'call' and rhythmic 'response' eventually collide in a visceral climax. The last section is a characteristic Gregson dance, with constantly changing time patterns that lead back to the opening 'alarum'.

Love Goddess (2020)

In 2009, Gregson was commissioned by the Ida Carroll Trust to write a short work in memory of the Cheshire artist Dorothy Bradford (1918–2008). The result was an intensely personal response to a painting that hangs on Gregson's music studio wall, entitled *Goddess*. Originally written for viola and strings and here revised and reworked with piano, *Love Goddess* reveals Bradford's reclining figure as 'beguiling, peaceful and pre-occupied'

as she peers out from the canvas towards us. The viola assumes the 'role' of Goddess, whose 'love song without words' evolves as a free-flowing cantabile from its first three notes. As the music builds towards a peak of intensity, we hear a passing reference to the most influential Romantic musical gesture of the 19th century, the opening of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*.

The final moments of *Love Goddess* are founded on a ground bass that looks back to another operatic lament for lost love, *When I am laid in earth* from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. But, as Gregson explains, 'In my case the tonal resolution in A modal minor is a kind of peaceful and loving resignation after the dissonant chromaticism of the earlier music. The work ends enigmatically after three resounding major chords may have suggested something more affirmative.'

Divertimento (1968)

The three entertaining miniatures that comprise *Divertimento*, Gregson's first published pieces, were written at the request of the publisher Chappell as teaching



pieces. The first movement is a *Moto perpetuo*. Boisterous muted effects – glissandos and flutter tongues – are fun to attempt but difficult to master. A pensive *Canzona* exploits the trombone's lyrical side, while the *Scherzino* provides a satisfying light-hearted finale. The composer comments that *Divertimento* 'has been much used for graded music examinations, and is often performed by young players, thus satisfying my intention in writing the work'.

Tributes (2010)

Referencing the work of other composers through direct quotation, parody or stylistic 'invasion' is an important and ongoing aspect of Gregson's creative persona. In the summer of 2010 he put the final touches to a collection of *Tributes* which had taken some 20 years to reach their final form. Each item doffs a respectful cap to composers Gregson admires or has been influenced by. As he

explains, 'The dedicatee composers wrote memorably for the clarinet and as a tribute to them I have tried to invade their stylistic worlds.' With chameleon-like attention to detail, Gregson disguises himself, so to speak, as Francis Poulenc, Gerald Finzi, Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen and Béla Bartók. Three of the five *Tributes* are recorded here. The resonance of Orthodox chant and the razor-sharp rhythmic profile of the Russian master is unmistakable in *To Igor Stravinsky*. The lyrical second number is inscribed *To Gerald Finzi*, although the imitation here is perhaps a more generalised 'English pastoral' style. Finally, we hear *To Béla Bartók*, whose music has made a profound impact on Gregson's approach to form, rhythm and thematic manipulation in particular. His nod towards the Hungarian's clarinet trio *Contrasts* is elegantly woven in. This a brilliant piece of mimicry.

Paul Hindmarsh

Amy Yule

Photo: Andy Reeves



Amy Yule began her role as principal flute of the Hallé in 2019, having previously held the same position with the Royal Northern Sinfonia. She studied for her undergraduate degree at the Royal Northern College of Music and for a Master's at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating in 2017 with distinction and awards, including the Patrons' Award and HRH Princess Alice The Duchess of Gloucester's Prize. An enthusiastic chamber musician, Yule performs with several ensembles including her wind quintet, Moriarty Winds, at festivals including Lars Vogt's SPANNUNGEN, and has recently given recitals at St John's Smith Square and Wigmore Hall.

Jenny Galloway



Photo: Tom Bangbala

Jenny Galloway has been principal oboe of the BBC Philharmonic since 2000, having joined in 1993 as sub-principal while still a student at the Royal Northern College of Music. She also appears as guest principal with some of the UK's finest orchestras, and in 2012 joined the World Orchestra for Peace for the Solti Centenary Concerts in the US, and its BBC Prom in 2014. Solo performances with the BBC Philharmonic include the Strauss, Mozart and Vaughan Williams concertos, and a recording of the Malcolm Arnold *Concerto* for Chandos in 2001. In 2020 she premiered Edward Gregson's *Oboe Concerto*, which the BBC commissioned him to write for her.

Sergio Castelló López



Photo: Chris Cotton Photography

Sergio Castelló López was born in Xàtiva, Spain, in 1994. He studied clarinet with Michel Arrignon and Enrique Pérez Piquer at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid. While still a student, he was awarded several first prizes at various music competitions, and also played with the European Union and Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestras. In 2015 Sergio Castelló López was appointed principal clarinet at the Opéra de Limoges in France, and in the following year joined the Hallé as principal clarinet, performing concertos and recording Debussy's *Première Rhapsodie* for the Hallé label. He also enjoys playing as a guest with various orchestras in the UK.

Yuri Torchinsky

Photo: Andrew Price



Born in Kharkov (now in Ukraine) in 1955, Yuri Torchinsky studied at the Moscow State Conservatory and was successful in several major violin competitions. At the age of 24, while still a student, he became the youngest ever concertmaster of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra and toured the world with the company, both as leader and soloist. Torchinsky joined the BBC Philharmonic as leader in 1996, and makes regular appearances as soloist with the orchestra, most recently in Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto*. He has made over a hundred recordings for Chandos and has guest-led many of the UK's finest orchestras. He also gives many chamber recitals with his wife, the pianist Dina Parakhina.

Tim Pooley



Tim Pooley was appointed principal viola of the Hallé in 1988 under the baton of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Since that time he has made many guest appearances leading sections in other symphony orchestras in the UK, including the BBC Philharmonic and the Philharmonia. Pooley has appeared as soloist several times with the Hallé, performing works by Britten, Walton, Sofia Gubaidulina and Strauss. He recorded Holst's *Lyric Movement for Viola and Small Orchestra* with Sir Mark Elder and the Hallé in 2002. Pooley lives in the Peak District with his wife Sarah Ewins, associate leader of the Hallé, and daughter Imogen, a talented cellist.

Gareth Small



Gareth Small has been principal trumpet of the Hallé since 2007. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where he now teaches, as well as the Royal Northern College of Music and Chetham's School of Music. He is a member of London Brass and Hallé Brass, and has given solo recitals and masterclasses all over the world. He has also performed as guest principal trumpet with most of Britain's orchestras. In 2016 he was soloist in association with the Black Dyke Band and with them won the soloist prize at the European Brass Band Championships in Oslo. He can also be heard on many recordings, numerous movie soundtracks, and television commercials.

Katy Jones



Photo: Sara Porter

Katy Jones is principal trombone of the Hallé and teaches at the Royal Northern College of Music and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Her career includes playing on many film scores such as *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*, and freelancing with orchestras such as the London Sinfonietta and Chamber Orchestra of Europe. She is frequently invited as a guest soloist, tutor and lecturer to brass festivals across Europe. In 2019, the Hallé commissioned a concerto for Jones, John Casken's *Madonna of Silence*, which was performed at The Bridgewater Hall and broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Ewan Easton



Ewan Easton is principal tuba with the Hallé and teaches at the Royal Northern College of Music and The University of Manchester. He is a tutor for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, a trustee of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain and musical director of the City of Chester Brass Band. Easton's career has taken him all over the world playing with Britain's most prestigious orchestras and conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Sir Simon Rattle, Pierre Boulez, Sir Georg Solti and Daniel Barenboim, and he has given solo performances on BBC Radio 3. His ongoing pioneering work with the Ministry of Justice led to the groundbreaking project HALLÉ4BRASS, for which he received an MBE in 2010.

Paul Janes



Manchester-based pianist Paul Janes has had a busy performing career since graduating in 1991 from the Royal Northern College of Music, where he was the recipient of several prestigious awards and scholarships. He has worked regularly for many years as orchestral keyboard player for both the BBC Philharmonic and the Hallé, as well as freelancing with other orchestras around the country. Through this work he has taken on many prominent roles within the repertoire, in particular Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, where his contribution was acclaimed by the press, and, for the BBC Philharmonic, works by Percy Grainger including *The Warriors* which was recorded on Chandos. Janes is also an active chamber musician, and has worked with many prominent artists and ensembles, including pianist Steven Osborne, cellist Rebecca Gilliver, tenor Joshua Ellicott, flautist Adam Walker, and the Carducci and Piatti string quartets. He is a member of

the Chagall Trio. Janes is a long-standing member of the piano faculty at the RNCM, and he also works as an examiner and presenter for ABRSM, which has led to travel to many parts of the world.



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Edward Gregson



Edward Gregson is a composer whose music has been performed, broadcast, and recorded worldwide (four volumes of his orchestral music and concertos have been recorded on the Chandos label). He studied composition and piano with Alan Bush at the Royal Academy of Music, where he won five prizes for composition. His commissions have included works for the English Chamber, Bournemouth Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, and Hallé orchestras, with performances by many other orchestras and ensembles around the world. He has written orchestral, chamber, instrumental, and choral music. Among his major orchestral works are a dozen concertos for various instruments, mostly written for eminent soloists. His contribution to the wind and brass repertoire has also been of particular significance and in 2016 he was composer-in-association with the famous Black Dyke Band. In the following year he was composer-in-residence at the Presteigne Festival, where his *String Quartet No. 2* received its premiere. His academic career has included appointments at Goldsmiths College, University of London (1976–1996), where he was head of composition and was awarded a personal chair, and then as principal of the Royal Northern College of Music (1996–2008). He is a writer director of PRS for Music, and until recently a trustee of the PRS for Music Foundation. He has also been the recipient of a dozen honorary doctorates and fellowships from various English universities and conservatoires.

www.edwardgregson.com

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Edward Gregson's career has followed two parallel paths, one to the top tier of music education and the other towards the international reputation he now enjoys as a composer. This representative selection is Gregson's own and spans more than half a century, from the youthful exuberance of his *Oboe Sonata* to specially prepared versions of two of his most evocative compositions, *Three Matisse Impressions* and *Love Goddess*. The selected soloists are drawn from two leading symphony orchestras with which Gregson enjoys special relationships.

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1–3	Three Matisse Impressions (1993) (version for flute and piano, 2020)*	10:07
4	Serenata Notturna for violin and piano (1998)*	8:37
5–11	Cameos for trumpet and piano (1987)	13:14
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20–22	Tributes for clarinet and piano (selection) (2010)	10:08

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS**

Soloists from the Hallé and BBC Philharmonic orchestras

Paul Janes, Piano

A detailed track list and full artists' details can be found inside the booklet.

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