Stella Dickinson’s CD ‘Love’s Lore’

Stella Dickinson’s CD ‘Love’s Lore’ has recently been uploaded for streaming individual tracks and is now available on all sites including Spotify, iTunes and Google Play.

Stella writes: ‘recently rated 4-stars by the reviewer in The Independent, it is easy listening for people of all ages who may be interested to hear the lyrical side of the oboe (rather than lots of fast notes), or who may be considering learning it.’

When originally released as a complete CD it was reviewed by Robert Krause in IDRS magazine The Double Reed (Vol. 30, No.4 Spring 2008) as follows: ‘Love’s Lore gives the listener over an hour of beautifully arranged and beautifully performed contemporary settings of 16 Folksongs from the British Isles. Paul Hart’s arrangements are imaginative, well crafted and so very charming… I highly recommend it.’

William Waterhouse Collection Open Day

Following terrific bassoon days in recent years, Elisabeth Waterhouse is once again inviting guests to come and view the Waterhouse bassoon collection near Cheltenham.

The next one will take place on Sunday 24th May 2020 (from 10.00am to 5.00pm). There will be speakers on topics of interest, plus a massed play in. Please let us know if you are coming, so we can plan ahead, by emailing simon.payne@virgin.net to register and obtain full details.

There is good parking, and tea and coffee will be supplied. Do bring your own instruments and enjoy a ‘play together’ at 4.00pm.
EVENT REVIEW

Aberdeen’s 2019 soundfestival
Oboe Day with Nicolas Daniel
3rd November 2019

Previous soundfestival featured the bassoon in 2017, the viola in 2018 and this year it was the turn of the oboe. Scheduled from 23rd October to 3rd November, there was an abundance of concerts and workshops. On the final day, an Oboe Day was staged with Nicholas Daniel, supported by the BDRS.

Keen oboe players gathered from far and wide for what was a very interesting and worthwhile day. As well as locally based musicians, there were students from the Royal Scottish Conservatoire and players from Spain, Croatia and Lithuania.

The day started with a friendly preliminary session with everyone standing in a circle, introducing ourselves to one another. There was a certain amount of encouragement from Nicholas to talk about our pets!

Deep breathing exercises followed, the most memorable being to breathe in deeply to the bottom of our lungs and then to exhale without a break in a continuing imagined circle. This was followed by blowing our reeds in different ways, and some time was spent listening and repeating various pitched notes.

Following a coffee break, we were introduced to the piece Array, in ten parts, by John Woolrich. This contains interestingly tricky rhythms so time was spent mastering these first. This was the first time it was going to be performed with so many oboists. Then we played a piece by Boismortier: the Concerto No.1 in G from the set of six in his Op.15.

Ian Crowther had travelled from Canterbury with a wonderful collection of oboes to try and perhaps also purchase, sheet music, CDs and oboe accessories. He was very much in demand for advice and minor repairs which he kindly undertook with good humour! I found there wasn’t enough time to spend trying the oboes and generally perusing all he had to offer.

After lunch, beginner and junior oboe players joined the group, and a fascinating session was spent with the composer Tansy Davies; under her guidance we created a graphic score. This was something I had never previously done and it certainly made us think about the creation of sounds and images in representing the elements of Earth, Fire, Air and Water. Once the score had been created, we played it with Tansy pointing to the images and us playing the sounds they suggested.

For an informal performance we all transferred to the newly refurbished Cowdray Hall which is an integral part of the Aberdeen Art Gallery. The concert was introduced and directed by Nicholas Daniel and our group of twenty oboe players performed Woolrich’s Array, the Boismortier concerto and the graphic score with Tansy Davies. This concluded an inspirational day with Nicholas who was very informative, friendly and encouraging!

Fiona Gordon

MUSIC REVIEW

Four Miniatures
for cor anglais and piano
by Stewart Green
pub. Phylloscopus

This is a thoughtfully written set of pieces exploring the full range of the cor anglais. If you’re new to playing cor anglais they are an excellent place to start, covering all the technical aspects but in a more enjoyable way perhaps than in a study: and they include a few extra challenges too.

The first movement, Romance, uses the middle to lower register at the beginning, encouraging the development of a lovely sound. The high point of the piece asks for a crescendo to a held forte on top B, followed a few bars later by a piano bottom B, providing a great opportunity to develop flexibility.

The March is a study in fluency of arpeggios, written in a mixture of articulations and exploring different keys, again across the whole range of the instrument. A study yes, but much nicer to play, and with piano accompaniment; plus it requires you to bring character and personality to it. There is also an opportunity for the more adventurous to experiment with flutter-tonguing.

The third movement, entitled Elegy, is an adagietto and has a rhapsodic feel. There are changing time signatures and speeds, with opportunities for rubato and the chance to show off some imaginative and creative phrasing. Here too there’s the chance to try something new with an atmospheric harmonic on the last note. The final movement is a Humoreske, written in a randomly alternating 6/8, 3/4. It’s full of contrasts and quirkiness, taking you up to the heady heights of a top E flat, via some of the less comfortable keys. A fun finale to this set of well thought-out pieces.

Jessica Mogridge
**BOOK REVIEW**

*The Bassoon Reed: My System*  
by Mordechai Rechtman  
£14.95  
www.juneemersonwindmusic.com

The legendary Israeli bassoonist Mordechai Rechtman has finally agreed to share the details of his approach to bassoon reeds. His method has long been the subject of rumour and hearsay among bassoonists worldwide, and the publication of this wonderful guide has been keenly anticipated. Rechtman was assisted by two long-time acolytes, the acclaimed British bassoonist Philip Tarlton and Martin Mangrum of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

Rechtman emigrated from Germany to Palestine in 1934, when he was 8 years old. At the age of 20 he was appointed Principal in the Israel Philharmonic, a position he held for 45 years, until 1991. His playing was much admired by the world-class conductors and soloists that the orchestra attracted, and he developed a reputation as one of the most important players of the twentieth century.

The book is not a reed-making manual, but rather a detailed description of Rechtman’s ‘system’ for adjusting reeds, so that ‘with very little breath, the sound starts instantly’. Rechtman’s mantra is that playing the bassoon should be ‘like playing a recorder or blowing a simple whistle’. His system is based on three elements. First, the inner height of the tube area is set to continue the taper of the crook through the reed. Rechtman calls this the ‘inner cone’ concept. (For those familiar with Lou Skinner’s terminology, this is a ‘conical fulcrum’, a setting that minimises the resilience of the reed’s aperture opening and therefore facilitates playing with little or no up-and-down embouchure pressure.) Second, the tip aperture is manipulated by ‘kneading’ the blades. Finally, the blades are trimmed in a ‘V-Cut’. The book describes these adjustments in some detail, with helpful photographs, measurements and tests to be applied along the way.

Rechtman recorded a YouTube video interview (www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY-r_l24UKA) in 2018 (at the age of 92!) in which he explains and demonstrates his system and samples recordings of his marvellous playing. The interview is a fascinating glimpse of this icon of the bassoon, as well as an invaluable introduction to the ideas that the book explores in detail.

Highly recommended! Anyone with an interest in the bassoon and bassoon reeds should own this book.

Rick Yoder

---

**CD REVIEW**

**FOUR**  
*Woodwind Quartets*  
played by the London Myriad Ensemble  
Divine Arts Métier MSV 28587

There is much to enjoy in this disc of six pieces recorded in 2014 and 2018. The playing is of the highest standard and the ensemble consistently excellent; not to be underestimated given the contrasting tones of the four wind instruments. If an objective was to show that some quartet repertoire is of a similar level to that available for wind quintet, it does highlight the significant gap. These may be the best quartets, but the addition of a horn seems to inspire composers onto a higher plane of composition.

A delight is the recording of the *Deux Movements* by Ibert. Here a grand master of the wind quintet shows that it is possible to produce a compelling quartet. The skill of the ensemble is a pleasure on the ear given that Ibert is so difficult to pull off. The many tempo and rhythmic changes in the *Allant* happen seamlessly; the four are having an engrossing, dynamic conversation! The lively second movement is a joy of rhythmic variety.

The Woodwind Quartet by Françaix will make you smile throughout. The enthusiastic precision of the playing is infectious; the *allegro molto* becomes more humorous as it evolves. This work by a 21-year-old was composed because the horn player was unreliable; thankfully 15 years later Françaix was ready for his first quartet!

For a flautist or oboist, the second movement duet, *Nocturne*, of Frank Bridge’s *Divertimenti H.189* is worth absorbing. This movement was composed three years before the others and stands out as something that could be enjoyed in isolation, for example on Classic FM, with its haunting beauty and luscious playing. The CD comes with good notes that include a comment Bridge wrote provocatively to Britten in 1939: ‘They come off mightily well I’m glad to say. Which means I am quite pleased with them even if nobody else is!’

*Travel Notes 2* by Richard Rodney Bennett is described as ‘light’ music. Whether in balloon, helicopter or car-chase the composing is evocative, and perfect for this combination. A good piece to provide some contrast in a concert. The *Suite en Quatre* composed by Claude Arrieu in 1979 is interesting because it is so different from her wind quintet of 1955. Although the quintet is great fun for the listener, I found it difficult to be really engaged by this quartet, despite hearing it several times. The scherzo seems to lack sparkle and the presto not worth the effort; maybe it gives more pleasure to the players than the audience!

Antony Elliott
CONCERT REVIEW

Oboe Concerto by Richard Strauss
Philharmonia Orchestra
Tom Blomfield, oboe
Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor
Royal Festival Hall, 19th January

It’s remarkable, the ability for that opening in the right hands to silence even the toughest of audiences troubled with winter flu. Tom Blomfield’s angelic sound carried with ease to the back of the hall, and all tension was dissipated as the elongated opening phrase meandered gradually to its climax. Never giving the impression his performance was strained trying to fill the sizeable venue, he provided a sense of intimacy, seemingly halving the Festival Hall’s dimensions and pulling the audience ever closer. The conductor – the esteemed Esa-Pekka Salonen – stood at all times slightly to the right of centre and rotated 30 degrees to his left, with more than half an eye kept on the soloist. He followed Strauss’ score, indiscriminately adorned by tempo changes, with scrupulous precision, while maintaining a constant impression of total coolness. The Philharmonia Orchestra, in turn, performed with the unity and precision of a seasoned chamber ensemble. Every section in their moment demonstrated startling technical facility while traversing Strauss’ intricate semiquaver runs.

Two moments in particular stood out for their sublimity, unrivalled in live performance by any recording one could find online. The second cadenza, ending the third movement of the work, was given a degree of silence between each pithy phrase exceeding in length that of any performance I had previously heard. This silence was never superfluous; in fact following the spritely bustle of the third movement its presence was nothing short of impeccable. In a similar fashion, the ending of the second movement, always the most poignant phrase of the entire work, was, in a very literal sense, tear-inducing. Every affectionate duet between soloist and cor anglais (Maxwell Spiers) brought, in the midst of blanketed string textures, moments of evanescent serenity. As a final comment it would be remiss not to mention Tom Blomfield’s admirable skill in rising to the challenge of that redoubtable 2nd movement cadenza. The performance in all was a joy to hear and watch, rightly inducing cheers and whoops from a very appreciative audience.

Ewan Millar
Noticeboard

Items – both for this page in DRN and for ‘Events’ on the website – can be sent to noticeboard@bdrs.org.uk
Use the entries below as a guide to suitable length.

Sunday 23rd February: the Big Double Reed Day
at Guildhall School of Music & Drama,
Silk Street, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DT.
Full details including application information can be found at www.bigdoublereed.com

Tuesday 21st to Saturday 25th April, 2020:
BDRS oboe and bassoon courses at Park Place.
See Page 16 for an article about these courses with John Anderson oboe, and Laurence Perkins bassoon, which are held simultaneously in Park Place, Wickham, Hampshire. For full details: www.bdrs.org.uk/courses

Wind Serenades and other courses in 2020:
include those in the Lake District, Gloucestershire, Aberystwyth and Cornwall, led by Laurence Perkins and his colleagues from March to November.
Go to www.laurenceperkins.com/wind-serenades for full details.

For oboe and bassoon courses in 2020 at the Jackdaws Music Education Trust,
Great Elm, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3NY,
Go to www.jackdaws.org.uk/wind or Telephone 01373 812383 or email music@jackdaws.org

For oboe and bassoon courses in 2020 at Benslow Music,
Benslow Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9RB.
Telephone 01462 459446 or visit www.benslowmusic.org
Classified

Bassoonists!
Free your hands and neck and use a spike.
Tel: 01206 382567.

Nissen Bassoon Crooks made for professional players.
Order with full details from
www.nissenbassooncrooks.co.uk on a sale or return policy.

Billerbeck Oboe Reeds
Hand crafted reeds made by Marjorie Downward.
Oboe, oboe d’amore, cor anglais and bass oboe.
Gouged and shaped oboe cane.
Tel: 01343 835430 www.billerbeckoboereeds.co.uk

Oboe and Cor Anglais Reeds
David Cowdy. www.reedmaker.co.uk
Tel: 07905 322381 Email: davidcowdy@gmail.com

Unique Trios and Quartets for Bassoon!
javalinapress.com

Cor Anglais for sale. Louis Artist.
Thumbplate, semi-automatic octave keys, one owner, beautiful condition, rarely used, recently fully overhauled and serviced.
Case, crook, reed, reed box. £3,250 ono.
Tel: 0118 9268598. Email: frances@lake48.net. Berkshire.

Much sought after Adler Bassoon 1357/2
One careful owner, beautiful condition, free blowing, resonant sound, suit beginner-serious amateur. Recent o/haul including recorked joints.
25 silver-plated Keys/5 rollers/High D/3 Trill keys/RThumb Bb/Ab.
One No 2 Schreiber crook. Hard case/sling/cleaning rods/thumb rest etc. £3,500.
Tel: 07800 780898 Email: beccyroberts1@hotmail.com. Notts UK.
Advertising in the Double Reed News

Next copy deadline:
15th April 2020

The following rates apply for camera-ready copy.
Any additional artwork will be charged at cost.
To place an advertisement or obtain further information please contact Alison Wathey,
email: advertising@bdrs.org.uk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole page</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(265mmH x 190mmW)</td>
<td>£210</td>
<td>£188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half page</td>
<td>(130mmH x 190mmW or 265mmH x 92mmW)</td>
<td>£135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter page</td>
<td>(130mmH x 92mmW or 62mmH x 190mmW)</td>
<td>£77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth page</td>
<td>(62mmH x 92mmW)</td>
<td>£49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special positions add 10%

- Loose inserts: Up to 8grams £125, over 8grams by arrangement
- Classified: Pre-paid only, first 12 words £5.00, extra words £0.40 (per word)

Please make cheques payable to British Double Reed Society.

Copy requirements:
If sending by email please enquire first to discuss format.
Photographs can be sent digitally or as prints or negatives.
Layout and text is acceptable but the publishers reserve the right to charge for artwork.
Advertisers will be notified if this is necessary.

The Society reserves the right to refuse or withdraw any advertisement at its discretion without stating a reason, nor does it accept responsibility for omissions, clerical errors, or the statements made by advertisers, although every effort is made to check the bona fides of advertisers and avoid mistakes. The Society welcomes articles, letters and other contributions for publication in this magazine, and reserves the right to amend them. Any such contribution is, however, accepted on the understanding that its author is responsible for the opinions expressed in it and that its publication does not necessarily imply that such opinions are in agreement with the Society. Articles submitted for publication in the Double Reed News are accepted on the basis that they will not be published in any other magazine, except by permission of the Editor. No responsibility can be accepted by the Double Reed News, the Editor or the British Double Reed Society committee or contributors for action taken as a result of information contained in this publication.

© Copyright 2020 British Double Reed News. All rights reserved.

The British Double Reed Society is a non-profit-making organisation established to further the interests of all involved with the oboe and bassoon.

The BDRS acts as a national forum for debate and the exchange of ideas, information and advice on all aspects of double reed instruments.

It also fulfils an important role in encouraging greater interest in the instruments, and securing their place in the wider cultural and educational environment.

Registered Charity No. 1080461
Howarth of London

Oboe Specialists

Howarth • Lorée • Marigaux • Rigoutat • Buffet
Yamaha • Mönnig • Cabart • Ludwig Frank • Fox
Reeds 'n Stuff • Rieger • Kexun Ge

Offering a wide range of instruments and accessories with the helpful guidance of our specialist staff

howarth.uk.com