

# Quarternotes

June 2010

2010/2

Included in this issue:

Andriessen  
La Commedia in Los Angeles  
and New York

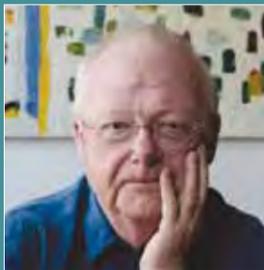


Photo: Opera Australia/Branco Giacca

## Dean Bliss

Brett Dean's new opera travels from Australia to Europe, with performances at the Edinburgh Festival and a second production at Hamburg State Opera



Peter Coleman-Wright as Harry Joy in the premiere of Brett Dean's Bliss at the Sydney Opera House

It is rare for a new opera to enjoy two different productions in its first six months, but such is the case with Brett Dean's *Bliss*, commissioned by Opera Australia and premiered in March at the Sydney Opera House. The first staging by Neil Armfield, conducted by Elgar Howarth, travelled to Melbourne in April and journeys to the Edinburgh Festival in September. Two weeks later a second production of *Bliss* by Ramin Gray opens at Hamburg State Opera conducted by Simone Young.

Long in gestation, the premiere of *Bliss* proved to be a red-letter day in Australian cultural life, with an ABC Television live broadcast, widespread news coverage, and an enthusiastic response from press and public alike:

"...here is an Australian opera so secure in form and purpose, it should, given care, live and flourish in all cultural climates for years. This is not to say it is necessarily an 'easy' work to understand. On the contrary, the technical and harmonic complexities of Brett Dean's lyrical score, matched in words by

Amanda Holden's masterly distillation of Peter Carey's original novel, demand much of an audience.

"Carey's story of Harry, the advertising executive who dies for nine minutes and returns to life only to find his family and professional existence a living hell, may have been written 30 years ago, but its message of the perils of materialism inherent in us all still resounds. The beauty of Neil Armfield's focused, flowing production... is how effortlessly yet meaningfully it propels us into Harry's personal inferno. The night belonged to Harry. Peter Coleman-Wright, as adroit an actor as he is singer, takes us from darkness to light, via the paths of greed and insanity, with unerring brilliance of character and vocal assurance. It was as if he had been singing the role for years." *The Age*

"*Bliss* is a success in every way...It's an eclectic mix of hard-edged modernism and expansive lyricism. And it works because Dean interweaves these disparate elements into a seamless entity. Dissonant chords and swirling textures nestle alongside appealing melodic shards and infectious rhythms... [Holden's] poetic text is an eloquent distillation of everyday speech. By offering poignant insights into their motivations, she

converts some of Carey's unlikable characters into more sympathetic figures." *The Australian*

"To his well-known skills as an orchestral composer, Dean has added an under-utilised empathy for the voice. The sung lines drive the musical and dramatic pace, underscored by beautifully detailed instrumental textures, wrought with an innate feeling for the expressive power of instrumental timbre, watched over by counterpoint and fine motivic workmanship." *Sydney Morning Herald*

In addition to Edinburgh, Dean appears at festivals in multiple roles as composer, violist and conductor. Following a feature at the Risør Chamber Music Festival in Norway (22-26 June), he is resident at the Cheltenham Music Festival (6-12 July) including the UK premiere of *Recollections* and world premiere of *Epitaphs* for string quintet when he joins the Australia Quartet. For first US performances of *Epitaphs* in August he joins the Orion Quartet at festivals in Santa Fe and La Jolla. The BBC Proms features *Amphitheatre* with the Australian Youth Orchestra conducted by Mark Elder (30 July) and *Carlo* with I Fagiolini (21 August).

### Dean

*Bliss* (2004-09) 147'

Opera in three acts

Libretto by Amanda Holden, after the novel by Peter Carey

2/4 September (UK premiere)

Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

Neil Armfield, *director*/Opera Australia/

BBC Symphony Orchestra/Elgar Howarth

12/15/19/21/25 September, 2 October

(German premiere)

Staatsoper, Hamburg

Ramin Gray, *director*/Hamburgische Staatsoper/

Simone Young

Turnage  
Interview about new orchestral  
work *Hammered Out*



Prokofiev  
Operas on stage in Berlin,  
London and Vienna



Reich  
New *Mallet Quartet* and  
75th birthday plans



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## Jenkins Gloria



Karl Jenkins's new *Gloria* can fairly be described as the biggest choral premiere of the year, with over 2500 voices joining together at the Royal Albert Hall on 11 July, conducted by Brian Kay. The

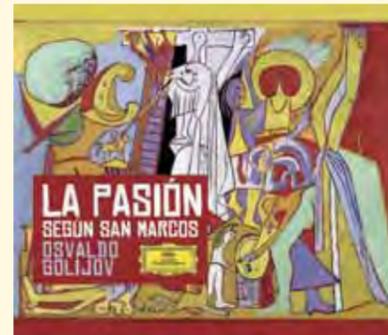
Really Big Chorus, who perform from scratch with a daytime rehearsal and evening concert, gave a successful performance of Jenkins's *The Armed Man: a Mass for Peace* in 2008 which attracted a capacity gathering and prompted the *Gloria* commission.

In *Gloria* Jenkins sets three of the traditional Latin texts entitled *The Proclamation*, *The Prayer* and *The Exaltation*, together with two additional movements: *The Psalm* is a setting of Psalm 150 to be sung in Hebrew or Latin, and *The Song* collects Old Testament texts in English. Between the sung movements are readings of texts from other religions expressing their own concept of the divine or a deity, drawn from Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Islam. The orchestration of *Gloria* mirrors that of the standard (larger) scoring of Fauré's *Requiem*, with the addition of percussion.

EMI releases its new Jenkins CD coupling *Gloria* with *Te Deum*, immediately following The Really Big Chorus's performance in July (CD 646 430 2; download 5099964643052). Performers on disc are the National Youth Choir and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer. This follows EMI recordings of *The Armed Man*, *Requiem*, *Stabat Mater* and *Stella natalis*, works which have established Jenkins as one of the most popular and widely performed choral composers of our time.

2010 is the 10th anniversary year for *The Armed Man*, and special celebratory performances are planned in October in

## Golijov Passion



Deutsche Grammophon has released a new box set of Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos*, containing a DVD of the 2008 Holland Festival production, plus an audio-only recording on 2CDs (477 7461 7). Both versions feature singers Jessica Rivera, Biella da Costa and Reynaldo González-Fernández and the Schola Cantorum de Venezuela, with conductors Robert Spano on the DVD and María Guinand on the CDs. The *Pasión* continues to travel widely, including recent performances in Los Angeles in April.

"It's easy to understand why Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos* received a 30-minute ovation at its 2000 Stuttgart premiere: a transferral of the Easter story to Latin America, it's a vibrant, sonically colourful experience in which the native South American strains of samba, tango and salsa contribute as much as the orchestral and choral elements.

"The aria performances owe more to Portuguese fado than to European classical singing. Golijov's intention was "to present a dark Jesus, not a pale European Jesus", and his success is partly due to his incorporation of native styles and structures. The result is an engaging tapestry in which demotic forms and religious chorale combine with piquant, astringent energy." *The Independent*

Golijov's opera *Ainadamar* was staged for the first time in his native land in May in a new production at the Teatro Argentino de La Plata in Buenos Aires, coupled with Ginastera's *Estancia* ballet.

## Bartók



The Philharmonia Orchestra has announced a major focus on Bartók next season, with an ambitious series planned by Principal Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Entitled *Infernal Dance: Inside the World of Béla Bartók*, the series is supported by The Meyer Foundation and combines five concerts spread between January and November 2011, featuring the three stageworks and major orchestral scores, plus related recitals and outreach events. During 2011/12 this new celebration of Bartók's life, influences and music travels throughout the UK, Europe and the USA.

To explore Bartók's music visit

[www.boosey.com/bartokconnections](http://www.boosey.com/bartokconnections)

London with Jenkins himself conducting and in Cardiff in November. This summer Boosey & Hawkes publishes the full score of *The Armed Man* for the first time. It will appear in two editions: a deluxe hardback signed score for both collectors and conductors, and a paperback full score for study and performance – both versions are available for pre-order from [www.boosey.com/shop](http://www.boosey.com/shop) or your local dealer. EMI releases a special 10th anniversary edition of *The Armed Man* this autumn including a new Jenkins work which sets Binyon's *For the Fallen*, sung by Hayley Westenra, and incorporates *The Last Post*.

New Jenkins works include *Zhi Jiangnan* for chorus and orchestra, commissioned by the Shanghai Spring International Music Festival and performed in April as an upbeat to the Shanghai EXPO.

# Turnage Hammered Out

Mark-Anthony Turnage discusses his new orchestral work, *Hammered Out*, receiving first performances at the BBC Proms and by the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

*What were the milestones in your development as an orchestral composer?*

I had to jump in at the deep end with my first orchestral piece *Night Dances*. I was only 20 and studying with Oliver Knussen and as a wind player didn't know a lot about the other instruments. But you have to learn through listening and it was pretty clear what worked and what didn't. Then I trod water for a few years until I was appointed Composer in Association with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, which was my real training ground. Simon Rattle was very hands on and helped me enormously with my orchestration for the string section, for instance challenging me to be more adventurous in my writing for the violas, pointing me towards Nielsen.

*Are there differences writing an orchestral commission as a one-off or as part of a composer residency?*

If you have a residency you feel supported, and have more chance to make necessary changes. Even more important, though, is knowing the orchestra you're writing for, and this can influence the nature of the work. For instance the Chicago Symphony has an amazing blended sound, so this affected the tutti sections in *Chicago Remains*. Equally, different conductors prompt different approaches, and I've been fortunate working with figures like Bernard Haitink and Esa-Pekka Salonen. I really like the way the London Philharmonic plays Stravinsky under Vladimir Jurowski so this made the pieces for them become much more rhythmically based.

*The title Hammered Out prompts percussive imagery. Is this single-minded as in Crying Out Loud, or do you balance this with your lyrical side?*

This is a driven, obsessive work throughout – it's a Beethovenian idea of exploring just one thing as far as it can go, like in my piece *Scherzoid*. It is very motoric and the main middle section is underpinned by a regular 4/4 dance pattern, though not in a minimalist sense which I can't do. The percussive hammering comes from my interest in James Brown and '70s jazz funk, influences that can be heard right back in *Blood on the Floor*, but this is my most R&B work to date. The dance in the middle is almost like multitracking against a repeating rhythmic pattern, so it will be a real challenge to get tight playing, particularly from the brass, so things don't go awry.

*How different is your hammering from the 'furious craftsmanship' of Le Marteau sans Maître?*

Very different. I know Boulez said he was breaking from Western tradition with the Eastern

instrumentation and 'progressive' modernist style, but it still sounds closer to the Classical-Romantic tradition than much of the music I'm interested in. I'm drawn more to what excited me when I was 17 or 18 – soul music and black gospel. So I'm even further now from the European avant-garde with its distant intellectualism. For instance the Boulez piece explores and elaborates surrealism, but I'm trying to be real, direct and up front.

*Do you orchestrate your music, or is the orchestral colour there from the start?*

This can differ from work to work. Here I composed the music in short score first, though even at this stage I knew some of the lines would be for wind or brass, and I could tell that the voicing of certain chords would work well on brass. Then, rather like taking a vocal score, I orchestrated it fully from beginning to end, almost turning it from black and white into colour.

*What role does the orchestra play in your forthcoming opera Anna Nicole?*

A danger in composing modern opera, and something I may have been guilty of in the past, is writing concert music for the stage rather than theatre music. I understand more in *Anna Nicole* that this doesn't work and the orchestra has to have a



Photo: Philip Gaward

supporting role, largely to accompany the singers. I worked very hard with the librettist Richard Thomas to pare the music back before we reached the workshop phase, so that everything could be stage led. There are no long scene changes with orchestral interludes as it is a fast, mainly comic work. The orchestration can help paint local colour and character – for instance I use a drummer and jazz trio so I can provide Anna with hints of her Texan roots, but I've avoided doing the whole Country & Western thing. The orchestra also plays a greater role towards the end of the opera when we move from comedy to something much darker.

**Turnage Hammered Out (2009-10) 15'** for orchestra

26 August (world premiere)  
BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London  
BBC Symphony Orchestra/David Robertson

13/14 November (US premiere)  
Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles  
Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra/Susanna Mälkki

For other events in Turnage's 50th birthday year visit [www.boosey.com/turnage](http://www.boosey.com/turnage)

*Anna Nicole* is premiered at The Royal Opera in London on 17 February 2011, directed by Richard Jones and conducted by Antonio Pappano.

## Schwertsik night music

Kurt Schwertsik was much in evidence in Manchester in January and February with a world premiere by the BBC Philharmonic and a two-day focus on his music at the Royal Northern College of Music.

*Nachtmusiken* was premiered under the baton of Gianandrea Noseda in the opening concert of Manchester's Mahler festival, in which new commissions were coupled with a cycle of the symphonies shared between the BBC Philharmonic and Hallé Orchestra. Schwertsik describes Mahler as a 'constant presence' for a composer working in Vienna, and the new 25-minute score hints at the atmosphere of the city that would have been familiar to Mahler at the time when he moved there to conduct and compose.

Schwertsik's programme note for *Nachtmusiken* also explains the nocturnal characteristics of the work, drawing on memories of Vienna in the 1940s. As a child he hid at nighttime from the bombing raids, and after the war loved to wander the streets during the frequent power cuts seeing the candlelight of city dwellers emanating from their houses onto the darkened streets. He writes:

*"Not only in the loneliness of the woods do the secrets of the night whisper: & metaphysical thoughts prefer to roam in the dark. I love to move through the night: a dreamy vision, a fragmented melody blown away..."*



Photo: Karl Kleinmayr

*"Nachtmusiken combines the lofty with the demotic in ways that are Mahlerian in spirit, though not in its muted, spectral tone. Attractively scored, it was played with considerable finesse..."* *The Guardian*

"...a suite of occasional character pieces, an offering of fragrant *Viennaiserie*, evoking a series of departed spirits. Those spectral presences include Janáček, whose characteristic inflections merge and mingle as in a dream, and David Drew, the critic and writer who died last summer, who is remembered in the eulogy of a quartet of cellos, frosted by glockenspiel. In between an accordion spices a bittersweet Viennese waltz, a toy march hovers between West and East Europe and the final fugue is touched by a frisson of Mahler's First Symphony." *The Times*

The Schwertsik festivities at the Royal Northern College of Music included student ensembles performing the *Transformation-Scenes* from his fantasy-filled opera *Fanferlitzzy Sunnysfeet*, and the song-cycle *shâl-i-mâr* which sets surrealist poetry by HC Artmann. The event culminated in a concert by the BBC Philharmonic, conducted by friend and fellow Viennese composer HK Gruber. The programme included Schwertsik's recent *Divertimento Macchiato* with trumpeter Håkan Hardenberger as soloist, and the environmentally conscious *Irdische Klänge (Earthly Sounds)* cycle, with the title work followed by *Five Nature Pieces*, *Uluru* and *Mit den Riesenstiefeln (With Heavy Tread)*.

## Reich mallet quartet



Photo: Palace of Arts Budapest/Sauzeau Peter

Steve Reich with *Amadinda* at the premiere of Mallet Quartet

The sound of mallet percussion, fusing rhythm with resonance, is one of the most recognisable colours in Steve Reich's palette and his new *Mallet Quartet* casts the spotlight on a quartet of two vibraphones and two marimbas. The work is a four-way commission for leading percussion groups in Hungary, the USA, Canada and Australia: Budapest Palace of Arts for Amadinda Percussion Group, Stanford Lively Arts for So Percussion, NEXUS and Synergy Percussion. Following the premiere in Budapest last December, *Mallet Quartet* has travelled to Stanford, Sydney and Toronto with future performances planned in London and New York.

"Both rhythm and counterpoint recede into the background, replaced by a series of emphatic block chords that are borne along on a current of busy accompaniment figures..."

In place of the composer's usual modal harmonies, *Mallet Quartet* trades in the language of jazz and pop... Even the instrumentation has a jazzy feel to it, with the marimbas serving as an unobtrusive rhythm section and the vibraphones doing the solo work." *San Francisco Chronicle*

"*Mallet Quartet* represents Reich's first deployment of the five-octave marimba, which has generated a lush tapestry of sounds at the lower end of the spectrum. The two marimbas, conjoined with a pair of vibraphones, yield startling cadences and sudden thematic shifts that fall on the ear like a forest of gossiping wind chimes." *Financial Times*

**75th events in 2011**

Plans are underway for Steve Reich's 75th birthday year in 2011 with events in London, New York, Paris, Stockholm, Essen and Porto. The Barbican in London presents a two-day celebration in May entitled *Reverberations: The Influence of Steve Reich*, pairing Reich works with composers who have followed in his footsteps. The same month brings a 75th birthday programme at Carnegie Hall in New York, bringing together ensembles closely associated with Reich. Recent repertoire to be heard in both cities for the first time includes *Double Sextet, 2x5, Mallet Quartet* and a new work for the Kronos Quartet to be toured internationally in 2011. The birthday month of October 2011 brings a series at Cité de la Musique in Paris and an all-Reich concert by the London Symphony Orchestra.

## Marsalis Blues Symphony



Photo: Rob Waymen

Wynton Marsalis as performer and composer crosses boundaries and styles with an output including a growing number of works performable by orchestras and choirs. His *Blues Symphony*, commissioned and premiered by the Atlanta Symphony this season, is his first work written solely for symphony orchestra and celebrates the blues through the prism of different moments in American history.

Each of *Blues Symphony's* seven movements takes a blues form, exploring everything from traditional fife and drum to African-American spirituals to the urban soundscape of New York City. Marsalis gives a video tour through several movements of the piece from his piano, in a series of films viewable on our website by selecting Audio Visual at [www.boosey.com/marsalis](http://www.boosey.com/marsalis)

"*Blues Symphony* has aroused major expectations for a Gershwinian fusion of symphony and jazz by this celebrated trumpeter and leading figure in American music... Part historical survey, part encapsulation of major jazz idioms, the *Blues Symphony* is nothing if not ambitious. Marsalis's creative juices seem to flow in abundance, and when rhythms take hold the music offers much toe-tapping enjoyment, especially in the *Ragtime* and *Danzón* movements." *Financial Times*

The *Blues Symphony* is the second of Marsalis's three works bearing the 'Symphony' title. *All Rise (Symphony No. 1)*, composed in 1999, incorporates orchestra, jazz big band and choir, and *Swing Symphony (Symphony No. 3)* receives its premiere this month in Berlin both in concert form and as a dance project. On 9 and 10 June Simon Rattle conducts the new score with the Berliner Philharmoniker and 15 musicians of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra at the Philharmonie. *Swing Symphony* then forms the basis of a dance work, choreographed by Rhys Martin and performed by 170 Berlin schoolchildren at the Arena Berlin in Treptow on 12 and 13 June.

As well as the project in Berlin, Marsalis's European performances in June include the first events in a new Jazz at Lincoln Center residency at the Barbican in London (15-20 June). Events include concerts which chart the history of the American jazz orchestra, featuring Marsalis and the JLCO at the Barbican and the Hackney Empire in East London. There are also family concerts, workshops, Essentially Ellington UK, and a leadership day for music teachers.

## Monk Weave premiere



Photo: Jessie Froman

Meredith Monk won a standing ovation for the premiere in March of *Weave*, her new work for two voices, chamber orchestra and chorus, the latest in a series of collaborations integrating her ensemble-based vocal idiom with symphonic

performance. David Robertson conducted the combined forces of the St Louis Symphony and Chorus together with members of Monk's vocal ensemble. The 23-minute score was co-commissioned by the LA Master Chorale who gave a further performance in April at Disney Hall conducted by Grant Gershon.

"Like strands of thread, melodic themes are sown into energized patterns... The vocal soloists start spinning the basic material, which Monk has described as bell-like sounds, a walking theme and sonic cascades. There is no text (there rarely is in Monk's music). Nor do these solo voices always sound like voices; Monk is a master of turning the vocal cords into orchestral instruments. The chorus picks up its music from the soloists, becoming an extended body of extended vocal techniques... Monk is the super-seamstress of performance. Her career has been predicated on the fact that movement, theater, film, music, site, script are all part of a large fabric..." *Los Angeles Times*

"...voices and orchestra acting as warp and woof on the sonic loom of Monk's creation... Voices sound wordlessly or on nonsense syllables, sounding at times more like a gamelan orchestra than singing. It's tonal and lovely, exotic and unexpected. *Weave* makes more imaginative use of the orchestra than Monk's earlier works, integrating the instruments – a small orchestra dominated by a battery of marimbas and two pianos – seamlessly into the whole... It builds, then tapers, in the moment, with fascination that holds the audience suspended." *St Louis Post Dispatch*

"At once meditative, then playful, then meditative again, *Weave* is a feast for the soul, the ears and the eyes... While not mimicking instruments, Monk shows the world that voices are indeed instruments of their own kind. The result is spiritually moving." *St Louis Classical Music Examiner*

## Prokofieff opera



Photo: The Royal Opera, Clio Birds

The Gambler in Richard Jones's new production at The Royal Opera in L

Prokofieff's reputation as an opera composer may centre largely on his *Love for Three Oranges*, a staple internationally, but over the past decade there has been a growing reappraisal of his complete oeuvre, including the experimental early stageworks as well as the later operas composed after his return to the Soviet Union.

In an age of casino banking and sudden economic collapse *The Gambler* has found a new topicality with productions at major opera houses. The Berlin Staatsoper's 2008 staging conducted by Daniel Barenboim has been released on DVD by Unitel, the *Süddeutscher Zeitung* noting how 'the Prokofieff renaissance has reclaimed one of the composer's most daring, almost 'futuristic' pieces from neglect – a work that is nothing less than 'a discovery'. Richard Jones produced *The Gambler* this year for The Royal Opera in London, conducted by Antonio Pappano, with the Observer describing how "the story helter-skelter from start to finish... Snatches of melody match the vortex of Dostoevsky's original... the roulette wheel speaking of life itself, in which every win is another's loss."

*The Fiery Angel* was summarised at the acclaimed recent Vienna production by Philipp Harnoncourt as "an opera which vibrates with eroticism and esotericism, which conjures up religion, excess and exorcism, mysticism and hysteria"

# Adams at the movies

John Adams's recent orchestral work *City Noir* paid homage to the movie industry in a 1950s setting, and the tribute has been returned with two new films on general release featuring his music.

The soundtrack to the Italian film *I am Love* (*Io sono l'amore*), a 10-year labour of love from director Luca Guadagnino and actress Tilda Swinton, resounds throughout with Adams's music – a vital ingredient in the creation of the movie. Scores featured include *Century Rolls*, *Harmonielehre*, *Fearful Symmetries*, *Shaker Loops*, *Lollapalooza*, *The Chairman Dances* and *Nixon in China*. Tilda Swinton and John Adams are hosting a number of red carpet screenings in the USA, including San Francisco, Washington and New York.



Tilda Swinton in *I am Love*, featuring music by John Adams

"The drama's intensity is buoyed up by the intricate, imposing dynamism of John Adams's music. Guadagnino astutely matches scenes to specific pieces: the result is certainly cinema's most inspired coupling of music and image since *There Will Be Blood*... *I Am Love* is a deeply serious film, and a seriously political one, but it's also playful, flamboyant and visually magnificent." *The Independent on Sunday*

"An exquisite feast of sensual pleasures that's almost certainly the most elegant piece of cinema you'll see this year." *The Times*

Music by Adams can also be heard on the soundtrack of Martin Scorsese's recent film *Shutter Island* starring Leonardo DiCaprio. The movie is radical in its use of contemporary classical music rather than a film score and includes Adams's *Christian Zeal and Activity* and *Hoodoo Zephyr* alongside works by John Cage, Ligeti, Brian Eno and Ingram Marshall. A 2CD set of the film's music was recently released by Warner on the Rhino label (081227983192).

# eras explored



London

(Neue Merker). The work has frightened many opera houses with its fierce intensity and challenging lead soprano role, but the new reduced scoring used at the Odeon Theatre in Vienna offers the opportunity for casting with lighter voices and performances in smaller theatrical venues.

"Wolfgang Suppan really knows his craft as an arranger: over long passages he succeeds in translating the shimmering music, conceived for large orchestra, virtually intact to a version for just sixteen musicians... With the sonic intensifications and tightenings which the scoring for seven wind, six strings, piano and percussion allows, he turns the screw of modernism half a turn tighter still, without actually compromising the sounds." *Die Presse*

Many of Prokofiev's stageworks suffered a complex history of cancellations, truncated performances and enforced revisions, no more so than *War and Peace*. So it was intriguing to experience the opera in a form returning close to the composer's original intentions in the recent collaborative staging by The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and the Rostov State Rachmaninoff Conservatoire. The Guardian described how "stripped of its ballast, what emerges is leaner and more muted, with some 90 minutes shorn off". The Times concluded the "original version is theatrically tighter, more lyrical – and a more practical proposition in these straitened times" but "missed those spine-shuddering choruses".



# Glanert & Holloway revisiting Romantics

Both Detlev Glanert and Robin Holloway have a deep understanding of the German Romantic repertoire, a well-spring for their original compositions and the source of a series of acclaimed orchestrations. Glanert's new version of Schubert's *Einsamkeit* (*Solitude*) was premiered by Carolyn Sampson and the Hallé Orchestra under Markus Stenz in Manchester on 18 February. This was not the short song familiar from Schubert's *Winterreise*, but his extended 20-minute setting which resembles an operatic scena. The Guardian described how "Glanert's orchestration, all low woodwind and unusual pizzicatos, is extraordinary: towards the end there is a surge in the strings that has you choking back tears".

"an ingenious new orchestration... a highly dramatic treatment of a poem in which a man struggles to reconcile the noisy turbulence of everyday life with the inescapable loneliness of his inner world... Though full of echoes from Schubert's orchestral sound world – everything from *Rosamunde* to the Great C Major Symphony – it also hinted, in its agitated passages, at how much Mahler took up Schubert's lyrical threads and wove them into his own vast tapestries." *The Times*

Cologne plays host to the German premiere of *Einsamkeit* on 24 October and also to the premiere on 21 November of Glanert's arrangement for chamber ensemble of Schumann's valedictory *Geistervariationen*, a contribution to the composer's bicentenary. This joins Glanert's mixed octet versions of Brahms's *Variations on a Theme of Schumann* and *Four Piano Pieces* op.119, together with his orchestration and expansion of Brahms's *Four Serious Songs* which has received over 50 performances to date.

Robin Holloway's output includes a number of works that have refracted the music of Schumann into his own distinctive idiom. *Scenes from Schumann* enjoys multiple performances in Germany and Turkey in this bicentenary year, and *Fantasy-Pieces* is featured at the BBC Proms on 28 August with the Nash Ensemble. The BBC Proms also presents the world premiere of Holloway's *Reliquary* on 9 September, with Dorothea Roschmann and the BBC Philharmonic conducted by Gianandrea Noseda. Scored for mezzo-soprano and chamber orchestra, this work 'encloses' an orchestration of Schumann's final song-cycle setting poems and prayers penned in exile and prison by Mary, Queen of Scots.

# Clyne signs with B&H



Photo: Denise Anderson

Anna Clyne has signed an exclusive agreement with Boosey & Hawkes to represent her existing catalogue as well as future works. British-born and American-resident, Clyne (b.1980) has been nurtured through the Emerging Composers scheme launched by Boosey & Hawkes in New York and now moves to a full publishing contract.

Since the relationship with Boosey & Hawkes began in 2008, Clyne's *Within Her Arms* for string ensemble was premiered on the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Green Umbrella series and she has been named by Riccardo Muti as a Composer-in-Residence with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Beginning in September this year and continuing for two seasons, Clyne will compose new works for the CSO, curate the contemporary music series MusicNOW, and be involved with outreach projects in the Chicago community to further the understanding and appreciation of all music.

Anna Clyne, writing of the new agreement, said: "I am honoured to join the Boosey & Hawkes fold. Through their Emerging Composers initiative, I was fortunate to get to know, and to work with, a wonderful team of people who share my passion for experiencing fresh music and exploring new territory in music with dance, film and the visual arts. I look forward to an exciting and collaborative future."

This season has seen Clyne featured by the Psappha ensemble in the UK and Sentieri selvaggi in Italy and the first New York performance of *Within Her Arms* by the Metropolis Ensemble. In August she serves as a composer-in-residence at Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, under the direction of Marin Alsop. Next April, Riccardo Muti leads the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a performance of *Rewind* at Carnegie Hall in New York, and Clyne's plans include a new work for the London Sinfonietta.

# Andriessen Commedia in the US

Louis Andriessen has forged strong cross-Atlantic links, evolving a distinctive European response to American minimalism in the 1970s, and proving to be a highly influential figure for a generation of younger US composers. So his selection as Musical America's Composer of the Year is a fitting tribute, coinciding with high profile events at Carnegie Hall in New York and in Los Angeles.

April brought the first US performances of his latest opera *La Commedia*, with definitive interpretations guaranteed by Reinbert de Leeuw conducting the Asko/Schoenberg Ensemble and Synergy Vocals, and the opera's original cast including Cristina Zavalloni as Dante, Claron McFadden as Beatrice and Jeroen Willems as Lucifer.

"Andriessen has assembled a spectacularly idiosyncratic libretto that draws not only on Dante's epic tour of hell, purgatory and paradise, but also on the Bible, works by the 17th-century Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel and other sources. He has reconfigured Dante's triptych as five panels, and kept the first three in hell.

"...a driven, often intensely dark score that brings together starkly contrasting styles and makes the juxtapositions sound natural. Dissonant, sharp-edged woodwind and brass chords are accompanied by almost minimalist arpeggiation... Recorded electronic sounds, used sparingly, suggest the present world, the bubbling cauldrons of hell



Photo: Francesca Parola

and the sparkling shimmer of heaven. But the score's most memorable aspect is the pounding, often lurching chord progressions that evoke different corners of the underworld." *New York Times*

*Commedia* may work best as dramatic oratorio... a spectacularly sung and played concert performance that made a strangely exhilarating encounter with the here-and-now and the beyond all the more meaningful... The instrumental ensemble, a few strings (no violas) and

plenty of brass winds and percussion, belted out jazz, aced difficult Stravinsky and Minimalist rhythms and sounded, when asked, touchingly tender and gloriously glittery... De Leeuw is Virgil to Andriessen's Dante, the perfect guide for his music." *Los Angeles Times*

Other highlights of the Carnegie season included the two-piano concerto *The Hague Hacking* and John Adams conducting *De Staat*, described in the New York Times as "pugnacious and exhilarating". The US premiere of Andriessen's new work for Bang on a Can, *Life*, fell foul of volcanic ash disruptions, but the group has successfully toured the work to Milan, Rome, Amsterdam, The Hague and Karlsruhe, with future dates in Stanford and at the Barbican in London. Andriessen's *Anais Nin*, for singer Cristina Zavalloni, ensemble and sampler, is premiered at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena on 10 July, with future performances planned in Amsterdam and by the London Sinfonietta.

# Rouse Odnazhizn



Photo: Christian Stener

For the hardy concertgoers who braved a Manhattan snowstorm to hear the New York Philharmonic in February, "the program's highlight was the premiere of Mr. Rouse's *Odnazhizn*... a magical score" (*New York Times*). Christopher Rouse made his name with dramatic and passionate orchestral music and his new 15-minute score for Alan Gilbert's opening season at the orchestra's helm was no exception. Gilbert is a leading interpreter of Rouse's music, having introduced European audiences to the composer's works and recorded a pair of CDs with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic for BIS.

In his programme note Rouse writes that *Odnazhizn* (*A Life*) is a "homage to a person of Russian ancestry who is very dear to me." He goes on to describe how the enigmatic score "is built around a personal (and unrevealed) code in which the letters of the alphabet are assigned to pitches and durations" to create a work that is both "a public portrait" and something of "a private love letter".

"Against a backdrop of haunting, pianissimo strings, which move at a glacial pace, Mr. Rouse imposes short bursts of fast, angular flute figures, darkly mysterious contributions from lower-lying woodwinds, and sudden bursts of fortissimo brass. Eventually the strings abandon their lvesian introspection and take up more vigorous themes of their own... the real action is in the huge percussion array, which not only contributes shimmering effects and underpins the brass bursts, but also provides the connective tissue between the string and wind writing." *New York Times*

A further performance of *Odnazhizn* takes place at the Aspen Festival on 2 July with the Aspen Chamber Symphony. Rouse's 15-minute concert-opener *Rapture* is one of the most widely travelled orchestral works of the 'Noughties', performed recently on a Californian tour by David Robertson and the Saint Louis Symphony, and scheduled next season by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra with Peter Oundjian. Rouse's new *String Quartet No.3* is premiered by the Calder Quartet next season, and their performances of his two earlier quartets can be heard on a new CD from E1 Entertainment.

# Schiphorst goose girl

Iris ter Schiphorst's new opera for young audiences, *The Goose Girl*, was premiered in February by Vienna Pocket Opera, touring to Berlin's new Radialsystem V arts venue. Based on a Grimm fairy tale with a libretto by Helga Utz, the hour-long opera has a 'pocket-size' cast of four singers and an actor/dancer and was praised in *Die Tageszeitung* for the "wit of the text, music and staging. Though the goose girl is one of the most poetic and sad of Grimms' fairy stories, it was a real eye-opener that so many humorous sparks fly... The children showed their appreciation at the end with enthusiastic foot stamping."



Photo: Die Wiener Taschenoper

The premiere of Iris ter Schiphorst's *The Goose Girl* in Vienna

"The secret of *The Goose Girl*'s success is – honestly – new music. Although Iris ter Schiphorst composes on the borders of tonality, she has mastered the genial trick of ensuring accessibility and recognition through the repetition of individually skewed and oblique arioso phrases." *Kulturradio*

"Scored for keyboard, cello, bass clarinet and accordion, the fairy tale is related by the 'false' goose girl in fine and merry fashion... All the characters are convincingly portrayed: the innocently trusting princess, her caring mother, the overbearing lady's maid who pays the price for her social climbing, the clumsy bridegroom, his fat-bellied father and, naturally, the faithful horse." *Berliner Zeitung*

Schiphorst has recently completed a score for seven instrumentalists to accompany Buñuel's surreal short film *Un chien andalou*, premiered at the Berlin Konzerthaus in January with Ensemble Ascolta.

# Maxwell Davies Sea Orpheus

Peter Maxwell Davies's new work for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, described by the *New York Times* as "an engagingly virtuosic score", was commissioned as part of a series linked to Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*. Specifically it is the 5th concerto that Maxwell Davies revisits in *Sea Orpheus*, with its solo flute, violin and keyboard pitted against the tutti ensemble. The new 17-minute work was featured on a tour of the USA culminating in a concert at Carnegie Hall on 6 February, with Christopher Taylor as piano soloist.

As well as being a tribute to the famed conductorless orchestra, *Sea Orpheus* takes its name from a poem by George Mackay Brown, in which the Greek father of song and his lost Eurydice are transported to the waveswept Orkney Islands. The mythical transformation is paralleled in musical terms through Maxwell Davies's employment of the *Tantum ergo sacramentum* Gregorian chant throughout all three movements. The composer writes in his programme note that "this is the first time I have attempted to write a strictly neo-Classical work, and, as well as from the

*Brandenburg Concerto*, I have borrowed techniques from the *Musical Offering* and the *Art of Fugue*".

"Davies has peppered musical inspirations with textual and social reference points that serve to clarify... He views the piece as an allegory about global warming, a phenomenon that threatens his beloved Orkney Islands in coming decades. It's an evocative, multi-textured work well worth repeated listenings." *Musical America*



Maxwell Davies's website, relaunched last year for the composer's 75th birthday, provides a wealth of information, including a comprehensive list of works, programme notes, over 50 audio clips, and links to purchase CDs and downloads. Visit [www.maxopus.com](http://www.maxopus.com)



The Benjamin Britten centenary in 2013 offers orchestras and festivals the opportunity to explore the composer's repertoire beyond those perennial favourites, *Four Sea Interludes*, *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*.

Although a number of major works in Britten's output include in their title 'symphony' or 'sinfonia', he avoided direct lineage from the traditional symphony, instead exploring hybrid forms prompted by Mahler's example. His largest purely orchestral work is the powerful *Sinfonia da Requiem*, commissioned by the Japanese government for a dynastic anniversary but composed as Britten's memorial tribute to his parents. The work combines a pacifist's strong reaction to the menace of war with liturgical movement titles drawn from the *Requiem Mass*.

The *Spring Symphony* is a compelling fusion of symphony, oratorio and song cycle, exploring the reawakening of the earth and life. It is wholly characteristic of Britten in its response to English verse, from Edmund Spenser to WH Auden, and its blending of original composition with folksong traditions. The riotous May-Day festival finale is the composer at his most energetic, complete with cow horn, cheeky boys' chorus, and high-spirited music-making. The *Cello Symphony* is essentially a concerto, written for Russian virtuoso Mstislav Rostropovich, while also signalling Britten's re-engagement with symphonic thought in the 1960s.

Just as the *Four Sea Interludes* and *Passacaglia* capture scene-setting and the emotional undertow of the drama in *Peter Grimes*, so do orchestral suites from other Britten stageworke, extracted either by the composer himself or by his closest collaborators. The *Symphonic Suite 'Gloriana'* draws us into the Elizabethan age, with a tournament, courtly dances, a lute song and the epilogue in which the Queen balances the call of love and duty. The melody of the Earl of Essex's lute song can either be sung by a tenor or played by an oboe.

Music from Britten's ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas* can be heard in three different orchestral compilations: the exhilarating *Pas de six* from Act 3; the *Prelude and Dances* compiled by Norman del Mar

with Britten's authorization, and the more recent 45-minute suite arranged by Donald Mitchell and Mervyn Cooke to include the gamelan music which gives the ballet its distinctive eastern flavour.

Britten orchestral works published by Faber Music include the *Suite from Death in Venice* and his orchestral farewell, the *Suite on English Folk Tunes 'A time there was...'*

<b>Sinfonia da Requiem</b> op.20 (1939-40)	20'
<b>Spring Symphony</b> op.44 (1948-49)	45'
for soloists, chorus, boys' choir and orchestra	
<b>Cello Symphony</b> op.68 (1963, rev.1964)	34'
<b>Gloriana: Symphonic Suite</b> op.53a (1953)	26'
<b>The Prince of the Pagodas</b> <b>Pas de six</b> op.57a (1956)	12'
<b>Prelude and Dances</b> op.57b (1963)	27'
<b>Suite</b> op.57c (1997)	42' or 47'

A new CD sampler of Britten's orchestral music is available for orchestral programmers and conductors preparing concerts for the Britten Centenary: please email [composers.uk@boosey.com](mailto:composers.uk@boosey.com). The CD also contains a fully updated *Guide to the Orchestral Works of Benjamin Britten*, covering the composer's complete orchestral output. To download a PDF of the *Guide* visit [www.boosey.com/brittenorchestral](http://www.boosey.com/brittenorchestral)

## Panufnik CD series launched



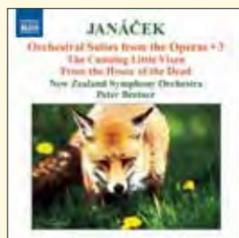
A new recording series has been launched by CPO, exploring Andrzej Panufnik's symphonic works. The first volume features the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lukasz Borowicz in six works spanning half a century of

Panufnik's creative output. *Heroic Overture* was first sketched in 1939 in wartime Warsaw, as the nation first defended itself against the German invasion. The latest work on the disc, *Harmony*, was composed for the New York Chamber Symphony in 1989. War and peace are recurring themes on the CD, which also includes *Tragic Overture*, *Nocturne*, *Katyrń Epitaph* and *A Procession for Peace* (CPO 777 497-2).

The second disc in the series is due to be released this summer, with *Sinfonia Rustica* (*Symphony No. 1*), *Sinfonia Concertante for Flute, Harp and Strings* (*Symphony No. 4*) and *Polonia*, again with Borowicz and the Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra. The CPO series is planned to run to six discs, with performing honours shared between Polish forces and the Berlin Konzerthausorchester, and signals the welcome return of many Panufnik symphonic works to the recording catalogue.

For a CD sampler of Panufnik's music please email [composers.uk@boosey.com](mailto:composers.uk@boosey.com)

## Janáček opera suites



Naxos has completed its collection of orchestral suites from Janáček's operas, in arrangements by Peter Breiner. The third disc contains suites from *The Cunning Little Vixen* and *From the House of the Dead*, performed by the New

Zealand Symphony Orchestra conducted by Breiner (Naxos 8.570576). The usually performed *Vixen* suite, created by Talich in the 1930s, adopts a simplified orchestration and uses material only from Act I, whereas Breiner's 40-minute suite returns to Janáček's original scoring and covers the trajectory of the opera as a whole, also including the *Vixen's* courtship, marriage and eventual death at the hands of the poacher.

The suite from Janáček's final opera, *From the House of the Dead*, includes the *Overture*, *Pantomime* and four other movements, which capture the composer's vision of hope amidst the bleakness of a Siberian prison. The earlier releases in the Naxos series featured suites from *Jenůfa* and *The Excursions of Mr Brouček* (8.57055) and *Kát'a Kabanová* coupled with *The Makropulos Affair* (8.570556). As Gramophone wrote: "the extracts are expertly chosen by Peter Breiner... for a minimal outlay the music delivers treasure upon treasure".

All six suites are available on hire from Boosey & Hawkes (some territorial restrictions may apply). For perusal scores please email [composers.uk@boosey.com](mailto:composers.uk@boosey.com)

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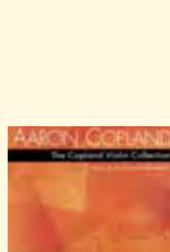
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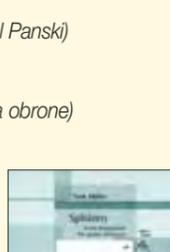
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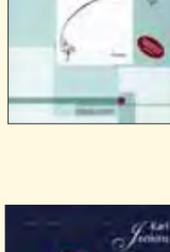
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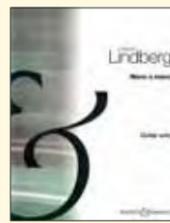
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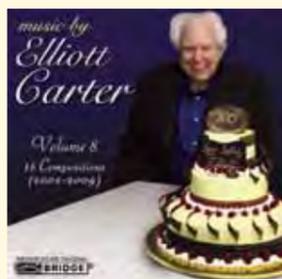
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## Carter celebration



Bridge Records has released Volume 8 in its series devoted to Elliott Carter, celebrating the composer's centenary and collecting the works written in the years leading up to the 100th birthday

(Bridge 9314A/B). The 2CD set contains 16 compositions covering orchestral, vocal and chamber music, and all are premiere recordings. Performers include many of Carter's leading interpreters, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oliver Knussen, the Juilliard Quartet, soprano Lucy Shelton and clarinetist Charles Neidich.

Highlights on the discs are the *Horn Concerto*, the Ezra Pound song cycle *On Conversing with Paradise*, the *Poems of Louis Zukofsky* for soprano and clarinet, and the *Clarinet Quintet*. As The Guardian's reviewer noted: "Even in his 102nd year, Elliott Carter's creativity shows few signs of faltering... Every piece seems charged with energy and sheer delight in its own fluent invention."

Pierre Boulez conducts the premiere of Carter's newest song cycle *What Are Years*, setting poetry by Marianne Moore (1887-1972), at the Aldeburgh Festival on 26 June with soprano Claire Booth and the Ensemble Intercontemporain. The first US and Swiss performances are presented at Tanglewood (12 July) conducted by James Levine and at the Lucerne Festival (1 September), and Daniel Barenboim conducts the first German performances in Berlin in July 2011.