

UCL Chamber Music Club



Newsletter No.7 October 2016

In this issue:

From theorbo to electronics, from reinventions to arrangements: the focus and scatter of the 64th season - page 2

The Chamber Music Club's new Honorary President - page 8

Meet the committee – Roger Beeson - page 9

UCLU Music Society presents three concerts this term - page 14

Music by Mozart in memory of friends and family - page 14

Some thoughts on notation - page 17

Welcome to our newsletter

Welcome to the seventh issue of the Chamber Music Club Newsletter. As usual, there is a variety of content. A short item introduces our new Honorary President, Professor John Irving. Dace Ruklisa, our editor-in-chief and, since June, my successor as Chair of the CMC, contributes her usual wide-ranging and perceptive review of last season's concerts. Previous issues have contained a mini-series of articles centred around J.C. Bach and C.F. Abel; this is continued with a look at Mozart's musical tributes to various deceased family members and friends, including Bach and Abel. The latest in the 'meet the committee' series is an interview with me. (I've managed to avoid this for three years, but my colleagues are a persistent lot, and they eventually wore me down!) My own full-length article about notation may appear a little rebarbative to those who are not intimately familiar with all those crotchets, quavers, dots etc., but I hope that you will persevere: the aim of the article is just to be thought-provoking, so let your thoughts be provoked about the relations between music as composed, as written, and as performed.

If you have views on these matters or thoughts on any other music-related topics, we would be pleased to receive them in the form of letters to the editor, short comments or full-length articles (c.3000 words); book and concert reviews are also welcome. If you are thinking of submitting a substantial item it would be useful to let us know of your proposal first (just in case someone else has the same idea). Contributions will be especially welcome from members who have not written for the Newsletter before. The eighth issue is scheduled for spring 2017. The people to contact are: Dace Ruklisa (dd.rr.tt@btinternet.com), Helene Albrecht (helene.albrecht@gmx.net), Jill House (j.house@ucl.ac.uk) or me (rabeemus@gmail.com).

As always, thanks are due to Dace, Helene and Jill for their work in putting this issue together. We hope you enjoy reading it.

Roger Beeson, Deputy Chair, UCL CMC

Concert dates 2016-17

Lunchtime concerts begin at 1.10pm, and all others at 5.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Autumn term

Thursday 6 October

Monday 17 October

Wednesday 26 October

(joint concert with Oxford and Cambridge Musical Club, starts at 7pm)

Friday 4 November, lunchtime

Thursday 17 November

Friday 25 November, lunchtime

Thursday 1 December

Tuesday 13 December

(Christmas concert in North Cloisters, starts at 6pm)

Spring term

Tuesday 17 January

Thursday 26 January

Thursday 2 February

Friday 10 February, lunchtime

Monday 20 February

Friday 3 March, lunchtime

Tuesday 14 March

Summer term

Tuesday 2 May

Friday 19 May, lunchtime

Wednesday 31 May

From theorbo to electronics, from reinventions to arrangements: the focus and scatter of the 64th season

O where are the muses of yesteryear? Since last year's report on a ceaseless feast around the Haldane Room, muses have been sporting a more individualistic air and pretending to be as focused as some seventeenth-century British scientists; they have also become increasingly reckless and capricious, demanding more and more diversity in entertainment. Thus this season embraced a great range of themed concerts, a huge variety of compositional styles, Baroque music played with both modern and period instruments, whether in sober truthfulness to the score or in bold Romantic reinventions, the occasional willingness to be lured by jazz and non-classical forms, the scores of individual composers studied with a magnifying glass and various sounds and timbres in contemporary music. Now let me explore how these strands have emerged and coexisted in CMC concerts.

Within this year's themed concerts listeners were challenged with reflections on loneliness and loss and with a programme entirely compiled of pieces in slow motion. Amidst the contemplation of loneliness and loss four items from Grieg's *Lyric Pieces* brooded on melancholy, homesickness and wandering ('Elegie', 'Valse

mélancolique', 'Hjemve', 'Ensom Vandrer'); the performance closely followed and captured momentous alternations between lighter and darker moods and exhibited a subtle diversity of tempi within these pieces. Among items of music in slow motion the interpretation of the second movement of Poulenc's Flute Sonata brought out a seemingly never-ending lyrical theme with occasional chromatic diversions – it might be an ideal music for a film, having both a memorable melody and continuity. But the most convincing evocation of stillness and timelessness could be experienced while listening to the last movement of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, scored for violin and piano – the only changing aspects seemed to be the ascent of themes higher and higher in instruments' registers and a delicate emphasis on slight variations in harmonies, which reminded me of much longer works by Morton Feldman.

Themed concerts have also incorporated a remarkable diversity of contemporary music and a plethora of lesser performed twentieth-century works. A concert celebrating an anniversary of the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies and comprising music by Slavonic composers offered an intriguing range of compositional styles. Four pieces for solo piano from Book I of *On an Overgrown Path* by Leoš Janáček showed the composer's meticulous work on harmonic progressions. The interpretation communicated the clarity of themes and simultaneously emphasised the restless development and the constant change of material – the music seemed to move forward faster than its actual tempo. It was followed by *Motivy* by Emil Tabakov. This piece for solo double bass was like a collage of brief phrases rooted in folk music and rough unabridged sounds elucidated by various playing techniques (glissandi, double notes, pizzicati, *sul tasto*); all this diversity was masterfully brought together in a dynamic ritual dance-like form. Lastly, the Sonata for viola and piano by Dmitri Shostakovich was played. Both performers had found an individual approach to each type of material and theme, with differing tone, timbre and phrasing, thus creating a lively and sometimes tense conversation between dryly lyrical passages (to be taken literally due to pizzicati and other subdued and whispering sounds of the viola) and grotesque eruptions. In another concert contemporary music influenced by ancient non-Western traditions was showcased. A solo piano piece *Kristall I* by the Iranian composer Alireza Mashayekhi showed how the improvisatory ornamentation characteristic of the playing of many Eastern instruments can be translated into a piano score despite different instrumental techniques, and how it can be united with tropes of contemporary music (e.g. complex rhythmical figures scattered within a changing metre as if mimicking a very slow jazz improvisation). The polished performance of a lesser known early cycle by Iannis Xenakis, *Six chansons pour piano*, led the audience to Greek islands, with their musical modes, polyrhythmic textures and old dance forms – the diversity of images and moods elucidated from this set of pieces was remarkable and the sudden expressive take on the last movement was stunning. This performance was complemented by an improvisation on a lyra –

an instrument prevalent both in East and West, including Crete, and not dissimilar to the mediaeval rebec.

At a concert of contemporary electro-acoustic music a guest trio formed of Sarah Dacey, Kate Halsall and Duncan McLeod performed a variation on the experimental work of Laurie Anderson and John Cage on Beatles songs – a spoken text on trees was transformed step by step until it reached ‘wooden trees’; it was accompanied by pointillistic sounds on prepared piano that were processed with live electronics. This piece was contrasted with *Zechstein* for solo oboe by Paul Archbold (played by a guest performer, Christopher Redgate) – it started with an arabesque-like theme which then began to move in various and often unexpected directions and was also reflected and extended by live electronics. The form of this work seemed irregular, but also balanced and very compact, and a well-considered use of overtone playing added to the overall sense of diversity and colours of the piece.

Regular explorations of non-classical genres have taken place within themed concerts. Thus two of the *Jazz Songs* for soprano and double bass by Betty Roe (‘Euphonium Dance’ and ‘Madam and the Minister’) delighted with thorny harmonies, animated imitations of voice in the double bass (a very good jazz technique and active approach towards material) and above all a vivid embodiment of various characters in the voice. *Trois pièces nègres pour les touches blanches* for piano duet by Constant Lambert were convincingly presented, with clear polyrhythmic contours and a fine delineation of various registers and motifs; chords sounded sharp and bright and the first and last movements seemed to possess the energy of a street dance.

A number of programmes this season focused on certain periods within the work of a single composer. The composers thus examined were Sibelius and Nielsen in the opening concert and then Beethoven, Brahms and Poulenc. The performance of five songs by Sibelius written at different times (Op.13 to Op.60) revealed a slightly gloomy and occasionally ecstatic melancholy of these pieces and also emphasised the purity of harmonic language and intonation characteristic of Sibelius. The interpretation of ‘Kom nu hit, död’ (the text of this song is Shakespeare’s ‘Come away, death’ from *Twelfth Night* in Swedish translation) was particularly memorable in its autumnal and almost desolate mood – it was appropriately conveyed as a direct and unadorned recitation. The highlight of compositions by Carl Nielsen was his *Serenata in vano* for five instruments. This work is grounded on simple rhythmic figures within a three-part metre, mostly played by low strings (cello and double bass). On top of their delicate foundation (pizzicati and light and quick strokes with a bow) three wind instruments (clarinet, bassoon and French horn) could elaborate slow and persuasive cantilenas and exhibit a well-considered phrasing and a smooth collaboration in sustaining of melodies while conveying the enjoyment of a summer night. The concert dedicated to Brahms and named after

a novel by Françoise Sagan (*Aimez-vous Brahms?*) dwelled on middle and late periods of the composer's work, both on solo songs, such as 'Die Mainacht' Op.43 No.2, and on music for chamber ensembles. The Trio in E flat major Op.40 for violin, horn and piano was performed on this occasion – the balanced and also extensive architecture of the piece was meticulously revealed, theme after theme and development after development, with all the intricate variations of material. The culmination was the affirmative last movement played in a sustained fast tempo; precisely accented piano cascades and flying figurations across all registers relentlessly moved the piece forward. The concert dedicated to Beethoven's middle and late period compositions also involved large-scale works. Thus the Piano Trio in D major Op.70 No.1 was played with lots of contrasts and an almost constant change in fast movements. The cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* Op.98 was sung by UCL alumnus Rory Mulchrone – it was presented with a variety of vocal colours and a ready adaptability to the changes in text within the strophic and deceptively simple songs. A search for the character of music by Francis Poulenc was conducted in another concert. In *Élégie* for horn and piano a sombre and occasionally macabre mood prevailed; the horn played elusive and lamenting melodies that seemed to float over diverse dissonances in the piano with lots of nuance in dynamics. In contrast, in the Sonata for piano, four hands, unabashed piles of broad and loud chords created a both grotesque and jovial impression, and harmonically deranged, although fairly diatonic, melodies were as if coming from a nightmarish feast (with an exception of the light and entertaining second movement).

Both familiar and novel collaborations have enriched the scenery of CMC concerts. The link with the Oxford and Cambridge Musical Club has been responsible for one of the longest programmes this year. A presentation of J.S. Bach's Sonata No.2 in D major for viola da gamba and obbligato keyboard, played on a cello and piano, was pleasing with its wide variety of optimistic moods, especially within exuberant finale replete with dance-like figures in the cello part and graceful piano figurations. Its second movement was characterised by a precise and well-controlled cello phrasing and a lively development, while the third movement exuded stillness, and the audience could linger in enjoyment of variously-shaded elongated notes and translucent harmonies played by the piano. The most substantial work played at this concert was the Clarinet Quintet in A major by Mozart. In the slow second movement subtle gradations of dynamics created a wave-like form and emphasised the static nature of this section of the score – the clarinet phrasing was so smooth and exquisite that soon any sense of either a beginning or an end to the music was lost. UCLU Music Society devised a programme that was remarkable for the range of repertoire covered. Melancholic eagerness and mannerism of 'If music be the food of love' by Henry Purcell was juxtaposed with a sparkling virtuosity in flute playing in *Fantaisie pastorale hongroise* by Franz Doppler, and complemented by arrangements for a saxophone quartet. A new collaboration was established with UCL Art Museum who celebrated the French Revolution with an

exhibition on its first three years (1789-92) when monarchy coexisted with a sort of parliament (prints, medals and engravings). So CMC members dusted off scores written around that time and headed for the museum space. A performance of *Tambourin* by François-Joseph Gossec was remarkable for its brightness and technical ease. The highest point of this concert was 'Le chant du départ' by Étienne Méhul performed by an ensemble of strings, harpsichord, natural horn, recorders and a small choir – it was fascinating to see how various instruments and individual voices came to the foreground in brief and vivid phrases, as if embodying a saying 'Vox Populi, Vox Dei'. This concert led to another themed event devoted to the echoes of revolutions. Among the greatest surprises of this programme were *Extracts from Short Solfeggi for daily practice* and also Sonata in D minor for flute and continuo by Frederick the Great. The former were composed as regular exercises for improving the flute technique of the Prussian monarch and exhibited a minimalism-like texture with brief and rhythmically varied motifs. The performance of two middle movements of Mendelssohn's String Quartet No.6 in F minor showed a well-considered instrumental balance and a stability of intonation. Often a vivid dialogue arose either between two instruments or two instrumental groups, and it was exciting to hear how themes were communicated and even debated across the ensemble whose players elucidated a great timbral richness from their instruments.

Baroque music has flourished again during this season. Some of the most substantial Baroque works were performed at last year's Christmas Concert, including Handel's Concerto grosso Op.6 No.2. A particular success was an interplay between a *concertino* group consisting of violin, viola and cello and a *ripieno* of strings and continuo – the trio managed to fill the space of the North Cloisters as equals to the Baroque orchestra and the communication was carried out with ease and sensitivity to dynamics. The soloistic impulse given by the trio players animated the whole second movement, which provided a welcome contrast to an otherwise joyfully contented piece. The performance of J.S. Bach's Lutheran Mass in G minor, BWV 235, at the same concert gained momentum with precisely articulated and pointed chorus entrances in the first movement. Then the piece gradually obtained additional timbral colours, underlined by the skilful musicians of the ensemble, amidst the perpetual movement of polyphonic lines in the first and second movements. The three following movements were presented with a flexibility in tempo which enabled engaging interactions between soloists, continuo and a wider ensemble (an expressive and warm execution of the oboe part has to be noted). An interesting dialogue with Baroque choral tradition was established by a new choral composition by Roger Beeson, 'Verbum caro factum est' – it was based on octatonic scales and had a somewhat sparse and lucid quality, as if some potentially luscious harmonies had been held back, possibly, for the most direct rendering of the text.

A wide range of Baroque genres and musical forms was explored within concert programmes. Virtuoso and ornate Baroque variations on a well-known theme could be heard in one of the spring term concerts – *Les folies d’Espagne* by Marin Marais in a version for solo cello. The interpretation had a sense of immediacy and was characterised by the fullness of tone; there was no holding back of the melancholic nerve, especially within a build-up towards a climax and a resolution. A themed concert was devoted to Baroque music sung and played in different places and situations. The opening aria of J.S. Bach’s *Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust* was almost ethereal, executed with a freely flowing tempo and phrasing, and the soloist was well supported by nuanced ensemble playing (the violin and continuo). The concert also included dances written for ballets and theatrical plays that were arranged for the Baroque flute and theorbo (it was a part of a programme previously presented at the Royal Academy of Arts together with Baroque dancers). The theorbist applied a great variety of textures and figurations to different pieces and the whole sequence was performed with an improvisatory feel slightly reminiscent of a hippy gathering, notwithstanding rigorous dance rhythms.

Baroque music has often emerged in unexpected shapes. So for the last concert of the season the Club’s musicians had found and even made unusual arrangements of relatively well-known Baroque works. Several pieces from J.S. Bach’s Inventions for keyboard, BWV 772-786, were rendered for the violin and double bass: an effect of a vast acoustic space was created by the differences in registers and string resonances. An arrangement for cello and piano by Robert Schumann of J.S. Bach’s Suite No.3 in C major for solo cello was played as well. Long-held and non-numerous piano harmonies sometimes created an eerie effect despite familiar themes played by the cello – it seemed that Schumann had meant to emphasise the most important features of the piece, but had succeeded in casting J.S. Bach as an inventive master of harmonic colours that turned out to be richly present even in a piece for a solo instrument. But even more of a Romantic spirit or, some would say, Romantic distortion could be glimpsed in the Passacaglia from Handel’s Suite in G minor for keyboard, HWV 432, arranged by Johan Halvorsen for violin and cello. The virtuosic bravura score had tempted both instrumentalists to experiment with the broadest dynamic ranges; similar diversity was present in timbre and tone, which could be either deep and resonant or dry and scurrying.

As usual, CMC performers were honing and showing their skill in a more traditional repertoire. This year’s new performers’ concert was particularly dense with brilliant performances and budding pianists. Especially memorable was a reading of Franz Liszt’s *Liebesträume* No.3 – the playing ranged from an exuberant delivery of chord cascades to absent-minded dreaminess amidst non-rushed figurations. The performance of the three last songs from Sergei Rachmaninov’s Op.4 immediately established a distinct atmosphere; the singer’s expressive range was notable as was the sensitive interception of various themes by the pianist. The

performance of the Second Piano Sonata by Alexander Scriabin (also by a new performer, but at another concert) exhibited tenderness in the slightly uncertain and musing lyrical passages as well as strength and conviction in the tackling of octaves.

The new season is approaching with its own character and barely predictable trends. An October concert will celebrate Shakespeare's anniversary with music from his time and also much later responses – the constellation of composers might surprise listeners. Schubert's Fantasy in F minor for piano four hands will be played in one of autumn's lunchtime concerts. Collaborations with Oxford and Cambridge Musical Club and UCLU Music Society will be very active and respective concerts promise varied programmes of nineteenth- and twentieth-century music. One of the highlights of the next season will be an inaugural recital by Club's Honorary President Professor John Irving – he will play four of J.S. Bach's French Suites that will be linked by improvised modulating preludes (Nos.4, 1, 3 and 6). I hope that this makes for a couple of good reasons to look forward to yet another season spent next to unruly muses.

Dace Ruklisa

The Chamber Music Club's new Honorary President

We are pleased and honoured to welcome as our Honorary President for the next five years Professor John Irving. John is currently Professor of Performance Practice at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, having previously held the posts of Professor of Music at Bristol University and Director of the Institute of Musical Research at London University. He is also, among other appointments, Associate Fellow of the Institute of Musical Research, Trustee of the Horniman Museum, and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and was Vice President of the Royal Musical Association from 2010 to 2014.

John is equally distinguished as a performer and as a scholar. Described as 'one of the foremost exponents of the period piano in the UK', he specialises in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century solo and chamber music, played on early keyboard instruments – fortepiano, clavichord and harpsichord – and maintains a busy performing schedule in the UK and abroad. He has published extensively on the music of Mozart: his output includes both an international best-selling biography, *The Treasures of Mozart*, and the widely acclaimed *Understanding Mozart's Piano Sonatas*. Recent recording projects include *Mozart on the Hass Clavichord* (with associated website: <<http://www.mozartclavichord.org.uk>>), *Beethoven and the Art of Arrangement*, and most recently a selection of Haydn's keyboard sonatas.

John has given two recitals for the Chamber Music Club in recent years; members may particularly remember his performance on the fortepiano of music writ-

ten in London by the six-year-old Mozart in February 2015. He will be playing for us again on 1 December, this time on the harpsichord, with a programme of four of J.S. Bach's French Suites. The inclusion of improvised preludes is characteristic of John's approach to performance, which is imaginative and exploratory as well as historically informed; we look forward greatly to hearing him.

For further information about John Irving, visit his website:
<<http://www.johnirving.org.uk>>.

Meet the committee – Roger Beeson

CHAIR OF UCL CHAMBER MUSIC CLUB FROM 2013 TO 2016

Helene Albrecht: *Roger, you are looking back on a most successful time as Chair of the Chamber Music Club. It sadly came to an end this summer when your three-year term of office expired. How does life feel after withdrawal? And how do you fill the spare hours since then?*

Roger Beeson: Actually, over the summer I was pretty much doing what I usually do. I wrote some of my article for the newsletter, and composed some of my new piece for the Chamber Music Club's next Christmas concert. I had one small performing engagement in mid-July, which also involved doing some arrangements for violin and piano. I had a couple of short holidays away; went to the opera a couple of times, and to quite a few proms. As for life, it's more relaxed, of course! Though I do still find myself occasionally responding to email queries – but as far as possible by passing them on to the new Chair!

HA: *And we found it very hard to let you go, to be honest: you have been the ideal leader, never reluctant to support even the most adventurous and pioneering projects. Accordingly, under your leadership the club has experienced a number of new and refreshing developments: we have seen the frequent appearance of themed concerts, some of which carried your personal signature such as a concert on the French Revolution, others on Eastern European music, landscapes and places and the crossing of popular and classical music, just to mention a few. You are also the composer of a series of choral works and music for ensembles that have been presented in our concerts and you are the author of some intriguing articles of the Club's newsletter, most recently concerned with the relations between numbers and music. What is your background, or better your secret source for such a comprehensive and knowledgeable approach to chamber music?*

RB: Well, my professional background is in music, which I studied at university (Sheffield), taught for a while in a school and then for twenty-five years at Kingston University (formerly Polytechnic). At Kingston I taught a variety of subjects on a broadly based music course, including music history, analysis, harmony and counterpoint, and composition, as well as 'keyboard skills' (harmonisation,

score-reading etc.). By the way, it's nice to be credited with 'new and refreshing developments', but they're not all down to me. Specifically, the idea of the newsletter came from discussions among various committee members, including yourself; likewise, the very successful masterclasses last season arose from a member's suggestion which you took up and brought to fruition. In both cases I like to think that I was supportive, but I think my role has been as much an 'enabler' as an initiator.

HA: *As a pianist you are famous for your ability to step in at any time for any purpose, regardless of pianistic hurdles. Personally, I benefited enormously when looking for an accompanist for Richard Strauss' Violin Sonata one week before the actual performance, or when topping up my programme on music from 1914 literally at the last minute with Prokofiev's tremendously difficult Sarcasms Op.10 for piano solo. Other memorable moments have been your performance of Stravinsky's Sacre du printemps in its version for piano duet together with your former colleague Michael Round. What has made you such a skilful and versatile pianist and accompanist?*

RB: Kind of you to say so! To be fair, it was just the first movement of the Strauss, and two movements of the Prokofiev – and not quite literally at the last minute. But yes, I'm generally up for a challenge of that sort, if it seems manageable. The answer to your question in a word is probably 'experience'. I've done a lot of playing and, especially, accompanying (which I really enjoy). In particular, I have quite extensive experience as a rehearsal accompanist for opera and particularly for choirs – experience that goes back many years. And I have accompanied students frequently for instrumental auditions and exams, so I have built up a good working knowledge of standard instrumental repertoire (though I must say that the Strauss was new to me). Add to this that I know how traditional harmony works (though this wasn't much use in the Prokofiev!), that I can count and have a good rhythmic sense, and can keep going when something goes wrong. I sight-read well, and can quickly get the overall 'feel' of a piece. On the other hand, I don't think I have a particularly strong or secure technique as a pianist.

You mentioned the *Sacre* duet. Michael and I did it a number of times over the years at Kingston, firstly in about 1980. We have also performed some of the two-piano repertoire: Messiaen's *Visions de l'Amen*, the duo versions of Brahms's Piano Quintet and of Ravel's *La valse*. It was a very enjoyable collaboration – and quite a privilege for me. In general I would have the part with the tunes and Michael the part with the really difficult bits. It worked very well!

HA: *What are you currently working on as solo pianist?*

RB: Nothing very new. I have been revisiting Prokofiev's Sonata No.7; if I can work it up again (a big 'if') it would be good to perform it in one of our concerts. Then, of course, some French repertoire: as you know, I'm an enthusiast for the music of Gabriel Fauré, and I've been looking afresh at the Fifth Barcarolle, which

I've done before, and the well-known Sixth Nocturne, which I've never properly learned.

HA: *And what were your most rewarding experiences with chamber music since you joined the Club in 2004?*

RB: Recently I've very much enjoyed working on the French Revolution concert, which you mentioned, and the 'Around Shakespeare' concert; both of them gave me an opportunity to do some research and some arranging. During my first few years in the Club I did quite a lot of chamber music playing with Bronwen Evans (violinist) and other string players, working on and in due course (after quite long periods of rehearsal) performing substantial pieces, complete, such as Franck's Violin Sonata, Fauré's Piano Trio and Second Piano Quartet, Mendelssohn's lesser known Second Piano Trio in C minor, Elgar's Piano Quintet; this was certainly very rewarding – but in the nature of things these groups tend to dissolve: people move away, take on new responsibilities. In the academic world the demands on people's time just seem to increase. In the early days of the Chamber Music Club, in the 1950s, Professor Winton's quartet would put on really challenging programmes quite regularly – Bartók, late Beethoven and so on. I wonder whether that would be possible now.

I have noticed a bit of a tendency for our programmes recently to consist largely of single movements. If there's too much of this it can come to resemble an Associated Board syllabus or a school concert!

HA: *Oh, I feel guilty: I have organised quite a few of these concerts! However, they have the advantage of offering opportunities to a greater number of players. They might also match students' experience who have at school probably passed Grade 8 or other exams with a focus on single movements, too. I am even wondering whether the times for intensive chamber music gatherings have not vanished altogether due to overstretched academic timetables. However, we are just in the process of finding a better balance between both extremes: one of our committee members, Tabitha Tuckett, has continuously been working with a string ensemble over several months. She now intends to build upon this experience and to bring people together for similarly intense work.*

RB: No need to feel guilty. Single movements can work well, especially in the context of a 'themed' concert such as your '1914' programme of a couple of years ago. And I agree about providing opportunities to as many performers as possible, some of whom may be most comfortable with playing just single movements. It's just a matter of finding the right balance. It would be a pity to forget that a four-movement quartet or sonata, for example, is more than just a string of separate movements from which to choose one! In this context it might be interesting to try and find out what our audiences think of our programming. We do have two 'constituencies' to cater for – those who want to play, and those who want to listen (as well, of course, as those who want to do both).

It's excellent that Tabitha is working on the development of ensembles – it should obviously be one of the functions of the Club to bring people together who want to play. That said, in my experience ensembles often get formed 'by chance', as people get to know each other. But it's our job to facilitate this.

HA: *Roger, I am interested in the style of your compositions. If ever one of your pieces were to be played on the radio, I would probably quickly be able to recognise a 'Beeson'. How did your particular style evolve, in other words, what are your compositional techniques?*

RB: In regard to choral writing I have certainly learned a lot in more than thirty years as a choral accompanist at Kingston, Richmond and Putney. I'm interested in the use of modes by people like Debussy, Stravinsky and Messiaen, in particular the octatonic and acoustic scales, which I use quite frequently in my pieces. Listeners may also occasionally notice a slightly 'jazzy' tinge in some of my music, particularly in the rhythm and perhaps the harmony. In addition, I have quite a sound academic knowledge of harmony of Renaissance and Baroque counterpoint, and of formal techniques – which, even when one is writing in a 'modern' style, can be very useful. I like writing fugues! Structure is important – having an overall view of a work, and an idea of how the piece will end. Sometimes I even start with the end of a piece – something like the last two bars – and then find a way to lead convincingly to this. Of course, the structural conception may develop and change in the process of composing.

HA: *Have you ever published your works?*

RB: No, so far I have always composed for particular occasions: lots of chamber choir music and for ensembles, especially for brass ensembles at Kingston. Two pieces from the Kingston days have been performed at CMC concerts, a flute sonata and a recorder sonatina; I'm also quite keen to revive a duo for flute and cello. Here at UCL I have written for CMC members: in addition to the choral pieces, I composed Three Pieces for flute, clarinet and cello two years ago (partly modelled on Stravinsky's Three Pieces for string quartet, though they didn't sound particularly Stravinskian!), and prior to that I set two poems by W.B. Yeats for mezzo-soprano, viola and piano.

HA: *Which brings me to the question of the lyrics that you choose for your vocal music. As far as I remember the poem your last Christmas piece was based upon was remarkable... What are the criteria according to which you select suitable texts?*

RB: The last Christmas piece actually used a biblical text! But yes, a number of earlier pieces did set medieval and later poems in either Latin or English. Obviously I am attracted by the expressive quality and potential of a poem, and verbal rhythm always seems to me an important component and a source of musical ideas.

HA: *I know that you are a keen reader, which connects very well to your academic*

relation with UCL. In 2005 you completed a degree in Philosophy. What was your academic field of expertise and in what ways has it interplayed with your musical occupation?

RB: Yes, I did an MA, part-time, in Philosophy between 2003 and 2005. The areas in which I chose to specialise – epistemology and metaphysics – were not directly relevant to music; my dissertation was on the philosophy of the American pragmatist C.S. Peirce. However, I did attend lectures on aesthetics and an aesthetics discussion/reading group, which helped to sharpen up some of my ideas about the nature and function of the arts, the concept of the art-work, and the relation of creator, work and performer.

HA: Finally, Roger, I would like to know about your very personal assessment of the Chamber Music Club's development, its current status and your vision for the future.

RB: Most remarkable is the fact that the Club has existed for sixty-five years without interruption, and that we're able to put on an impressive number of concerts of good quality each year. We have an effective committee, and a core of willing performers. We must continue to raise our profile in the college generally; events such as the French Revolution concert in cooperation with the UCL Art Museum are very important in this respect. The museum where the concert took place had a good acoustic for our purposes and staff over there seemed to be very happy with the overall outcome. It would be good if other similar opportunities were to arise. Unfortunately, even when people know about us, they sometimes think of us as purveyors of background music for events rather than potential collaborators. It would be good if we could properly develop a relationship with the musicians in the Institute of Education; our efforts in that direction haven't really borne much fruit yet.

HA: Thankfully, the Club will continue to be able to benefit from your musical commitment and enthusiasm as you will act as Deputy Chair in the coming season and participate as a member of the committee. What are your personal future ambitions not only for chamber music at UCL but also for your musical activities outside the campus?

RB: Outside the campus I'm not actually doing much on a regular basis, though I take opportunities for playing as they arise. I do continue to collaborate in performances with Bronwen Evans, the violinist I mentioned earlier, and that's a great pleasure. As for chamber music at UCL: we do remarkably well with very limited facilities – wouldn't it be nice to have more practice space? And – what I'm sure we all long for – an accessible, permanent home for our harpsichord!

HA: Thank you very much, Roger, for revealing so much of your background and ideas to us. We look very much forward to the next years of certainly exciting and inspired cooperation!

UCLU Music Society presents three concerts this term

On Saturday, October 29, Symphony Orchestra and Chorus will perform Berlioz's *King Lear Overture*, Tchaikovsky's *The Tempest* and Schubert's Mass No.5 in A-flat major at All Hallows Church, Gospel Oak. The concert starts at 7.30pm.

Then on Friday, November 18, Chamber Choir will present Respighi's *Lauda per la Natività del Signore* alongside works by a variety of composers. The concert will take place at St. Pancras Church and start at 7.30pm.

Finally, on Saturday, December 10, Symphony Orchestra and Chorus will hold an annual Christmas concert at St. Pancras Church (it starts at 7.30pm).

Music by Mozart in memory of friends and family

Elegiac music is an expression of public or private sorrow and Mozart expressed his personal grief in unusual ways. His only Requiem is a conventional mass for the soul of an unknown person, and as his death prevented him from completing it this gave the work a special poignancy. His 'Great' Mass in C minor, K.427, also remained unfinished; composed in 1782-3 after his marriage to Constanze Weber and the birth of their first child, the C minor Mass lacks most of the Credo following the 'Et incarnatus est', the Agnus Dei and part of the Sanctus. These omissions make the work an unspoken requiem for their little son who died in 1783 after his parents left him in Vienna to perform the unfinished C minor Mass in Salzburg. Grief may have disinclined Mozart to complete the work.

The sudden death of Mozart's mother in July 1778 while they were in Paris left the composer shocked and silent, but J.S. Bach taught his sons the clavier should be used to express emotion, a lesson Mozart also learnt, and his Piano Sonata No.8 in A minor, K.310, composed at the time, shows he was capable of deep feeling. He wrote only one other piano sonata in a minor key; as a true performing musician he remained impassive and concealed his private grief in music written after hearing of the death of loved ones. The Serenade in G major, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, K.525, composed in the summer of 1788, brought back memories of his father, Leopold Mozart. However, Mozart remembered their London friends, J.C. Bach and C.F. Abel, unconventionally: he uses a theme by J.C. Bach, who had died on 1 January 1782, in the slow movement of his Piano Concerto in A major, K.414, written later that year; similarly, the rondo of his Sonata for piano and violin in A major, K.526, adapts a rondo by Carl Abel, who died in the summer of 1788.

J.C. Bach's death was a great loss; Mozart met Bach and Abel in London in 1764-5, and still idolised the London Bach when they met again in Paris in 1778. Bach was seeking copyright for his work, and it was widely known Mozart borrowed excerpts of the work of other composers, but they remained friends. By

then Mozart revered the work of the London Bach's father, J.S. Bach, and his comment, 'he is the father, we are all his sons', is more applicable to J.S. Bach than to his sons, J.C. or C.P.E. Bach. The London Bach was famed for his beautiful melodies and fine orchestration and to some degree all Mozart's piano concertos are a tribute to his teacher, J.C. Bach. When the news of his death reached Vienna Mozart exclaimed 'what a loss to music'. He had to compose three piano concertos for Vienna's Lenten concert series in 1783 – Nos. 11, 12 and 13 (K.413, K.414 and K.415 respectively) – and though he was busy he paid his respects in Mozartian fashion, borrowing four bars of a tune by J.C. Bach that he heard as a child in London, enabling him to relive through music the time he spent with Bach whom he loved as a father.

Scored for piano, two oboes and horns and a full complement of strings, the Piano Concerto in A major, K.414 can be played accompanied by strings only. The outer movements are in A major, the first a bright *allegro*, the third a rondo marked *allegretto*, but the central movement, in D major and 3/4 time, has both depth and meaning, for Mozart arranged the melody which Bach wrote for the slow section of an overture he composed in London in 1764 for Baldassare Galuppi's 1753 opera *La calamita de' cuori* (*Magnet of Hearts* – or, simply, 'beloved by all'). Mozart's devotion to Bach gives his second movement an elegiac quality, and we are reminded that the two composers thought along the same harmonic lines. It is possible that there is an intended pun: a grave accent on the last 'a' in 'calamita' makes the word mean 'tragic', not 'magnet'. Mozart allows Bach's melody to become sad but not sentimental as a heart-broken lament for J.C. Bach, a kind man whom everyone loved.

There was another link between them: both Mozart and Bach preferred the new pianoforte to the harpsichord or clavichord, and tactile connections would have brought back memories, though J.C. Bach used square pianos manufactured by Zumpe of London, simple instruments unable to perform difficult music, while Mozart favoured a Viennese pianoforte on which he performed his piano concertos K.413, K.414 and K.415.

In 1787 memories of his childhood visit to London recurred as Mozart worked in Vienna on his opera *Don Giovanni* and received news in May of the death of his father in Salzburg, followed in June by that of Carl Friedrich Abel in London. The latter was a close friend of J.C. Bach and a student of J.S. Bach whom they all revered. J.C. Bach and C.F. Abel were Mozart's protectors in London and Mozart probably performed or transcribed many of their compositions as a child. The manuscript of a symphony in E flat major in Mozart's hand was mistakenly catalogued as his Symphony No.3, and only later found to be the concluding symphony in Abel's Op.7 (six symphonies, published in 1767).

In the finale of his Sonata for piano and violin in A major, K.526, Mozart pays tribute to Abel by using the rondo from Abel's Trio in A, Op.5 No.5 for harpsi-

chord, cello and either violin or flute. Published in 1764, Abel's work is in two movements; the first is marked *vivace*, the second, *allegro assai* or *presto*, is in 4/4 time with a simple, catchy tune which Mozart used in K.526. The latter is a more developed work in three movements; the first in A major is an *allegro* in sonata form and has the two instruments finely balanced; the central movement in D major is an unusually long, elegiac *andante*; the third movement returns to A major and, marked *presto*, uses Abel's tune but in a sophisticated arrangement. However, Mozart follows Abel and uses the same key, A major, and 4/4 time signature.

The memorial to his father Leopold is more moving: during their last days together in Salzburg in 1780-1 Mozart wrote several serenades, light music for an evening's entertainment, and in the summer of 1787 shortly after Leopold's death he composed the most famous of all serenades which he called simply *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (K.525), 'a little night music'. The date of its composition, August 1787, makes it reasonable to think that this serenade in G major was composed in remembrance of Leopold. Early in the 1780s Josef Haydn and his pupil, Ignaz Pleyel, composed *notturmi* – Italian music for late evening serenades – a genre Mozart explored in his K.286 *Notturmo* in D major. Music for late evening can be used to celebrate the hours of prayer after midnight and so as a 'nocturne' *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* becomes a prayer for Leopold. Mozart's reticence over deep personal feeling may explain why he never published the work and there is no record of a performance in his lifetime. His widow, Constanze, sold it with other manuscripts in 1798 to a publisher, Johann André, and its first known performance was in 1827 by which date John Field – and later Chopin – had popularised 'nocturnes' or night music.

Eine kleine Nachtmusik is scored for an ensemble of two violins, viola, cello and double bass. The work is in four movements: *Allegro*; *Romanza: andante*; *Minuetto*, and *Rondo: allegretto*. Mozart's catalogue listed a lost second minuet, and the *Divertimento*, K.251, composed in 1776 for his sister's birthday, also has two minuets. The first movement of K.525 is in G major and in sonata form; the second, a rondo, is in C major; the third movement, a minuet and trio in 3/4 time, returns to G major; and the fourth, in G major, is in sonata-rondo form. Did the use of rondo in K.525 influence Mozart's recollection of Abel's rondo when composing K.526?

Clare Taylor

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Some thoughts on notation

There are many kinds of musical notation, having various functions. I deal here with the standard Western system as it developed over hundreds of years – the system which is still taught as ‘theory’, still used by many composers, and still likely to have currency for as long as the live performance of classical music continues.

Much of the history of the development of Western notation concerns the notation of *rhythm*, or more generally *duration*. Once the system of staff notation was in place, with its alternating lines and spaces and its clefs – this was achieved early in the eleventh century – and eventually with the possibility of chromatic inflections (sharps and flats), the notation of pitch was straightforward to an acceptable degree of accuracy. (It is better to think of pitch *relationships*; the system was concerned not with *absolute* but with *relative* pitch.) Notation of rhythm, on the other hand, has gone through a number of stages. While it is relatively easy, with practice, to identify the pitches of a passage of medieval music (indeed, plain-song notation, basically medieval, is still in use today), the same cannot be said of recognising its rhythmic structure. Furthermore, many of the contested or doubtful areas of notation, even down to the nineteenth century, have to do with how *rhythmic* notation is to be interpreted.

NOTATION AND COMPOSITION

The Western system of notation began with neumes – signs placed above the text to indicate the rise and fall of the melody. To begin with, these were ‘unheighted’ neumes: in other words, while the direction of notes is shown – where they go up, where they go down – *how far* they go up or down is not shown. So, for example, while the second of a group of notes may be higher than the first, whether it is a 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th higher is not clear from the notation. Clearly, this form of notation acts as an *aide-mémoire* – a means to remembering a melody which already exists and is already known. Unheighted neumes are not sufficient to convey a melody to someone who doesn’t know it without the assistance of someone who

does. Staff notation, however, means that as far as pitch relations are concerned a performer can learn a new melody without (in principle) the need for tuition; the notation takes the place of the teacher. While it *can* still serve as an *aide-mémoire*, this is not its only, or ultimately its most important, function. Conversely, it makes possible innovation by the composer – or rather, makes it easier for the composer to be innovative and convey his innovations to the performer.

The question then arises of the role of notation as a factor in the compositional process itself: to what extent might the composer's ideas arise *because* of the possibilities offered by notation? The traditional view of notation – that it is the means whereby the composer transmits his/her ideas and intentions to the performer – is not inaccurate, but it is inadequate insofar as it suggests a model of composition in which the composer 'thinks up' the music and then writes it down. There are indeed examples in which this seems to be the case: Mozart supposedly having a whole piece in his head before writing it down; Stravinsky's claim that he knew how the final 'Sacrificial Dance' from *The Rite of Spring* should sound before he knew how to notate it. On the other hand, I would suggest that there have been times when notation has *made possible* developments in musical style and compositional technique – generally in the direction of complexity. One such period is the later fourteenth century, following the rhythmic innovations of *Ars nova* notation; another is the twentieth, with its sometimes highly intellectualised compositional procedures.

Notation, then, may be partly the *means by which* the composer forms his/her intentions – the means, that is to say, by which the composer composes. This was indeed the assumption behind much teaching for a long time – that one wrote things down and *then* saw (or rather heard) what they sounded like. This is certainly a feature of the training that was received in universities and conservatoires until recently – to the extent that it was customary to have written examinations in harmony and counterpoint administered under normal examination conditions; students might be required to write music (in the style of Palestrina, J.S. Bach or whoever) *silently*, without access to some means of finding out what their efforts sounded like. I do not condemn such methods, but on reflection they do seem rather strange. The idea of testing musicians silently, by requiring them to write things down, would probably not make much sense in the great classical traditions of, for example, Indian or Chinese music.

NOTATION AND PERFORMANCE

What exactly does notation convey to the performer? One well-known area that still causes difficulties for both scholars and performers is the question of accidentals (sharps and flats) in medieval and Renaissance music. The system of staff notation was developed to represent music based on the 'diatonic' collection of

pitches (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, defined by a particular pattern of tones and semitones) with adjacent notes appearing alternately on the lines and in the spaces. However, notes in this basic framework are capable of 'chromatic' inflection – of being raised or lowered by a semitone – so that in certain contexts there may occur a B flat instead of a B, an F sharp instead of an F, etc. The note B flat was indeed incorporated into the teaching system called the 'gamut' at an early stage, and accepted as what we might call a 'real' note.

Although the signs for sharp and flat – \sharp and \flat – were used in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, a problem for present-day performers, editors and scholars, is that sharps and flats were not always notated when they might be required or expected in performance. Nowadays I, as a composer, may intend the note F sharp to be sung at a particular point, and in that case I would insert the sharp sign before the note F in the score. (I won't go into the matter of key-signatures here.) For the medieval or Renaissance composer, however, or the manuscript copyist, it might not have been necessary to write in the sharp sign in order for the sharpened note to be sung – in other words, a notated F might, in certain circumstances, actually mean an F sharp.

These matters were governed by rules and conventions, which we know about from the writings of contemporary theorists. For example, a note might have to be flattened to avoid the 'forbidden' interval of the augmented 4th by turning it into a perfect 4th. But of course the theorists are not always clear and they do not always agree among themselves; conventions may differ at different times and places; in particular cases, the consistent application of rules and conventions may seem to be impossible: for example, the 'horizontal' aspect – the melodic line of an individual voice – may apparently require an accidental which would conflict with the requirements of the 'vertical' aspect – the harmony formed by voice parts sounding together. In some cases, composers seem to have deliberately experimented with notation; a famous case is 'Quid non ebrietas', an early composition by Adrian Willaert (c.1490-1562) to a text by Horace which is, appropriately, in praise of drink. In the duo version the upper (cantus) part ends on a D while the lower (tenor), as notated, ends on E. This is stylistically impossible. What seems to be happening is that the consistent flattening of some notes in the tenor part, with unnotated accidentals but in accordance with the rules, will cause the tenor to end on E double-flat (E $\flat\flat$). In pure tuning this is not the same as D, though it is of course very close. Willaert evidently had in mind some system of tuning whereby E double-flat forms a unison with D (as it does in modern equal temperament).

In the field of rhythm, a significant area in which the composer's, copyist's or printer's notation does not always give the present-day performer precise enough information is the relation of duple and triple subdivisions of the beat, and of simple and compound time (which is one aspect of this). Puzzles and anomalies here

are found over a long period – from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.

A particular case is that of dotted rhythms. Theory tells us that putting a dot after a note adds half its value to the note. So in a rhythmic figure such as ‘dotted quaver followed by semiquaver’, the two notes stand in the relation 3 : 1. Triplets, on the other hand, are a way of dividing the beat into three, rather than two or four, equal parts, and therefore make possible a ‘triplet crotchet-plus-quaver’ rhythm in which the two notes stand in the relation 2 : 1.

The two rhythms are not the same, but they are obviously similar, and at a fast speed may be scarcely distinguishable. During the Baroque period the notated dotted rhythm would be played as a triplet rhythm in contexts where triplets were a predominant feature. A well-known example is the last movement of J.S. Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No.5: the theme contains both dotted rhythms and triplets, and it is generally accepted that the dotted rhythm should conform to the triplet – i.e. be played as triplet crotchet-plus-quaver. The Corrente from Bach’s keyboard Partita No.1 has continuous running triplets in one hand against dotted rhythms in the other; the dotted rhythms should be assimilated to the triplets. The instrumental passages in Bach’s famous chorale setting ‘Jesu, joy of man’s desiring’ (‘Wohl mir, dass ich Jesum habe’), from Cantata 147, has triplets in the first violins and dotted rhythms in the seconds: again, the intention is clearly that the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm should sound with, not after, the third triplet. These are not isolated examples.

Problems arise, however, as we move into a later period. To what extent did the ‘tripletisation’ of dotted rhythms, where they appear against triplets, remain a *standard* practice? Or was it what has been called an ‘obsolescent convention’?

The first movement of Beethoven’s ‘Moonlight’ Sonata (1801) has continuous triplets in the middle of the texture, with dotted rhythms occurring above and below. Should the two types of rhythm be assimilated? In 1842 Carl Czerny, Beethoven’s pupil, in his commentary on the performance of Beethoven’s piano music, stated that the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm should be played after the third triplet. Czerny was a pedagogue of enormous influence, and it is perhaps partly on his account that this interpretation is standard. However, the fact that Czerny found it necessary to make this recommendation suggests that it was not to be taken for granted – i.e. that assimilation was still a live tradition, not only in Beethoven’s time but in the mid-nineteenth century.

Schubert is perhaps more problematic than Beethoven. In our last newsletter, the review of Ian Bostridge’s book about Schubert’s *Winterreise* referred to the rhythmic interpretation of ‘Wasserflut’, the sixth song in the cycle. The question is again whether the dotted rhythm should be assimilated to the triplets (which in this case are not continuous). The slow speed, as with the Beethoven, makes it easy to place the semiquaver discernibly after the last triplet, and this solution is often adopted. One pianist, however, who took the ‘assimilationist’ approach

in 'Wasserflut', placing the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm with the third triplet quaver, was Benjamin Britten, in performances of *Winterreise* with Peter Pears. This sparked off an interesting correspondence on the subject of 'Schubert as written and as performed' in the *Musical Times* in 1963, which is still worth reading.

Other examples abound in Schubert's music of dotted rhythms occurring simultaneously with, or in close proximity to, triplets. Familiar examples are: 'Ungeduld', No.7 of the song-cycle *Die schöne Müllerin*; Variation 3 of the Impromptu in B flat, Op.142 (D.935) No.3; and the Impromptu in C minor, Op.90 (D.899). In the latter the theme with its dotted rhythms appears accompanied at different points by semiquavers and by triplet quavers: so should the theme be played in the same way with both accompaniment figures, or should it be adjusted to fit the triplets? Instinctively we may think that the theme should be played consistently throughout, but is this preference for consistency perhaps a modern assumption which may not have had so much weight in Schubert's day?

Chopin provides further examples of dotted rhythms coinciding with triplets: there are many in the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* Op.61, and in Chopin's original manuscript the semiquaver of the dotted rhythm is often aligned vertically with the third triplet – indeed, sometimes the notes share a stem, thus clearly indicating assimilation of the two rhythms. An interesting case is the E major Prelude, No.9 of the Twenty-four Preludes Op.28. In this slow piece, triplet quavers appear in the middle of the texture; around this Chopin writes carefully distinguished dotted and double-dotted rhythms (i.e. dotted quaver – semiquaver and double-dotted quaver – demisemiquaver). In his manuscript the quaver of the dotted rhythm is vertically aligned with the third triplet; but since the demisemiquaver of the double-dotted rhythm is likewise vertically aligned it would be unwise in this case to make deductions about intended performance from the appearance of the manuscript. The issue is further complicated by the notation at the beginning of the climactic bar 8, where, for the only time, the upper part has two 'straight' duplet quavers, of which the second is aligned with the third triplet. However, it appears that Chopin originally intended a dotted rhythm, then changed his mind while actually writing it down. What must have been a dot has been crossed out in the manuscript, so evidently Chopin did not intend this figure to be played in the same way as the dotted rhythms. A possible recommendation is to place the second duplet quaver in the theoretically correct place, between the second and third triplet quavers; to synchronise the semiquaver of the dotted rhythms with the third triplet; and to place the demisemiquaver of the double-dotted rhythms after the third triplet quaver.

Another problem arising quite frequently in nineteenth-century piano music concerns cases where duplet and triplet figures (usually quavers) coincide on a *single note*. That is to say, a single note-head is attached to *two* stems, one of which (usually the upper) belongs to the second of two duplet quavers, while the

other (usually the lower) belongs to the third of three triplet quavers. Many piano accompanists will have come across this in Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* Op.73 for clarinet and piano; the music of Schumann, Brahms and other composers of the Romantic period affords numerous other instances. Clearly this notation cannot be realised literally – it has been correctly described as an 'impossible' rhythm: the same note cannot be simultaneously played as a duplet and a triplet. So which interpretation should be chosen? There has been little systematic scholarly discussion of this as a general problem, although individual cases have been commented on. The issue of consistency often arises. For example, in the second of Schumann's pieces the piano's first phrase contains such duplet/triplet quavers, the duplets belonging to the melody, the triplets to the accompaniment figuration; the answering phrase in the clarinet is similar to the piano's, but has 'straight' duplet quavers. In the interests of consistency, should the pianist give priority to a duplet interpretation of the quavers in the first phrase, even though this would mean distorting the triplet? The duplets are, after all, part of the melody, and are taken up by the clarinet in its answering phrase. Again, however, the assumption here might be questioned. How important would consistency of rhythmic realisation have been for Schumann (or indeed other nineteenth-century composers) – might it not have been quite acceptable for pianist and clarinettist to play the same notated rhythm in two different ways? In any case, if a degree of consistency is required, why should the clarinettist not adjust to what the pianist has just played, rather than the pianist adjusting to what the clarinettist is about to play? (I do not know whether anyone has put forward this rather heretical suggestion, but perhaps it should not be dismissed out of hand.)

To return for a moment to the general duple/triple issue, an interesting case is that of the gigue. This stylised dance, a regular component of the Baroque suite, is usually in compound time, most commonly 6/8 or 12/8, and we can think of this as the equivalent of triplets. In the seventeenth century, however, there are a number of giges written in simple, not compound time – i.e. with the beat divided into duplets, quadruplets etc. The assumption is that these would be played as if in compound time – tripletised, as it were – but it is not clear exactly how this should be realised. The tradition continued into the eighteenth century, and there are two examples of it in J.S. Bach's keyboard music (possibly deliberately archaic uses of the notation): the Gigue from Partita No.6 is in 4/2 time, while the Gigue from French Suite No.1 is in 2/2. It will be interesting to hear how John Irving interprets the latter in his CMC recital on 1 December.

A further matter regarding dotted rhythms during the Baroque period is the question of 'double-dotting' (or 'overdotting', as it is sometimes called), as apparently applied to the first section of the French overture and works in the 'French overture style'. While the tripletisation of dotted rhythms involves giving the dotted note less than its notated value, double-dotting has the opposite effect – the

dotted note receives more than its notated duration. So we have the interesting situation that a notation which, theory has always told us, 'means' that two notes have the durational relationship 3 : 1, in fact has 'meant', at various times, the relationships 2 : 1 and 7 : 1 – and during the Baroque period might 'mean' either, depending on the context. A reminder that, as always, context is crucial in determining meaning.

IN CONCLUSION

These rather random thoughts do not constitute a thesis or lead to a conclusion. But perhaps they suggest a few questions. Does the composer 'intend' and then write? Or see what can be written and then 'intend'? Or some combination of the two? In any case, how does 'intend' relate to 'expect' and 'take for granted'? And given that we recognise that the performer has a certain liberty to interpret what the composer has written, to the extent, for example, of adding unnotated ornaments in music of the eighteenth century and earlier, might not this liberty extend to the addition of accidentals (in cases where they are possible but not compulsory) in music of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and to the realisation of rhythm in the nineteenth century?

Roger Beeson

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