

NAXOS

BRITISH MUSIC FOR CELLO AND PIANO

**William Busch • Kenneth Leighton
William Wordsworth • Arnold Cooke**

Raphael Wallfisch, Cello • Raphael Terroni, Piano



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William Busch (1901-1945): Suite for Cello and Piano (1943)		13:59
1	Prelude	4:31
2	Capriccio	3:54
3	Nocturne	2:44
4	Tarantella	2:50
Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988): Partita, Op. 35 (1959)		20:59
5	I. Elegy	5:08
6	II. Scherzo	4:15
7	III. Theme and Variations: Theme	2:11
8	Variation I: Allegro inquieto	0:44
9	Variation II: Ostinato	1:23
10	Variation III: March	1:14
11	Variation IV: Appassionato	1:08
12	Variation V: Waltz	1:28
13	Variation VI: Chorale	3:26
William Wordsworth (1908-1988): Cello Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 66 (1959)		16:16
14	Lento – Allegro risoluto –	6:06
15	Adagio – Quasi improvvisazione –	4:28
16	In tempo – Poco più mosso – Allegro risoluto – Largamente	5:42
Arnold Cooke (1906-2005): Cello Sonata No. 2 (1980)		24:01
17	I. Allegro moderato	9:22
18	II. Lento	6:22
19	III. Scherzo: Molto vivace	2:59
20	IV. Allegro	5:17

Recorded at The Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon, UK, on 18th February, 2010 (tracks 1-4), 3rd April, 2009 (tracks 5-13), and 9th October, 2008 (tracks 14-16), and at the Music Hall of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, UK, in October 2005 (tracks 17-20)

British Music for Cello and Piano: William Busch (1901-1945)

Kenneth Leighton (1929-1988) • William Wordsworth (1908-1988) • Arnold Cooke (1906-2005)

If one takes the number of recordings available as an index of popularity, the four composers on this disc would come into the category of 'neglected'. Only recently have recording companies given them any significant attention, despite the fact that, with one exception, they were prolific in output. All wrote in a conventional idiom, so their music was marginalised by the BBC and by orchestras and critics when the *avant-garde* bandwagon began to roll at the beginning of the 1960s. Premature death, wartime pacifism (with its implications for postwar public acceptance) and geographical remoteness may also have contributed. But, sadly, all four composers may also have failed to make public headway simply because they were not prepared to go to undue efforts to advance their own careers. "He that bloweth not his own trumpet, his trumpet shall not be blown".

William Busch was born, like Wordsworth and Cooke, in that first decade of the Twentieth century which also saw the birth of Tippett, Rawsthorne, Rubbra, Walton and Lambert. Initially envisaging a career as a pianist, he decided to concentrate on composition in his mid-thirties. At the outbreak of war in 1939 he was evacuated to Devon, where in 1945 he died of a brain haemorrhage. Overexertion in very cold weather was cited as the cause, although the symptoms could also imply an attack of meningitis.

In addition to being a committed pacifist, Busch was a shy, retiring individual who suffered from concert nerves and was unwilling to indulge in self-promotion. He left for Devon when his composing career was just beginning to develop, so found himself outside the musical mainstream at a time when a London presence would have been to his professional advantage. In 1944 a 78 r.p.m. recording of four of his songs was sponsored by the Committee for the Promotion of New Music (now the SPNM): but with this exception his slender output (which includes concertos, songs and chamber music) has remained almost totally forgotten, although the concertos for piano and for violoncello are currently available on CD. The *Suite for Cello and Piano* (published by Chester

Music) was written in 1943 for the well-known soloist Florence Hooton. The *Prelude* opens with a fanfare-like figure for the cello, followed by the lyrical, passionate main theme. A faster middle section leads to a return of the opening music. The scherzo movement, *Capriccio*, has a major-key trio strongly reminiscent of Shostakovich: the reprise is a not-quite-literal repeat of the opening section. Following the slow, contemplative *Nocturne*, where, at the end, the cello part slows to virtual immobility, the *Tarantella* brings the work to an energetic conclusion.

Kenneth Leighton was also unfortunate to die at a relatively early age, but unlike the other three composers on this disc was too young to have had his career temporarily sabotaged by the war. He spent much of his life away from London, for many years holding an academic post in Edinburgh. Although Leighton composed over a hundred works in all forms, he was for many years known to the wider public solely as a composer of church music. In recent years much of his output has appeared on CD, including recordings of concertos, the three symphonies and instrumental and vocal works.

Leighton's *Partita Op. 35* (Novello & Co.) dates from 1959 and was also given its première by Florence Hooton. The opening *Elegy* commences with a jagged march figure followed by a more lyrical section marked *più liberamente*. The march returns, but now subdued rather than harsh. The *Scherzo* is hard-driven and relentless until it evaporates in dry chords and ghostly *tremolandi*. This is followed by the emotional core of the *Partita*, an extensive *Theme and Variations*. The bell-like theme is followed by variations marked *Allegro inquieto*, *Ostinato* (with reminiscences of the first movement's rhythms in the cello), *March*, *Appassionato* (running quavers in the piano while the cello has the theme) and *Waltz*. In the final *Chorale* all energy is spent and the bell sounds fade into silence.

William Wordsworth was a contemporary of Busch and likewise had his career interrupted by war: he was also a pacifist and spent the war years as a farm labourer,

but, unlike Busch, he was able to enjoy the favourable climate for classical music in the decade following the cessation of hostilities. In the 1950s Wordsworth appeared to be forging a solid reputation with the public, but in 1961 he moved from Surrey to the Scottish Highlands, whose scenery provided lasting inspiration but which was far removed from the metropolis. Consequently – his taciturn and abrupt personality may also have been a factor – Wordsworth's reputation went into an eclipse from which it has never really recovered, although he became a respected member of the Scottish music establishment.

Wordsworth's eight symphonies and six string quartets span his entire career (*Symphony No. 8* was his last completed work). There are concertos, orchestral and instrumental music, but only three quartets, two symphonies and a few instrumental pieces and songs have so far appeared on LP or CD – a fraction of his total output.

The shadow of Shostakovich falls heavily over the scherzos of the Busch and Leighton works, but in Wordsworth's *Sonata No. 2 in G minor Op. 66* (unpublished: via Scottish Music Centre) this influence is entirely absent, even though the composer had met the Russian at the time of the sonata's composition in 1959. Brahms is a more obvious influence in the sonata's emotional intensity and massive piano sonorities. Although there are no subdivisions in the score, the sonata is in three clearly defined sections, the introductory *Lento* presenting a sequence of four-note motifs and leading to *Allegro risoluto*. The second movement, *Adagio*, follows without a break, and this leads, via a *Quasi improvvisazione*, into the final movement *In tempo – Poco più mosso*. A lengthy coda over held chords in the piano returns to the G minor of the opening.

Arnold Cooke spent five years teaching at Manchester College of Music, but as soon as he had moved to London the war intervened, during which he served in the Royal Navy. From 1947 until his retirement he was Professor of Composition at Trinity College, London. That Cooke's music is not well-known today is due to the fact that he was a modest, unassuming

personality who was not prepared to proselytise on his own behalf. And when the tide of official media opinion turned against conventional music in the 1960s, critics found it easy to label Cooke's music as 'imitation Hindemith' (Cooke having studied with the latter in Berlin in the 1920s) and dismiss it without further consideration. It is true that Cooke's music shares Hindemith's rather peculiar harmonic idiom. But Cooke has a much greater mastery of melodic inventiveness and intellectual control: in some cases he could be said to have written better Hindemith than Hindemith himself ever managed.

Cooke had begun to make a reputation before the war, and was always just sufficiently in the public eye to ensure that his music was not completely forgotten. There were regular performances up to the mid-1970s, but his reputation subsequently declined although he continued composing until his ninetieth year. Like Wordsworth, Cooke concentrated on instrumental music although there are some songs and two operas. Central to his output are six symphonies (the sixth is as yet unperformed), concertos, orchestral and chamber works.

Cooke's musical language did not change noticeably over time and *Sonata No. 2* (Anglo-American Music) is typical of his mature style which combines within an entirely conventional idiom elements of Hindemith's and of English musical vocabularies. The opening *Allegro moderato* is followed by a lyrical *Lento* and a jig-like *Scherzo*. Finally the extensive *Allegro* returns to the home key of E minor. Dating from 1980, the sonata did not receive any known public performance until 2006 when it was given its première by the present artists on the 100th anniversary of Cooke's birth.

Busch died before he was able to form his own identifiable musical style and will probably never amount to more than a footnote in British musical history. In recent years Leighton has been well served by recordings. But neither Wordsworth nor Cooke deserves long-term obscurity and a reassessment of their music is overdue.

Robert Kay

Raphael Wallfisch



Raphael Wallfisch was born in London into a family of distinguished musicians, his mother the cellist Anita Lasker-Wallfisch and his father the pianist Peter Wallfisch. At the age of twenty-four he won the Gaspar Cassadó International Cello Competition in Florence. Since then he has enjoyed a world-wide career and is regularly invited to play at major festivals such as the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Aldeburgh, Spoleto, Prades, Oslo and Schleswig Holstein. His extensive discography explores both the mainstream and lesser-known works by Dohnányi, Respighi, Barber, Hindemith and Martinů, as well as Richard Strauss, Dvořák, Kabalevsky and Khachaturian. He has recorded a wide range of British cello music, including works by MacMillan, Finzi, Delius, Bax, Bliss, Britten, Moeran and Kenneth Leighton. Britain's leading composers have worked closely with him, many having written works especially for him. These include Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, James MacMillan, John Metcalf, Paul Patterson, Robert Simpson, Robert Saxton, Roger Smalley, Giles Swayne, John Tavener and Adrian Williams.

Raphael Terroni



Photo: John Terroni

Raphael Terroni was born in 1945, and studied the piano with John Vallier and Cyril Smith. For fifteen years he was Head of Piano at the London College of Music and Media, and examined and adjudicated at music festivals in Britain and abroad. He worked with broadcaster Richard Baker, giving first performances in Britain of several works for narrator and piano. He was active in concerts worldwide, and appeared at major festivals as a soloist, accompanist and chamber-music player. A founder member of the British Music Society, he served two terms as the Society's Chairman, and made several critically acclaimed recordings of music by British composers, Lennox Berkeley, Robin Milford, Howard Ferguson, Josef Holbrooke, Eric Coates and Arthur Butterworth among them. His 1989 recording of piano quintets by Cyril Scott and Frank Bridge with the Bingham Quartet was issued on CD for the first time shortly after his untimely death in 2012.



The **British Music Society**, founded in 1979, brings together professional and amateur musicians, students and scholars, and music enthusiasts young and old from around the globe to promote, preserve and celebrate British music, pre-dominantly from the Twentieth century, both at home and abroad. Its extensive discography is now being re-issued by Naxos, bringing to a wider audience many highly-acclaimed performances, often world premières, of neglected British works. The Society's Historic label includes a number of famous vintage recordings by artists such as Noel Mewton-Wood and Walter Goehr.

In addition the Society produces a Journal, *British Music*, packed full of scholarly articles and reviews, as well as a regular e-newsletter for members. Our website lists forthcoming BMS events as well as performances of British music, and also provides a forum for discussion and debate.

www.britishmusicsociety.com

Dohnányi's powerful *Second Symphony* was composed toward the end of the Second World War but its large canvas reflects not so much his wartime experience as his own artistic credo as a Romantic composer. Of the symphony and its philosophy he wrote: "The goal is the end of the glorious fight. The goal is death; life is a struggle", and in it he crafted a passionate monument to the Romanticism he espoused, heard here in its final revised version. The two songs for baritone and orchestra have been very rarely heard, and were revived by Alexander Jiménez with the Florida State University Symphony Orchestra in 2013.

Ernő
DOHNÁNYI
(1877-1960)

Symphony No. 2 in E major, Op. 40 (1945, rev. 1957)	54:49
❶ I. Allegro con brio, ma energico e appassionato	14:07
❷ II. Adagio pastorale, molto con sentimento	13:47
❸ III. Burla: Allegro	4:32
❹ IV. Introduzione, variazione con fuga sopra un corale di J.S. Bach, e coda	22:23
Two Songs, Op. 22 (1912)*	10:55
Texts by Wilhelm Conrad Gomoll (1877-1951)	
❺ No. 1. Gott (God)	4:43
❻ No. 2. Sonnensehnsucht (Longing for the Sun)	6:13

***WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

Evan Thomas Jones, Baritone*

Florida State University Symphony Orchestra
Alexander Jiménez

Recorded at Ruby Diamond Concert Hall – Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, USA,
from 1st to 3rd March, 2013 • Produced, engineered and edited by John Hadden

The German sung texts and English translations can be found at www.naxos.com/libretti/573008.htm
Publishers: Lengnick / Chester Novello (tracks 1-4); Unpublished (Edition: James A. Grymes) (tracks 5-6)

Booklet notes: James A. Grymes

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