



VOL 18 #2 - SUMMER 2021 - THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FROM THE BRITISH HORN SOCIETY

# THE HORN PLAYER

Featuring  
**Annemarie  
Federle**  
BBC Young Musician  
Finalist



**Also in this issue**  
**Dennis Brain Centenary**  
**Chris Larkin (1947-2021)**  
**Anneke Scott**  
**and much, much more...**

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We are currently pursuing how we might create some online events as a society in the interim - watch this space!

### Lindsey Stoker

Chair, British Horn Society  
bhschair@gmail.com

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## Dear members,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this summer edition of *The Horn Player*.

In this edition we look back in celebration of 100 years since the birth of Dennis Brain, with tributes from Ben Goldscheider and Richard Watkins about his influences on them, and look forward to the next generation of player in Anne-marie Federle, finalist in the BBC Young Musician competition.

Whet your appetites with reviews of new recordings by Ben Goldscheider, Richard Watkins and Anneke Scott, and re-releases of recordings by Dennis Brain and Ifor James.

The BHS was sorry to lose yet another horn playing legend, and former Chair, Chris Larkin, and we pay special tribute to him in this magazine.

I'm sure that most of you, like me, had hoped that the music world might have returned to normal by now, but it seems we will have to be patient for a bit longer before we can organise any large in-person events. In the meantime, it's a great time to play chamber music and discover lesser-known Haydn symphonies, but who can even predict when we can hear a Mahler symphony again live?

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## Dear reader,

Welcome to the Summer 2021 issue of *The Horn Player*.

As we've found out over the last 15 months, trying to plan most things with a raging pandemic is very problematic. In the music business, I have the utmost respect for all concert managers and promoters who are earnestly trying to find a way to employ musicians and keep their businesses afloat. It's easy to underestimate the tenacity needed to forge ahead when previous efforts have come to nothing after a change in the rules or a threat of another wave. Of course, many musicians have also been hit by the effects of Brexit and I learnt a lot about the problems it's causing touring musicians in my interview with Anneke Scott.

Organising magazine content can also have its pitfalls. Our careful planning of this issue celebrating Dennis Brain's centenary was derailed by two differing events which both demanded magazine space. Annemarie Federle's spectacular performance of Ruth Gipps's *Horn Concerto* in the BBC Young Musician final rightfully earns her a place on our cover, and the very sad, early passing of Chris Larkin leads us to celebrate his amazing life and career. To make room, some of our regular features don't appear in this issue. If there are any that you miss and want to see return in the next magazine, please do drop me an email. Your feedback is invaluable.

Best wishes,

**Richard Steggall (Editor and publisher)**

[www.richardsteggall.co.uk](http://www.richardsteggall.co.uk)



## Dear fellow horn enthusiasts,

I do hope that this magazine finds you well. We are all still affected to some degree by this blasted pandemic, but hopefully July will bring some good news, especially to the weekend warriors amongst you.

The horn world has lost a number of great players and wonderful characters recently. Sadly, in this issue we mourn the passing of some of those, including Chris Larkin and Tom Briggs.

Though it is scant consolation, it is some comfort to see that the mantle is always passed on to the next generation, and I hope you enjoy Richard's interview with Annemarie Federle, and Ben Goldscheider's writing on Dennis Brain.

Closer to home, my orchestra now has a new principal horn – Alex Wide. It's nice to have a full section again and I look forward to the coming months of opera and summer concerts attended by actual human beings.

Best wishes,

**Ed Lockwood (Co-editor)**

Please write to:

[richardsteggall@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:richardsteggall@yahoo.co.uk)

or

[ed.lockwood72@gmail.com](mailto:ed.lockwood72@gmail.com)

## A huge thank you to this issue's contributors:

Bob Ashworth  
Tony Catterick  
Andrew Clark  
Andy Evans  
Ben Goldscheider  
Kelly Haines  
Miles Hewitt  
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Daniel de Souza  
Lindsey Stoker  
Letty Stott  
Adam Walters  
Calum Ward  
Richard Watkins

And particular thanks to our **Sub-editor Paul Cott**. "One of the most pedantic horn players of his generation".



# News

## Alex Wide appointed Principal Horn of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra



**A**lex Wide started playing the horn at the age of 7 in Southampton. He progressed through the local city music services before going on to study at the Junior Royal Academy of Music, aged 16. At 18 he won a place at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where he received both his undergraduate and master's degrees with first-class honours.

Alex was appointed to the position of Co-Principal horn with Britten Sinfonia in 2017 where he plays a combination of solo, chamber and small orchestral repertoire. Alongside the Britten Sinfonia, Alex is regularly invited to play as guest principal horn for many orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia, BBC Concert Orchestra, John Wilson Orchestra, London Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra.

Chamber music makes up an important part of Alex's career. Recent engagements include a performance of *Jabberwocky*,

a trio by Gerald Barry performed with Thomas Adès and Allan Clayton in Milton Court. He regularly performs with the Haffner Wind Ensemble and with the Emma Johnson and Friends chamber group. He is also a member of the Guild of Hornplayers.

Recent solo engagements include performances of Mozart's *Horn Concerto No. 4* and Glière's *Horn Concerto*, as well as recordings of Schumann's *Konzertstück* and two new pieces by Tim Jackson with members of the Guild of Hornplayers and the London Chamber Orchestra. On a recent tour of Argentina, Alex performed in the Haydn double concerto with the Tucumán Symphony orchestra.

Alex says, "I am so excited to be joining the BSO. The orchestra is absolutely fantastic and such an incredibly friendly place to work. Right from my first day on trial, they have made me feel so welcome and I can't wait to start as a full-time member of the orchestra! The BSO is also the closest orchestra to my family who live in Southampton. It's going to be brilliant to have a job close to home and to be able to spend more time with them."

## French Horn Summer School

**F**ollowing the success of their first French Horn Summer School in 2019, Peter Widgery and Simon de Souza had been looking forward to expanding the course in the summer of 2020, but inevitably that fell foul of the pandemic. However, with the easing of lockdown conditions the course is planned to run again in July this year.

As before, the course is due to take place in the beautifully tranquil and rural surroundings of Cilpost Farm, Whitland,

Carmarthenshire, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July. Simon and Peter have a wealth of performing, teaching and coaching experience and look forward to helping advanced young horn players aged between 16 and 24 to explore the horn ensemble repertoire and also to look into orchestral sectional work. There will also be opportunities for individual sessions and performance coaching. In 2019, course participants ranged from sixth formers to second-year conservatoire and final-year university students, and in a very short time all had become fast friends. Feedback included the following from a student of Michael Thompson's at the Royal Academy of Music: "The atmosphere of the course was friendly and relaxed but also very productive. The coaching was of a very high standard and I think everyone learnt a lot this week."

The venue is delightful and offers extensive opportunities for relaxation and leisure when participants need a rest from their horn-playing exertions, including an indoor swimming pool and games room. Culinary comforts are looked after by Simon's son Ben, a professional musician but also a talented chef who learned his craft in a Michelin-starred kitchen!

Peter has played second and fourth horn for many years with the Orchestra of St John's and has taught for many years at Winchester College and Charterhouse School. Simon, as well as an extensive freelance playing career, has been the specialist horn teacher at Wells Cathedral School for 35 years and a visiting tutor at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire for almost 20 years. He was also formerly at the Purcell School and Junior Royal Academy.

For full details please contact Peter at [widgep@live.co.uk](mailto:widgep@live.co.uk)



## The National Youth French Horn Ensemble

National  
Youth  
French  
Horn  
Ensemble  
of Great Britain



The National Youth French Horn Ensemble (NYFHE) holds its second annual course from 22<sup>nd</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> August this year in Cheltenham. Last year, COVID-19 forced the event to be held online, but this time the ensemble will play as nature intended, in person and live. A rare and immensely valuable opportunity for aspiring young horn players.

NYFHE offers an intensive week of horn coaching from leading professional players. The mainstays this year will be Tim Thorpe, Tom Taffinder and Ben Goldscheider. In 2020, Zoom allowed students to enjoy masterclasses and workshops from experts around the world including Sarah Willis, Jean-Pierre Dassonville, David Pyatt and Katy Woolley. Similar opportunities will be included this year along with the major benefit of being able to play live.

NYFHE is open to players aged 14-21 of a Grade 7 standard through to diploma level. Last year they won first place and also highly commended in the British Horn Society's Online Ensemble Competition. Thanks to these achievements, the students this year will be working on the music from Corniworld Publications arrangements that they won including Brahms's *Academic Festival Overture*, part of Grieg's *Holberg Suite* and "I Could Have Danced All Night" from *My Fair Lady*.

The ensemble week was established in memory of horn player Nic Branston who was the victim of a fatal road accident in 2008 when he was just on the brink of a very promising career. Last year's course leader Tim Jackson said, "It's been a wonderful experience and a privilege to work with these young people in such an exciting and unique event".

The NYFHE course this year will take place at Cheltenham Ladies' College,

alongside its sister/brother ensemble, the National Youth Percussion Orchestra. We have commissioned two pieces for sixteen horns and twenty percussionists, which should hit a very sweet spot.

There are a couple of spaces still available this year for anyone who has tons of stamina and is at least Grade 7 standard.

For further information contact the organisers The Nicholas Branston Foundation

Rachel Branston

Email: [rachel.branston@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.branston@gmail.com)

Tel: 01761 220102

Visit the NYFHE website:

[www.nyfhe.org.uk](http://www.nyfhe.org.uk)

## News from the Royal Academy of Music



Richard Watkins has recently told us about two Royal Academy of Music students, **Zoë Tweed** and **Annemarie Federle**, who have made it through to the preliminary round of the 70th ARD International Music Competition in Munich.

Zoë tells us, "I was so pleased to find out I was through to the first round proper of the ARD competition. As this is my first attempt in an international competition, my primary goal was to make it through the preliminary round, so anything else that happens from here is just a bonus! Having to record video submissions can be very frustrating, and I've found it's better to treat longer recordings as a one-take-only situation, otherwise it's easy to get caught up in what could have been. It's been fun to learn a bunch of new repertoire and I'm really looking forward to submitting the next video round. I played the third movement of Peter Maxwell Davies's *Sea Eagle* and the first movement of the *Glière Concerto*, and for the next

round I've chosen Haydn's *Concerto No. 1* (first and second movements) and the Knussen *Horn Concerto*."

Zoë also had a double success in the RAM Digital Chamber Music Competition as a performer and a composer.

"I wrote *Jabberwocky* a few years ago for wind quintet and narrator but never had the chance to perform it; the competition seemed like a perfect opportunity! I asked Drake Gritton, our oboist, to narrate the poem, which he did beautifully, and then I spent a weekend solidly editing the audio and video (and putting in the handwritten text of the poem). I was delighted that my quintet, Sylva Winds, ended up as joint winners with Lyrus Winds.

This winning video can be found here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nr8iKJubgRQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nr8iKJubgRQ)

## News from the Royal Northern College of Music

Fresh from his success in the 2020 British Horn Society online ensemble competition, Calum Ward tells us about his latest project.

The concept of arranging music for massed horn ensembles has always inspired me. Listening to ensembles such as the London Horn Sound and the Tony Halstead Horn Ensemble showed me all the different voices and characters that can be achieved in horn choir music that demonstrates a uniqueness to the instrument. Subsequently, over lockdown back in March 2020, I decided to experiment with this concept and arranged several pieces for horn ensemble which were recorded virtually by myself and my music college colleagues at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, including a Disney and a Broadway arrangement.

To my surprise, they were well received, and I was especially satisfied that my colleagues enjoyed making them very much during such a difficult period. It was then my ambition that I would attempt within the year to complete a live recording of a new arrangement and to

successfully perform it in a COVID-safe environment. It was at this very time of dedication to the project that my favourite film music composer passed away, the late, great Ennio Morricone. Despite many of his scores either being for Spaghetti Westerns or classic Italian cinema, his use of intensity, instrumental variety and harmony brings to mind some of the most colourful and cathartic sounds to align with a cinematic narrative. I knew I had to make my next piece based on his music.

The piece that I arranged was for ten horns, rhythm section and added percussion. I invited five of my music college friends/colleagues (Jack Sindall, Erin Bathgate, Molly Edwards, Joe Clarkson and Tom Hutchinson) and was also lucky enough to be joined by five top professionals (Bob Ashworth, Tim Jackson, Julian Plummer, Lindsey Stoker and Matt Head) who were so helpful and encouraging. The rhythm/percussion section were formed of RNCM/Leeds College of Music students Callum Quinn, Amy Gray, Keelan Carew and Tim Watson. I was fortunate enough that my good friend and third-year RNCM opera student Joe Dixon offered to help with the video aspect and David Coyle and Stephen Guy of the live sound and video dept in RNCM were kind enough to help me out as well. I, under the conducting guidance and encouragement of my dad, Crispin Ward, took the baton and decided to conduct the work.



The day was a great success, everyone had a fantastic time and I thoroughly enjoyed working with all those incredible musicians. I am looking forward to more projects we can do together in the future. I hope you all at home enjoy the video.



Watch the video of the Northern Horn Ensemble playing *Grazie, Ennio* here:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZ\\_7eF7P29E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZ_7eF7P29E)

## Letters

**Dear Editor,**

Your article in the recent *Horn Player* about the Strayhorn work is very interesting. I spoke with Willie Ruff about it. He had gotten an email from Katy Ambrose but didn't know about the article. I sent my copy of the journal to him and he commented about the piece having a second life now.

Willie told me that the recording was from Strayhorn notes (i.e. implying it was not a complete manuscript). He also said that when they did the recording he was living in Hollywood and had acquired excellent recording equipment. He urged Mitchell to come out to record, and he rented a piano from Steinway. The piano turned out to be Rubenstein's, and Steinway had Willie keep it an extra month until they needed it for Rubenstein (so they had to move it only once). The recording thus was done in Willie's apartment.

**Marilyn Bone Kloss** (assistant editor of the International Horn Society's *The Horn Call* and publisher of the *Cornucopia* newsletter)

**Dear Editor,**

I was saddened recently to hear of the passing of Eric Wetherell and Andrew McGavin. As a pupil of John Burden at Trinity College of Music in London from 1976 to 1979 I have an interesting mem-

ory of Eric from John's association with him over 60 years ago.

My understanding is that in the early days of ITV in the 1950s, there was a variety programme possibly called *Wednesday at Eight* and Eric Wetherell was the MD of the live orchestra that played each week. To vary things around, some sections of the orchestra were featured, and the horns got four solo spots by the look of it. John clearly kept the scores after the programme went out on air and then used them as ensemble repertoire for his students at Trinity College of Music, when the College was still based at Mandeville Place in central London. Obviously Eric composed the pieces for John and his regular horns for the Sinfonia of London, a very busy orchestra that recorded big film and TV scores like *633 Squadron* and *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.

The members were John Burden, Sim Saville, Andrew McGavin and Jim Burditt.

The four arrangements were:

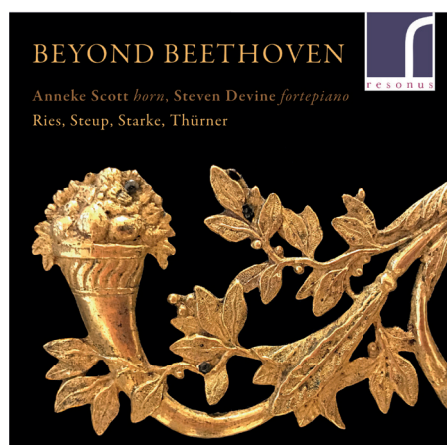
"Crazy Rhythm" for four horns, bass, drums and piano, completed or performed 23rd November 1959.

"Blue Skies" for four horns, bass, drums and piano.

"Grasshopper's Dance" for four horns, drums and bass.

"Linden Lea" for four horns. Completed or performed 13th March 1960.

**Robert Parker**



***Beyond Beethoven* (RES10267)  
Anneke Scott (horn), Steven Devine  
(fortepiano)**

**Review by Daniel de Souza**

*Beyond Beethoven*, a phrase which will resonate with many after the 250th anniversary of the composer's birth in 2020, could well mean "around Beethoven", in this case with a carefully considered programme of works which complement and give context to the Beethoven *Sonata for Horn and Piano*, Op. 17.

Renowned historical horn specialist Anneke Scott and her regular duet partner, the fortepianist Steven Devine, present a kaleidoscopic range of colours and timbres.

Many horn-playing listeners may already be familiar with Ferdinand Ries's *Grande Sonata in F major*, Op. 34, and will know it to be a fabulous piece. It runs the full gamut of natural horn technique, from running quavers, leaping arpeggios and fluid legato lines, to some fiendish low notes, requiring great control. Ries was a former student of Beethoven, and was

probably aware of the famous Op. 17 sonata when he composed this piece.

Friedrich Eugen Thürner was a travelling oboist, pianist and composer who studied with Franz Danzi, and eventually played under Louis Spohr in the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra. It is surprising that his music is little known, and I for one will be seeking more of it out. His *Grande Sonate*, Op. 29 was composed one year after Ries's (both written in the city of Kassel) and, as Anneke hints in her (as per usual) excellent and thorough sleeve notes, was probably written for one of the horn-playing Schuncke brothers. It is full of delightful melodic material, expanded on and ornamented, with a brooding slow movement and a sparkling rondo.

From a pupil (Ries), to a contemporary (Thürner), to a duo partner and colleague: the horn player and pianist Friedrich Starke. Starke is known to have played Beethoven's sonata with the composer at the piano, and played fourth horn in the premiere of *Fidelio* [what a great gig!] in 1814, so knew Beethoven well. The *Adagio and Rondo*, Op. 105, makes much use of call and response, most notably in the Rondo. The opening Rossini-esque theme gives way to pastoral alphorn calls, at first stridently, and then as an echo, using a papier-mâché mute which Anneke reconstructed from contemporary descriptions. This, combined with judicious use of the four different pedals of the Fritz fortepiano, gives a broad and interesting range of colours even beyond the normal depth of a recording on historical instruments.

Ending the disc is an admirer of Beethoven; the opening six bars of Henrik Steup's *Sonata*, Op. 11, being in homage to Beethoven's own sonata (so much so

that the original edition notes the fact on the title page). "Les Adieux" is a tender and expressive slow movement, followed by a joyful Rondo Allegro, which gives both horn player and pianist a chance to show off, and brings this delightful disc to a close with panache.

Anneke and Steven present each piece as a true duet between horn and piano, with Anneke's brilliant hand technique over Steven's rippling piano figures. Melodic phrases are effortlessly passed between the two musicians, with each player having space and time to give their own point of view on the material.

Having been lucky enough to have been the page turner on some of the recording days, I can confidently say that the passion for the music, and the joy with which it was played really does come across in the recording! **Dds**



***Legacy: A Tribute to Dennis Brain*  
(TWR009)**

**Ben Goldscheider ( horn), Huw Watkins (piano), James Gilchrist (tenor)**

**Review by Ed Lockwood**

This is a really beautiful recording on a number of levels. As the name and subtitle state, it is a tribute to Dennis Brain and his impact as a musician. This is given extra poignancy by the timing of its release – 100 years exactly from the day that Brain was born. Ben Goldscheider and Huw Watkins have thus combined a selection of works by composers that Brain either worked with or who wrote in his memory, and there are two new

commissions as a nod to the effect that Dennis's remarkable abilities had on composers.

We should probably concentrate our attentions on the brand-new pieces on the disc by Roxanna Panufnik and Huw Watkins himself, doubling as pianist and composer. For his *Lament*, Huw took inspiration from Poulenc's *Elégie* and it's a wonderfully haunting piece to open the recording. Like the Poulenc, it's a heady mix of soft introspection with truly impassioned climaxes. The musical language is a little chromatic but entirely accessible, and I have no doubt that it will begin to appear on recital programmes in the future.

Roxanna Panufnik's *Sonnets without Words* are re-workings of some of her earlier pieces. Originally written for different voices, she had always felt that they would also work well on other instruments and welcomed the opportunity to use the horn on this occasion. They, too, are dark and brooding (though a little gentler in nature). I was particularly struck by Ben's amazing pianissimo control in these pieces and the diminution *a niente* at the end of the first sonnet is quite remarkable.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that the playing on this disc is of the highest calibre, but I was most struck by the emotional weight of the music-making. This was clearly a very personal project for Ben, and this comes across in spades throughout the recording. Much of the writing is taken up by long, lyrical lines, and they are beautifully graded throughout so that the listener really feels that they are being taken on a journey.

I highly recommend this recording. Ben and Huw play together with great sensitivity and it's lovely to hear some of the repertoire on the periphery combined with some new music. **EL**

**A free PDF of the Huw Watkins *Lament* is available with every purchased download of *Legacy*.**

[www.three-worlds-records.com/playlist/legacy-a-tribute-to-dennis-brain/](http://www.three-worlds-records.com/playlist/legacy-a-tribute-to-dennis-brain/)



***Shining Gate of Morpheus* from  
Eleanor Alberga *Wild Blue Yonder*  
(NV6346)  
Richard Watkins (horn) and  
Ensemble Arcadiana**

**Review by Adam Walters**

The starting point for this piece from 2012 is Morpheus, the Greek god said to govern sleep and dreams. Alberga herself has written that she gets much inspiration from her dreams, and maybe this connection between composer and subject matter helps explain the exceptional beauty of the music. 13 minutes long, this piece for horn and string quartet is both attractive and accessible, and the recording by Richard Watkins and Ensemble Arcadiana (on the Navona Records label) is superlative.

Alberga integrates the horn into the string quartet effortlessly, incorporating into the score some particularly lovely unison moments with the different string instruments. The horn part demonstrates a consummate understanding of the instrument on the composer's part, with idiomatic fanfare sections, a wide range (of both notes and dynamics) and passages containing stopped notes and (briefly)

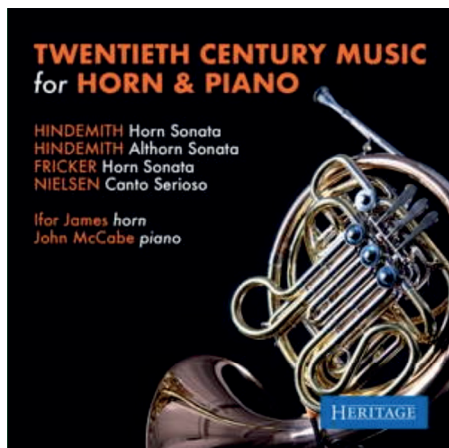
flutter-tonguing. One of the world's finest chamber musicians, Richard Watkins is appropriately assertive when called for, and in the more translucent textures showcases his sensitive pianissimo and perfect production.

Watkins and the members of Ensemble Arcadiana capture the music's various characteristics with a vivid and varied palette of sound colours, and mention must be made of not only the exemplary horn playing but also of the

truly expressive violin and cello solos that punctuate the score. The recording is first-rate too, with everything from the biting, crisp articulation of the faster sections to the yearning pianissimo solo lines conveyed with great clarity and in enticing detail.

Whether intended or not, *Shining Gate of Morpheus* contains nods towards other pieces concerning sleep – the string writing at times calls to mind moments of Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, and certain textures heard in Roussel's *Le Marchand du sable qui passe* are evoked elsewhere. For me, at least, the piece also has the dream-like quality of sounding shorter than it actually is! This may be due to the flow of the material and the seemingly whimsical form but, whatever the reason, it is remarkable how Alberga and her performers in this recording pull us so completely into the realm of Morpheus.

By turns reflective and dramatic – and sometimes evoking an almost heart-breaking fragility – this is an absolute jewel of a piece. Thanks to Alberga's formidable technique and very evident inspiration, *Shining Gate of Morpheus* feels like a classic already, and is a significant addition to the chamber repertoire for horn. **AW**



## Twentieth-Century Music for Horn and Piano (HTGCD 164) Ifor James (horn) and John McCabe (piano)

This recording has been issued by **Monica McCabe**, the wife of the late John McCabe, as a tribute to Ifor James. We are delighted that she has written for *The Horn Player* about its release.

It is difficult to sum up the brilliant horn player, the late Ifor James, in a few words. Multiply gifted and madcap; a superb

mimic of accents; former youth football player for Carlisle; a gifted artist with the pencil; he was also teacher of many leading horn players today, all of whom will undoubtedly have their own fund of stories. Among his favourite concert club showstoppers was playing "The Flight of the Bumblebee" on the horn. Ifor and my late husband John McCabe began their playing partnership in the early 1960s. It continued, when they were not engaged in other activities (Ifor was also a member of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble), until the 1980s, when Ifor took up a teaching post in Germany. They recorded four of the works on this CD in 1968, including the Hindemith and Fricker horn sonatas, and Nielsen's beautiful *Canto Serioso*. The Hindemith *Althorn Sonata*, with its spoken interlude before the last movement, was never previously issued, and is generously gifted by its owner, Robert Matthew-Walker. Of the remaining four "bonus" items, the delightful Alan Abbott piece was also on the 1968 recording, while the other three works, by Eccles, Gwilt and Arnold Cooke, come from a recording made by Ifor himself.

During their partnership, John wrote several works for Ifor, including *The Goddess Trilogy*, based on Welsh mythology, and it was through Ifor's influence that

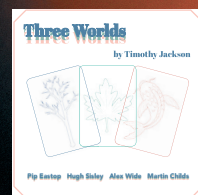
he began writing for brass band, including the well known *Cloudcatcher Fells*. The horn became one of John's favourite instruments.

Among lesser-known facts about Ifor: he was missing his two front teeth, possibly because of a football accident in his youth. Also, he carried a bullet lodged in his spine, as a result of a mishap while on tour in South America. Thinking the gruff Spanish voice in a restaurant queue behind him was asking him to move, he politely did so, only to find that the command was, "Don't move. This is a hold-up." Thereafter, when travelling abroad, Ifor had to carry medical information explaining why he set off alarms when passing through airport gates.

The names of the composers Hindemith and Fricker can sound fearsome to those who don't know their music, but should not. These are all fine works, melodious, noble and well crafted. I am astounded by Ifor's breath control in these, and in the fast movements of the Eccles. Despite his outstanding virtuosity, Ifor never really won the accolade he deserved. Perhaps his very exuberant high spirits told against him. However, this is my tribute to his memory, and to many years of laughter. **MMC**

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# Annemarie Federle



Many of you will have watched Annemarie's wonderful performances in the **BBC Young Musician** competition. With a bright future ahead, she tells **Richard Steggall** about playing the *Gipps Horn Concerto* and her route to the final.

**I have to start by saying a huge congratulations from the BHS and horn players around the world.**

Thank you!

**Those that are regular BBC Young Musician viewers may remember you from the 2018 competition.**

Yes, this was the second time that I entered – in 2018 I made it to the brass final. Back then, I only applied because I thought, “what have I got to lose?” and I was just glad to have some audition and performance experience. When I got to the category final I was really surprised, but I learnt so much from it and really enjoyed it.

**Were you thinking you could go further two years later?**

I always thought that I would apply again, yes. I knew that I would be young enough to do it again, so I thought I might as well have another go and see how far I get.

**This time you got all the way to the grand final. How did you make your concerto choice?**

I'd discovered the Ruth Gipps concerto after buying David Pyatt's *British Horn Concertos* CD because I wanted to listen to the Gordon Jacob concerto. That was the first time that I heard the Gipps and I remember thinking that it sounded quite hard but that it was a great piece. I think Richard Watkins once suggested it in a lesson, so I bought the music and had a go. When it came round to picking a concerto, I didn't really want to pick Strauss *Horn Concerto No. 2* which often seems like the default

choice for horn players. I wanted something a bit different to stand out from any violinists' or pianists' repertoire – maybe something a bit more technically challenging and slightly more modern. The Gipps is modern but also has great lines and melodies that are so idiomatic for the horn. It also has an incredible relationship between the orchestra and the solo horn; there is so much dialogue between the wind instruments which gives it a very distinctive, rather impressionistic texture. Every time you listen to it or play it, you hear something that you didn't notice before, whether that be a countermelody, or a new way of linking different motifs.

Lots of non-horn players don't quite realise how difficult it is. All the challenging passages are there because they sound nice and because that's how the music is supposed to go, not for the sake of being difficult. The work comes across as being accessible, but it's actually quite hard!

**You won't get any arguments here. Didn't David Pyatt say it was the hardest piece he has ever recorded?**

Yes, in fact, I don't think he's ever played it live because it's not often requested but it's also a risky piece to play.

**David was 19 when he recorded it, and Ben Goldscheider's just recorded it at 23 – it's obviously for the young and fearless!**

**How important to you is it that you are championing the work of a female composer?**

I didn't pick it for the sake of having a female composer, but I

definitely think the reason that the concerto (along with the rest of her music) is not as well known as it should be, is that she faced a lot of discrimination as a female composer. This, as well as the fact that it is beautiful music, gave me all the more reason to pick it. I was pleased to be able to give the piece a little more recognition and I really hope I can continue to do so in the future.

## How was the occasion? With no audience did it feel like an occasion?

All of us have had very little performing experience over the last year, so if I had gone from that, to performing to a packed hall, it would have been quite a shock. We've had a couple of concerts at the Royal Academy of Music with just ten or twenty people spread apart – even if it's just a few people, it's enough to make it feel like a concert. When we're all in concert clothes, it feels like a performance anyway, so in fact I didn't mind too much not having a proper audience. In the hall, the panel was there, as well as a couple of parents hiding in the corner and then all the BBC tech people; it was enough to make it feel like an audience.

The whole experience leading up to the final was also very exciting and rewarding. I really enjoyed rehearsing with the orchestra and with Mark Wigglesworth – playing with a professional orchestra for the first time is definitely an indescribable feeling.

## Is that the first time you'd played the Gipps with an orchestra?

Yes. I had done two or three rehearsals with my school orchestra on the first movement back in March last year, but the concert obviously got cancelled.

## Which school is that?

Hills Road Sixth Form College in Cambridge. We are lucky in Cambridge as there are a lot of academics. Results-wise my school was one of the best state sixth forms in the country. I was at Chesterton Community College before that.

## Are your parents musical?

My parents both play the violin as a hobby – my Dad actually studied music. He's a biologist now but I always grew up with music around me so it felt very natural to start an instrument.

## Was the horn the first instrument you started?

I started on the piano when I was about 6 and then took up the horn when I was 7. I initially learnt with Christian Rutherford privately, before briefly having Richard Kennedy and Sue Dent. I started lessons with Richard Watkins at the age of 13, and he has taught me ever since.

## What is it you like about Richard?

He's obviously an incredible player and also an incredible teacher. He's very encouraging and I like the fact that he doesn't focus on the specific physics of playing the horn but on musicality, so

**Name:** Annemarie Federle

**Age started horn:** 7

**First instrument:** I can't remember – some kind of single F Kinderhorn!

**Current instrument:** Alexander 103

**Favourite composer for horn:** Schumann or Mahler

**Favourite composer to listen to:** This changes frequently – at the moment I'd say Tchaikovsky or Bach.

**Horn hero:** My teachers!

**Hobbies:** Cooking and baking, cycling and going on walks, board games, spending time with my friends

**Fun fact:** On one of my NYO courses, I played in all three concerts without realising I had a disposable foam earplug stuck up my bell. I remember thinking my horn felt weirdly resistant and out of tune but didn't think anything of it until after the course...!

the technique comes as a result of that. That makes the music always the number-one priority which I think is really important.

I remember when I first started having lessons with him, he strongly encouraged me to use the Arban *Cornet Method* book which really pushed my technique on a lot, through doing those exercises.

## You were principal horn in the National Youth Orchestra for a while.

Yes. I joined when I was 14, starting on 7th horn (my first BBC Prom was Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, so that put me on first Wagner tuba!), so it was quite a shock when I moved to principal horn in the next year. I played principal for two years.

## Were you in any other youth groups?

I took part in ensembles from quite early on: I played in lots of local groups, such as the Bedfordshire Youth Orchestra, Cambridge Holiday Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia Academy and a brass dectet called Junior Prime Brass that I was in until I left school. I was also a member of Aldeburgh Young Musicians, where I met the composer Will Harmer, who wrote a piece for me that I played in the Young Musician Brass Final.

## How did you choose the brass final programme? [The same programme as in the semi-finals.]

I wanted to keep the structure of the programme I had in 2018 – starting with an unaccompanied piece, followed by a lyrical piece and finishing with a more showy piece that incorporated an element of chamber music. I commissioned Will to write me an unaccompanied piece, so that gave me a piece that was very suited to me and what I wanted to show. Then I wanted to have some standards of the horn repertoire to complement that, so I chose Franz Strauss's *Nocturno*, which is one of my favourite pieces, and is always a good piece to show the warm lyrical horn sound. I thought about the last piece for quite a while because I

was considering doing just the Allegro from Schumann's *Adagio and Allegro*, but wondered if it would be too controversial not to have the Adagio with it. I considered other last movements of sonatas but settled on the Schumann because it was the best showy end-piece and I think it complemented the other pieces very well.

**I think it works for a competition but you wouldn't necessarily play it on its own in a concert.**

Definitely. Lots of horn players might think it's a crime to play the Allegro without the Adagio. But it made sense in the programme as they only show excerpts on the TV programme anyway. I could have played the Adagio instead of the *Nocturno*, but I liked having three different pieces to show my breadth as a horn player.

**Do you think your playing has developed between the semi-final and the final? [Because of COVID they were actually a year apart.]**

Yes, definitely. I didn't think I'd improved that much but I hadn't heard any of the semifinal broadcast until it was recently aired – it was really interesting comparing my playing a year apart. When you are focusing on the details when you are practising, it's sometimes hard to see the bigger picture of how you've improved. I didn't realise it was that much. I remember thinking that the semi-final went quite well, but listening back to it a year later, there were definitely a few bits that... er... I wasn't too sure about. Comparing it to the final, I was really pleased with the improvement.

**Between the semi and the final, you've started at the Royal Academy of Music. Did you always want to do music?**

During the last few years of school, yes, I was quite certain that's what I wanted to do. I think joining and playing in NYO was the point that I realised that that was what I really enjoyed doing.

**I expect that you haven't done much large-scale work at RAM?**

No, unfortunately not, but we have had regular ensemble playing. I hope we can do more larger orchestral playing soon.

**You also have David Pyatt as a teacher now. Is he a similar teacher to Richard?**

He does things differently – he is very systematic in the way he



Annemarie with the 2020 BBC Young Musician Brass Category Prize (all photos courtesy of the BBC)

teaches, and gives me loads of stuff to work on including lots of studies. The studies are particularly good for my low playing – that's one of the biggest differences between my playing a year ago and now. My low playing has improved quite a lot, although there's definitely still work to do!

**What do you like to do apart from playing the horn?**

I live in university halls near Kings Cross now, which is a 20-minute walk to RAM. It's self-catered flats, so I'm really into cooking and baking. I also love socialising with my flatmates – we have games nights, for example, with the eleven or twelve students that are living there at the moment.

**I assume you now see yourself as a first horn player?**

Well, definitely a high player.

**We've all heard your pedal notes now in the Gipps!**

No, definitely a high player!

**What are your ambitions?**

I'd definitely like to play in an orchestra at some point, that's a goal. Having a balance of solo, chamber and orchestral playing would be great – I'll just see what happens.

**And I'm sure we are all looking forward to seeing what happens as well... RS**

# DENNIS BRAIN CENTENARY

BHS Historian Tony Catterick writes on  
17<sup>th</sup> May 2021:

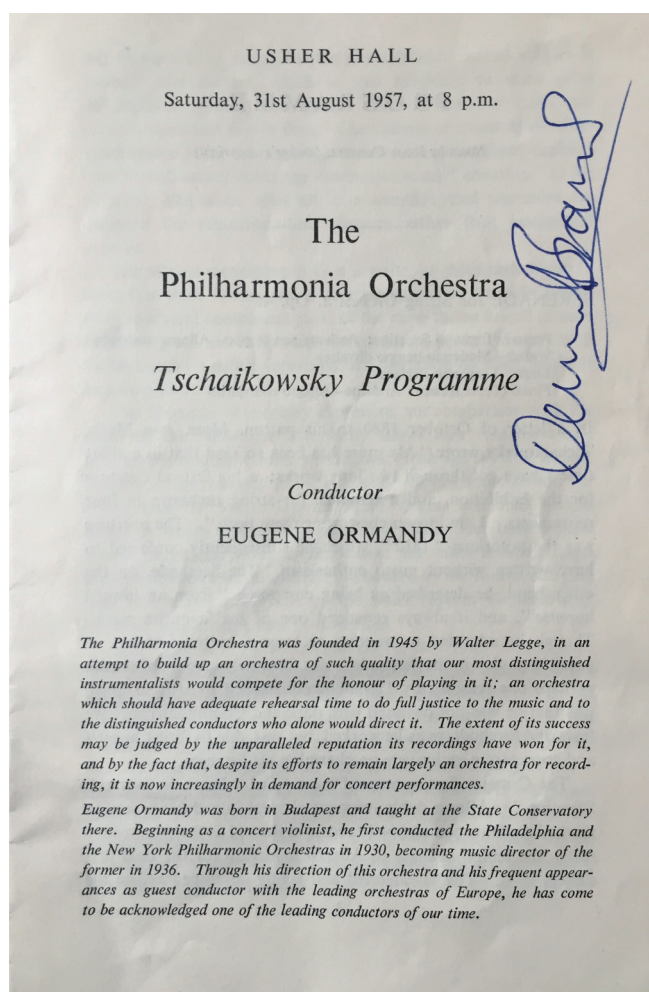
On this day 100 years ago the incomparable horn player Dennis Brain was born. He is still regarded as the finest horn player of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not just for his fearless playing and wonderful interpretations, especially of the horn's solo repertoire, but for his musicianship, warmth of character, easy-going charm and relaxed stage presence. He was a player who showed the world, through his phenomenal control of a notoriously precarious and sometimes treacherous instrument, that the horn could be tamed and used to make a most glorious and totally reliable sound. He was incredibly in demand from his late teens onwards, with orchestras and conductors such as Sir Thomas Beecham and Herbert von Karajan. His recording of the four Mozart concertos with Karajan and the Philharmonia Orchestra, recorded in London for EMI in November 1953, is still regarded as the finest of all interpretations: true magic and perfection, played with great style and sensitivity, from a delightful and modest artist.

So many composers wrote solo works for him, notably Britten and Hindemith. Taught by his distinguished father Aubrey, at the Royal Acad-



emy of Music, Dennis, aged 16, made his debut sitting next to his dad in the old Queen's Hall in London, playing second horn in Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1*. Like his father, he played an old French Raoux piston-valved horn, sometimes referred to as a peashooter. His playing as principal horn in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philharmonia is regarded as some of the most perfect ever heard. Tragically, he was lost to the world on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1957 in a car accident, only 17 miles away from his home, after driving back overnight from the final concert of the Edinburgh Festival. We have a legacy of fine recordings to enjoy today, but one wonders what else would have come from this genius if he had lived beyond 36 years of age. He certainly showed us all that the horn is a wonderful instrument to touch the heart. **TC**

## RIP Dennis



The Philharmonia Orchestra was founded in 1945 by Walter Legge, in an attempt to build up an orchestra of such quality that our most distinguished instrumentalists would compete for the honour of playing in it; an orchestra which should have adequate rehearsal time to do full justice to the music and to the distinguished conductors who alone would direct it. The extent of its success may be judged by the unparalleled reputation its recordings have won for it, and by the fact that, despite its efforts to remain largely an orchestra for recording, it is now increasingly in demand for concert performances.

Eugene Ormandy was born in Budapest and taught at the State Conservatory there. Beginning as a concert violinist, he first conducted the Philadelphia and the New York Philharmonic Orchestras in 1930, becoming music director of the former in 1936. Through his direction of this orchestra and his frequent appearances as guest conductor with the leading orchestras of Europe, he has come to be acknowledged one of the leading conductors of our time.

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Tessa Robbins		Vernon Elliott
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	Gordon Pearce	
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Arthur Davison	Flutes	
Thomas Rolston	Gareth Morris	
Charles Verney	Arthur Ackroyd	
Jean Le Fevre	Brian Chadwick	Trumpets
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Ernest Rutledge		Arthur Wilson
Alfred Davis	Piccolo	Frederick Mansfield
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George Lalland		Clement Lawton
Donald Weeks		
	Oboes	Timpani
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Anne Wolfe	Clarinets	Michael Jefferies
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\* The Souvenir Programme is now on sale at the Festival Office and at booksellers at the price of 2s. 6d.

A signed programme from Dennis Brain's final concert, courtesy of Tony Catterick

# William Brain: The daddy of 'em all

**John Humphries** turns his attention to the very start of the Brain family dynasty and looks at the previously unexplored life of **William Brain**

**W**illiam Brain, the great-grandfather of Dennis Brain, was not a horn player but there is some evidence that he could sing. His life was, in many ways, conventional, but his story is worth telling as he was a member of the British army in an age when its role was to keep order across vast parts of the globe.

William was a Londoner. His father, who was also called William, had been born to Thomas and Mary Brain on 17th October 1792, and baptised at St Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street, just to the south of St Paul's Cathedral. While still a teenager, William (senior) met Margaret Rebecca Wheeler who was six years older than him. She had been brought up near Smithfield Market and, on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1810, they were married at St Giles, Cripplegate, the beautiful medieval church which still stands at the heart of today's Barbican Centre.

Their son, William (junior) – Dennis Brain's great-grandfather – was born on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1814 and was baptised on New Year's Day 1815 at St Luke's Church, Old Street, now the home of the London Symphony Orchestra. By the time his sister, Rebecca Sarah, was born in 1820, the family had moved to a newly built terraced house in Popham Terrace, Islington. William (senior) was a typefounder, and his son started to train for the same business but then joined the army on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1833, a month or so after his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. What caused his career change is not known and his decision to sign up came quite late in life by the standards of the day, as some recruits were as young as 13.

William's attestation papers show that when he joined the 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot at Newark, he was a fresh-faced young man, 5 feet 7 ½ inches in height with hazel eyes and dark brown hair. The main body of the regiment was serving in the Caribbean at the time, so he was probably employed at their depot which, for the next three years, moved between various barracks in the north of England. However, in June 1836 they were ordered to Nenagh in Tipperary in the west of Ireland, and three months later, when the rest of the regiment returned from the Caribbean, they were stationed in Buttevant, County Cork. In May 1839, after short stays in Templemore and Kilkenny, the regiment was posted to the Royal Barracks in Dublin.

Life was going well for William. According to his records, he was an "excellent" soldier, and on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1839, he was promoted to corporal. But there was more. How he met the 16-year-old Sarah Ellen Brown is unknown but, as she was born in the barracks where William was now living, the chances are that her father was on the permanent staff there. They married at St Paul's Church, Arran Quay, Dublin on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1839 after knowing each other for only a few weeks.

The regiment remained in Dublin for a further year but, in September 1840, HMS Vanguard – then said to be the fastest



Sarah Ellen Brown, wife of William Brain and great-grandmother of Dennis

ship in the Royal Navy – sped all 270 of them and their families to Malta. This must have been a pleasant posting because, even then, it was a favourite destination for those who could afford to escape England in search of winter sunshine. The regiment stayed in the Mediterranean until 1846 but, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1841, the 18-year-old Sarah gave birth to Charles, the first of their twelve children, and in 1842 William and his family returned to the regimental depot in England.

At first the Brains were stationed in Brighton, moving to Dover and Winchester before spending 18 months in Jersey. In June 1845, they were on the move again, arriving in Waterford in Ireland only days before the arrival of their second child, Mary. Their next stop was Carlow, then Boyle in Roscommon and it was there that their second daughter, another Sarah Ellen, was born in 1847. William had been promoted to the rank of sergeant in 1842, and on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1847, around the time the depot moved on to Castlebar, County Mayo, he was promoted to colour sergeant.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot served in Canada from June 1848 until August 1851 and for much of this time (two years and 299 days, according to his military record) William and his family were with them. The quiet postings of Malta and Jersey were a thing of the past and Montreal lost its status as the capital of the Province of Canada when rioters burned down its parliament buildings on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1849. Five men were arrested and charged with arson but it took 100 men from the 19<sup>th</sup> Regiment to escort them to prison in the face of an angry mob of 3,000. Montreal was sent into further panic by a cholera epidemic in July, and the entire regiment was forced to withdraw for four

months to the relative safety of St Helen's Island in the middle of the St. Lawrence River. On 19<sup>th</sup> April 1850 they left Montreal for Quebec before returning to England.

After short spells in various towns in southern England, the regiment was posted to the Tower of London on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1854 but on 28<sup>th</sup> March, Britain and France declared war on Russia. On 17<sup>th</sup> April the men, accompanied by 15 of their wives, marched from the Tower to start their journey to the Crimea. William, however, was not among them: he had completed his 21 years' service on 12<sup>th</sup> April and already had a new job lined up. How he felt as he saw his colleagues going off on another great adventure is not known, but as the regiment suffered quite heavy losses, first through cholera, and then at the Battle of the Alma, the story of British horn playing could easily have been different if he had gone with them.

William's new job was running the stores of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Royal West Middlesex Militia, at Heathfield Road, Turnham Green in west London, and it is during his time with the Militia that we get a tantalising glimpse of him as a musician. He seems also to have served as Vice President of the Turnham Green Devonshire Cricket Club and, at a club dinner on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1858 where the Militia band played the National Anthem "in masterly style", he made a short speech and was one of four who "greatly enhanced the pleasure of the evening" by the "more than ordinary character" of their singing. It is difficult to know just how able a singer he was, but it was perhaps from William that subsequent generations of the Brain family inherited their musical genes.

During the ten years that William worked in Turnham Green, he and Sarah had six more children of whom Alfred Edwin, the first of the horn-playing Brains, was one of four to survive into adulthood. William retired from the Militia in 1864 and when his daughter, Sarah Ellen, married in 1865 he recorded his profession as "traveller" although what he was doing or selling has been forgotten.

Later in the 1860s, William and his family were living at Wallace Cottage, somewhere near Radnor Terrace, a lane leading from Warwick Road, Kensington to a railway line owned by the London and North Western Railway. He was also now Wharf Clerk to a coal merchant, Charles A Walter & Co at Newcastle Wharf on Warwick Road and, as there is neither a canal nor a river in the area, the Wharf was probably a railway siding. The only snapshot we have of his life at this time comes from an appearance he made as a witness in a case at Hammersmith Magistrates Court in 1873. Investigating after hearing a pane of glass being broken during the night, he had found one Edward Bachelor, a bailiff who had been assigned to look after another property on the Wharf, very drunk and with his head through a window, trying to get in!

William and Sarah were still at Newcastle Wharf in 1874 when their 14-year-old son Alfred was playing in the band of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 18<sup>th</sup> Regiment so they may well have heard him in performance before William died on 5th February 1877. He was buried

in a common grave at Brompton Cemetery three days later but Sarah stayed on at Wallace Cottage until at least March 1881. By the time she died in January 1890 she was living in Marloes Road, Kensington, and Alfred had become a lance sergeant in the Band of the Scots Guards, so she must have realised how good a player he was. She may also have met her little grandson, Alf, who would become a leading Hollywood studio horn player but neither she nor William can have foreseen that their son was the first of a dynasty of horn players who would be remembered forever. **JH**



Dennis's grandfather Alfred Edwin Brain Snr.



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# What Dennis Brain's Legacy Means to Me as We Celebrate His Centenary

by **Ben Goldscheider**

To understand how a figure like Dennis Brain arrived along the unfolding journey of musical history, one must first look at the environment which served as his background and in which he was nurtured. Dennis Brain himself was part of the so-called “third generation” of Brain horn players, his familial predecessors laying strong foundations that would eventually reach their pinnacle with Dennis.

For example, on the 10th August 1895 the very first Prom took place at the Queen's Hall, London, with Mr A. E. Brain (Dennis's grandfather) as the fourth horn in the orchestra. In 1909, “Uncle Alfred” was the first horn soloist in the UK premiere of Schumann's notoriously difficult *Konzertstück* for four horns and orchestra and in 1923, Aubrey Brain (Dennis's father) made the very first recording of a horn concerto with the Royal Symphony Orchestra: Mozart's *Horn Concerto No. 2*, K417 for Edison Bell Records. Further afield, the seeds of horn greatness were sown in Germany; 1928 saw Aubrey Brain become the first English horn player to play as a soloist abroad, at the invitation of the renowned conductor Bruno Walter. In America, in 1931, Alfred Brain gave a memorable performance of the *Horn Concerto No. 1* by Richard Strauss at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, a performance which reached many thousands by way of the radio. It would be safe to say that by the time Dennis was entering his horn-playing years, the wheels had been set in motion for the horn to be more readily accepted as a respectable solo instrument.



Dennis's father Aubrey Brain



Photo: Kaupo Kikkas

Whilst it may seem unnecessary to note the achievements of Dennis's family, the Brain family tradition set Dennis up to improve the standard of horn playing as his forebears had done, raising the bar for every horn player that followed him after his tragic death in 1957. This feeling that he was a true pioneer was beautifully encapsulated by Benjamin Britten, writing after his death: “I must be grateful to Dennis for having challenged all other horn players in his playing of this piece.” (Britten refers here to his *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, Op. 31, written for the 22-year-old Dennis Brain).

Indeed, it was Brain's remarkable combination of unparalleled skill, elegant style and humble demeanour that raised the bar of horn playing universally. To me personally, he is a constant source of inspiration. He was an individual who was not content with that which was conventional or run-of-the-mill, always on the lookout for new avenues for his extraordinary talents. He became the driving force of our beloved instrument, popularising it worldwide and stretching its boundaries. Despite prolific performances of the much-loved Mozart and Strauss concerti, the chamber music of Brahms, Beethoven and Mozart and his memorable orchestral contributions, it was Dennis's activities in new music that made him one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most important artists. Many readers will be well aware of the many wonderful pieces written for him, but I would like to single out one in particular, the aforementioned *Serenade* by Benjamin Britten. Not to discredit the achievements of Sir Malcolm Arnold, Gordon Jacob or Paul Hindemith, but concerti and sonatas, to a greater or lesser extent, would most likely have existed with or without the inspiration from Dennis Brain. The *Serenade*, however, is inconceivable without him. This new genre of voice, horn and strings, the multi-movement work that pushes the horn's technique to the extreme and is framed by the most poignant of “horn calls”, was born directly out of Britten's fascination and admiration for the skills of the 22-year-old horn player. Like Punto and Leutgeb before him, Dennis Brain

awoke the horn from its slumber as a solo instrument and was a catalyst for its development during the 20th century.

His recordings of the Mozart concerti under Herbert von Karajan remained in the top 20 “best sellers” of EMI’s catalogue for more than 20 years; an achievement which really made the public accept the horn as a worthy solo instrument. It is perhaps down to Brain alone that the fourth movement of the K495 concerto is as famous as any other piece of classical music in the literature. In such a short career, it is truly astounding that he achieved so much for our instrument. The question of “what if”, had he taken the advice of Eugene Ormandy to “take it easy” the morning of his fateful drive from Edinburgh to London, is a difficult one to contemplate. It was his legacy, what he did for the instrument and what he represents today, that served as the catalyst for my latest recording project, *Legacy: A Tribute to Dennis Brain*.

I suspect that without his efforts, his work ethic and dedication, and love for music, the development of our instrument would have been much slower. Recently, I re-read Stephen Pettitt’s biography of Dennis Brain in more or less one sitting, the effect being a whirlwind tour of his life and career. On reaching the penultimate chapter that describes his death, I was rather shocked at the strength of emotion I felt, the feeling of loss and pain that was felt so strongly by the musical, and indeed wider, world at the time.

The first element to my recording, therefore, was two works that were written in his memory, the Poulenc *Elégie* going a long way to really convey the pain and sorrow that was felt by so many. One can only begin to imagine what an emotional affair it must have been for Neill Sanders, Brain’s long-serving second horn and friend, to give the premiere performance a year after Brain’s death.

The second element to my recording was to celebrate Dennis Brain’s collaborations with the great composers of his generation. In this vein, there are works by Sir Malcolm Arnold and Benjamin Britten, the former writing his *Horn Concerto No. 2* for him, not the *Fantasy*, and the former is coming later this year by way of another recording too. Finally, I am enormously grateful to the Guild of Hornplayers for providing the means to the third element of this album: the commissioning of two new works, by Huw Watkins and Roxanna Panufnik, that pay a subtle homage to Dennis Brain’s activity towards his devotion to new music.

When reflecting on his life and career, the one thread that binds it beautifully together is the great love he had for everything he did, as well as the fun and wit with which everything was undertaken. I have nothing but the greatest admiration for this awe-inspiring legend.

**BG**



Dennis Brain by Howard Coster © National Portrait Gallery, London



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra horns in 1947 rehearsing Strauss *Sinfonia Domestica*

Left to right: Dennis Brain, Ian Beers, Roy White, Frank Probyn, Eddie Chapman, Mark Foster, Alf Cursue, H. Hamilton  
(from the Seenan Collection)

# Why Dennis Brain Remains Such an Inspiration for Modern Horn Players

by **Richard Watkins**

As we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, Dennis Brain still remains one of the greatest horn players to have ever lived. Perhaps his greatest legacy is the incredibly high standard of horn playing we have today. He was tragically killed in a car accident at the very peak of his career and it is perhaps easy to forget in our “celebrity” world today that the announcement of his death was headline news. Sadly the 1950s also claimed the lives of singer, Kathleen Ferrier and violinist, Ginette Neveu. All of these artists were much loved and admired all over the world.

I have been asked several times what actually made Brain’s playing so special and of course it is difficult to quantify but first and foremost it is the quality of sound Brain produced. The hallmark of any great artist is the unique quality of sound. I always enjoy listening to Philharmonia recordings, trying to recognise the horn playing; Brain’s sound presence is unmistakable and it’s always fascinating to hear how the playing has evolved right through to the present day. Nigel Black, the current principal, is, I think, now the longest serving Principal of the Philharmonia. Like Brain, Nigel has his own characteristic sound – the stamp of all great players.

Brain’s sound was incredibly focused, combined with a real purity. It has been well documented that his instruments, the Raoux and Alexander single were both very narrow-bore compared with the instruments of today. I can testify to this, having had the privilege of playing his Alexander currently in the archive at the Royal Academy of Music. It would probably not be one’s immediate first choice to take on stage to play a Mahler symphony, but I am always struck by the make-up of the horn to highlight this core of the sound.

Of course, Dennis grew up with the sound of his father, Aubrey, who was also famed for his quality of sound. Dennis would also have learnt the art of breath control from his father. He had the ability to sustain long lines without the need to break the phrase – the opening of Schubert’s *Auf dem Strom* and the slow movement of Mozart’s *Horn Concerto No. 4* being just two examples highlighting his liquid-like phrasing and ability to glide between notes. Throughout his career Dennis apparently spent a good deal of time practising his breathing, which is perhaps reassur-



Richard Watkins playing Dennis Brain’s horn

ing to all horn students whose teachers are constantly emphasising the need to take a good breath... at all times!

His attention to breath control perhaps goes some way in explaining his fearlessness. He professed to have no nerves, and his reliability relaxed his listeners, but of course he was fully aware of the hazards of the horn. I feel I am preaching to the converted here but I do love the story of when he cracked a note at the beginning of the famous solo in Tchaikovsky’s *Symphony No. 5* in a recording and the conductor, Herbert von Karajan, was heard quietly saying “Thank God”!

His recordings remain the benchmark for all horn players, from the classics of Mozart and Strauss to some of the new works he commissioned, such as the concerti by Hindemith, Jacob, Arnold, and Britten’s wonderfully evocative *Serenade*. Brain transformed the horn into a respected solo instrument and at his untimely death, composers were queuing up to write for him.

When I joined the Philharmonia in 1983 there were still several players in the orchestra who knew and worked with Brain, notably Ian Beers, his second horn. When talking to them I was struck by how they all immediately related to Dennis Brain the person, describing him as incredibly kind, generous, modest and almost unassuming without a hint of arrogance. On this I do think the final sentence in Stephen Pettitt’s biography says it all: “To all he was the ideal genius, unapproachable in his unique gifts but reaching out to touch the hearts of all as a friend.”

Brain’s final performance at Snape Maltings in 1957 is perhaps a snapshot of his life. He performed the Mozart *Fragment in E major*; after the orchestral introduction the horn enters with a

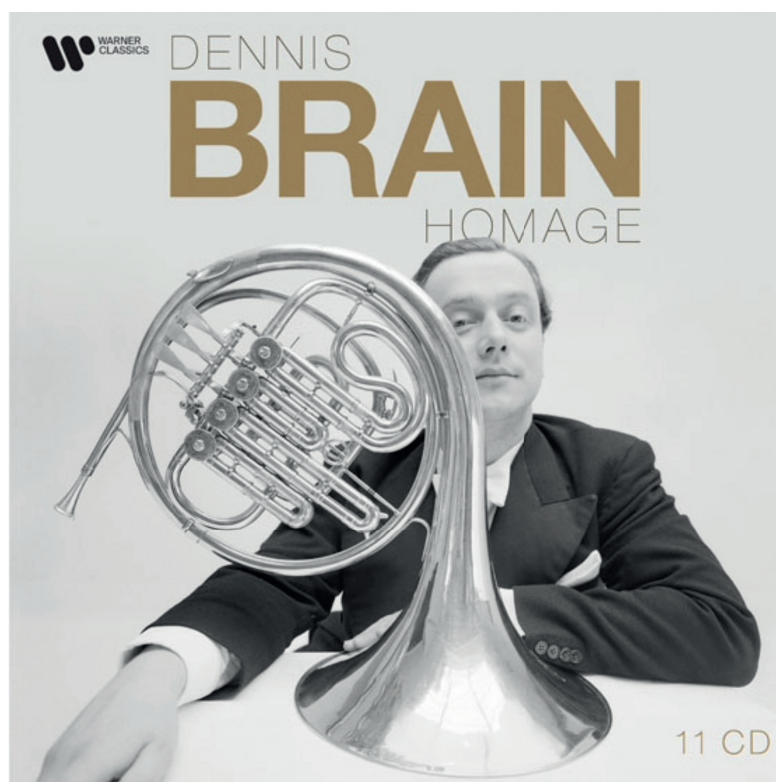
beautiful lyrical melody potentially eclipsing the other concertos. Then suddenly, after 40 bars or so, the music stopped; Brain shrugged his shoulders and walked off – sublime music and music-making cut off in its prime.

I mentioned at the beginning that perhaps his greatest legacy is his inspiration to future generations of horn players. My own playing career has also been inspired by great players such as Barry Tuckwell, Alan Civil and Michael Thompson, not only by their astonishing ability, but who have all touched me musically.

I am happy that the torch continues its journey with the continued emergence of new talent such as Annemarie Federle, finalist in the most recent BBC Young Musician, and featured in this magazine.

I would like to end by quoting one of my teachers and another hero, Ifor James, who said, “as long as the horn is played, Dennis Brain will always be remembered.” **RW**

**Richard is the holder of the Dennis Brain Chair of Horn Playing at the Royal Academy of Music.**



## Dennis Brain: Homage (Recordings 1938–1957) Warner Classics

### Review by John Humphries

Congratulations to Warner for putting together this eleven-CD collection, gathering together all their recordings of Dennis Brain's performances: concertos, works with piano, chamber music, orchestral solos and works written especially for him. Apart from a performance of Vincent d'Indy's lovely wind septet, *Chanson et danses*, all have been available before. As so much has been written, not least in this magazine, about Dennis's playing, attempting to say something new about every track would be impossible, so, instead, I should like to pick a few to try to show how they reflect his development as an artist.

Letters between WFH Blandford and his friend, Reginald Morley-Pegge tell us something of what it was like to hear Dennis

playing for the first time. “Did you hear young Dennis Brain play the Brahms Trio on the radio?” wrote Blandford in August 1942. “He made a very good show of it and evidently is going to be a worthy successor to his father.” Yet a few months later, when he heard the 21-year-old playing the Mendelssohn “Nocturne” in another radio broadcast, he wasn't impressed. “The playing was technically perfect – couldn't have been better [but] the spirit of the movement, as a Nocturne was, I thought, entirely lost.” Morley-Pegge detected a similar dichotomy in 1946: “Did you hear Dennis Brain's recital this morning? His technique in quick time is simply astounding: I should doubt if it has ever been equalled”, but he thought it lacked “emotional pleasure”, and it was “the thrill one experiences when a fellow on a flying trapeze accomplishes some particularly difficult feat.” He also regarded Dennis's decision to record an arrangement of Senaillé's “Allegro spiritoso” (originally a bassoon piece) as “a lack of judgement and also, I think, of musical culture much to be regretted.”

Ouch! Not what one might expect, and so different from the view generally held today of Dennis Brain as the genius who emerged fully formed, and who flashed across the musical heavens like a brilliant meteorite.

So, did they have a point, or were they taking time to get their heads around something new?

Listening to Mozart's *Horn Concerto No. 4*, K495, recorded with the Hallé Orchestra in 1943, Dennis's first-ever concerto recording, I'd say they were on shaky ground. The “Andante cantabile” is stylish and sensitive with flexibility of both pulse and tone, and for this listener, it hits the spot. Surprisingly, it is control of the instrument which is problematic: there are several tiny slips, and a decidedly wobbly patch in the first movement cadenza which would never have been released today. But Dennis was not entirely to blame: conductor Malcolm Sargent had been late for the session and there was probably no time for retakes.

The 1946 recording of Mozart's *Horn Concerto No. 2*, K417 is almost as technically polished as the later one with Karajan, but it seems rushed and a little prosaic, making it less easy to overlook Morley-Pegge's charge of a lack of emotional depth. But don't bypass the recording completely. It was recorded on

the single F horn, and in the finale, Dennis produces some splendidly rustic blasts which are simply impossible on a B♭ instrument. He transferred to the shorter horn in 1950 because it gave him the security he needed, but he agreed that the resulting sound was different, and many people felt that it was not a change for the better.

It is easy to see why Dennis himself had a soft spot for the best of the F horn recordings, the first Strauss concerto from 1947. It isn't perfect and there is a particularly vicious honk from an oboe at one point, but he catches the music's heroic mood brilliantly and, if you are after a daring young man on a flying trapeze, the coda is for you. It is quite scintillating.

Three horn and piano recordings demonstrate similar issues. The Beethoven sonata (1944) has the purity of sound which results from his playing on the F horn, and some of the tonguing is astounding, but there are moments of untidiness which could have benefited from modern editing. By contrast, whether or not you are comfortable with his B♭ horn tone, the 1952 recordings with Gerald Moore of Dukas's *Villanelle* and Schumann's *Adagio and Allegro* show Dennis on top form. It isn't just that the technical control is astonishing, it is more the speed of his reflexes as he finds the perfect weight for each note, irrespective of the speed of the passage.

In the renowned 1953 recording of the Mozart concertos with Herbert von Karajan, Dennis's playing is characterised by a mercurial lightness of touch and an undemonstrative, but incredibly detailed sense of phrasing that has rarely been matched. Compare his playing here in the Andante of K417 with the version of six years before to hear a new and exquisite sense of melting lyricism. Morley-Pegge was completely converted, finding the playing "superlative", and later describing Dennis as "the first horn player of genius since Punto". Another career highlight was his recording of Strauss's concertos with Wolfgang Sawallisch (1956). Some are probably right to argue that there are performances of the *Horn Concerto No. 2* which are more ruminative and reflective, but Dennis set the standard by which others are judged, and I am not aware of any other version which comes close to the levels of euphoric excitement of the finale.

This lavish set also includes a 1954 version of Mendelssohn's "Nocturne" directed by Paul Kletzki. This could not be more different from the radio broadcast which Blandford dismissed eleven years earlier as sounding like "a cornet player standing in front of the band". Here Dennis's playing is positively ethereal and it is hard to imagine a more cultured performance. Bravo, and happy hundredth, Dennis! **JH**



Between 680 BCE and 400 CE, several brass instruments with hugely important ritual and cultural functions were developed by Etruscan, Native European and Ancient Greek societies. These instruments were visually stunning, combining extraordinary craftsmanship with complex social meaning.

I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to explore the historical background and performance capabilities of four of

these instruments (Karnyx, Salpinx, Lituus and Cornu) through an Artistic Residency at Snape Maltings in 2020-21. The instruments themselves are extremely well-researched analogues (replicas) of horns recovered from archaeological finds and are made by Dr Peter Holmes who generously loaned them for the project.

As a professional French horn player, my performing work was

hugely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, so the chance to explore something artistically creative could not have come at a better time. Working with my three collaborators, Alice Zawadzki (violin and voice), Ed Ashby (tuba) and Luke Christie (percussion), we started from the rich and varied histories behind each instrument and then devised new pieces around them. In pre-Roman, Etruscan societies, people had few possessions, so the objects that they did have were extremely meaningful to them.

All four horns that I used in my Residency have a unique story behind them, with my favourite of the four being the Etruscan Lituus. This instrument (a very early ancestor of the alphorn) held enormous power as a ritual tool and was used in Roman society by augurs to predict the future. The analogue I play is an exact copy of the original instrument that was found bent into three pieces (no mean feat, as it is made out of cast bronze!) and ritually buried under the entrance to a sacred space. Alongside the Lituus was buried an axe, a folded shield and the body of a small child, so that anyone stepping over this threshold had to walk over all four to enter the sacred building. The power of the Lituus is so strong that before burial, as well as being bent into three, the mouthpiece was nailed across so that nobody could ever play it again. These things intrigue me and, combined with the ethereal sound that it produces (with wide natural harmonics, easy-to-produce pitch-bends and tonguing effects), make it a mysterious and fascinating instrument.

Following on from my Residency at Snape, I am hoping to perform this year (COVID restrictions permitting!) at a number of Music Archeology conferences, including the Europa Prehistor-



ic conference in the UK, the Global Breath conference in Essen and the ISGMA conference in Berlin. I am also completely hooked on these majestic instruments and am hoping to start a PhD to explore them further!

Something that I believe might be of interest to horn players reading this article, and which I hope to research in my PhD, is the idea of horns as being fundamentally integral to human society. The fact that horns exist in some shape or form in nearly every society in the world (and have done since the beginning of human existence), is something I find absolutely incredible.

In these uncertain times, perhaps it is of value to listen to these ancient instruments, which call from a distant world... **LS**

**Letty's project page on the Snape website:**

[www.snapemaltings.co.uk/festival-of-new/letty-stott](http://www.snapemaltings.co.uk/festival-of-new/letty-stott)

**Listen to the tracks on Soundcloud:**

<https://soundcloud.com/laetitia-stott/sets/ancient-horns/s-DrSZSMbcYSH?ref=clipboard&p=i&c=1>

**All photos © Britten Pears Arts**



# Work-outs - part six

by Bob Ashworth

This time, let's get away from exercises and "routines" and play some real music! It's always good to play a tune and hopefully these will help build on the *sound* work that has been the main premise of previous workouts. The flute books of Marcel Moyse – *Tone Development Through Interpretation* and *De la Sonorité* – have often featured on my music stand.

Let's begin with some French music not usually associated with the horn: Claude Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and its evocative opening flute solo.

Horn in F Très modéré ♩ = 92

Play very legato – the phrasing is Debussy's original but feel free to break the phrasing to take a breath, if necessary.



Of course, immediately afterwards comes our well known excerpt which needs the most delicate, exquisite legato.

Très modéré ♩ = 92

Horn in F

Fl.

Silent

Hn.1

Hn.3

p

p

p

5

Time to enjoy some Bruckner – the extension of the beautiful lyrical opening of his *Symphony No. 7*. I must confess that I had to look up “gezogen”; it means “drawn out”. This is normally written for horn in F with a key signature of five sharps, but as it would have had so many double sharps, I decided that a little transposition practice would be in order – so play for horn in E.

Allegro moderato

Horn in E

mf lang gezogen

poco a poco cresc.

f

8

15

diminuendo

Back to more French music now, “The Swan” from Camille Saint-Saëns’s *Carnival of the Animals*. Such a lovely melody.

Adagio e tranquillo (♩ = 68)

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 6/8 time, key of B-flat major. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 1-4 show a gentle rise in the melody. Measures 5-8 continue the melodic line with some chromaticism. Measure 9 starts a new phrase with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 10-12 continue this phrase. Measure 13 begins a new section marked 'poco rit.' and 'a tempo', starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 14-17 continue this section. Measure 18 starts a new phrase with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measures 19-21 continue this phrase, ending with a 'dim.' (diminuendo) marking. Measure 22 starts a new section marked 'Lento' and 'a tempo', starting with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Measures 23-24 continue this section, ending with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Looking back to bar 11 in “The Swan”, this is a perfect introduction to the wonderful “Valhalla” motif from Wagner’s *Ring* cycle. This motif comes several times throughout the whole cycle, with this version appearing at the end of the first opera, *Das Rheingold*.

Opera North’s 2016 performance of the complete *Ring* cycle is available online at [www.operanorth.co.uk/the-ring-cycle/](http://www.operanorth.co.uk/the-ring-cycle/)

Molto risoluto

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measures 1-3 show a steady, rhythmic melody. Measures 4-5 continue this melody. Measure 6 starts a new phrase with a piano (*p*) dynamic. Measure 7 continues this phrase, ending with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Bob Ashworth is Principal Horn with Opera North in Leeds, a post he has held since 1978. He is a frequent guest with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and has played hand horn and baroque horn with the English Concert and the Academy of Ancient Music. He helped form the Opera North Horn Club (now re-named the Northern Horn Club) and runs a publishing business ‘edition db’ specializing in horn ensemble music, horn-related chamber music and the works of English composer Humphrey Procter-Gregg. On the website there are wonderful pieces to be discovered, notably by Anthony Randall, Chris Gough, Ralph Hall, Chris Garland and Giovanni Punto! [www.editiondb.com](http://www.editiondb.com)

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# Anneke Scott



Photo: John Croft

**Richard Steggall** met up with Anneke to discuss her new recording, historic horns and fighting Brexit.

## **Tell us a little about your latest recording.**

The background to *Beyond Beethoven* came from a gripe of mine which is that we've got so much excellent early 19th-century repertoire yet it feels that if horn players only learn one piece from that era, it's the Beethoven *Sonata for piano and horn*. It's a great piece in many ways but it hides the fact that we've got lots of repertoire from this era and I think it's just a shame that the rest of the repertoire is so seldom explored. Given that it was a Beethoven anniversary last year I decided to look at some of the other pieces that are knocking around – we have such wonderful repertoire, so why is it that we're playing such a small proportion of it? I wanted to give some examples of pieces that should be heard more.

## **Did you know these pieces before you started researching the CD?**

The Ries *Grande Sonate in F major*, Op. 34 is one that most natural horn players know, I feel that's the sonata that Beethoven should have written; it's a more thought-out piece, it's a big piece.

## **But it's harder, particularly the last movement?**

Yes, I mean the Beethoven sonata is quite accessible – I'll give you that. I went through various ideas for the disc, I had a shortlist of about twelve pieces and then whittled them down to what I felt had a nice thread through them. For example, the Steup *Sonate in E-flat major*, a Dutch piece, starts with a direct quote from the Beethoven sonata and then goes off and does its

own thing – it's so cheeky. It was nice to have that as a reference back to the Beethoven.

## **When did you record the *Beyond Beethoven* disc?**

In November 2019, pre-COVID. It was supposed to come out in the Beethoven 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary year (2020) but then everything just got shifted. In a funny way one of the things I've quite enjoyed about this year is that we've all cut ourselves a bit of slack over some of those things that used to feel really pressing. I felt that this disc **had** to come out in the Beethoven anniversary year – it's called "Beyond Beethoven" – but, you know, it can come out a year afterwards; it doesn't really matter.

## **How does it sit amongst your other recordings? How long ago was your first one?**

The first solo disc was ten years ago which I recorded with the pianist Kathryn Cok. We recorded the Beethoven, the Krufft and the Leidesdorf/Bellonci sonatas and a little Haydn transcription.

## **So the complete Beethoven sonata is on your very first disc?**

Yes.

## **So you're partially to blame for this Beethoven thing. You're as culpable as the next person?**

Ha! I always think back to the wonderful Dennis Brain video (with Denis Matthews on the piano) so I blame him – he started

it! And the other thing is, it's a mixture of it being by such a major composer and in our home key. That makes it accessible.

This latest disc has allowed me to return to that Austro-German early 19<sup>th</sup>-century repertoire because a lot of the stuff that I've been doing in the last few years has been French (Gallay and Gounod and things like that) – but I like to flit about a bit.

**You've got a great range of different instruments that you play. What do you call yourself, a period-instrument performer, or just a horn player?**

I've used the term "historic horns" a lot. We officially start in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century but there's certainly traces of use from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. We've got such a wonderful repertoire in terms of solo, chamber, all the orchestral stuff and there're so many different designs of horn. I think I like the term "historic horns" because it's not just about the hardware – that piece of kit that you've got in your hand. It can tell you an awful lot and inform what you're doing, but there're so many other sources that we can be looking at and exploring.

**What percentage of your work is research and what percentage is practice?**

I think every time you sit down to practise, you're exploring things. One of the things I've enjoyed doing in lockdown is trying to copy old recordings of singers. Listening to recordings from the 1910s and 1920s and just thinking "can I do that on the horn?". There are a lot of different sources I'm raiding but I don't know where the research stops and practice starts.

**Let's cast our minds back to pre-COVID times. What was your work schedule like?**

Very varied. The work can cover anything we do from early 18<sup>th</sup>-century baroque oratorios and operas, through to historically-informed early 20<sup>th</sup>-century repertoire, so there's a lot of time travelling in terms of that, and a lot of juggling with the actual instruments. I spend a lot of time trying to get from A to B in terms of geography for gigs, but also working out how am I going to have the right piece of gear in the right country. I think I could make a really good travel agent!

Much of my work is with French ensembles, I go off to Australia quite a lot, and so you're constantly having to juggle schedules to make sure that they all see you relatively regularly.

**You obviously travel in Europe a lot and are well known for fighting against the damage that Brexit has caused for all British touring musicians. Has COVID conveniently bought the government time?**

In a bizarre way, the pandemic is hiding the magnitude of the

**Name:** Anneke Scott

**Age started horn:** 11

**First instrument:** Can't remember! It was something loaned to me by the Birmingham Music Service

**Teachers:** Mike Bates, Richard Duckett, Andrew Sandham, Derek Taylor, Pip Eastop, Andrew Clark, Claude Maury, Teunis van der Zwart

**Current instrument:** Far too many to mention! My favourites probably include my M. A. Raoux cor d'orchestre (natural horn), Raoux piston horn, Uhlmann rotary horn and Kruspe rotary horn. My "modern" is a rather vintage Alex 103.

**Favourite composer for horn:** Brahms

**Favourite composer to listen to:** I'm going through a big Janáček phase at the moment

**Horn hero:** Claude Maury

**Favourite piece to play:** Beethoven Symphony No. 3 "Eroica"

**Piece you never want to play again:** Possibly controversial but Beethoven Symphony No. 6

**Hobbies:** Making stained-glass windows

problem that we're facing, which I'm hoping is going to give the government the opportunity to put things in place. I'm travelling to Prague next week. Given the current climate, they've had to get intervention from the Czech government to allow us in, so it's miraculous that I'm able to do it. It's a very difficult situation that we find ourselves in.

The good news is that the situation with travelling with instruments that you can carry as hand luggage looks to be generally OK. If you are travelling with an orchestra that's carrying cellos and basses, like when I tour with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, you run into problems with the cabotage because you can only go to two countries and then you have to come back.

I'm viable because I have actually got an EU passport.

**So in an interview for the BRITISH Horn Society, we can reveal that you're not British at all!**

I'm not, although I have lived here most of my life. My dad's Australian and my mother's family were Dutch. I'm a proud Brummie but my ancestry actually goes back to Portugal. My Dutch grandmother was a refugee to the UK in the second world war – she was a Sephardic Jew which means our roots come from the Iberian Peninsula; my grandmother always used to say we were Portuguese. We knew that the family had fled from that part of the world to Holland in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and we had the family tree back to the 1400s. When Brexit happened I couldn't become Dutch because of the Dutch regulations, so I started putting things in place and became Portuguese – I'm really, really lucky.

**I guess your experience in historical research helped! Although you are personally lucky, you are still fighting the fight for other musicians.**

Very much so. The backstory is: post-referendum, pre-Brexit, I took to sending postcards to my MP and to various cross-party

MPs (people working in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, or in the Foreign office). I basically had an app on my phone and wherever I was in the world, I would take a photo from my seat in the pit/concert stage and send a “postcard” via this app. “Hi, today I’m in Paris. I’m playing Beethoven symphonies and I’m here with an Italian orchestra.” Next day, “I’m back in the UK but sitting next to a German flautist”, etc. I started doing it because very few people outside of our professional world see the fluidity of the travel patterns and things like that, so it was a very tangible way of showing how mobile we need to be.

Various people picked up on it, there was some coverage in the press, which meant that I started to get called in by the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the Musicians’ Union to talk to MPs. They like to have case studies and people who are willing to speak to MPs to explain the reality of our careers and lifestyle.

**You seem to be one of the few musicians to break out of the echo chamber of social media.**

Yes. I look at my early career, which was very much jumping in last-minute to do gigs in Germany, France, those sorts of places,



Prague 2021: Collegium 1704 Left to right: Joseph Walters, Jana Švadlenková, Gijs Laceulle, Anneke Scott, Patrick Broderick, Jörg Schultess



Prague 1996: London Classical Players Left to right: Robin Cain, Sue Dent, Beth Randell, Martin Lawrence, Chris Larkin

and now that won’t be an option. I have my passport, but I’m 20 years into my career, people know who I am. Someone who’s just graduated from one of our music colleges, who’s unknown, isn’t currently going to get the same opportunities because of the extra hoops to jump through and red tape. That’s why I’m not shutting up about this, because I can’t just get the passport and then pull up the ladder behind me.

**Would it be rude to describe your personality as “forth-right”? And it’s that kind of determination, whether it be fighting Brexit, or making CDs or recording every single day during a pandemic, that’s been a hallmark of your career.**

Well, I’m not very good at sitting still. I just find there are so many interesting things out there. If we just think about what we have in our repertoire as horn players, we are never going to exhaust it are we? It’s such a magnificent repertoire. You could decide that you’re going to just focus on 20 years of horn playing in one particular geographical area and you would have enough to keep you happy forever. And that’s the thing – there are too many things out there that I look at and think, “that’s interesting. I wonder what happens if I follow that thread?”

**So it’s your excitement in music that’s kept your enthusiasm?**

Yes, I’d say so, and the political lobbying is really to keep this going. What we do involves such a delicate ecosystem and I just want to ensure that we can stay mobile and relevant to allow us to collaborate with musicians all around the globe. I fear that if it becomes harder for our young musicians to study and have the opportunities that I had, then surely British music is going to stagnate.

**And you say you’re off to Prague next week.**

Yes, next week is the opening concert of the Prague Spring International Music Festival. I cannot believe I’m going – I’m going to play with an orchestra with an audience – it’s just totally crazy. I’m particularly pleased because me and Joe Walters are going to be playing on a pair of Chris Larkin’s horns. Chris had often lent us a pair of Kruspes from the 1880s and when we knew he was sick and had spoken about selling the instruments, we asked to have first refusal so this pair can stay together. He knew about this concert and he knew that his horns were going to get played – he actually bought them in Prague.

The last time they had a period instrument orchestra for the opening concert was in 1996 – the London Classical Players with Roger Norrington. Chris himself played in that concert, and this concert’s on the day of his funeral. We’ll be in Prague, playing two of his instruments in a concert that he knew about, and it feels like a nice tribute to him, playing the sort of thing that he loved on his instruments.

**And if the tradition of Britain developing world-class period performers continues, then I’m sure Anneke will have played her part in helping that to happen. RS**



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# Chris Larkin

## 1947-2021

**Chris Larkin**, a much loved, multi-talented horn player, writer, lecturer and former Chair of the British Horn Society has recently passed away. BHS Historian **Tony Catterick** recalls the life and career of his good friend and colleague.

**C**hristopher Michael Larkin was born on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1947 in Wigan, Lancashire. His father was a schoolmaster and an amateur pianist, whilst his mother, a nurse, was busy bringing up their two daughters and two sons. Chris attended Thornleigh Salasian College in Bolton aged 11 and sang in the school choir. He started playing the cornet in 1959 and was given free lessons from a Mr. Murphy. Many years later Chris wrote this memory of going to a concert at the Royal Albert Hall as a twelve-year-old. "In 1959 my father took me to my first Prom concert during what was also my first visit to London. All that I remember now about the holiday was that I divided my time between a long-established interest in the doings of steam locomotives and a new love – music".

In 1960 Chris changed to a piston-valve French horn crooked in F and taught himself, using the famous *Tune a Day* horn tutor, before having lessons, from 1964, once a week at the Northern School of Music in Manchester, with Peter Rider, fourth horn of the BBC Northern Orchestra, then with Julian Baker, principal horn of the Hallé. By now Chris had changed to a school-owned Italian compensating horn and then a Lidl double horn. He gained a distinction in his Grade 8 Associated Board exam, started to play in the Lancashire Youth Orchestra and the British Students Symphony Orchestra and attend-



ed many Hallé and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra concerts. Chris moved on from his Lidl to a Paxman double and an Alexander 103 full double horn. In 1965, he won a place to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London, playing an Alexander 90 single B♭ horn. His professor was the great James Brown, principal horn of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Jim gave Chris his first professional experience on fourth horn in 1967, in St. Albans with the RPO.

### Remembering Chris

Richard Steggall's interview with Chris from the Summer 2020 magazine is still available to download as a two-part podcast.

Find it at:

[BritishHornSociety.podbean.com](http://BritishHornSociety.podbean.com)



Final “Last Night of the Proms”: Chris with his wife, Tricia

After leaving the RAM, he joined the BBC Training Orchestra based in Bristol in 1968/69 then returned to London to begin his long career, initially as a busy freelancer in many West End theatre productions. He joined the much respected and successful London Gabrieli Brass Ensemble, with whom he played a natural horn, baroque horn, piston horn with crooks, a trompe de chasse, a hosepipe and a Vienna horn, as well as writing arrangements, administrative work and conducting the Ensemble. Chris also played fourth horn in a quartet called the Petrides Horn Quartet, with David Lee, Michael Baines and Robin Davis. After a period of playing second horn in *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Palace Theatre, London, and second horn in Kent Opera, Chris was personally invited by the great Alan Civil, in 1979, to be fourth horn in the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Chris liked to use a Kruspe yellow-brass double horn, primarily for the extra weight of volume required to give a strong bass to the section, which was ideal, too, for the others on their Alexander horns. Alan used to nickname Chris “Clarkin!” The job also required Chris to move up to play second when required, which he particularly enjoyed, sitting next to his idol, playing chess together, and Chris always liked to play the fourth horn solos in the slow movement of Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9*. Chris played as a soloist with the BBCSO horn section in several performances of Schumann’s *Konzertstück* for four horns and orchestra and Mark-Anthony Turnage’s *Four-Horned Fandango*, both in the UK and on tour in South America. Latterly Chris liked to use horns made by Engelbert Schmid – a full double and a triple horn. When Chris retired from

the BBCSO in 2015, after 36 years, he specifically chose as his final concert on contract a live public broadcast from the Barbican Hall in London of the great “Horn-Fest” which is Richard Strauss’s huge *An Alpine Symphony*, requiring 21 horn players. What a finish!

Freelance work continued to flow in on both period and modern horn and he was a very efficient and popular Chair of the British Horn Society from 2011-14, hosting the festivals in his own inimitable way, as well as being a member of the Royal Society of Musicians since 1995. He was much in demand for giving brilliant lecture-recitals called “Larkin – Around the Horn” and wrote articles for specialist brass magazines. With his encyclopaedic knowledge, experience and research, he has written a definitive and authoritative history of the trompe de chasse, which surely must be finished and published.

A very popular man, likeable, generous of spirit, stoical of character, lover of all things French, funny, sociable, an excellent negotiator with BBC management and fine horn player, Chris was tragically struck down with cancer which he fought with tenacious courage until, worn out with his battle, he left us on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021. He was 73. A much missed character, musician and friend to so many, we and all his family mourn his loss. **TC**

**RIP Chris.**



I've been staring at this blank page for some time now, trying to find a way to start to express my thoughts on losing not only a former colleague of 26 years in the BBC Symphony Orchestra but, far more importantly, one of my dearest and closest friends.

In the orchestra Chris was my rock. Mr Dependable. Unflappable, unfussy – he just got on with whatever was thrown at him by modern composers and would dispatch everything with aplomb. He provided such a solid foundation for the section from his chair. There was much humour with him also. He would enjoy, in a slightly grumpy fashion, asking conductors to “Enunciate your words as we can't hear what you are saying at the back” (anyone who has played in the acoustic “hole” that is Maida Vale 1 will understand!). He would sometimes remind composers, with a smile, that “we aren't proof-readers”, on being presented with poor or illegible parts. He was a true consummate professional, always interested in new experiences. His love of the trompe de chasse and historic performance, alongside his love of research, history and especially the Marquis de Dampierre, was phenomenal.



BBC Symphony Orchestra horn section 1992 (L-R) Brendan Thomas, Derek Taylor, Andy Antcliff, Chris Larkin, Mike Murray, Tim Brown

We shared much in common as it turned out, albeit 17 years apart. Both Lancastrians (he Wigan... yes it was still part of Lancashire then, me Blackburn). We both played with the Lancashire Youth/Schools Orchestra, both studied at Royal Academy of Music, and were both taught by Jim Brown. Memories... so, so many: the performances, the tours, his love of Spain and the Czech Republic, his love of languages, the food, the post-concert first pint “not touching the sides”, the Larkin-measure gin and tonics, experiencing a “Sol y Sombra” in memory of Alan Civil, the sound of his voice with a slight sarcastic inflection replying “OH REALLY” when something obvious was pointed out by a conductor! My family holidays in France where, being close to his property, we would meet up. Playing trompes de chasse, worse for wear, outside his house in France one night. Foxes were seen fleeing for miles around in pure terror! His laugh. His unwavering support. His shoulder when I needed to cry.

I and many others have lost a dear friend. The section in the sky has gained a truly wonderful man, musician and horn player. Till we meet again in Avalon, sweet dreams No 4. Yours, No 2.

## Mike Murray (BBCSO 1989-present)



Chris and Tony Catterick



Mike Murray and Chris



Hugh Seenan and Chris

I first met Chris at the University of Manchester in the late 1960s; he was in his final year at the Royal Academy of Music and I was at the Northern School of Music. We were taking part in an orchestra which was put together in order to perform Strauss's *Four Last Songs* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 4*. John Butterworth and Peter Bateman were also in the section; with Chris they made a very formidable trio in the midst of which I felt totally outclassed. Chris was playing first horn and I remember being in awe of the wonderful sound which he was making.

In the following years our paths crossed occasionally, most notably, and again, in Manchester – this time at the Free Trade Hall – when we were both extra players in what was then called the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra. On the bill was the final scene of *Götterdämmerung* with the great Rita Hunter singing Brunhilde and Charles Mackerras conducting. In those days I was fairly new to the delights of the Wagner Tuba; nowadays you get lessons on them as part of your training but in the 1970s you just had an instrument thrust into your hands with an instruction to get on with it. Not for nothing was their sobriquet of “catastraphones” deserved! Chris's friendly advice made my job much easier that day.

I really got to know Chris when we were both involved in the BHS committee; I was very privileged indeed to be part of a horn ensemble which he organised to play an arrangement of “Siegfried's Funeral Music” in memory of Alan Civil at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, with a prior rehearsal in the BBC studios at Maida Vale. His approach was always calm and thoughtful with a constant touch of humour. This approach continued when he became Chair – allowing all committee members to have their say, but never badgering them if they preferred to remain silent. In the great tradition of all BHS Chairs, there was no sense of hierarchy – the opinion of one committee member was always as important as that of another. His help and advice given to me as Editor of the magazine was invaluable – no inelegant phrase or incorrect fact escaped his eagle eye. Thank you, Chris, for so many wonderful memories.

## Paul Kampen (BHS Secretary)

The thing that has struck me since we lost Chris is just how many things crop up on a day-to-day basis to which one of my first reactions would be, “oh, I must ask Chris about that” or “I must tell Chris about this”. Chris's hinterlands were truly immense, plus (perhaps as a result of this?) I found he was always the best person to ask for another perspective on all sorts of things. We

first met when I was a green undergraduate at the Royal Academy of Music and he came in to coach a horn quartet performance of the Tcherepnin quartets. We were very much in awe of him, but his enthusiasm was infectious and his encouragement knew no bounds.

Whilst our own interests in the history of the horn very much overlapped, it was only in the last ten years that Chris and I got to know one another, and I feel really privileged to have had the benefit of playing alongside him. Of course, there was also the great joy of enjoying so many of the aspects of touring that a “bon viveur” such as Chris revelled in. He had a light touch (I think he was the only person who has ever got away with calling me by a diminution of my name!), an ability to talk profoundly on all sorts of weighty subjects, but also that mischievous twinkle in his eye when not taking himself or those around him too seriously. But I think his greatest gift to so very many people was that he made us all feel valued and encouraged. He will be sorely missed.



Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique in Verizon Hall,  
Philadelphia, 2013

(L to R) Chris, Jorge Renteria, Joe Walters, Anneke Scott

**Anneke Scott**

# Georgina Spray

Do we need to start a conversation about inclusivity in music? How do we accommodate those musicians who may have disabilities? Are we aware of the challenges they may face? **Lindsey Stoker** met with **Georgina Spray** to discuss the challenges she has faced as a disabled musician.

## How did you get into music?

I fell in love with music after a brass quintet came into my primary school. They introduced us to their instruments. I really wanted to play the trumpet, so I nagged my parents for a year until I was finally allowed to start cornet lessons and played in the beginner section of a brass band. I quickly moved from the cornet onto the tenor horn when I was 7, and when I was 12 I moved onto the French horn because I wanted to play in an orchestra rather than a brass band.

## How is music making different for you?

Being disabled makes everything more challenging, not just music. Being autistic means I have a few sensory problems, so the noise before rehearsals or concerts is definitely the worst. Some people are warming up, others moving chairs or talking, and if I'm actually on a stage, the bright lights really hurt my eyes, so I find it difficult to concentrate, especially because my horn is lacquered and therefore the light reflects off it.

## So, there are a lot of challenges that you have to work through when you are playing in a band or orchestra.

Yes. I also played in a pit band and it was so squashed, like being completely trapped. I was worried about how I would get out in an emergency. It's the same when playing loud – not only is it really loud but the vibration of the horn makes it really uncomfortable, as is hand-stopping; I can do it but I hate it!

## At the time was there much help or understanding for what your needs were?

No, because I was not diagnosed with autism until I was 16 so no one knew.

## How is the music you are doing now different?

I play with the National Open Youth Orchestra (NOYO) in the London NOYO Centre which is run by Barbican Guildhall Creative Learning. It's the world's first disabled-led national youth orchestra. It's a pioneering orchestra where there are disabled and non-disabled musicians aged 11-25 that play and perform together. We play music that is specially composed for us because we are such a diverse group of musicians with a wide variety of acoustic and electronic instruments – some people



Georgina Spray

play an instrument called the Clarion which can be played with any part of the body including just the eyes.

At present we are working on a piece that has been written especially for us by a disabled composer. We've had to meet online mostly this year, every other week, and were due to give our first concerts in May 2020 but they were cancelled.

## What message would you give to young disabled musicians?

Don't give up, because the more you practise the better you get.

## That's good advice for anyone! How would your life be different without music?

Sometimes when I can't find the right words, music has always been there and helped me through.

## Are you from a musical family?

Yes, my Mum is a pianist, so I grew up with the sound of the piano in my house.

**Who's your favourite composer?**

Mozart... I only really know his horn pieces, but like me, maybe he was autistic. He's also famous for his horn concertos so I feel I have two connections with him!

**What's the best advice you've been given?**

The harpist Steph West spoke to us at NOYO and she said that "you are where you are today and that's ok".

**How can the music industry become more inclusive of disabled musicians?**

It needs to be more aware that people are different and to accept it.

**Do you think there are ways in which we could adjust the performance experience to be more inclusive?**

In my orchestra we get a timetable the day before, so we know which pieces we're rehearsing and what time, when we are going to have a break; no one is allowed to play in the break.

**So set rules to accommodate? What if people need to warm up, do they stop them?**

No, you can still do that but there are set spaces that you can go to that are quiet.

**In what ways do you think the BHS could be more accommodating? Disabilities like autism, for example, are not always obvious?**

Provide the music in advance so that there is no sight reading, and have some relaxed performances – a lot of people find sitting still difficult. In the classical performances that I have been to, if you start moving people tend to look at you.

The hardest part for me in a non-disabled orchestra is the social part – I always end up standing on my own because I'm too anxious to ask to join in. Also, conductors go so fast; they will ask to go from a certain bar and before I've found the place they are counting in and I missed the entry and then they're shouting at the horns!

**So, being aware of people in that position and how you might accommodate them is important.**

There are lots of famous musicians... but not many are disabled. There is an amazing horn player called Felix Klieser who was born without arms so plays the horn with his feet.

**What do you hope for in the future?**

I can stay in NOYO until I'm 25 but I hope I can get a job in a professional orchestra like the Paraorchestra or the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra Resound ensemble, which are disabled-led professional ensembles. **LS**

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# Saar Berger – Twelve Pieces from Around the World

**Saar Berger**, soloist, horn player of Ensemble Modern, and Professor of Horn in Trössingen University of Music, Germany, tells **Andy Saunders** about his latest project of new commissions.

I was supposed to give a concert as the new Professor in Trössingen in collaboration with Donaueschinger Music Days, and then Corona showed up and things changed. I decided to ask six...eight...ten... then twelve composers from across the world for new short pieces, writing in different languages, different visions, fantasies, colours, techniques, and sound. After my *Travelling Pieces* CD with many new commissions, I thought it was nice to keep going with my *horn travelling*.

There are so many fantastic composers now, just hoping that people will discover them. It's like a kind of secret society of people working, but you don't know most of them. I was lucky because, being a member of Ensemble Modern for the last 15 years, I could meet lots of new composers and get to know them. I could find out who had the same interests and passions, and who could see new possibilities in the character of the horn. I met a few of these through Ensemble Modern, and others from teaching in different places and giving workshops. The best-case scenario: a piece for horn and friendship!

New music is music. It can be written with any language, vision, notation, understanding, vocabulary, meaning. The composers all had free choice to compose whatever they felt like or wished. They all wanted to hunt for an interesting sound first, and then to explore beyond the boundaries – and of course, I loved it! But I was also asking the composers to follow a wish that I had – the feel of *cantilena* (prayer, melody, song) in their composition. I thought it would be interesting to challenge the composers to find their cantilena. It can be hidden, it could come from folk music, improvised song – any way they felt like phrasing. Each composer took this cantilena their own way. Often it was not always immediate to see where it was, so I had to sing it first myself.

I told my composer friends, “the low register... the low horn is very unique.” There are lots of possibilities about this register that not so many people know about, or don't use. For me the natural approach of playing the horn is the natural approach of our vocal cords and our face, of being relaxed, of not doing much with the chops. We always try hard because the instrument asks this of us. Sometimes we forget about who we are, and what we are. Why not find our inner voice first? This music is not only about what is written on paper, but about what goes on behind the lips, behind the face – just before you let the sound go. The low register allows a much more natural physi-

for Saar Berger

for horn in F  
Nicholas Olsen

### Ghost Light

♩ = 68  
Molto rubato

The musical score for 'Ghost Light' is presented in a single staff with various performance markings. Handwritten annotations in red and blue ink provide specific instructions: 'air' with an arrow pointing to a note, 'pitched' with an arrow, 'top line sung/hummed' with a red line, 'sing' in red, 'take time (9)' in blue, 'open vocal' in red, 'Breath?' in blue, 'Longer' in red, 'poco vib' in blue, 'molto vib.' in blue, 'echo' in blue, 'soft?' in blue, 'open / slow / articulated' in blue, 'powerful' in blue, 'senza vib.' in blue, 'f' and 'ff' dynamics, and 'pp' dynamics. The score includes measures 1 through 23, with a final measure marked 'f'.

© Nicholas Olsen

## Nicholas Olsen - Ghost Light

cal approach, so you can bring a soft touch, a gentler colour to the sound. For me, it's also very close to my vocal register, so I can explore more possibilities for vocal techniques. I'm always trying to find new sounds and colours. The palette needs to be rich.

I asked the composers not to think about the difficulties – how easy or difficult it is. Write what you feel like, bring it to me, and if you'll allow me to, let's not call it a final destination. Give me the chance to look at it, and to use my vocabulary as a sound maker and a horn player. Then the whole thing becomes a conversation between composer and performer, me and you. That is as important an adventure as playing any piece!



Saar Berger

I'm really happy with this project, but of course I want to do it again – there are more composers out there that I want to work with! Some of it was a real challenge, and recording all twelve pieces in just two days was very challenging, but I feel as though I found my light for each piece, which is really exciting. Hopefully these pieces will open doors for many horn players, composers, and audiences! Of course, it will be great to play them in a live concert one day...!

Being a member of Ensemble Modern is a fantastic thing. When I first joined, I realised that I needed to stretch the boundaries inside my head – mental pilates really! I had to extend my vision about the way of practising, to try things that I thought were impossible, and to keep on pushing myself to want to discover more.

I insist that my students must visit “new music” and modern solo horn repertoire. Try once to read through it, you don't need to play it, but just *visit*, don't *play*, visit it. Look at it, try to sing it once, try to interpret it as though you were reading it in a book, and put your vision on top of it. What can you do with it? You can always use your own musical vocabulary to express your own voice through a piece, whatever you play. There is something that you can always find if you know how to travel with it, and each horn player will take it to a different place.

As horn players we all have different approaches. We learn from the approaches of many great players (“Woah, I'd like to do that!”) but at the end of the day, you find your own vision, your own way of being... you make your own identity.

New music and the horn changed my life, because I had to really practise and also find a groove and a dance within

it. Not just technically, not only “I must do it, I need to play it.” No. This is a piece that starts and ends, and it needs you to jump around and see how far you can go for it to work. This is something that I really learned in Ensemble Modern, and this is maybe the best gift that I got as the horn player, and mostly as a musician, in this beautiful, colourful ensemble. **AS**

The twelve pieces from *Around the World* (by Dan Yuhás, Zeynep Gedizlioglu, Sven-Ingo Koch, Geoffrey Gordon, Bernhard Gander, Cathy Milliken, Márton Illés, Nicholas Olsen, Elnaz Seyedi, Chris Gendall, Olga Rayeva and Valentin Garvie) are on Saar's YouTube Channel. Start with Dan Yuhás' *Voices at*

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipgTuSWqxeK](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipgTuSWqxeK)

Andy Saunders is a Scottish freelancer and also Co-Chair of the New Music Scotland network. Over the past year he has overseen a focus on the horn in Scotland's new music scene, with **soundfestival's** *Endangered Instruments* programme turning the spotlight our way.

Zeynep Gedizlioglu - Virgül

# Mini-Horns – in F or B♭?

**Miles Hewitt** asks, “Why on Earth do we need both?”

**D**oes it matter if we start learning on the B♭ horn? Surely you can then just learn the F horn when you get a double horn? Why are there such strongly held views that if you don't start on an F horn then your tone quality is compromised when you move to a double horn? As many learners start on mini-horns nowadays I have used this as a starting point for discussion.

Rather than the “which is best” argument, why don't we look at the situation on the ground? Although the excellent Besson single F “Kinder” mini-horn was first on the scene it was closely followed by the John Packer mini-B♭ *Hornblower* which was a cheaper option and was bought in large numbers by many local authorities and metropolitan boroughs when whole-class/small-group tuition was unrolled around 2010. These were followed by the John Packer mini-F, the Paxman Primo mini-F and mini-B♭, and the Bach International mini-F and mini-B♭ amongst others. One interesting idea came from the Jupiter brand which provides two sets of slides to convert the horn from F to B♭ (or vice versa). This is apparently quite time-consuming and begs the question, what is its purpose? To “progress” from the F to the B♭ version? Or vice versa?

The likelihood is that many school-based starters are learning on a B♭ horn. I think it's important to acknowledge that the teacher often has no say in which instruments are used, or more to the point what's available, but for the first time there are **lots** of horns out there, being played by **lots** of children. This is a big opportunity for the horn to become a more accepted mainstream instrument. We need to grasp it with both hands and a little finger hook! Incidentally, there doesn't, for some reason, seem to be such a stigma around starting on the E♭ tenor horn before moving to French horn. Why? Could mini-B♭ horns simply be seen as a hybrid – neither a full-length F horn, nor a Saxhorn? They are different, **affordable** and **useful**, and they get young people playing in large numbers, unheard of not so long ago.

We need to remember that before mini-horns, younger players were (and still sometimes are) given a **full-size** F horn when there was no hope of a correct right hand position and often a wrap much too large for the player. Thankfully those days are gone... mostly.

We have both mini-F & mini-B♭ horns; let's use them wisely! (Let's not forget there are still many small-wrap single F piston-valve horns with a small bell taper out there which could be of great use in the short term.)

My personal view is that it is fine to start in a group/class on a mini-B♭ but one-to-one lessons are preferable on F horns for better intonation, better tone and, most importantly, to be able to play a note expressively, achieved through the resistance of the F horn; there's something to blow against to “mould” your



John Packer JP161 Single B♭ French Horn

sound. Mini-B♭ horns are much more free blowing making the notes less malleable and therefore less expression can be achieved by young players in the crucial middle-register starting notes.

In my experience the mini-Fs are more robust. Due to the design, the shorter slides of the B♭ horns can have problems with stays becoming unsoldered, and the valves tend to be a lot less reliable than mini-F horn valves. I am puzzled as to why this should be?

Mini-B♭ horns have a very wide bell throat taper (much wider than mini-Fs) which make them very free blowing **but**, in my view, makes any quality of tone/intonation difficult for the beginner, although notes are easier to pitch. Anyone who has taught groups and classes knows this is a crucial starting point. Mini-B♭ horns are here in large numbers and we can't simply ignore them, ideally doing two or three terms before moving to an F horn (if available).

Sometimes a problem requires a radical solution. In a Blue Peter moment I experimented with trying to make the bell throat **smaller** on the mini-B♭ by inserting a cardboard tube into the bell (about half a loo roll in length). This definitely gives more blowing resistance and improves the tone by bringing it more into focus, allowing the player to play longer phrases and, crucially, with more dynamic expression. I realise this sounds slightly ridiculous, but is it not unlike inserting a kind of mute? Worth a try!

Cases were a **real** problem (and still are) for many mini-B♭ and mini-F horns as often the zips break and the cases themselves deteriorate quite rapidly in older models. This seems to have been improved with some more recent cases, but is there

anything new out there? There are a few different designs for mini-horn cases, most with straps for the backpack option – very popular and practical!

There are surely more questions to be asked:

- Could a smaller bell be found for the mini-B $\flat$  horns to make them less unwieldy?
- Why is the mini-B $\flat$  bell throat taper so much larger than on the mini-F? Is it necessary?
- Who is advising the manufacturers? A discussion between teachers, makers, players and parents is long overdue. Let's start one now!

I would like to thank many friends and colleagues for their views in preparing this article. **MH**



Miles Hewitt has combined a career of specialist horn teaching at Westminster Abbey & Cathedral Choir Schools with playing with many of the UK's orchestras. He was a member of English Touring Opera for many years.

## Horns! You're late!

**Andy Evans** tries to find a solution

As an amateur horn player, how many times have you heard this from a conductor? When I hear it, I usually think, oh dear, I must concentrate a bit more. Then, when the conductor tells us off again after I have been trying hard to concentrate, my hackles rise as I am sure we have been playing perfectly in time. I have been listening hard to the rest of the orchestra (as we are continually told to do) and watching the conductor from time to time, but his beat is wishy washy at the best of times.

However, I was recently listening to a programme on the Berlin Philharmonic's Digital Concert Hall by one of their timpanists, Wieland Welzel, who had some very interesting insights on playing at the back of an orchestra on an instrument where timing is everything. When he hasn't played with the orchestra for a while, he said the hardest thing to get back was remembering how far ahead of the beat he has to play. He said that in one concert, his father sat directly behind him and despaired at how far ahead of the beat his son was playing, but out in the main body of the concert hall his friends said it was fine. He commented that when playing in a new hall, he concentrates first on how far ahead the violin bows move ahead of the sound, and then he works out how far ahead of the beat he has to play for it to be right for the audience.

Sound travels very slowly in comparison to light. Let's assume the horn section is 20 metres from the first violins. If you wait to hear them play in order to correspond perfectly with their sound you will be 0.12 seconds late, at least. It will take 0.06

seconds for their sound to travel to you and 0.06 seconds for your sound to travel back to the conductor. 0.12 seconds doesn't sound much but the human ear can detect an echo 0.1 seconds after the main sound so 0.12 sec is easily in the range of delay which the human ear can perceive. Also, the horn bell points backwards so most of the sound reflects off the back wall delaying the sound even further. This is in marked contrast to the forward-facing sound projection of the trumpets and trombones. It is now easy to see now why the horns often sound behind.

Well, what is the solution? There are a few options. One can always try to play a bit ahead of what you can hear – this is possible in many works with a regular beat. You can try to focus on the movement of the conductor if he has a clear beat (you will be in trouble if they have Gergiev's wobble!) or the first violins' bows (I know this goes against the grain!) and less on playing along with what you can hear, at least from the front of the orchestra. This is because the speed of light is literally thousands of times faster than the speed of sound. Another option is trying to reduce the distance of the horns from the front of the orchestra.

So next time a conductor complains, "Horns! You're late!", rather than cursing the stick-waver, who is probably right, see what you can do to sort the problem. As if the horn wasn't difficult enough without this! **AE**

# Horn Health Matters

with Osteopath **Kelly Haines**

**H**ello fellow horn players. What a pleasure it is to write for you. Let me introduce myself: I'm Kelly Haines, a freelance horn player and an osteopath. When not playing the horn I run my own clinic in the Cotswolds. As an osteopath I treat people of all ages with many different conditions and I have a special interest in performing arts medicine. The types of conditions that people bring to me include tinnitus and headaches, frozen shoulder, spinal and joint pains such as sciatica and tennis elbow, muscular and neurological issues, trauma and injury. The list is long and varied.

This is a new feature of the magazine where you have the opportunity to write in and ask any questions regarding your horn-playing health, and for me to provide some answers and information in order to help keep you fit and healthy and performing at your best.

As restrictions ease and we dust off concert wear in readiness for the diary to hopefully start filling up again, I wanted to start things off by talking about warm-ups. But not the warm-ups we're used to chatting about. This isn't about playing scales, long notes or lip-flexibility exercises but more about warming up our bodies.

Playing the horn is, without question, physically demanding, not only on the facial muscles but on the entire body as we adopt an awkward posture holding a heavy metal object to our face. Horn playing can place stress on the muscles of the hands; the bicep muscles of the arms; the complex shoulder muscles; the network of overlapping neck muscles and joints; upper back and diaphragm, to name but a few. I want to share some tips on how best to prepare for getting back to playing several hours at a time.

I freely admit that my horn practice over the last year of lockdowns has been much more about quality rather than quantity (read into that what you will!) It has been a long time since some of us have done a three-hour rehearsal followed by a concert or sat in the pit of a show night after night. Going straight back into a scenario such as this could leave us with aching shoulders or necks, mid or lower backache or forearm soreness. It's a bit like a marathon runner taking the best part of a year off with maybe just the occasional 5km jog, then attempting the London marathon. It will hurt the next day, to say the least.

Taking some time before picking up the horn to warm up each of the major and minor (see what I did there?) muscle groups will help us become the musical equivalent of "match-fit".

Warm-up exercises will raise the body temperature, which enhances blood flow to the muscles and improves flexibility. It can slightly elevate the heart rate, which helps with overall circulation and aids the respiratory system (another vital system requirement for playing the horn). Muscles with adequate perfusion are less likely to become stiff and sore.



So how can you do this? It doesn't need to take too long. Just think "**BHS**" (this acronym will be VERY familiar to you all I'm sure!):

- **B**reath: Deep, slow breaths in as far as you can, holding the breath for a second or two then slowly breathing out. This is a simple exercise that stretches the ribs and improves lung capacity.
- **H**eat: Try walking a little faster for a few minutes, take the stairs rather than the lift, march on the spot to help elevate the heart rate and get the blood pumping more freely.
- **S**houlders and spine: Shoulder rolls will warm up the upper back and lower neck region, arm swings will wake up the shoulders, seated spinal twists can mobilise the thoracic spine.

This really is a whistle-stop tour. It could be something that is covered in more detail in a future issue. Do write in and let me know what you think of this feature and what topics you would like to read about in the future. Also, send in your article suggestions and questions to me at [osteokel@gmail.com](mailto:osteokel@gmail.com) or via the BHS social media pages.

**KH**



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## Ten Vocalises by Auguste Panseron and Marco Bordogni

Edited by Bob Ashworth and Jeffrey Snedeker

### Review by Andrew Clark

*“Good training in singing being, in general, the best course that could be followed by any student who intends to master any instrument...”* – Louis-François Dauprat (1824)

Some readers will have heard of the Meifred Method, in which these *Vocalises* may be found. Its historical context is discussed in Morley-Pegge’s book *The French Horn* and in Dr Jeffrey Snedeker’s excellent article on the subject in the 1992 *Journal of the Historical Brass Society*. This new edition of the *Vocalises* offers a user-friendly introduction to the historical transition from natural horn to valved horn in Paris.

Meifred’s *Méthode pour le cor*, first published in 1840 (and available on [imslp.org](http://imslp.org) since 2017) is a book of instructions and exercises for playing the valved horn, attempting to incorporate important aspects of the tradition of hand horn playing. As valved instruments were gradually becoming available, some musicians (including Meifred and Berlioz) saw the horn with valves as being its future. Many other musicians preferred the hand horn to the newly invented valved horn, but in this publication, the author sought to show how the valved horn could have just as much nuance and sensitivity as the natural horn, with the advantage of having many improvements in the middle and low register. Meifred acknowledges the compositions (*Vocalises*) of his Paris Conservatoire colleagues, singing professors Auguste Panseron and Marco Bordogni, whose approach will help students to “learn the art of good phrasing, of appropriate breathing... [and] purify taste”.

This new edition (by Ashworth and Snedeker) offers two significant things not available in the original *Méthode*: phrasing and dynamics from Panseron and Bordogni that had been omitted by Mei-

fred, and two separate horn parts – “historical” and “modern”. In the absence of specific valve fingerings and hand-stopping instructions in the original pieces, the “historical” horn part has editorial instruction on how to apply Meifred’s hand stopping philosophy using F horn fingerings and light hand-stopping. The “modern” part contains the phrasing and dynamics. The decision to keep these separate is understandable for reasons of clarity, but a cross reference between the two horn parts is encouraged.

This music has several valuable uses: for intermediate-level and recital performances; for horn lessons where the teacher can appreciate the easy piano accompaniments(!); for enjoying some technically approachable singing-style melodies; but perhaps, most importantly, for learning about a historical way of thinking about how to use the valves in combination with right-hand technique, simultaneously discovering numerous alternative fingerings for a satisfying musical result. The academically minded may wish to learn more by referring to the original publication, but it is much more convenient to have this nicely type-set new sheet music to hand. As a performer and teacher I recommend it. **AC**

## Fifteen beautiful quartet arrangements by Frances Jones

### Review by Dave Murray

I meet up with my good friend Frances Jones regularly for multi-horn weekends and we have all enjoyed her delightful horn arrangements over the years. I’m very pleased that these quartets have now been published and highly recommend them to anyone wishing to add variety and originality to their horn quartet repertoire, whether for the sheer fun and enjoyment, or as performance pieces. They are suitable for players of various abilities. These arrangements for four horns include a wide variety

of gems such as “O for the Wings of a Dove”, “Country Gardens”, “London-derry Air”, “Pizzicato Polka”, “The Pirate King”, “Salut d’Amour”, “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes” and extracts from the *Brandenburg Concertos* and Handel’s *Water Music*. My personal shortlist, though, definitely includes “Rond-o-Mania”, a medley of all four Rondos from Mozart’s horn concertos, skilfully combined, with a tongue-in-cheek nod to Schumann’s *Konzertstück* and “Teddy Bears’ Picnic” too! The “Policeman’s Song” from *The Pirates of Penzance* went down really well with our audience when the horn section of Chesterfield Symphony Orchestra performed it a few years ago.

There are 15 available at the moment. As we move beyond the restrictions of lockdown, we don’t know how our future music making might be affected, but small groups outdoors in the summer-time seem like a safe bet. So why not give your neighbours a treat this summer and serenade them with a few of these great horn quartets? **DM**

*Vocalises* and Frances Jones’s quartets are available from [www.editiondb.com](http://www.editiondb.com)



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# Tom Briggs (1940-2021)

**Paul Sawbridge** tells the story of his life-long friend **Tom Briggs**, a much loved and long-serving member of the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra in Dublin

**T**om Briggs joined the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra in 1962. His final concert, with the now renamed RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, was in September 2005. This marked 43 years of service under nine principal conductors. Initially, he joined as second horn to the legendary Slovenian-born player Victor Malirsh, but within a short time moved to third horn, where he remained for the rest of his career. Tom was always effusive about Victor's playing and his stamina. He once told me that when the Irish Chamber Orchestra was formed, Victor was soloist in all four Mozart concerti in the same concert.

Tom and I were both born in Bolton in 1940. Although we went to different schools, we both started playing the horn at around the same time. We played together in the Bolton, Lancashire and National Youth Orchestras and became friends for life. Tom was in the NYO from 1956 to 1960, and for the last two years was principal horn. The section included Tim Brown, Jim Beck and Julian Baker.

Tom was a fine musician. He started playing the piano at the age of 6 and got his Grade 8 in his early teens. He was also an accomplished organist. I was to benefit from this when, as a guest at my wedding, he stepped in to save the day when the booked organist failed to appear. He started playing the horn aged 14 at school on an old piston-valved horn in F, and was initially self-taught. He subsequently had monthly lessons from Sydney Coulston, principal horn of the BBC Northern Orchestra, who rarely took on private pupils. Throughout this period, and in his early professional career, Tom played on a Boosey and Hawkes "Imperial" double horn. It was only when he moved to third horn in RTÉ he changed to a gold-brass Alexander 103.

In 1959 he went to Oxford University to study physics at Balliol College. In those days, this alone was a significant achievement for a working-class boy from Bolton. He left with an upper second-class degree in 1962. The choice of career in science or



in music was quickly made, and on Sydney Coulston's recommendation he went to RTÉ in Dublin.

One of his RTÉ colleagues noted that Tom never lost his commitment to, or his love of, music. In an interview with The Irish Times before he retired, he described "the pleasure of being part of an orchestra which was growing in stature". They also interviewed his daughter Melanie, who joined the orchestra as a violinist. I know he was immensely proud of that. Whilst he never sought the principal chair with RTÉ he did play principal with the New Irish Chamber Orchestra. He was also a member of Les Amis de la Musique, which regularly recorded wind quintets for RTÉ. On occasion, he also sang tenor with the Dublin Male Voice Choir too.

He still had time and energy to serve on the orchestra committee at RTÉ, and it is clear from tributes made to him that he mentored many young players when they first joined the orchestra. He was a gentleman, a sensitive musician, a consummate professional with no ego and a dry sense of humour. He died peacefully on 25th March 2021 in Our Lady's Hospice, Blackrock, following a long illness. He leaves a wife, Anna, their three children and two grandchildren. **PS**

## A tribute to Tom Briggs

It is rare to find someone who is as enthusiastic on the very last day of their working life as they were on the first, but everyone who knew Tom would agree, he WAS that person! In spite of his great academic prowess and many other talents (builder, decorator, gardener, wine-maker, crossword puzzler extraordinaire, husband, dad etc.) all Tom really wanted to

do was to play the horn. Like Chris Larkin and Derek Taylor, who we also sadly lost recently, Tom retained a pure joy and almost childish delight in his chosen profession and in turn influenced and inspired all those around him.

I was one of those lucky ones. He took me under his

wing on day one when I started in the RTÉ Symphony Orchestra in 1982, pretty much straight out of college, and he and Anna became like a big brother and sister to me. His energy, wit, reliability, kindness and encyclopaedic knowledge of all things French horn were the utter centre of a section that stayed unchanged for 21 years, when he had to almost literally be pushed out of the door. I went to work every day knowing he had my back. The only time he was ever late, he arrived flustered after being knocked off his push bike and under a car, helmet smashed to pieces. He insisted on doing the rehearsal – no arguments.

We loved our chamber music gigs with the Orchestra of St Cecilia as well as big orchestral repertoire. His ability to remember and tell me the complex plot of every opera we ever did ( “now *Il Trovatore* – remember there were two babies... *Così fan Tutti* – well think of it as an early *Carry On* film...” ), plus every bit of phrasing and breathing required in every

piece ever written, made him invaluable as a colleague and totally irreplaceable as a friend.

I remember the hilarious quips, the wonderful drives from Dublin down to the Wexford Festival night after night for years, singing Wagner loudly in the car, great meals out, coffees on the couch in Taney Rise with Anna discussing my latest disastrous date, or looking at the photos of their recent safari trip, his tiny old red Lada car (the butt of many cruel jokes) and the comical sight of this tall slim bloke playing his horn wearing bicycle clips, his “Jesus, Mary and Joseph” exclamation, still in a broad Bolton accent. The most modest of men with not a clue how precious he was to those around him.

RIP Tom. You can play up there with Derek and Chris as long as you like now, no-one will EVER stop you again.

**Lesley Bishop**

## Eric Wetherell (1925-2021)

**Eric Wetherell** has recently passed away at a great age. **Tony Catterick** tells us about Eric's varied career.

**E**ric David Wetherell was born on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1925 in Tynemouth in the north east of England. His father worked for Welfare for the Blind and was an amateur singer, and his mother was an amateur pianist. The family moved to Carlisle and Eric became a member of Carlisle Boys' Grammar School. He began playing the piano and a trumpet given to him by his dad at school, but soon changed to a piston-valve Boosey French horn with an F crook. He was basically self-taught but had some lessons from a bandsman called Smith. After leaving school in 1943 aged 18, he won a place at Queen's College at Oxford University, reading music, where he obtained both BA and BMus degrees. His poor eyesight meant that, mercifully, he was unfit for military service during the final two years of the Second World War.

He began to have private horn lessons with Norman Del Mar, who was second horn of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the time, and Eric bought a Raoux French horn from him too, for £20. Eric was then a horn student at the Royal College of Music with Frank Probyn, fourth horn of the RPO, who had also been Del Mar's teacher before the war. He now used an Alexander 103 double horn and soon began to pick up professional work. He was appointed fifth horn of the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1949. Eric had the distinction of playing the cow-horn, specially made by Boosey and Hawkes



for the occasion, at the first English performance of Benjamin Britten's *Spring Symphony*, at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in October 1950. In 1951 Eric joined the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra as third horn, but only stayed for one year before a severe ear infection caused him to cease playing for seven years.

The hiatus between leaving Bournemouth and freelancing again in London in the late 1950s was taken up by being the director of music at Kendal Parish Church, and about a year teaching music in a grammar school – something he vowed never to do again! He picked up horn work again in 1957 as a freelancer, now using a Kruspe compensating double horn, but decided in 1960, aged 35, to stop playing and think about a different career. He chose conducting and worked as a repetiteur at the Royal

Opera House in August 1960. He moved on to Welsh National Opera from 1963, then worked as a senior BBC music producer based in Bristol, and finally became conductor of the BBC Northern Ireland Orchestra in Belfast. Eric was a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and became a member of the Royal Society of Musicians in 2001.

Although Eric's career as a horn player was cut short due to a serious mastoid problem, he is still remembered as a fine and reliable performer. Eric died in a nursing home on 31st January 2021, aged 95. We at the British Horn Society extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends at this sad loss. **TC**

## Ian Lambert (1930-2021)

**Ian Lambert**, a long-serving second and fourth horn player in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, has recently died. **Tony Catterick** relates Ian's life and career.

**I**an Kenneth Lambert was born on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1930 in Rotherham, Yorkshire. He started learning the piano as a child and attended Rotherham Grammar School from the age of 11. After leaving school in 1946, he enlisted as a Bandboy in The Black Watch regiment band and was paid 15 shillings (75p), per week. He was given a piston-valve French horn with an F crook and was ordered by the Bandmaster, in the uniquely army way, to teach himself until, aged 18, he went to the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall in London for one year, to study with Alfred Cursue, fourth horn of the Philharmonia Orchestra. Alf immediately put him onto a brand-new army silver-plated Boosey and Hawkes "Imperial" double horn. He went to Germany with the band and bought an Alexander 103 double for £50.

After buying himself out of the army in 1954, he studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music with Sydney Coulston, principal horn of the BBC Northern Orchestra, as it was then called. After one year he was appointed second horn in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra from 1956 to 1973, where he played a very heavy horn made in Hamburg, Germany by Harald Wetzell. This instrument apparently had an enormously wide bell throat. The section in 1956 was Bob Gray, Ian, Bill Thompson and Billy Bull. In his early days in Glasgow, he and the BBCSSO's later principal horn, Farquharson Cousins, used to occasionally play on natural horns for the Classical repertoire. Early English pioneers, perhaps, of the later renaissance of period instrument use? In Glasgow, Ian taught the hand-horn at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama from 1989 to 1993 and owned an Antoine Courtois sauterelle piston-horn with detachable valves. Ian moved to play fourth horn in 1973 and bought himself a Holton 180 double horn and a Kruspe double before retiring in 1994 after 38 years with the BBC. In a letter to me in 1995, Ian wrote this wonderful thought: "It's odd

*how I played Schumann's Konzertstück and the fourth horn solo in Beethoven 9 for the first time when I was over 60!"*

Ian was much liked and respected for his modesty, warmth, humility and skill in equal measure, and he sadly passed away this April aged 90.

We at the BHS send our sincere condolences to his wife Margaret and their family. **TC**



# Andrew McGavin (1922-2021)

**Andrew McGavin**, one of the horn giants of the UK film, TV, commercial and orchestral scene in London for nearly 50 years, has left us at a great age. **Tony Catterick** attempts to summarise Andy's distinguished life and career.

**A**ndrew James McGavin was born on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1922 in Southampton, the youngest of seven children. His father, a well-known cornet player and multi-instrumentalist, was the Chief Officer and Bandmaster of the Training Ship Mercury, based at nearby Hamble in Hampshire. Andrew attended Hamble Primary School before moving to the school on the TS Mercury where he was a dayboy until January 1934 and then a boarder. In 1935 he started playing a cornet and in 1937, aged 15, joined the Grenadier Guards as a Bandboy and was immediately transferred to a Boosey & Hawkes piston-valve French horn with an F crook. His father paid for him to have private lessons in London with Michael Graydon, third horn of the London Symphony Orchestra, and aged 18, Andy was promoted to Principal Horn in the Grenadier Guards Band. He was able to have some lessons with Frank Probyn at the Royal College of Music in London, bought a Lehmann compensating horn and, aged 19, played second horn to Dennis Brain when they were both in military uniform.

Andy moved on to a B&H "Imperial" double horn and, although amazingly still in the army, worked for the BBC Theatre Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra and the International Symphony Orchestra, all during the war. From 1945, his outside work in London flourished with the New Symphony Orchestra, opera seasons, and with the BBC's Variety, Revue, Dance Band and Show Band orchestras. In 1948 Andy left the army and was appointed third horn of the London Symphony Orchestra alongside his great friend, the principal horn John Burden. The two young men stayed until 1955 when there was a dispute with the management, and, alongside other senior members, resigned and formed the Sinfonia of London. This elite group of freelance musicians virtually dominated music for films over the next two decades, alongside the Independent Television Companies Association, making fondly remembered series like *Robin Hood*, *William Tell*, *Ivanhoe*, *The Saint*, *Danger Man* – the list goes on and on during this golden era. Elstree Studios was allegedly nicknamed Fort Knox because of all the work and money earned there!

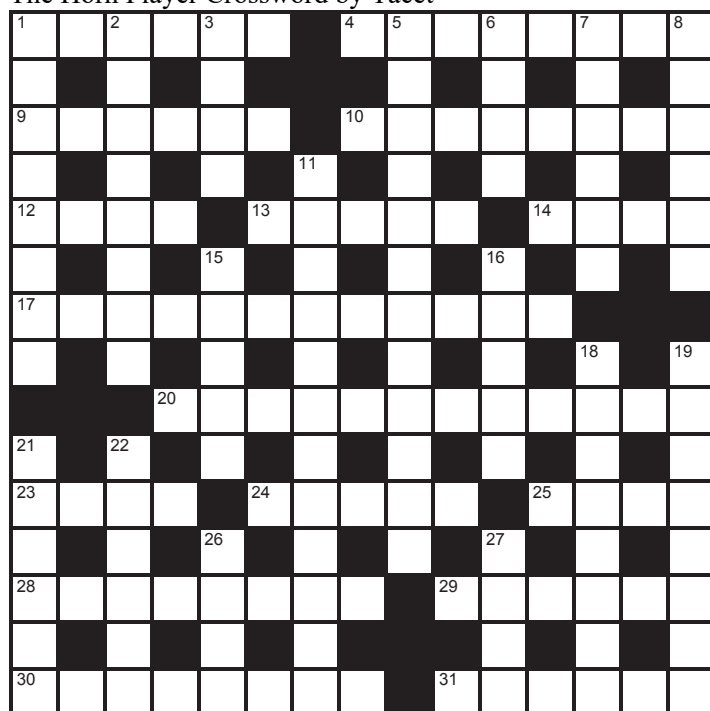
The British film industry was flourishing, and John and Andy, alongside Sim Saville on second and Jim Burditt on fourth, were the regular horn quartet. One film of particular interest to horn players worldwide is *633 Squadron* with Ron Goodwin's dramatic music, especially its rumbustious and heroic horn theme – always a delight to play and hear! In 1955 Andy joined the Philharmonia Orchestra as fifth horn alongside Dennis Brain, a memorable experience, he always said. He remained with them until 1973, always managing to continue his very busy freelance life in studios throughout those years, playing principal horn in the BBC Radio Orchestra, touring with Frank Sinatra and backing pop sessions until he retired in 1988, still playing marvellously well.



Andy always liked Alexander horns and had a series of model 103 double horns, a B♭/F alto compensating horn and his best horn, a model 107 B♭/F alto which used to ring out! His clear, open and full sound was always faultless, and he had great charm, modesty and, right up to his death, retained an amazing memory. In 2007, he was made an Honorary Member of the British Horn Society at the Royal Academy of Music and, on that same day, at my invitation, I had the great thrill of interviewing both him and John Burden together in front of a large audience. We listened to their memories and stories of their long careers producing wonderful horn sounds for some of the classics of the cinema, TV, radio and big horn-featured LP's like *Adventure* for Decca by Ron Goodwin. The first track is Ron's own masterpiece, *633 Squadron*, of course, with its four sizzling Alexander top A's. Do please beg, borrow or steal a copy of this horn gem. You won't regret it!

Having lost his wife Daphne several years ago, Andy died aged 98 on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021, two days before what would have been Dennis Brain's centenary. Both men were hugely respected and liked by all. **TC**

## The Horn Player Crossword by Tacet



## Across

- 1 Blimey! Take home sweet icy treat (6)  
 4 Old keyboard instrument playing in septet (8)  
 9 Fiddle with French wine 10 litre boxed (6)  
 10 Jazzy hip person rejects square old sailor's jig (8)  
 12 One of Stones to do bop? (4)  
 13 Large version of 9, device Lloyd's partly use (5)  
 14 Primarily harmonious article regularly plucked (4)  
 17 Slip knee clog dancing with percussion instrument (12)  
 20 Top brass? The opposite, gypsy tucked into ale and steak (4,8)  
 23 Leading chef's butter and flour mixture (4)  
 24 Avoid getting out what conductor requires (5)  
 25 Game for sweet sucker? (4)  
 28 Stork with new kids in broadcasts (8)  
 29 Was sailor sounding vulgar? (6)  
 30 Elusive dun harts presenting difficult problems (4,4)  
 31 Team member serves for each set being held (6)

## Down

- 1 Ended in jail for reporting (8)  
 2 Murphy maybe given cheer with short cut (4,4)  
 3 Thrilling picture seen getting out of rut banged up? (4)  
 5 Penelope's pro mingling being one who likes folk (6,6)  
 6 Double negative is what's best unsaid (2-2)  
 7 First class women get brown round SE Asia island (6)

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....

Email (optional)\*

Please send solution with name and address to arrive by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to:

The Horn Player Crossword, 23 Lane Ings, Marsden, Huddersfield HD7 6JP. Correct solutions received by the closing date will be entered in the prize draw for a gift token. A photocopy is acceptable, or scan to

[candslev@gmail.com](mailto:candslev@gmail.com)

All contact details kept confidential.

\* Not required if I already have it – CL.

- 8 Give immunity to former politician taking ecstasy over time (6)  
 11 You'd find Federer with this kit earns cent amazingly (6,6)  
 15 Seabirds observed as Usk flows (5)  
 16 With lots of jewellery heard of here's crowbar! (5)  
 18 Hustle mayor to opening of widened outer ring road? (8)  
 19 Judge DVD machine possibly (8)  
 21 Leave window dressing? This may come before all (6)  
 22 Goose up in the attic room, initially it's plucked (6)  
 26 Hooter in Wabash or Nashville (4)  
 27 Odd ones being dead as doornail may become vocal (4)

## Solution to previous puzzle



Correct solutions were received from: Bob Ashworth, Edward Besly, Steve Burnby, Kate Coles, Lizzie Faulkner, Hazel Fox, Paul Fox, Bruce Hebblewhite, Ronan Heffer, Fiona Hughes, Marian Kirton, Andrew Jones, David Lowe, Robert Parker, Chris Pople, Bill Salaman, Charles Smith, Andrew Stockall, Sam Wood and David Woodgates. There were 1 or 2 incorrect answers to 33 down and 23/26 across. Winner of the prize draw is Bob Ashworth of Leeds.

**Notes:** Across: 1/36 Cryptic defn., 6/29 Blue + ('Desperate') Dan + first letters, 10 har(p) in anag., 17 anag. + ENT in cot, 21 the ta; ref. St Paul in NT, 23/26 anag., 24/14 anag., 35 homophoe ie Walt's, 37 lute with M for L, 38 anag.. Down: 1 ut rev. + lip, 2 hidden, 3 anag. incl. m, 4 R + a + GS, 5 hidden, 7 anag., 8 elan(d), 9 anag. incl. bu(st) & lit., 13 (U)kip, 15 LP incl. e.a, 16 hidden, 17 cod + a, 18 woman less wo(e), 19 anag. incl. que(asy), 20 2 mngs., 22 hidden, 25 nut rev., 27 ecla(irs) + t, 28 anag. incl. n, 30 2 mngs., 31 untie with t,i rev., 32 E + (s)ight, 33 cryptic def., 34 homophone ugly.



England's Finest

