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Saturday 13 May 2017, 8.00pm
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Joy Lisney Thread of the Infinite
CUMS Composer In Residence world première

Tippett Fantasia Concertante
on a Theme of Corelli

Beethoven Symphony No.6,
'The Pastoral'

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Thomas Gould violin/director
Aditya Chander violin
Wallis Power cello

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Joy Lisney

Thread of the Infinite

Despite the suggestive title, *Thread of the Infinite* is not a programmatic piece. The title is however, not entirely irrelevant, but occurred to me retrospectively. The sentence *Every bird that flies has the thread of the infinite in its claw* appears in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* in a passage where Hugo expounds upon the interconnectedness of Nature; that is, the familiar concept of the Butterfly Effect whereby the flap of a butterfly's wing can cause a hurricane half way round the world. On a 'nuts and bolts' level, *Thread of the Infinite* subscribes to this idea. My compositional process is very bound up with motivic development, with each new aspect of an idea impacting on its meaning when it returns

again. There are several motivic 'threads' running through this piece but perhaps the most important is the falling augmented fourth you hear in the first phrase (albeit displaced by an octave) and the rising augmented fourths you will hear from the trumpets, which gradually become more insistent and more frequent as the piece continues. The 'thread' might also be loosely connected with the wistful *Cor Anglais* solo which opens the piece. This melody remains unmoved by what has happened in the rest of the orchestra every time it returns and closes the piece almost as if it had been playing unnoticed all the way through.

Joy Lisney

Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli

'Dear boy, there are too many notes in this piece', began the memo with which the score was returned to the composer from the hands of Malcolm Sargent, the intended conductor for the first performance of Tippett's *Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli*.

Composed in 1953 to celebrate the tercentenary of Corelli's birth, Tippett's *Fantasia* filters the string music of the Baroque through distinctly twentieth century ears. Here, in the tradition of the Baroque concerto grosso, a virtuosic concertino, consisting of two violins and a cello, is pitted against the main body of strings; Tippett further contributes a concerto terzo (stage left) to function as a kind of continuo substitute.

The work is based on an 'Adagio' from Corelli's *Concerto Grosso in F, Op. 6, No. 2*, from which Tippett draws on two themes: a slow, lavish melody, orchestrated richly and enamoured with suspensions, and a vivace, characterised by violin

virtuosity. Characteristically, Tippett takes these ideas and reimagines them without inhibition: 'if Corelli's bass in F minor is put into the relative major of A flat major and somewhat extended', he wrote, 'it produces a melody of pure Puccini!'. Indeed, the opening sequence of seven variations is brought to a close by a display of such Italian decadence. A fugue on new material follows – on the same theme of Corelli that Bach sourced for one of his own, BWV579 – leading to an exciting climax. In the bars that follow, Tippett reimagines the famous 'Pastorale' from Corelli's *Christmas Concerto*, and soloists intertwine above the concerto grosso as Tippett recalls the 'Dawn Chorus' that concludes *The Midsummer Marriage*, before the work's dominating theme returns unabridged to conclude the masterpiece: a theme of Corelli, of influences, of strings, and of notes.

Stephane Crayton

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68 'Pastoral'

The most remarkable concert of Beethoven's career was given in the Theater an der Wien on 22 December 1808. Alongside the première of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, there were excerpts from the Mass in C, a fantasia improvisation by Beethoven, a concert aria, the Fourth Piano Concerto and the Choral Fantasy for piano, chorus and orchestra. Unable to get enough professional players and with insufficient rehearsal, the ambitious four-hour

concert didn't quite go to plan: the soprano suffered stage fright; the Choral Fantasy had to be restarted; and the orchestra struggled under the baton of the deafening Beethoven. With one critic deeming them 'lacking in all respects' – it was the last time Beethoven appeared as a soloist in a piano concerto. Even by nineteenth-century standards, the concert was something of an endurance test.

The *Pastoral Symphony* is Beethoven's most vivid depiction of nature and he gave the guide for the première:

Pastoral Symphony, more an expression of feeling than painting. 1st piece: pleasant feelings which awaken in men on arriving in the countryside. 2nd piece: scene by the brook. 3rd piece: merry gathering of country people, interrupted by 4th piece: thunder and storm, into which breaks 5th piece: salutary feelings combined with thanks to the Deity.

The *Pastoral Symphony* is the crowning work of Beethoven's middle period, one which – unlike the Third, Fifth and Ninth – has not been tempered by the 'myth' of Beethoven as the brooding, solitary genius getting to grips with losing his hearing. This is the work of a *Tondichter* (literally 'sound poet') – one portraying and imitating nature, painting in tones.

The quiet, understated opening of the *Symphony* is unexpected, not least in its contrast to the opening of the Fifth, premièred at the same concert. The dynamic base of the movement remains piano throughout and its serenity continues into the next movement, an 'Andante molto mosso'. Calm, lilting

violin melodies combine with beautiful harmonies and orchestration, but it is the end of the movement which is the most stunning moment of the whole *Symphony*: a quasi-cadenza of bird calls sung out by a nightingale (flute), quail (oboe) and cuckoo (clarinet).

After the repose of the *Andante*, the third movement satirises the village band and their 'merry gathering' with a quirky yet unsettling humour. One writer comments: 'the solo scoring satirises inexpert players but also, as anyone who has directed or taken part in shaky amateur music-making will recognise, their uncanny ability to contrive a plausible result'. The fourth movement is one of the most evocative storm sequences ever written – the harmony loses its track, melodies become frantic and the orchestra surges to its dynamic climax with thundering timpani, trombones and trumpets. The storm eventually subsides and out of the debris rises a solo flute – the nightingale – to hail the final movement: a 'shepherd's song: cheerful and thankful feelings after the storm'. The tranquil, bucolic character of the first two movements return amidst a haze of F major. A *sotto voce* string passage begins a reflective coda before the *Symphony* is brought to a close.

Declan Kennedy

BIOGRAPHIES

Thomas Gould

Described as an artist who "refuses to be defined by a single genre" (The Guardian), Thomas Gould is a violinist with wide-ranging musical interests. Gould has fast established for himself a reputation as one of Britain's foremost interpreters of contemporary music whilst also remaining dedicated to the core classical repertoire.

Highlights of his 2015-16 season included performances of Max Richter's *Vivaldi Recomposed* with Britten Sinfonia at the Barbican, Thomas Adès' *Violin Concerto* with Orchestra of St Luke's in New York and with Philharmonie Zuidnederland in the Netherlands, Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* at the Royal Festival Hall, and the UK premiere of Anthony Pateras' *Double Concerto for Violin and Live Electronics* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Highlights of previous seasons include performances of Bruch's *Violin Concerto* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall, performances of Nico Muhly's *Concerto for Electric Violin* with the LA Phil New Music Group and West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the London premiere of John Woolrich's *Violin Concerto* with Britten Sinfonia, and performances with pianist Alasdair Beatson of Hans Abrahamsen's *Double Concerto* with Britten Sinfonia and Sonderborg Symfoniorkester.

Gould is leader of Britten Sinfonia, one of the world's most celebrated unconducted ensembles, and frequently directs the orchestra from the violin. His recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* arranged for strings by D. Sitkovetsky with Britten Sinfonia (Harmonia Mundi, 2015) was received to great critical acclaim. From 2005-2016 Gould was leader of Aurora Orchestra.

Gould's solo albums include Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* and Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* with Sinfonietta Riga (Live in Riga, Edition Classics, 2015), an album of contemporary works for solo violin



(Bach to Parker, Champs Hill Records, 2014), and Nico Muhly's *Seeing is Believing* with Aurora Orchestra (Decca, 2011). He has recorded two albums with the swing band The Man Overboard Quintet and several other jazz releases.

Gould trained at the Royal Academy of Music where he is now an associate. He plays a Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin made in 1782.

Aditya Chander

Aditya is a third year music student at Magdalene College, and has played the violin since the age of eight. In December 2012 he achieved a Distinction in the ABRSM Diploma for Violin Performance, and performed Saint-Saëns' Violin Concerto no. 3 at St John's Smith Square with Westminster School Symphony Orchestra. He was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain in 2013, led the CUMS Symphony Orchestra in 2013-14, and currently leads the Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra, having played principal roles in the ensemble over the past two years. In November 2015 he performed the Brahms Double Concerto with CUSO, having won their concerto competition. He holds instrumental awards from Magdalene College (Lincoln Award) and the University's Instrumental Award Scheme. He has played leading roles in many orchestras and chamber groups across the university.



Formerly a student of Rafael Todes, Aditya now learns with Lorraine McAslan, and has received guidance from Eszter Haffner at the Internationale Sommerakademie Bad Leonfelden and Alda Dizdari from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He plays baroque violin in the Cambridge University Collegium Musicum, and has had masterclasses with members of the Academy of Ancient Music and Vivaldi specialist Adrian Chandler. He is also an award-winning violist and composer, and sings tenor in the Novaura chamber choir. He is playing on a violin attributed to Giovanni Dollenz from 1832.

Wallis Power

At the age of thirteen, Wallis gained a scholarship to the Junior Department of the Guildhall School of Music. During that time, she developed her interests in a number of directions. Alongside studying cello with Selma Gokcen, she was also fully involved with performing regularly as a chamber musician and orchestral player, performing at venues including St Johns Smith Square and Milton Court concert hall. She also took piano as her second study instrument. While at Junior Guildhall, Wallis reached the finals of the Pro-Corda national chamber music and obtained an LRSM performance diploma in her final year. At school, she won the Baillie Murphy competition in both the senior strings and ensemble classes.

Now in her final year reading music at Pembroke College, Wallis has been studying cello with Melissa Phelps throughout her time at Cambridge. An instrumental award holder of the University, she has performed extensively as part of the Aether piano trio, having played in evening recitals at various college chapels, a lunchtime concert at West Road Concert Hall and at the Fitzwilliam museum. Wallis is a keen chamber musician and has attended numerous courses of this type, including ProCorda and MusicWorks. She has also received tuition and masterclasses from Paul Watkins, Hannah Roberts and Steven Doane. Last summer, she enjoyed performing in masterclasses taken by Raphael Wallfisch as part of the Cello Classics summer course in Tuscany. For the remainder of her time at Cambridge, Wallis looks forward to continuing performing in a number of recitals, as both a soloist and with her piano trio, as well as leading the cello section of CUCO, the university's chamber orchestra. This coming summer, she will play in the festival orchestra of the St Endellion festival for her third year, and in the Midsummer Music Festival. Wallis will start her postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music this coming September, where she will continue her studies under the tutelage of Melissa Phelps.



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Aditya Chander, *M*
Angus Bain, *CAI*
James Jones, *HO*
Clare Rees-Zimmerman, *T*
Anahita Falaki, *DOW*
Konrad Viebahn, *T*

VIOLIN II

Peter Grishin, *Q*
Laura Alexander, *G*
Kieran Reed, *SE*
Leni Sewart, *SE*
Emma Werner, *CAI*
Mallika Buckle, *K*
Annika Maus*

VIOLA

Roc Fargas-i-Castells, *SE*
Dorothy Hoskins, *JE*
Anna Semple, *TH*
Isabel Cocker, *F*

CELLO

Wallis Power, *PEM*
Sophia Ramnarine, *N*
Catherine Porter, *R*
Kai Konishi-Dukes, *JN*
Rachel Flint, *PET*

DOUBLE BASS

Joe Cowie, *CL*
Myles Nadarajah, *PET*

FLUTE

Jack Mainwaring, *CHU*
Héloïse Lecomte, *SE*
Christina Alishaw, *SID*

OBOE

Adam Phillips, *CL*
Pip Elmer, *EM*

CLARINET

Alex Card, *CL*
Daniel Malz, *T*

BASSOON

Aidan Hilton, *M*
Dominic O'Sullivan*

HORN

James Liley, *DAR*
Robert Blyth, *JN*

TRUMPET

Katie Lodge, *EM*
Joe Penaliggon, *CL*

TROMBONE

William Barnes-McCallum, *CTH*
Max Wilkinson, *T*

PERCUSSION

Jack Whitehead, *CAI*

*Guest player

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Cambridge University Musical Society (CUMS) is one of the oldest and most distinguished university music societies in the world. It offers a world-class musical education for members of the University and local residents, nurturing the great musicians of the future and providing performing opportunities for over 500 Cambridge musicians every year.

The Society has played a pivotal role in British musical life for almost 170 years. It has educated such luminaries as Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Mark Elder, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Edward Gardner, Christopher Hogwood and Robin Ticciati, has given world or UK premieres of works by Brahms, Holloway, Lutoslawski, Maxwell Davies, Rutter, Saxton and Vaughan Williams, and has given successive generations of Cambridge musicians the experience of visiting conductors and soloists including Britten, Dvořák, Kodály, Menuhin and Tchaikovsky. Since the 1870s, CUMS has enjoyed the leadership of several of Britain's finest musicians, including Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, Sir David Willcocks, Sir Philip Ledger, and, from 1983 to 2009, Stephen Cleobury.

In 2009 Stephen Cleobury assumed a new role as Principal Conductor of the CUMS Chorus, and Sir Roger Norrington was appointed as Principal Guest Conductor. Martin Yates, 'one of the most exciting and versatile British conductors of his generation' in the words of *The Times*, joined the team as Principal

Conductor of the CUMS Symphony Orchestra; and a Great Conductors series was launched with the objective of exposing CUMS members to a succession of world-class visiting conductors.

In February 2010 CUMS entered another new phase of its development when it merged with the Cambridge University Chamber Orchestra and Cambridge University Music Club. In October 2010 the Society launched the Cambridge University Lunchtime Concerts — a new series of weekly chamber recitals at West Road Concert Hall showcasing the University's finest musical talent. In 2011 it merged with the Cambridge University Chamber Choir, which is directed by directed by Martin Ennis, David Lowe and Nicholas Mulroy.

CUMS continues to provide opportunities for the University's finest student soloists and conductors by awarding conducting scholarships and concerto prizes, and it actively encourages new music by running a composition competition and premièring at least one new work each year. Recent highlights have included Wagner's *Parsifal* (Act III) conducted by Sir Mark Elder, a recording of *The Epic of Everest's* original score for the British Film Institute, a concert of Haydn and Mendelssohn at Kings Place, London conducted by Sir Roger Norrington and Verdi's *Otello* (Act I) conducted by Richard Farnes.



Joel Sandelson conducting CUMS Symphony Orchestra in Bonn University Hall, July 2016

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