

In association with
TRINITY
college of music

Oboe
classics
CC2010



Recording *Summer is icumen in* at Trinity College of Music, July 16th 2004.
Left to Right: Jenni Britton, Victoria Usher, Alexa Walters, Madelaine Davies,
Emma Gourlay, Uchenna Ngwe, Julia White, Jeremy Polmear



MUSIC FOR BEGINNER OBOISTS
READY
STEADY
BLOW!

READY STEADY BLOW!

- 1 **Henry VIII**
Pastime with good company (2) 0:47
(Jenni Britton, Marcus Andrews, Amy Kelly)
- 2 **Purcell** *Air* (3) 1:01
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 3 **Wedgwood** *Cat Walk* (2) 1:03
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 4 **Trad** *Comin' round the Mountain* (2) 0:33
(Jenni Britton, Uchenna Ngwe)
- 5 **Mozart** *La ci Darem* (4) 0:56
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 6 **Gershwin** *I got Rhythm* (3) 1:13
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 7 **Grieg** *Piece II* (3) 2:02
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 8 **Williams** *Hedwig's Theme* (4) 1:29
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 9 **Rose** *Calypso* (3) 0:48
(Jenni Britton, Amy Kelly)
- 10 **Head** *A Song of the Hills* (3) 2:26
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 11 **Trad** *Summer is icumen in* (2) 0:59
(Jenni Britton, Victoria Usher, Alexa Walters, Madelaine Davies, Emma Gourlay, Uchenna Ngwe, Julia White, Jeremy Polmear)
- 12 **Chédeville** *Musette* (3) 1:17
(Jenni Britton, Marcus Andrews, Jeremy Polmear)
- 13 **Byrd**, *John Come Kiss me Now* (2) 0:28
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 14 **Parker** *Sunday Morning* (3) 1:33
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)

- 15 **Richardson** *Chi-Chi's dance* (3) 0:49
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 16 **Arlen** *Somewhere over the Rainbow* (3) 2:05
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 17 **Harris** *Tango* (3) 0:46
(Jenni Britton, Amy Kelly)
- 18 **Wedgwood** *Easy Tiger* (1) 1:13
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 19 **Wastall** *Corumbá* (0) 0:32
(Jenni Britton, Julia White, Amy Kelly)
- 20 **Parker** *Freeway* (3) 1:21
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 21 **Schumann** *First Loss* (3) 1:41
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 22 **Trad** *Polish Folk Tune* (1) 0:41
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 23 **Ellerton** *Looking Glass World* (3) 1:57
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)

- 24 **Trad** *London's Burning* (1) 0:32
(Jenni Britton, Julia White, Uchenna Ngwe)
- 25 **Hook** *Minuetto* (1) 0:38
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 26 **Chédeville** *Tambourin* (2) 0:39
(Jenni Britton, Amy Kelly)
- 27 **Czerny** *Rise and Shine!* (0) 0:35
(Alex Birchall, Marcus Andrews)
- 28 **Barratt** *Round Dance* (0) 0:31
(Jenni Britton, Marcus Andrews)
- 29 **Wedgwood** *Hot Chilli* (1) 1:11
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 30 **Handel** *Air* (3) 2:18
(Julia White, Marcus Andrews)
- 31 **Wedgwood** *Dragonfly* (2) 1:24
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 32 **Wedgwood** *Wrap it up* (0) 1:02
(Uchenna Ngwe, Philip Cornwell)
- 33 **Trad** *Good Night, Ladies* (0) 0:36
(Jenni Britton, Uchenna Ngwe)

Tracks without Oboe Part:

- 34 **Henry VIII** *Pastime with good company* 0:58
- 35 **Purcell** *Air* 1:08
- 36 **Wedgwood** *Cat Walk* 1:09
- 37 **Mozart** *La ci Darem* 1:09
- 38 **Gershwin** *I got Rhythm* 1:22
- 39 **Grieg** *Piece II* 2:09
- 40 **Williams** *Hedwig's Theme* 1:39
- 41 **Head** *A Song of the Hills* 2:39
- 42 **Chédeville** *Musette* 1:26
- 43 **Byrd**, *John Come Kiss me Now* 0:40
- 44 **Parker** *Sunday Morning* 1:43
- 45 **Richardson** *Chi-Chi's dance* 0:58
- 46 **Arlen** *Somewhere over the Rainbow* 2:15
- 47 **Wedgwood** *Easy Tiger* 1:22
- 48 **Wastall** *Corumbá* (ob 2 missing) 0:42
- 49 **Wastall** *Corumbá* (ob 1 missing) 0:43
- 50 **Parker** *Freeway* 1:28
- 51 **Schumann** *First Loss* 1:44
- 52 **Trad** *Polish Folk Tune* 0:53
- 53 **Ellerton** *Looking Glass World* 2:04
- 54 **Hook** *Minuetto* 0:52
- 55 **Czerny** *Rise and Shine* 0:46
- 56 **Barratt** *Round Dance* 0:41
- 57 **Wedgwood** *Hot Chilli* 1:19
- 58 **Handel** *Air* 2:17
- 59 **Wedgwood** *Dragonfly* 1:33
- 60 **Wedgwood** *Wrap it up* 1:11

Total Time

75:54

The number after the title indicates the approximate Grade of the piece

All count-ins by Marcus, except for *Freeway* (Philip), *Comin' round the Mountain* and *Good Night, Ladies* (Julia)



Oboe
classics

READY STEADY BLOW!

This CD is recorded by the Graduate students of Trinity College of Music 2004. At the time of the recording they had just finished their post-Graduate Diploma in performing on the oboe. Jeremy Polmear asked them about their oboe careers so far.

JENNI BRITTON

"As far back as I can remember there was a recorder group in our village that played in the church at the Sunday service. When I was very young – maybe only four – I borrowed my brother's recorder and used the Abracadabra recorder book to teach myself to play, and to read music. I wanted to play all the time so I didn't bother learning about rests!

"My Mum got me started on the oboe. A teacher at school told her I had talent, and there was a music teacher there who taught flute, oboe and clarinet. My Mum liked the sound of the oboe, and thought



Jenni Britton

everyone else played flute and clarinet, so my parents bought me a third hand oboe.

"My High School had an orchestra and a jazz band where I played. I realised that I really liked the buzz it gave me, the adrenaline, the risk. You worked hard for something, and it might go wrong – but when it went right it was a great feeling. My Upper School didn't have an orchestra, but I went to the Saturday morning sessions organised by Leicestershire Arts.

"I did 'A' levels in English and German as well as Music, but it was music I wanted to do. When I was fifteen I got a knock when someone told me that I wouldn't make it to Music College, that I had 'no musicality' – I knew I could, and I was determined to prove it to myself and to them. And I'm glad I did. College has been the best time of my life – to be independent, to make really good friends. The atmosphere here at Trinity has given me self-confidence; I feel that people here are for me rather than against me.

"It was good to record *Summer is icumen* in with lots of other oboists. You don't normally get so many all in one room! And having bongos with the *Calypto* and *Tango* really helped to bring out the feel of those pieces.

"I like all sorts of music, but especially fast music. I like to push myself, to see how fast I can get my fingers to move. It's also a stress reliever – you are so busy just going for it you don't have time to think!



"Now that I've finished my course I'm looking for work. I shall do some teaching, and I am auditioning for orchestral jobs in Germany. I really want to perform, but I expect to do many different things in the course of my life."

JULIA WHITE



Julia White

"I played the recorder and piano in my Primary School; my Mum had been a school teacher and also taught the piano. When I was eleven, I wanted to learn an orchestral instrument. I was interested in the viola and the oboe, and was happy to do either, but my Dad particularly liked the sound of the oboe, and the fact that it gave the 'A' to the orchestra.

"It wasn't all plain sailing – my first report said 'Julia is not a natural oboist', which rather annoyed me – but my teacher encouraged me to listen to famous oboists, and the school had a good music department.

"I lived in Oxfordshire, which has very good orchestras; if you pass an audition you can do holiday courses and summer tours. I played in the Senior Schools Orchestra and the County Youth Orchestra, and we toured in Europe and gave lots of concerts. I got to know some great orchestral music; I remember especially Sibelius' 2nd Symphony, and playing the cor anglais in



Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*.

"But no-one suggested I go to music college, so after 'A' levels I did Modern History and English at Oxford. I played the oboe in orchestras a lot, too; and I did consider going to music college but didn't pluck up the courage – I thought you had to be a child prodigy like Mozart to get in – so after university I worked for a charity,

in a museum, and at the Oxford University Counselling Service.

"The other people working there were very artistic, always going to concerts, and they seemed impressed by me; eventually I got to the point where I knew that despite my fears of not being good enough, music was what I loved, and I had to try, Mozart or no Mozart.

"So I did two years part time at Birmingham Conservatoire, then one year at Trinity, then – having come late to music I want to do things properly – two more years here at Trinity part time, which I am halfway through.

"I really enjoyed playing *Somewhere over the Rainbow*, with its heart on its sleeve, and a spirit of hopefulness. And the Michael Head piece too - I love English oboe music, my all-time favourite is Benjamin Britten's *Phantasy Quartet* for oboe and strings. I also liked Cimeon's piece because it's new and I could play it without feeling weighed down by traditions.

"When I leave Trinity I want to play – orchestral playing of some kind, and opera and ballet; I'd love to play chamber music too. I'd also like to teach adults, because of my own experience as a late starter."

ALEX BIRCHALL

"I played the recorder in Primary school, and my recorder teacher said to my Mum that I was good and should play an orchestral instrument like the oboe or the french horn because they weren't very common. I watched 'Peter and the Wolf', where the oboe is the duck and the horns are the wolf. I decided I'd rather be the duck, even though it gets eaten! I liked the comical aspect.

"I started the oboe in Senior school. They had good music, I played oboe in the orchestra, flute and sax in the jazz band, kept up the recorder, and sang in choirs.

"I'm from Lancashire, and they have good County



Alex Birchall

music there, they put a lot of money into it. At one point they even paid for our travel to get to rehearsals, but that got cut. I played in the Lancashire Students Concert Band, we had Saturday rehearsals and then did tours of Europe and the US, and made CDs. They were a great bunch of people, and they also pushed my standard up, and first started me with the idea of doing the oboe professionally.

"I was also good at maths, but by 'A' levels I was bored with it, so I auditioned for various music colleges. Even at the audition, I noticed people at Trinity were friendlier than at the other colleges, so here I am.

"I had a problem at college when I tore a ligament doing Martial Arts, and was off playing for several months. I'm now at the end of my fifth year.



"The recording was really good fun, a good experience. *Hedwig's Theme* was my favourite; such a contrast to the other pieces. It was lovely playing with Marcus – I've played with him before – he's a fantastic pianist.

"I'm now looking for work. I've got three days' teaching lined up, starting in September – flute and clarinet with some oboe, and I'll see what playing I can get, by doing orchestra auditions and working with chamber music groups such as an oboe/bassoon/piano trio, and an oboe trio.

"I'm also a Black Belt in Ju-Jitsu, and have taught for the World Ju-Jitsu Federation, so if the music dries up I can always go back to that!"

UCHENNA NGWE



Uchenna Ngwe

"I first heard music through my Dad's record collection. This was mainly mainstream jazz – I remember listening to Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald – but he also had some classical music too, big Romantic pieces like the Grieg and Schumann Piano Concertos.

"My parents always played classical music on Sundays – I'm not sure why – and I've always enjoyed anything to do with music of any type.

"When I was very young I was given a cheap little electronic keyboard with numbers you press to

make tunes – the kind of thing that normally lasts about a month – but I learned to use it, and I realised that the tunes could be played on the piano.

“One day in school I was picking out these tunes when the Head Teacher heard me and said I should have lessons. My Mum never pushed me, but she always tried to fix things for me if I expressed an interest. I went to the Saturday morning school in Haringey in London. I was happy to try out any instrument, including recorder, violin, and especially oboe and cello. I also played bass guitar at school in a girl band.

“When I was about thirteen, my Head of Music saw me looking at a notice about a junior Music School, and suggested I try for it. I did, but I noticed that there was nowhere to sit, and nobody smiled! I also tried Junior Trinity, where people seemed to be having fun. So I came here, and studied oboe and cello; and also first met Phil Cornwell, who is playing piano with me on this CD.

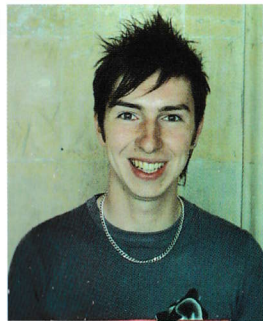
“I did ‘A’ levels, but realised that I really wanted to play the oboe, so I came to Trinity. It may sound from all this that I’m very active, but I can be lazy too – I rely on what I know to get me through! But I had to practise more at Trinity, and got tendonitis in my first year, and was off for six weeks.

“This CD was a good thing to finish College with. I especially liked *Freeway*, with its little jazz solo in the middle. And I liked the wistful pieces like *Dragonfly*, which remind me of Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan. I like the oboe as a singing instrument.



“I’m currently teaching three and a half days, and I’m a college Student Security Officer, which helps to pay my way; in September I’ve got four days teaching lined up, and I want to play as much as I can, not just in one orchestra but freelance.”

To read how some professional oboists got started on the oboe, go to www.oboeclassics.com and follow the 'More Details' link for this CD.



Cimeon Ellerton

CIMEON ELLERTON

is a composer, saxophonist and producer in his 4th year at Trinity, who took up the challenge of writing a Grade 3-level piece especially for this CD – 'Looking Glass World'.

“I’ve always liked the oboe – I like the fluid sound you hear when composers such as Bach wrote for it. I like the horrible sound it can make too! There’s one bit in *Looking Glass World* that mustn’t sound too beautiful.

“Writing a piece especially for beginners was fine. There is always a framework for composing any piece – a standard or a style – it’s never a free choice. I’m interested to see what I can do within a framework, rather than just go off to a place of my own where I do what I like but nobody cares.”

MUSIC FOR BEGINNER OBOISTS
**READY
STEADY
BLOW!**

THE MUSIC AND THE PERFORMERS

by Jeremy Polmear

The main purpose of this CD is to show that there is a wealth of good music, in many styles, available to the oboe beginner. These pieces are within the general Grade 3 level, and some of them can be played after just a few lessons, so that learning the oboe can be a musical experience right from the beginning. The tracks are marked 0 to 3, to indicate their general technical level, where 0 indicates a pre-Grade 1 piece.

There are two exceptions to the Grade 3 limit – Mozart’s *La ci Darem* (Grade 4), because it points the way to a new world of musical expression, and *Hedwig’s Theme* from Harry Potter, because, as one teacher put it, it is by far the nicest way to learn the bottom two notes on the oboe.

The selection was made in consultation with a number of teachers. I asked them which pieces their pupils responded to with enthusiasm. I soon noticed the same pieces being mentioned time and again. Some pieces were liked by some teachers and not by others, and I added in my own preferences, and take full responsibility for the final choice.



It was also necessary to stick to a smallish number of books or tutors, so that the pupil is not faced with a large music bill. Where only one piece has been included from a particular collection, it always means that there are other equally good pieces in that book. Exclusion of a book of pieces does not mean it is not good. Attention was also paid to the various exam syllabuses for Grades 1 to 3; some of these pieces appear there, some do not.

The Music can be found in the following books:

- Abracadabra Oboe**, Helen McKean, A & C Black: *Comin' round the Mountain, Good Night Ladies, London's Burning, Summer is icumen in*
- All Jazzed Up**, Jim Parker, Brass Wind Publications: *Freeway, I got Rhythm, Somewhere over the Rainbow, Sunday Morning*
- Bravo!** Carol Barratt, Boosey and Hawkes: *Rise and Shine, Round Dance*
- 80 Graded Studies for Oboe**, John Davies & Paul Harris, Faber Music: *Tango*
- First Book of Descant/Soprano Recorder Solos**, Walter Bergmann, Faber Music: *Musette*
- First Book of Oboe Solos**, Janet Craxton & Alan Richardson, Faber Music: *Chi-Chi's Dance, John come Kiss me Now, Polish Folk Tune*
- Grieg – Four Pieces**, Chester Music: *Grieg Piece II*
- Handel Air and Rondo**, Chester Music: *Handel Air*
- Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets** (violin/piano version), John Williams, IMP: *Hedwig's Theme*
- Learn as you play Oboe**, Peter Wastall, Boosey and Hawkes: *Corumbá, Minuetto, Tambourin*

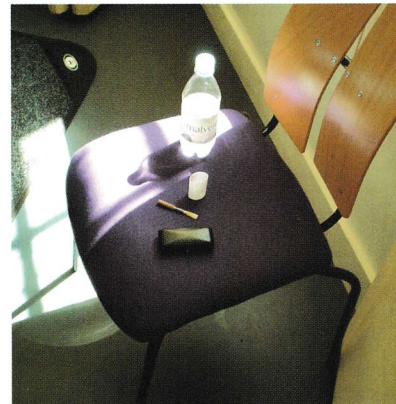
- Let's Make the Grade**, Book 2, Sunshine Music Company: *Pastime with Good Company*
- A Miscellany for Oboe**, Michael Rose, ABRSM: *Calypso Really Easy Jazzin' About*, Pam Wedgewood, Faber Music: *Cat Walk, Dragonfly, Easy Tiger, Hot Chilli, Wrap it up*
- Second Book of Oboe Solos**, Janet Craxton & Alan Richardson, Faber Music: *First Loss, Purcell Air, La ci Darem*
- Three Hill Songs**, Michael Head, Emerson Edition: *A Song of the Hills*

Cimeon Ellerton's *Looking Glass World* can be downloaded free from www.oboeconcerts.com. Click on the 'More Details' link for this CD. It is possible that some of the other pieces will be made available in this way.

In the performances we tried to keep as far as possible to speeds that beginners could emulate, especially where they were explicitly specified in the music. We made no rule about repeats, but chose what we felt most benefited the music. The performers stuck to the music as written, but sometimes used expressive techniques (vibrato, dynamic variations, etc) that the student may not yet have acquired. In the more jazzy numbers, where 'swung' quavers are always a point of discussion, we did what sounded most natural.

The student can play along with all these pieces. For the oboe and piano items, a separate track without oboe is provided (always with the same repeats, etc, as the oboe version). For the duets –

two oboes, or oboe and bongos – the instruments are on separate channels, so an oboe can be removed with the balance knob. For Peter Wastall's *Corumbá* – two oboes and bongos – there are two backing tracks, one for each part. In the *Round London's Burning*, the student can be the fourth player, and in *Summer is icumen* in they can be the eighth player.





Philip Cornwell



Marcus Andrews

This CD was made possible through the generous assistance of **Trinity College of Music**, who not only enlisted their four 2004 post-Graduate students, but provided rehearsal rooms, accompanists, a recording studio, and engineering and editing facilities. Specifically, many thanks to **Alex Birchall**, **Jenni Britton**, **Uchenna Ngwe** and **Julia White** for their musicianship, their oboe skills, and their professionalism. Both the pianists work regularly at Trinity, and played a full part in shaping the performances. **Marcus Andrews** also played the oboe for ten years, and is a member of the Karrilon Trio (flute, oboe, piano). **Philip Cornwell** brought his invaluable jazz experience to his session, expertly shaping the moods of the pieces. **Amy Kelly**, a Trinity 4th year student, transformed the mediaeval and Latin American pieces with her improvised percussion. **Kit Venables**, Trinity's recording engineer, made, edited, and

evaluated the recordings – including many different microphone placements – with unflinching patience and energy.

My thanks to them, and to the other performers. Two ten-year-olds participated in this CD – **Jessie Chorley** who provided the hands on the cover, and **Madelaine Davies**, who played in the round *Summer is icumen* in along with her teacher, **Emma Gourlay** from Howarth of London (who also planted the seed of this whole project). The round was completed with fellow students of Trinity, **Victoria Usher** and **Alexa Walters**.

Except, of course, that there were no fellows. Women have taken over! During the sessions we discussed why boys did not seem to be taking up the oboe like they used to, but reached no obvious conclusion. Have you got a theory? Is the situation different where you are? Are you a boy who is learning the oboe? If you have a comment,

let me know on mail@oboeclassics.com, and I will post it on the Oboe Classics website www.oboeclassics.com. Click on the 'More Details' link for this CD.

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Kit Venables

Recorded at Trinity College of Music, London, July 2004
 Producers: Jeremy Polmeare and Kit Venables
 Engineering and Editing: Kit Venables, Trinity College of Music
 Mastering: Morgan Roberts, The Classic Recording Company
 Oboes by Howarth (Jenni Britton, Alex Birchall)
 Marigaux (Uchenna Ngwe, Julia White)

Cover Picture by Peter Wiggins
 Oboe image courtesy Howarth of London
 Session photos by Jeremy Polmeare, Andrew Knights; Trinity College photo by Matt Prince
 CD design by STEAM
 Grateful thanks to: Nicola Fairbairn, Ann Greene, Sara Grint, Christopher Hooker, Heather Jordan, Josephine Lively, Moyra Montagu.

Companion labels: www.clarinetclassics.com,
www.celloclassics.com



Amy Kelly



Jessie Chorley