

Meridian

A Touch of France
Anna Hashimoto - Clarinet, Daniel Smith - Piano

CDE 84581

Meridian

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CDE 84581 TT 7time'53"



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A Touch of France

Donato Lovreglio (revisione Alamiro Giampieri)

[1] Fantasia da Concerto 11:01

Arthur Benjamin

[2] Le Tombeau de Ravel (Valse-Caprices) 13:32

Claude Debussy

[3] Première Rhapsodie 8:14

Francis Poulenc Sonata for Clarinet and Piano

[4] Allegro tristamente 5:56

[5] Romanza 5:20

[6] Allegro con fuoco 3:26

Camille Saint-Saëns Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, op.167

[7] Allegretto 4:46

[8] Allegro animato 2:21

[9] Lento 4:31

[10] Molto allegro 5:14

Claude Debussy

[11] Petite Pièce 1:20

Ernesto Cavallini

[12] Carnevale di Venezia 7:43

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Lovreglio
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Donato Lovreglio (1841-1907) *Concert Fantasy on Verdi's 'La Traviata' (1865)* rev. Giampieri

Donato Lovreglio lived in a period where Italian operas were always in demand, and therefore instrumental paraphrases and transcriptions became popular. As a flautist Lovreglio wrote many such fantasies and variations for his own instrument, but writes equally flamboyantly for the clarinet! This *Fantasy* comes from Verdi's famous opera *La Traviata*, based on a tragic novel by Dumas set in Paris where a man falls in love with a courtesan who eventually dies from tuberculosis. All the favourite arias and operatic themes have been combined with dazzling variations, and the edition used here has been revised by Alamiro Giampieri, another Italian composer famous for paraphrases, such as his variations on *Carnival of Venice*, also for clarinet.

Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960) *Le Tombeau de Ravel (1936)*

Australian composer and pianist Arthur Benjamin studied at the Royal College of Music in London with the English composer Stanford. A decade later he became a piano professor at the same college, Benjamin Britten being amongst his pupils. It was as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music that he travelled to the West Indies and wrote his best known piece *Jamaican Rhumba*, but is of a totally different character to this clarinet work. Benjamin held Ravel's music in high esteem, and the title of this piece comes from the French composer's suite *Tombeau de Couperin*. The music base comes from Ravel's *Valses Nobles and Sentimentales*, a piano suite consisting eight varied waltzes. Benjamin too uses eight parts in this work, although the waltzes only number six sandwiched by an introduction and finale. Ravel's *Valses* in fact relate back to Schubert's collections of *Valses Nobles* and *Valses Sentimentales*, so this seemingly modern work has far older roots.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) *Première Rhapsodie (1910)*

This is one of the famous of the Paris Conservatoire 'concours' pieces, written by different composers each year specifically to test the students' abilities. The system has given birth to many fantastic showpieces for wind instruments, by composers such as Fauré, Widor, Jolivet, Messiaen and Bozza. Perhaps this *Première Rhapsodie* is of a slightly different character from the typical slow-fast virtuoso style; full of quiet lyrical melodies and atmospheric harmonies, the music explores a whole range of subtle colours and characters, masking the 'test' aspect of the piece and instead creating a work that has become core repertoire for clarinet. There is no second *rhapsodie*, however, along with his *Petite Pièce*, Debussy later orchestrated both his clarinet works.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) *Sonata* (1962)

Poulenc was a prolific writer for wind instruments, and greatly increased their chamber music repertoire with works like the *piano and wind sextet* and the *sonata for horn, trumpet and trombone*. He was a member of *Les Six*, who were six French composers reacting against Wagnerian Expressionism and Impressionist music, instead opting for lighter and more frivolous music. Like the Saint-Saëns this sonata was written towards the end of his life. The first two movements are quite sinister and melancholic in character, followed by a vibrant and joyous finale. Poulenc died of heart failure a few months before the first performance by Benny Goodman and Leonard Bernstein, and since the work was published after his death editors have not always agreed on some of the notes. This follows the Chester edition, by whom Poulenc originally intended the sonata to be published.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) *Sonata* (1921)

An unparalleled pianist as well as organist, conductor and even philosopher and astronomer, Saint-Saëns showed great promise both musically and academically from early years, his reputation attracting friends such as Franz Liszt who thought him to be the greatest organist, and Hector Berlioz, who once said Saint-Saëns “knows everything, but lacks inexperience”. He also made enemies with musicians in his promotion of contemporary French music, and famously did not like Debussy's music. Towards the end of his life he became more conservative, and this clarinet sonata is one of the three wind sonatas he wrote in the last year of his life. Although deceptively simple and light, the piece has an underlying sorrow at its heart, perhaps foreshadowing his death by pneumonia.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) *Petite Pièce* (1910)

Written around the same time as his *rhapsodie*, originally this little piece was called *Morceau à déchiffrer pour le concours de clarinette de 1910*; a sight-reading test for the conservatoire students. It is probably one of Debussy's shortest chamber works, and features dotted rhythms in a charming manner.

Ernesto Cavallini (1807-1874) *Carnival of Venice for Eb clarinet*

The Carnival of Venice is a yearly festival dating from the 13th century, and no-one knows who composed the famous folk tune associated with it. Over the centuries many variations and embellishments have been added to it, and fantasias have been composed by countless musicians from Paganini on violin to Frosini on accordion! For clarinet, Frenchman Paul Jean. Jean's version may be the favourite, however this Cavallini is special in that it is for the smaller Eb clarinet. Cavallini himself was a legendary clarinetist in La Scala, and around the 19th century solos on the Eb clarinet were more common. This little piece shows off the versatility of the instrument in all registers, and brings out the cheeky quality of the little clarinet, well suited to the tune itself.



Programme notes by Anna Hashimoto

Anna Hashimoto made her Barbican Hall debut in December 2004 at the age of fifteen, playing Weber's Concertino with the English Chamber Orchestra. She has since been invited regularly as a soloist with the orchestra, most recently under the baton of Vladimir Ashkenazy. She won the Japan Clarinet Society's 'Young Clarinetists Competition' where she was also awarded all three special prizes, and the following year was a prizewinner and the youngest competitor of the Japan Clarinet Competition. In October 2009 Anna was the highest prize winner at the 7th International Clarinet Competition in Carlinio (Udine), Italy.

Anna has appeared at London's Wigmore Hall on numerous occasions playing solo and chamber music. She has also played in the Cadogan Hall, South Bank Centre and Buckingham Palace, as well as France, Spain and Italy.

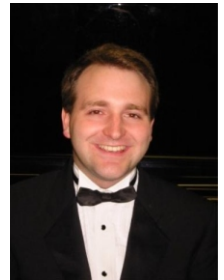
At the 'International Clarinet Fest 2005' she had the honour of giving the Japanese Première and a live broadcasting of Michael Daugherty's new clarinet concerto 'Brooklyn Bridge'.

In 2006 she performed Mozart Clarinet Concerto four times, including a performance with the Japan Chamber Orchestra, and the English Chamber Orchestra. Anna gave a highly acclaimed performance of Jean Francaix's Concerto at LSO St Luke's in March 2007. Other performances include Weber, Finzi and Spohr concertos with orchestras such as the London Pro Arte Orchestra, Kyushu Symphony Orchestra and Japan Philharmonic Orchestra. She gave sold-out recitals at Tokyo's Bunka Kaikan and Kioi Hall in 2008. As a chamber musician she has collaborated with Michael Collins, Leon McCawley, Tom Poster, and the Alberni Quartet.

Anna was a student at the Royal College of Music Junior Department and at the Purcell School and is now at the Royal Academy of Music under a full Associated Board Scholarship, where she continues to study with world-renowned soloist Michael Collins. Anna plays on Peter Eaton 'International' clarinets and basset clarinet. For more information please visit www.annahashimoto.com

Daniel Smith is one of the UK's most sought-after duo partners and accompanists. He has given concerts all over the world as both soloist and accompanist and has one of the fullest diaries of anyone of his generation. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music where he won the Harold Craxton and Max Pirani prizes for Chamber Music and others for his all-round musical ability. His teachers were Piers Lane, Ruth Nye and Vanessa Latache. His extensive concerto repertoire, featuring works by Rachmaninov, Beethoven, Gershwin, Ravel and Mozart, has led to many concerto performances in the UK and around Europe, including the Royal Festival Hall, London, various theatres in Cataluña, Spain, and San Stefano al Ponte, Florence.

Accompaniment and chamber music are a major part of Daniel's life and he is currently staff accompanist at the Purcell School leading to concerts for Prince Charles and at the Wigmore Hall. He also regularly accompanies at the Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music and for Philharmonia Orchestra and South Bank Sinfonia auditions. Daniel is often official accompanist on summer music courses, including Keshet Eilon, Israel and the Ciacconna course, UK.



Daniel has performed on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio Ulster as part of the Belfast Festival, Northern Ireland, and appeared in the televised finals of BBC Young Musician of the Year 1996 as soloist and regularly since then as accompanist. In September 2003 he played as Orchestral pianist with the Philharmonia Orchestra. He has also recorded a number of Cds.