

BEN GOLDSCHIEDER
HORN

DANIEL HILL
PIANO

DEBUT

SCHUMANN
WIDMANN
KIRCHNER
SALONEN
BOWEN
KRUFFT



*Willowhayne
Records*

AIR, FOR SOLO HORN

JÖRG WIDMANN (b. 1973)

Jörg Widmann's "Air" for solo Horn was written in 2005 for German horn player Bruno Schneider. The composer writes in the foreword that "the work is as a whole, orientated towards a single vocal gesture - "air" in both its literal meaning and as the established musical term... Through this microtonal cosmos, and the constant fluctuations between open and stopped notes, a natural work on the themes of proximity and distance is created." The piece opens with extremely quiet long tones, both open and closed (a technique involving the closing off of the bell with the player's right hand). Then, a series of legato phrases on the harmonic series of E₃ is played, whilst the sound continues reverberating inside the lid of the grand piano whose sustaining pedal is kept down for the duration of the piece. Of particular interest is the use of the 7th harmonic, which naturally lies very flat and its natural rawness is intensified by the sound waves clashing together as they hit the piano strings; a close shimmering of tone we so often associate with "playing out of tune". The piece continues to explore the tonal versatility of the harmonic series, exploring the extreme high and low registers and extremes of dynamics. Once it reaches the *marcato* section, there are flurries of very fast glissandos and virtuosity that hugely exploits the possibilities of the horn, leading to a section of respite that is quickly interrupted by the juxtaposition of extremely loud open and stopped sounds. Here, not only does the tone sustain inside the piano, but the piano strings actually seem to absorb the differences between the open and metallic sounds at the same time; a wonderful effect. The piece then finishes with the player singing and playing an open octave in pianissimo, a fitting ending to a piece that takes the listener on a wild journey of the horn and its capabilities.

SONATA FOR PIANO AND HORN IN E MAJOR

NIKOLAUS VON KRUFFT (1779-1818)

Born in February 1779 in Vienna, Nikolaus von Krufft was the son of a state minister. His mother, a talented pianist in her own right, was his first teacher and gave him his early music education. He later commenced composition studies under Albrechtsberger, the most sought-after teacher of his day. Whilst he took a degree in both philosophy and law at the University in Vienna, he remained a devoted musician; a pursuit that often occupied many hours into the night after his job in land governance had ceased for the day; this lifestyle may have eventually contributed to his premature death at the age of 39 in 1818.

On the opening page of the score, the title proudly states "Sonate E-Dur für Klavier und Horn", as opposed to what would become either "Horn Sonata" or "Sonata for Horn and Piano". Although an exact date for the work's publication is not possible to distinguish, it is generally agreed that this piece was written and published in 1814, four years before the composer's death. At this time, it was not

unusual for composers to write fortepiano sonatas with the “accompaniment” of another instrument such as the horn or bassoon in Krufft's case.

Due to the physics of the horn, the tonic key of this sonata (E major) is the ideal key to utilise the ringing pitches of the harmonic series and the subsequent sweet spot in terms of sonority on the instrument. Advances in players' techniques during the eighteenth century created an era of composers inspired to write works for the horn. Vienna, in particular, attracted players such as Jan Václav Stich (also known as Giovanni Punto) for whom Beethoven wrote his Horn Sonata. The Beethoven Sonata is thought to be the first composition for this combination, and it is highly likely that Krufft was inspired in some way by the newly established horn and piano combination.

ADAGIO AND ALLEGRO FOR HORN AND PIANO, Op.70

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

A man most famous for his piano works, lieder and orchestral music, Robert Alexander Schumann was born in 1810 in Zwickau, Saxony. Now arguably the epitome of the Romantic era, Schumann lived a very troubled life, possibly the result of his upbringing. His father, a successful bookseller and novelist, was a tremendously nervous man who married a violently passionate woman, leading to an environment both literary and unstable.

The year 1849 saw Schumann turn his attention towards wind instruments. In an intense week in February, he composed both the *Fantasiestücke* for Clarinet and Piano and then the *Adagio and Allegro* for Horn and Piano. In December of the same year, he wrote the *Three Romances* for Oboe and Piano.

The *Adagio and Allegro*, Op.70, was designed to showcase the new found virtuosic capabilities of the valved horn, an instrument which had only recently been making its way into the orchestra that replaced its technical predecessor, the natural horn. Unlike other romantic composers such as Brahms, (who once mocked the instrument as the “brass viola”) Schumann exploited the newly found capabilities and wrote in an unprecedented virtuosic style.

The work can be said to reflect Schumann's own two-sided emotional nature with the *Adagio* being pensive, wistful and melodic, and the *Allegro* fiery and exuberant, with poetic interludes evoking the *Adagio*. Clara Schumann, his wife, first played through the work with the first horn of the Dresden Court Orchestra, Julius Schlitterlau, and later wrote in her diary that it is “a magnificent piece, fresh and passionate; just as I like it.”

SONATA FOR HORN AND PIANO IN E FLAT MAJOR, Op.101

YORK BOWEN (1884-1961)

Born in Crouch Hill, London in 1884, Edwin York Bowen was the youngest son whose father was the owner of the whisky distillers Bowen & McKechnie. A child prodigy, he made his musical debut at the age of 8 as the soloist in a Dussek piano concerto.

As a student, he won many prestigious prizes for both piano and composition, (he conducted as well as playing the viola, horn) and upon leaving the Royal Academy of Music, won the Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. In the course of a long career, Bowen composed for many of the exceptional musicians of the time, including Lionel Tertis, Arnold Dolmetsch, Terence Macdonagh, Walter Lear and both Aubrey and Dennis Brain.

This Sonata, Op.101 is among a few works in which Bowen wrote for horn, namely the Horn Concerto and Ballad for Horn, Oboe and Piano. Often given the nickname of the "English Rachmaninov," one can certainly draw parallels between the second movement of this Sonata, with the rich *pesante* chords at the beginning evoking comparisons with the opening of Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto.

Written in 1937, this piece is a milestone of early twentieth century horn repertoire. Rich in harmony and virtuosity, the three movements provide the listener with vast contrasts in both style and character.

TRE POEMI

VOLKER DAVID KIRCHNER (b. 1942)

Kirchner, a German violist and composer, does a musical balancing act with his *Tre Poemi* for Horn and Piano: the piece pays homage to Romantic character pieces whilst maintaining a very modern approach to horn tone colour and technique. Composed from 1986 to 1989, *Tre Poemi* is actually derived from a song cycle for horn, piano and baritone, which is a setting of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Sonnette an Orpheus*.

The first movement has often stood alone as a single complete piece. *Tre Poemi*, as it exists today, was written for the German horn soloist Marie-Luise Neunecker. The *Lamento* was premiered at New York's Town Hall on March 24, 1987, whilst the *Danza* was given its first performance in Karlsruhe on May 6, 1988.

The interaction of the horn and piano are intimately important to the texture of the piece. For instance, in the first movement *Lamento*, the horn plays directly into the body of the grand piano, changing the resonance of both instruments as a result. The composer also plays with echo effects, notably in the

second movement *Danza*, which escalates in carefully considered stages and is not always the wildly rearing beast it seems to be. The final movement, *La Gondola funebre*, is achingly slow and uses a wide tonal range in both piano and horn.

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CONCERT ÉTUDE, FOR SOLO HORN

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN (b. 1958)

'I will never forget my first French horn lesson with Holger Fransman. For an eleven-year old boy the great Finnish musician and teacher was an awesome sight: an impressive moustache and fiery eyes. He used to call me Mr Salonen despite my age, and only after I could play to the top C with some accuracy did he suggest we start addressing each other by first names. I spent hours every day with the Waldhornschnle by Oscar Franz, starting from triads for the natural horn, and gradually moving on to chromatic scales using the valves. The very last section of the Waldhornschnle contained hair-raisingly difficult 'real' compositions called Konzert-Etuden. The title really whetted my appetite, and I kept practising these little pieces feverishly, hoping that one day I would be a great horn player, worthy of my teacher.

Life took a different turn later, and I became a conductor and a composer instead. I never lost contact with Holger, however, and he never missed my concerts in Helsinki. There would be a phone call the morning after always, and Holger's creaky voice would deliver often quite a harsh view of what he had heard. Always to the point, I now have to admit.

I saw him for the last time on his deathbed in a hospital in Helsinki. When I entered the room he was listening to *Ein Heldenleben* from his portable CD player. His eyes were closed, but he knew I was there. Finally he spoke: 'Why, it is the Vienna Philharmonic and yet the timpani is too sharp!' We spoke a bit later about this and that, but these are his last words I can remember.

When I was asked to write a piece for solo horn for the International Holger Fransman Memorial Competition (commissioned by the Lieksa Brass Week, Finland), I agreed right away. I decided to write my own *Concert Étude*, and thus create a little homage to my teacher, who in fact was like a grandfather to me.

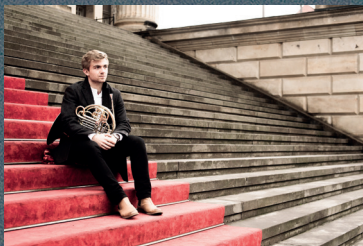
In this piece I treat the horn as a virtuoso instrument, capable of acrobatics as well as the idiomatic melodic expression. In a way, I wrote the piece for the great horn player I never became.'

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BEN GOLDSCHIEDER

Since reaching the Final of the BBC Young Musician Competition in 2016, Ben has made his concerto debut at venues including the Berlin Philharmonie, KKL Lucerne, Barbican and the Royal Albert Hall, appearing as soloist with the BBC Symphony, Lucerne Symphony and Aurora Orchestras, among others.

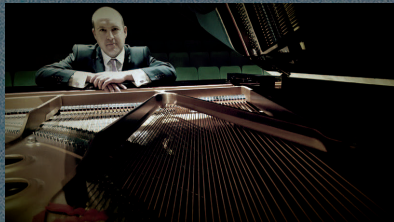
A committed chamber musician, highlights include appearances at London's Wigmore Hall with Julian Prégardien and Christoph Schnackertz, and Berlin's Pierre Boulez Saal alongside Daniel Barenboim and Michael Barenboim. Ben gives recitals throughout the UK and further afield, collaborating with musicians including Richard Uttley (piano), Callum Smart (violin), Denis Kozhukhin (piano) and Giuseppe Guarnera (piano). Sought-after as an orchestral player, Ben has performed as guest with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Staatskapelle Berlin, English Chamber and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestras.



Ben is a student of Radek Baborák at the Barenboim-Said Academy in Berlin, following studies with Susan Dent at the Royal College of Music Junior Department. Prizes include the 2016 Philip Jones Memorial Prize at the Royal Overseas League Annual Music Competition and the Cox Memorial Prize and Audience Prize at the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra Young Soloist Competition.

Ben is grateful for guidance and advice from Young Classical Artists Trust, and for awards from the Dorothy Croft Trust for Young Musicians, Awards for Young Musicians and the EMI Music Sound Foundation.

DANIEL HILL



Cornish-born Daniel received his musical education at Wells Cathedral School and the Royal College of Music, where his piano teachers were John Byrne and John Barstow.

Winner of the Hopkinson Gold Medal and as soloist in Constant Lambert's Piano Concerto under the baton of Ian Brown, Daniel graduated with 1st Class Honours and a Postgraduate Distinction in Performance. Thereupon he became a Junior Fellow

of the RCM, during which two year period he began to establish himself as an active and diverse musician, as comfortable in solo repertoire and chamber music as accompaniment and teaching.

He has performed all over the world at venues which include the Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre, National Concert Hall Dublin, Hochschule der Künste Berlin and University of Iowa; and has broadcast frequently on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM, BBC2 and Radio France. Recent performances have included Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto and appearing in the Brass Final of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition which was shown on BBC television.

Daniel holds teaching positions at the Royal College of Music, Wycombe Abbey School and Charterhouse, and is Organist and Director of Music at St. Michael's Parish Church, Camberley.

DEBUT

BEN GOLDSCHIEDER HORN

DANIEL HILL PIANO

JÖRG WIDMANN (b. 1973)

1. Air, for solo Horn 8:41

NIKOLAUS VON KRUFFT (1779-1818)

Sonata for Piano and Horn in E major 21:08

2. I. Allegro moderato 10:54

3. II. Andante espressivo 4:47

4. III. Rondo alla polacca: Moderato 5:27

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano, Op.70 8:47

5. I. Adagio 3:45

6. II. Allegro 5:02

YORK BOWEN (1884-1961)

Sonata for Horn and Piano in E flat major, Op.101 16:01

7. I. Moderato espressivo 6:16

8. II. Poco lento maestoso 4:56

9. III. Allegro con spirito 4:49

VOLKER DAVID KIRCHNER (b. 1942)

Tre Poemi 12:56

10. I. Lamento 5:02

11. II. Danza 2:37

12. III. La Gondola funebre 5:17

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN (b. 1958)

13. Concert Étude, for solo Horn 7:01

TOTAL TIME: 74:34