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‘Hear and Now’ Studio Concert

Sunday 9 March 2008 7.30pm

Studio 1, BBC Broadcasting House, Llandaff, Cardiff

Contemporary Music Ensemble of Wales

Kenneth Woods *conductor*

Ian Pace *piano*

John Senter *cello*

GORDON DOWNIE Fragments for cello and piano 3’

PAUL MEFANO Interferences – fragments IV, V, VI (*UK premiere*) 10’

GORDON DOWNIE Piano Piece 3 (*Wales premiere*) 12’

Interval (15 Minutes)

EARLE BROWN Novara 10’

GORDON DOWNIE Forms 7: non-mediated forms for 24 instrumentalists

(*World premiere*) 10’

IANNIS XENAKIS Akrata 12’

This concert will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3’s ‘Hear and Now’ on Saturday 19 March, 2008 at 10.30pm

This concert is part of Greece in Britain 2008, a nationwide series of events presented by the Hellenic Foundation for Culture

This concert is dedicated to the memory of the writer and new music specialist John Warnaby, who died in January 2007. John, who lived in Port Talbot, was a committed writer and commentator on new music whose contribution to the field will be greatly missed.

CMEW acknowledges the financial support of the Arts Council of Wales, the Hinrichsen Foundation and the Hellenic Foundation for Culture.

GORDON DOWNIE Fragments for cello and piano (1990–2005)

Commissioned by Margaret Reid and Derek Clarke and premiered in Cardiff, 1990.

The majority of *Fragments for cello and piano* was composed in 1990. The recent revision and extension in 2005 involved developing and re-characterizing certain material. Whilst the earlier material informally deployed a collection of contrasting pitch class sets, the new material is wholly serial, comprising a series whose constituent segments are extracted from the content of the earlier sets. By this technique it is intended to maintain consistency between the former and latter material, a process that is assisted by the inherently fragmented nature of the work's form, a feature that furnishes the work's title.

Programme Note © Gordon Downie

Gordon Downie studied music at York and Durham Universities and gained his PhD in computer science from Cardiff University which included research at IRCAM, Paris. The majority of his music has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and a full profile of his work was featured on *Hear and Now* in 2001. His work has also been featured in festivals in continental Europe and he has been an invited composer at the Darmstadt Summer School. He has recently completed his BBC orchestral commission, *forms 6: event aggregates*, which will be premiered by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales later this year.

About his work Brian Ferneyhough has noted that "Downie's music shows a great consistency of purpose, displaying a richness of sound and formal flexibility", whilst Susan Bradshaw observed that the composers' "forms 5: event intersection is a real pleasure to the ear, exhibiting a rich and extremely convincing tapestry of sound".

Downie is artistic director of the Contemporary Music Ensemble of Wales, which regularly records for BBC Radio 3. His critical writings have been published in several sources including *Perspectives of New Music*. Downie is senior lecturer in computer science in the Faculty of Computing, Engineering, and Mathematical Sciences at the University of the West of England, Bristol, where he leads programmes in artificial intelligence, programming, and object orientation and where he pursues research into the algorithmic formalisation of music composition.

PAUL MEFANO Interferences – fragments IV,V,VI (1966) (UK premiere)

Interferences is dedicated to Oliver Messiaen; parts IV to VI of this instrumental composition are written for 12 musicians who are divided into three subgroups each of which features a percussionist.

The main structure of *Interferences* uses open form, comprising distinct parts which lock together in a circular form. The conductor determines the number of parts (two minimum, seven maximum), as well as the start and end sequences as determined by set rules.

The figures making up these "fragments" and the material inside them, evolve following the same process, exploiting different parameters such as time and space. Of particular interest is Fragment V which puts structures into motion by assigning "fields of extendable time" to each instrumental part, offering instrumentalists some freedom regarding the placing of musical events.

Programme Note © Paul Mefano

Paul Mefano received encouragement from Alfred Cortot to study music. Later, he studied with Andrée Vaurabourg-Honegger and then at the Conservatoire of Paris with Darius Milhaud and Georges Dandelot. He continued his studies with Boulez, Stockhausen and Pousseur in Basle, attending concerts in the Domain Musical, the Darmstadt summer school and the class of Olivier Messiaen at the C.N.S.M.P. In 1965 his music was performed for the first time under the direction of Bruno Maderna at the Domain Musical. One year later, he embarked on a trip to the USA, from 1966 to 1968, and was later invited to study in Berlin by The German Academy of Exchange Studies where he remained for a year. Paul returned to France in 1970 following a contract with Mica Salabert. There he divided his time between composition, conducting and musical production. In 1972 he co-founded the Ensemble 2e2m de Champigny.

On Dec 12 1980 Paul became a Chevalier de L'Ordre Nationale du Mérite and received the Grand Prix Nationale de Musique in 1982. He was made a Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres on 16th Sep 1985.

His principal works are: "Captive", "Interferences", "involutives", "La Ceremonie", "Lignes", "Madrigal", "Micromégas", "Ondes", "Espaces Mouvants", "Paraboles", "Periples" and "Traits suspendus".

Translated by Hélène Rammant

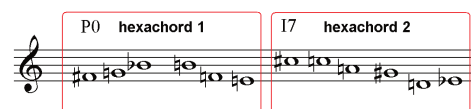
GORDON DOWNIE Piano Piece 3 (2005–06) (Wales premiere)

This work was commissioned by Ian Pace with funds provided by the RWV Trust. It was premiered at The Warehouse, London, in 2006.

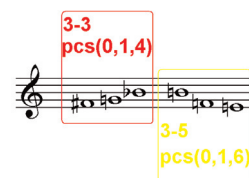
The series for **piano piece 3** is constructed from the following hexachord:



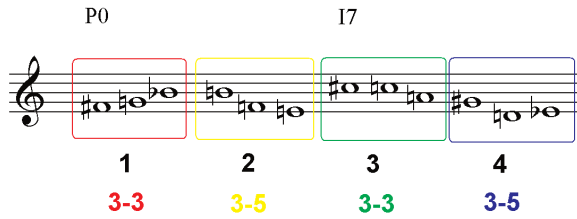
The second half of the series is an inversion of the first half transposed by interval 7, giving the full aggregate:



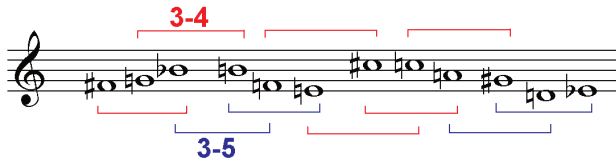
Each hexachord is constructed from two 3-note segments, 3-3 and 3-5 using Forte's terminology:



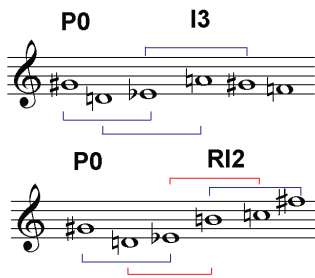
The series as a whole is thus an aggregate partitioned into four 3-note segments:



The interval relationships that constitute each primary segment are also reproduced and maintained between successive 3-note sub-segments. Each of these subsidiary segments comprises either 3-3 or 3-5. They are thus chained together:

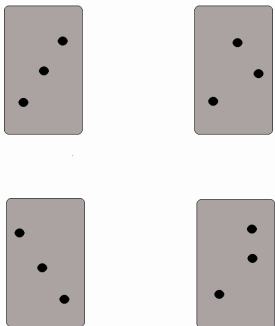


These linear relationships are also maintained between selected series. For example, the last 3-note segment of P0, followed by either I3 or RI2, retains the interval patterns established in the original series. Any given series can be followed by one of six others to maintain these relationships:



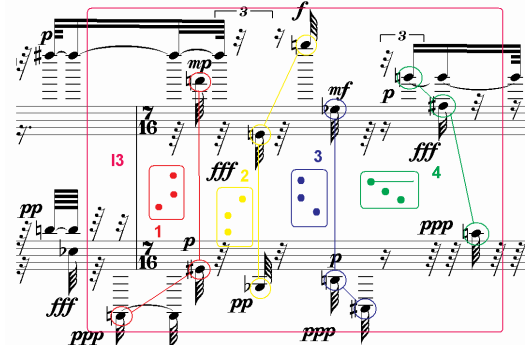
This arrangement results in a highly integrated and cohesive pitch structure.

The segmentation of the series into 3-note segments is reinforced and reflected in the gestural and rhythmic organisation of the work. A graphical representation of four of the gesture types used is shown in the following example:



The example illustrates four gesture types that can be obtained from the permutation and re-configuration of 3 objects. The types contain contour information and in the fourth, harmonic-contrapuntal information, where two points are superimposed. At this level their definition is at a high level of abstraction. Additional organisational schemes map these onto concrete duration values.

Any given series will have a gesture type applied to each of the 3-note segments:



This extract from **piano piece 3** illustrates how four gesture types are applied to a given series, here I3. It also illustrates how the 3-note pitch segments are registrally projected, and how the gesture types relate to the pitch organization. Note that gestureType 2 is the RI of gestureType 1. Notice also that gesture Type 4 allows for the first point in any given 3-note segment to sustain whilst the second two points are sounded.

Programme Note © Gordon Downie

Interval

EARLE BROWN Novara (1962)

Novara was composed, at the request of Lukas Foss, for a Fromm concert at the Tanglewood Festival in the summer of 1962 and the first performance was conducted there by the composer. The work was written just after the composition and Venice premiere of "AVAILABLE FORMS II" (for 98 instruments and two conductors), and is a kind of "relaxing" into the intimacy and delicacy of chamber music and soloistic possibilities after the very large resources and massed orchestral sounds of that work. *Novara* is an "Open-form" work and uses many of the less characteristic sounds of the instruments that are sometimes referred to as "noises" but are nevertheless instrumental sounds which can extend the formal and expressive potential of the work. "Open-form" means that all of the sound materials in the work are notated and controlled in the score but that their sequence, juxtaposition, tempi, and repetitions are left to the spontaneous (during the performance) decisions of the conductor as the performing process develops and unfolds between himself, the sound materials and the musicians. The form of the work is therefore unique in each performance but it is always *Novara* because only those composed sound events may be used.

Programme Note © Earle Brown

Earle Brown, a major force in contemporary music and a leading composer of the American avant-garde since the 1950s, died on July 2, 2002 at his home in Rye, New York. He was associated with the experimental composers John Cage, Morton Feldman, and Christian Wolff who, with Brown, came to be known as the New York School.

Earle Brown was born in Lunenburg, Massachusetts and, in spirit, remained a New Englander throughout his life. Like other artists from that region – Ives, Ruggles and Dickinson – he spoke with his own voice and found his own path. To America, these artists were iconoclasts, but to Europe they embodied America – and Brown was no exception:

his music has been most frequently performed, studied, lauded, and revered by Europeans. Brown's interest in a broad range of aesthetic expressions, ranging from the writings of James Joyce and the poetry of Gertrude Stein, Kenneth Patchen, to the work of the Abstract Expressionist painters – particularly Jackson Pollock and Alexander Calder – informed his own work. He said, as recently as 2000, that "the earliest and still predominant influences on my conceptual attitude toward art were the works of Alexander Calder and Jackson Pollock...the integral but unpredictable 'floating' variations of a mobile, and the contextual 'rightness' of the results of Pollock's directness and spontaneity in relation to the materials and his particular image of the work...as a total space (of time)."

Earle Brown's influence on the avant-garde community has been philosophical as well as tangible and practical. His conducting techniques and experiments with "time notation," improvisation, and open-form compositional structure have become part of contemporary compositional usage. Among Brown's most frequently performed and reinterpreted works is *December 1952*, the score of which is a stark, abstract series of floating rectangles – a musical equivalent to a Calder mobile. His early influential orchestral scores include *Available Forms 1* and *Available Forms 2*, and his musical friendships were legendary, from Bruno Maderna who conducted first performances of many of Brown's works to jazz musicians such as Zoot Sims and Gerry Mulligan.

Brown received many commissions, residencies, and awards, including a Guggenheim award; an honorary doctorate from the Peabody Conservatory of Music (1970) where he held the W. Alton Jones Chair of Music; and the John Cage Award from the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts. Among his many residencies were those at the California Institute of the Arts, Yale University, the Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals, the American Academy in Rome, and the Basel Conservatory of Music.

On November 20, 2002, The Museum of Modern Art hosted an homage to one of the great American composers of the twentieth century: In Memoriam: A Concert of Selected Works by Earle Brown. The program included works, selected by Brown in conversation with his wife Susan shortly before his death: *Music for Violin, Cello and Piano* (1952); *Corroboree* (1964); *New Piece* (1971); *Centering* (1973); *Tracking Pierrot* (1992); and *Special Events* (1998)

Profile © The Earle Brown Foundation

GORDON DOWNIE

Forms 7: non-mediated forms for 24 instrumentalists (2006-07) (World premiere)

Commissioned by the Contemporary Music Ensemble of Wales and supported with funds from the Arts Council of Wales and the PRS Foundation.

Serialism can be viewed as a particular domain-specific instance of a general tendency that has dominated certain trends throughout contemporary art theory and praxis. This is a tendency that rejects hierarchical modes of operation in favour of heterarchical modes of operation. It is thus a tendency that emphasizes equivalence or equality between the constituent parts of an art object. This practice can be seen operating across art media, whether in the visual constructions of De Stijl, in the rejection of axial symmetry in the architecture of the International Style, or the abandonment of privileged narrative positions in French *nouveau roman*. Within music, the transition from centralized tonality to decentralized atonality – and the latter's method of organization and systematization, serialism – can be viewed as a breakdown of hierarchy in favour of heterarchy.

Under another name, it is *equivalence* to which Karlheinz Stockhausen refers in his characterization of serialism as a process of

mediation, whereby extremes or opposites are reconciled through their scalar mediation. And once permuted, such scales become series. And *mediation* forms one of two primary organizational and structuring devices for forms 7's antecedents, forms 1 to 6. In forms 5: event intersection, for example, the gestural complexion of the work is determined through the establishment of two formal extremes comprising high impulse density and low impulse density. The two extremes are then mediated to form a 7-element scale of high to low impulse density – or notes per unit of time. The elements are then permuted to form distinct series which, in the case of forms 5, prioritize adjacencies which exhibit maximum differentiation from one another.

It is this latter process of *negation* that forms the second primary organizational and structuring device of the forms series. Within standard set-theoretic discourse, negation stands for a relation in which the contents of set A have no common elements with set B: they are thus distinct and wholly contrasting entities. Thus, by combining the organizational device of mediation (that emphasizes high levels of structural identity) with negation (that emphasizes maximum contrast), highly dynamic and perceptually differentiated forms can be devised that are nevertheless highly integrated and uniform.

In forms 6: event aggregates for orchestra, whilst the events that constitute the formal series of the work are generated by mediation, they are also given levels of specificity and autonomy that further enhances their distinctness from one another, mainly through instrumental and timbral differentiation. In this work then, processes of negation begin to be prioritized. And this is a process that is further developed in *forms 7: non-mediated forms*, where mediation is subordinated in order to emphasize formal constituents that are highly distinct from one another, not only in terms of timbral and instrumental identity as in forms 6, but also in terms of gestural complexion and intervallic projection. Forms 7 then, comprises a sequence of 44 distinct events, each delineated by distinctive instrumental and gestural organization. The extent to which successive events negate one another is controlled through the application of the logical operators NOT, AND, and OR, to either entire events or their constituent parts. By this mechanism, it is intended to produce a rich and diverse succession of behaviours the dynamic of which is determined by inter-event interaction and reaction.

Programme Note © Gordon Downie

IANNIS XENAKIS

Akrata (1964 – 1965)

Akrata is scored for piccolo, oboe, B flat Clarinet, E flat clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, 2 contrabassoons, 2 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 tenor trombones and tuba: the title means 'Pure'. The work was commissioned by the Library of Congress, Washington, and is dedicated to Olga and Serge Koussevitsky. It received its first performance in June 1966 at the English Bach Festival in Oxford, conducted by Charles Bruck.

According to the composer, the work possesses an extra-temporal architecture, based on the theory of groups of transformations. Use is made here of the theory of Sieves, a theory which annexes the congruences of modulo Z and which is the result of an axiomatic theory of the general structure of music. At the same time, use is made of complex (imaginary) numbers.

Translated by Edward Craxton

Iannis Xenakis was one of the leaders of modernism in music, a hugely influential composer, particularly in the later 1950s and 1960s, when he was experimenting with compositional techniques that soon entered the basic vocabulary of the twentieth-century avant garde.

Xenakis was born, not in Greece, but in Braïla, Romania, of Greek parents, on 29 May 1922. His initial training, in Athens, was as a civil engineer. In 1947, after three years spent fighting in the Greek resistance against the Nazi occupation, during which time he was very badly injured (losing the sight of an eye), he escaped a death sentence and fled to France, where he settled and subsequently became a key cultural figure.

Xenakis was first active as an architect, collaborating with Le Corbusier on a number of projects, not least the Philips Pavilion, designed by Xenakis, at the 1958 Brussels World Fair. It was in the 1950s, too, that Xenakis' compositions began to be published. In 1952 he attended composition classes with Olivier Messiaen, who suggested that Xenakis apply his scientific training to music.

The resulting style, based on procedures derived from mathematics, architectural principles and game theory, catapulted Xenakis to the front ranks of the avant garde – although there was never any suggestion that he was a member of a clique or group: he was always his own man. He never, for example, embraced total serialism, and he also avoided more traditional devices of harmony and counterpoint; instead, he developed other ways of organising the dense masses of sound that are characteristic of his first compositions. These stochastic, or random, procedures were based on mathematical principles and were later entrusted to computers for their realisation.

But for all the formal control in their composition, Xenakis' scores retain an elemental energy, a life-force that gives the music an impact of visceral effectiveness: works like *Bohor* for electronics (1962), *Eonta* for piano and brass quintet (1963-64), *Persephassa* for six percussionists, placed around the audience (1969), and the ballet *Kraanerg*, for 23 instrumentalists and tape (1969) all exhibit a primitive power that belies the complexity of their origins. The Sydney Morning Herald said of *Kraanerg*, it "remains staggeringly powerful and clamorous, an essay in constantly renewed energy that shows not the least sign of faltering". Married with this primordial power is the composer's fascination with ritualism, most often that of ancient Greece, finding fullest theatrical form in his setting of the *Oresteia* (1966).

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

KENNETH WOODS *conductor*

Already known in America as one of the most exciting conductors of the new generation and hailed by the Washington Post as an "up-and-coming conductor" and a "true star" of the podium, Kenneth Woods is quickly becoming recognized as a major talent on the international scene. He has worked with many orchestras of international distinction including the National Symphony Orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Budapest Festival Orchestra and the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra. He has also appeared on the stages of some of the world's leading music festivals, including Aspen, Lucerne, Round Top and Scotia. His work on the concert platform and in the recording studio has led to numerous broadcasts on BBC Radio 3, National Public Radio, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He is currently conductor of the Oregon East Symphony, Surrey Mozart Players and the Rose City Chamber Orchestra.

During the 2006-7 season, Kenneth Woods made his first appearances at the Bridgewater Hall, Menuhin Hall, Albert Hall, and Royal Concert Hall, and received a major, multi-page feature in The Sunday Oregonian. His blog, A View from the Podium, became a hit with music lovers and received wide acknowledgement from the music writers of the New Yorker, Wall Street Journal, Independent and Gramophone. 2007-8 sees him making more important UK debuts, doing extensive studio and concert work for the BBC and making his CD debut in London for Avie Records.

In the spring of 2001, Kenneth Woods was selected by Leonard Slatkin as one of four participants in the National Conducting Institute. At the completion of the Institute, he led the National Symphony Orchestra in a debut concert, drawing great critical acclaim. In the spring of 2000, David Zinman selected Kenneth Woods from a pool of over 200 applicants to be a fellow in the inaugural class of the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen. Toronto Symphony Music Director Peter Oundjian has praised Woods as "a conductor with true vision and purpose. He has a most fluid and clear style and an excellent command on the podium... a most complete musician."

Kenneth Woods has conducted critically praised productions of operas from Britten to Puccini, and ballet scores as diverse as Giselle, the Nutcracker and Firebird. Woods' work as an active proponent of contemporary music includes collaborations with composers including John Corigliano, Krystof Penderecki, Peter Lieberson and Oliver Knussen.

As a cellist he has been recipient of the Aspen Fellowship (Mr. Woods has received the Aspen Fellowship as both a cellist and conductor), the Dale Gilbert Award (the only musician to win this award in consecutive years), the Strelow Quartet Fellowship, the National Endowment for the Arts Rural Residency Grant and has recorded and toured extensively as soloist and chamber musician. He has played chamber music with members of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, the Cincinnati, Chicago and Toronto Symphonies, and the Minnesota, Gewandhaus and Concertgebouw Orchestras.

IAN PACE *piano*

Fiery passion combined with incisive intellect mark the playing of pianist Ian Pace. His repertoire, stretching from complexity to simplicity, focuses in particular upon the works of contemporary British, German and Italian composers as well as the 'classics' of modern music by composers such as Boulez, Stockhausen, Ligeti, Nono and Cage. Equally adept as a chamber music and ensemble player, Ian Pace frequently performs with other soloists and groups, most notably pianist Mikhail Rudy and the Arditti Quartet.

Born in Hartlepool, England in 1968, Ian Pace studied at Chetham's

School of Music, The Queen's College, Oxford and, as a Fulbright scholar, at the Juilliard School in New York. His major teacher, and an important influence upon his work, was the Hungarian pianist György Sándor, a student of Bartók. Ian Pace has played at most major European venues and festivals, and several of his recitals have been broadcast by BBC Radio 3 and Deutschland Funk.

Renowned for his astute and insightful writings on new music, Ian Pace is much in demand as a lecturer. He regularly gives workshops and master classes as well as pre-concert talks and is AHRB Fellow at Southampton University. He contributes to several music periodicals and co-edited the book *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy*. Ian Pace has given the world premières of over 100 works for solo piano including Brian Ferneyhough's long awaited *Opus Contra Naturam*, Michael Finnissy's monumental 5½ hour work *History of Photography in Sound* and James Dillon's sparkling *Book of Elements, Part 3*. A double CD of Ian Pace playing Dusapin's *Etudes* and his piano concerto *À Quia* with the Orchestre de Paris under Christoph Eschenbach was released by French label Naïve in 2004.

This autumn Ian Pace will give concerts in Cork, Leuven, Bludenz and Dublin amongst others as well as recording Boulez' *Structures Books 1 & 2* with pianist Pi-hsien Chen for release on the Hat Art label.

JOHN SENTER *cello*

John Senter was born in Norfolk. He studied the cello at the Royal Academy of Music with Derek Simpson. While a student there he was a founder member of the Arditti String Quartet, specializing in contemporary music. On leaving the Academy he joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London, and subsequently took up his present position of Principal Cello in the BBC NOW, with whom he has also appeared as soloist. He has also played with many other orchestras in the UK, sometimes as guest principal. He also coaches at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Contemporary Music Ensemble of Wales

CMEW was formed in 1992 by its artistic director, Gordon Downie. Since this time it has presented and recorded concert programmes featuring advanced music of the post 1945 period. Soloists and conductors appearing with CMEW have included Evelyn Glennie, Alison Wells, Steven Burnard, Christopher Redgate, Timothy Hugh, Ian Pace, Chi Chi Nwanoku, Jane Manning, Grant Llewellyn and Martyn Brabbins. The Ensemble has also been featured at foreign festivals and has recorded regularly for BBC Radio 3. Since 1992 it has received funding from the Arts Council of Wales, South East Wales Arts Association, Musicians' Union, Holst Foundation, Hinrichsen Foundation, Tippett Foundation, the British Council, the Hellenic Foundation, Pro Helvetia, and the French and Austrian Cultural Institutes.

Contemporary Music Ensemble of Wales

Artistic Director

Gordon Downie

Conductor

Kenneth Woods

Violins

Nick Whiting

Jane Sinclair

Violas

Alex Thorndyke

Helen Roberts

Cellos

John Senter

Keith Hewitt

Flute/Piccolo

Andrew Nicholson

Oboe

David Cowley

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

Roger Heaton

Bass Clarinet/Clarinet

Matthieu Lescure

Contra Bass Clarinet

Duncan Ashby

Bassoon

Jarek Augustyniak

Contra-bassoon

David Buckland

Maria Mealey

Trumpets

Dan Newell

Robert Samuel

Richard Hammond

Horns

Ed Lockwood

Irene Williamson

Trombones

Donal Bannister

Brian Raby

Bass Trombones

Robert Underwood

Martyn Hunter

Tuba

Andy Cresci

Percussion

Liz Gilliver

Tim Palmer

Andy Cookson

Cliff Prior

Celesta

Clive Williamson

Piano

Ian Pace

Harp

Hugh Webb