

VIENNA CALLING

Sonatas and Miniatures for Clarinet and Piano

BRAHMS | BERG | WELLESZ | KRENEK

Anthony Pike Clarinet
John Lenehan Piano



CELEBRATING
30
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY



CLARINET &
SAXOPHONE
CLASSICS

1–5 **Ernst Krenek**

KLEINE SUITE, OP. 28

Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Praeludium | 0:55 |
| 2 | II. Andantino | 1:09 |
| 3 | III. Bourrée | 0:39 |
| 4 | IV. Adagio | 1:10 |
| 5 | V. "Moderner" Tanz | 0:46 |

6–9 **Johannes Brahms**

SONATA IN F MINOR OP.120 NO. 1

Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|------|
| 6 | Allegro appassionato | 7:47 |
| 7 | Andante un poco Adagio | 4:52 |
| 8 | Allegretto grazioso | 4:23 |
| 9 | Vivace | 5:04 |

10–13 **Alban Berg**

VIER STÜCKE, OP. 5

Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------|
| 10 | I. Mäßig | 1:22 |
| 11 | II. Sehr langsam | 1:49 |
| 12 | III. Sehr rasch | 1:07 |
| 13 | IV. Langsam | 2:45 |

14–16 **Johannes Brahms**

SONATA IN EB OP.120 NO.2

Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|------|
| 14 | Allegro amabile | 8:30 |
| 15 | Allegro appassionato | 5:20 |
| 16 | Andante con moto | 7:26 |

17–20 **Egon Wellesz**

SUITE, OP. 74

Anthony Pike (clarinet)

- | | | |
|----|--------------|------|
| 17 | I. Rhapsody | 2:53 |
| 18 | II. Serenade | 2:08 |
| 19 | III. Scherzo | 0:49 |
| 20 | IV. Dance | 2:40 |

21–22 **Egon Wellesz**

ZWEI STÜCKE, OP. 34

Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------|
| 21 | I. Moderato | 1:36 |
| 22 | II. Andante appassionato | 1:54 |

VIENNA CALLING

Sonatas and Miniatures for Clarinet and Piano

- 23–27 **Ernst Krenek**
MONOLOGUE, OP. 157
Anthony Pike (clarinet)
- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|------|
| 23 | I. Moderato | 0:61 |
| 24 | II. L'istesso tempo | 0:51 |
| 25 | III. Larghetto | 1:10 |
| 26 | IV. Allegretto | 0:52 |
| 27 | V. Allegro appassionato | 1:13 |

- 28 **Ernst Krenek**
RHAPSODY, OP. 85A(F) 6:45
PREMIERE RECORDING
Anthony Pike (clarinet), John Lenehan (piano)

Total time: 79:01



Anthony Pike Clarinet
John Lenehan Piano

VIENNA – CITY OF BROKEN DREAMS

This CD brings together works by a number of composers for whom Vienna was their home, although two of them were driven into exile



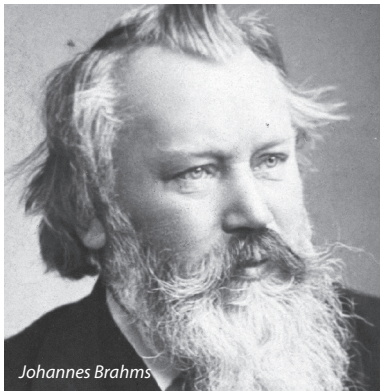
Ernst Krenek (1900–1991) was born in Vienna, the son of a Czech soldier in the Austrian army. He studied in Vienna and Berlin, worked in several German opera houses, and was (briefly) married to Gustav Mahler's daughter Anna. His 'jazz opera' *Jonny spielt auf* (1926) brought him huge success but aroused the disfavor of the Nazi party, who hounded Krenek as a Jew (which he was not) and a composer of 'degenerate music', eventually forcing him to flee the country in 1938. He settled in America, where he became a highly respected university lecturer in the USA and later in Canada; Krenek died in California at the age of 91. The legendary Canadian pianist Glenn Gould was a great champion of Krenek and his music; he wrote a perceptive essay entitled 'Ernst Who???' and played a Krenek sonata in his final live recital.

Krenek's **Kleine Suite (Little Suite) Op. 28** for clarinet and piano dates from 1924. At this period, under the influence of Stravinsky and the group of French composers known as *Les Six*, Krenek had developed a 'neoclassical' idiom, using polyphonic lines and bittersweet atonal harmonies – reminiscent of Hindemith or Martinů – within straightforward classical forms. The five short

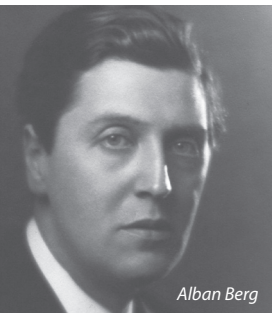
movements conclude with a teasing and slightly jazzy 'modern dance'. The Suite remained unperformed until 1967, when the clarinetist Karl Dörr gave the first performance in Bamberg, with the composer at the piano.

Although **Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)**

was born and grew up in the German city of Hamburg, he moved to Vienna in 1871 and made the Austrian capital his home for the rest of his life. In 1890 – at the age of 57 – Brahms declared that his newly completed String Quintet in G, Op. 111, would be his last work, and began destroying manuscripts and unfinished works, including sketches for a Fifth Symphony. However, all this changed in March 1891, when he heard the Court Orchestra of the German city of Meiningen and was impressed by the beautiful playing of the principal clarinetist, Richard Mühlfeld. He struck up a warm friendship with Mühlfeld, who inspired him to compose his four last great chamber works: the Trio for clarinet, cello and piano, the Quintet for clarinet and strings, and the two Sonatas for clarinet and piano. Brahms called Mühlfeld 'the nightingale of the orchestra' and 'my primadonna'.



Composed in 1894, the two Sonatas are conceived as a pair, complementing each other in their contrasting moods, keys and proportions. Stormy and passionate, the **Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 120 No. 1** is constructed on an ambitious four-movement plan. The first movement opens with a brief, sinister opening in octaves on the piano, leading to a yearning clarinet melody with wide intervals. Brahms then weaves together several themes in a restless free version of sonata form, before bringing the movement to a gentle close in F major. The slow movement, in A flat major, spins a long clarinet line over a cycle of falling arpeggios in the piano like a slowly turning wheel. The following movement in the same key, in 3/4 time, has been described as Brahms's 'final bittersweet tribute to the Viennese waltz'. The energetic F major finale, marked *Vivace* (lively), opens with a figure of three repeated notes which recurs throughout the movement like the tolling of a bell.



A generation after Brahms, the Viennese composer Arnold Schoenberg changed the course of musical history when he moved away from classical tonality in defined keys to develop his system of serialism, or 'composing with twelve tones related only to each other'. Schoenberg and his pupils Alban Berg and Anton Webern became known as the 'Second Viennese School' – Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven having constituted the first. **Alban Berg (1885–1935)** expanded Schoenberg's innovations to embrace an expressive 'quasi-romantic' idiom in his operas *Wozzeck* and *Lulu* and his Violin Concerto. His **Vier**

Stücke (Four Pieces) Op. 5 for clarinet and piano, composed in 1913, explore the expressive possibilities of serial technique in a set of jewel-like miniatures.

In contrast to the Sonata No. 1, **Brahms's Sonata No. 2 in E flat, Op. 120 No. 2** is relaxed, predominantly tranquil, and laid out in three fantasia-like movements. It opens with a placid 'singing' melody, marked *Allegro amabile* ('lovable'), which contains a thematic reference to the opening of the Sonata No. 1; the second theme of the movement is another reflective tune, in the clarinet's mellow lower register. The second movement, *Allegro appassionato*, is the stormiest of the three, although the agitated opening gives way to a sustained and lyrical middle section which expands to a heroic climax. The last movement is a sequence of variations, characterised by classical symmetry and restraint. The theme Brahms chose is a line from a song he had written 20 years earlier – 'Dämmerung senkte sich von oben' (Dusk has descended from on high), to words by Goethe; the song's mood of resignation and impending darkness is perhaps a reflection of Brahms's sense that his life was drawing to a close.

Another of Schoenberg's pupils was **Egon Wellesz (1885–1974)**, born in Vienna to Hungarian Jewish parents; he had a successful career in Vienna as a composer and musicologist. When the Nazis took over in 1938 he was fortunate to be abroad at the time. He then settled in England, receiving an honorary doctorate from Oxford University, where he taught until his death. Wellesz's musical language shows the influence of Schoenberg's serialism, but also has neoclassical elements derived from his academic studies of Baroque and Byzantine music. The **Suite Op. 74** for unaccompanied clarinet dates from



Egon Wellesz

1956; its four movements are characterised by wide-ranging intervals and hints of traditional dance forms. **Zwei Stücke (Two Pieces) Op. 34** for clarinet and piano were composed in 1922; the first is reflective and haunting, the second agitated and passionate, with a calmer middle section.

Krenek's Monologue Op. 157 for solo clarinet was written in 1956 – the same year as Wellesz's Suite. It is in five characterful and contrasted movements, the fourth being in the manner of a lively peasant dance. The last item on this disc, Krenek's **Rhapsody Op. 85A(f)**, comes from a set of pieces for various wind instruments which

he wrote in 1938–39, soon after his move to the USA. Entitled 'School Music', they were intended to develop the 'facility for musical understanding' in students and young performers. The Rhapsody was published in 1939 under the pseudonym 'Thornton Winsloe'. A lyrical *Andante* in triple time is contrasted with a quirky dance in 2/4.

Jonathan Burton © 2021

VIENNA CALLING, SOME OBSERVATIONS

Some years ago (2001) I recorded a CD of Reger's Complete Works for Clarinet and Piano for Clarinet and Saxophone Classics. The idea then was to imagine which directions Brahms might have taken had he lived into the Twentieth century. The duo writing of Reger fitted this bill uncannily. Since then I have had a chance to explore more twentieth century compositions involving the clarinet with the same 'What if?' Brahmsian conceit. This CD is the result.

The CD aims to expose the debt of gratitude which clarinetists owe to the city of Vienna. Building on the historical legacy of Mozart and Schubert, Brahms represents the earliest of the featured composers with his two late masterpieces Op. 120 1/2. 1897, the year of Brahms's death, was the same year in which the iconic Vienna Ferris Wheel was completed providing a link into the twentieth century and Berg's 1913 Vier Stücke Op. 5. These pieces, which were criticized by his teacher Arnold Schoenberg for their miniature nature, demonstrate nascent use of extremes of tempi, register and dynamics which he would go on to use in his later major works, notably his great operas Wozzeck and Lulu. Also a pupil of Schoenberg, Egon Wellesz had a first public performance of his work (String Quartet Op. 1) in 1913, the same year as Berg's Op. 5. Wellesz was well connected in liberal Viennese circles, and later related to friends in Oxford that he had sat on Brahms's knee. He was fortunate to be attending a performance of one of his works in Amsterdam when The Anschluss turned Vienna upside down in 1938.

He spent the remainder of his time as a professor at Lincoln College, Oxford, and his body was returned to Vienna for burial in 1974. Similarly lucky to be away from Vienna in 1938 was Ernst Krenek who was visiting the United States. Krenek also falls under the umbrella term Second Viennese School, though unlike Berg and Wellesz he didn't study with Schoenberg. Always an eclectic composer, he found himself a household name following the popular success of his jazz influenced opera *Jonny Spielt Auf*. Like Wellesz, he had earlier used twelve-tone techniques and both wrote Clarinet and Piano duos in 1923. Krenek remained in the United States for the remainder of his prolific career where Glenn Gould described him as a "one man history of twentieth century music".

The connections between these composers and the city of Vienna are powerful. Brahms influenced early Schoenberg, who in turn had a huge compositional effect on Berg, Wellesz and Krenek. The Ferris Wheel would have been a sight all of them, bar Brahms, would have been familiar with. Even Brahms himself may have heard the rumble of construction vehicles pointing to a new, modern Vienna.

John Lenehan and I have been performing the Brahms sonatas on and off since 1980 BBC Young Musician of the Year and recorded the Wellesz *Zwei Stücke* for BBC Radio 3 in 1991.

Anthony Pike © 2021

ANTHONY PIKE - CLARINET

Anthony Pike was born in Seoul, Korea, and studied the clarinet with Julian Farrell in London, Robert Marcellus in Chicago and Dame Thea King At the Royal College of Music. Anthony is the principal clarinet with the English Chamber Orchestra (E.C.O.), and has performed concertos with them extensively.

He has also appeared as guest principal with most of the British orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Chamber music collaborators have included Christian Zacharias, Ralph Gothóni, Joachim Trio, Medici and Tippet Quartets and E.C.O. Ensemble.

He is regularly invited, as chamber musician and soloist, to appear at international festivals which have included Edinburgh, Johannesburg, Nordland, Hong Kong and Bermuda.

Despite reading Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Magdalen College, Oxford, Anthony gradually became more absorbed with playing the clarinet. The National Federation of Music Societies 'Young Artist' award provided a springboard for his recital career, and he made his Wigmore Hall debut in 1994. Concerto appearances at the Royal Festival Hall, Barbican, Cadogan Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall followed.

Anthony's discography includes Mozart Concerto for Bassett Clarinet with Ralph Gothóni and the E.C.O., the complete works for clarinet and piano by Max Reger (Martin Jones, piano), the entire 2000-2003 Associated Board syllabus for clarinet, Vaughan Williams Six Studies in English Folksong and early Quintet (John Lenehan, piano), and Copland Clarinet Sextet. Studio soundtrack recordings include Harry Potter, James Bond and Shrek amongst many others. He played the theme music for the 'Lewis' television series. The Oscar winning score to Atonement uses his solo clarinet in a particularly haunting way.

Anthony is also a sought after and experienced teacher. He was a Professor of Clarinet at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama between 1997 and 2003, and currently teaches at Trinity Laban Conservatoire. He plays on Selmer Recital clarinets.





JOHN LENEHAN – PIANO

With more than 70 albums to his credit, reflecting an enormous variety of genres and styles, John Lenehan ranks as one of the most versatile pianists on the classical scene today. Praised by the New York Times for his “great flair and virtuosity” and the (London) Times – “a masterly recital”, John Lenehan has appeared in concerts throughout the World from Abu Dhabi to Zurich and from Aberdeen to Zimbabwe. As a soloist he has appeared with orchestras such as the London Symphony at the Barbican and the Royal Philharmonic in the Royal Albert Hall. John Lenehan has also collaborated with some of the leading instrumentalists of our time and is recognised as an outstanding and versatile chamber musician.

His many recordings include piano recitals and concertos as well as duo sonatas, chamber music and jazz. His four-disc survey of John Ireland’s piano music received great critical acclaim including a Gramophone award. His other solo recordings include three discs for Sony Classical of minimalist piano works and a disc of Erik Satie (for Classic FM). Most recently he has recorded concertos by Mozart (K.467) and Beethoven (Emperor) with the National Symphony Orchestra.

John Lenehan also composes, with works published by Faber, Novello and Schott. His Fantasy on Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker has recently been recorded by the Budapest Symphony Orchestra. He has written and arranged for a long list of soloists and orchestras including Nicola Benedetti, Leonidas Kavakos, Nigel Kennedy, Tasmin Little, Ksenija Sidorova (at the last night of the Proms 2021) and Yuja Wang. John also presents film and music programmes, reviving the art of the improvising pianist – the most recent being “The Roaring Twenties.”



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Headstone, Harrow on 8-9 March 2021
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Editor: Adaq Khan
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