

CHRIS HOULDING

houlding his own



Fanfare and Toccata I

Primo Solo

Tempo II

V. pos.

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CHRIS HOULDING *trombone*
IAN BUCKLE *piano**

In this album I have attempted to combine some new and refreshing takes on the character of the unaccompanied trombone together with two established classics from the main repertoire with piano. Added to this are a selection of smaller scale diversions which I will hope confirm that this noble instrument is not without considerable charm and versatility.

houlding his own

- 1 **Fanfare** (To Harold Nash) (Kenny; Warwick Music)
- Sonata for Trombone & Piano*** (Hindemith; Schott & Son)
- 2 *Allegro moderato maestoso*
- 3 *Allegretto grazioso*
- 4 *Lied des Raufbolds (Swashbuckler's Song)*
- 5 *Allegro moderato maestoso*
- 6 **Flourish for Solo Trombone** (Crees; Warwick Music)
- Sinfonia*** (Pergolesi transc. Sauer; Wimbledon Music Inc USA)
- 7 *Andante*
- 8 *Allegro con brio*
- 9 *Adagio*
- 10 *Allegro*
- Excito Quod Evenit** (Swan)
- 11 *Fanfare & Toccata 1*
- 12 *Lied*
- 13 *Dreamscape*
- 14 *Fanfare & Toccata (La Chasse)*
- 15 **Hommage du Trombone Exprimant la Tristesse de L'Auteur Absent*** (Honegger; Éditions Salabert)
- 16 **Andantino*** (Albéniz; Friedrich Hofmeister Musikverlag)
- 17 **Hamlet – First Tableau (Act I)*** (Thomas; Heugel Paris)
- 18 **Lucifer** (A brief psychotic episode for trombone) (Wills; Warwick Music)
- 19 **Piece for Ray*** (Sheriff; IMI Israel Music Institute)
- 20 **Elegy for Mippy II** (for trombone alone)(Bernstein; G Schirmer Inc)
- 21 **Sonata** (Vox Gabrieli)* (Šulek; The Brass Press USA)

Chris Houlding *trombone*

Chris was appointed Principal Trombone of the Orchestra of Opera North, Britain's newest and most innovative opera company, when he was 21. Since then he has appeared as Guest Principal with most major UK ensembles including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, London Brass, London Symphony Brass and the Symphonic Brass of London. A graduate of London's Guildhall School of Music, Chris studied with Denis Wick, Eric Crees and Peter Gane, and was awarded the Principal's Prize. Prior to this he was a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Great Britain's National Youth Jazz Orchestra and National Youth Brass Band, gaining the LRAM Diploma while still at school.

Recently appointed Professor of Trombone and Brass Ensemble at the Folkwang Hochschule, Essen, he is also Senior Tutor in Brass at Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music and regular Trombone Professor with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. He has coached the European Union Youth Orchestra and Gustav Mahler Jugend Orchester and gives recitals and masterclasses throughout the world, including the Joseph Alessi Summer Seminar, Juilliard, Eastman and conservatoires in Boston, Texas, St Petersburg, Porto and Oslo. In the UK, Chris has given recitals and classes at London's Guildhall School of Music, Royal College of Music, Trinity College of Music and conservatoires and universities in Glasgow, Birmingham, Huddersfield and Salford.

In 2003 Chris represented the UK in the World Orchestra for Peace under Valery Gergiev and has made concerto appearances with the Orchestra of Opera North (Elgar Howarth Concerto under the composer, Grondahl Concerto under Martyn Brabbins), Durham Sinfonia (Bourgeois Concerto) and Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra (Albrechtsberger Concerto as soloist/director). A



former President of the British Trombone Society and clinician for the Edwards Instrument Company, he has appeared as guest artist at International Trombone Festivals in Las Vegas (ITF 2007), Sweden (2007) and Birmingham (ITF 2006).

Chris was awarded an MMus in Conducting by the Royal Northern College of Music in 2005 and held the position of Music Director with the Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra for six years. He has also conducted the Orchestra of Opera North, the RNCM Symphony Orchestra, Wind Orchestra and Brass Band (2006 Festival of Brass), Lancashire Youth Symphony, Oslo Music Academy Brass Ensemble and Grimethorpe Colliery Band. As an adjudicator, he has served on international juries including the Turkish Young Musician of the Year, Norwegian Brass Band Championships, Feis Ceoil Dublin and the Royal Overseas League Music Competition.

Christopher Houlding - Technical Details

Trombone: Edwards T350; 335CF Bell; Rose Tuning Slide; T-STD Slide; T2 Brass Leadpipe
Mouthpiece: Denis Wick 5ABL (Prototype)

Ian Buckle *piano*

“Outstanding... Buckle is a pianist whose precision, power, musicianship and enviable composure allow us to experience the music without imposing superfluous affectation. His technique is dazzling, yet always in the service of the composer. A memorable event.”
YORKSHIRE POST.

Ian Buckle enjoys a busy and varied freelance career, working as soloist, accompanist, chamber musician, orchestral pianist and teacher.

He has appeared as soloist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of Opera North, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Sinfonia Viva and the Manchester Concert Orchestra. His London debut came in 1996



with a recital at Wigmore Hall and he has given recitals in numerous UK festivals including Buxton, Harrogate, Huddersfield and Lichfield, the Ribble Valley International Piano Week and in the Bridgewater Hall for Manchester Midday Concerts. He has performed and broadcast recitals in France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Turkey and Canada; and has appeared on BBC radio and television, most recently on the Radio 3 programme ‘In Tune’.

Ian is a member of the piano-and-woodwind ensemble Zephyr; and the Elysian Horn Trio, formed as students at the Royal Northern College of Music. His commitment to contemporary music is reflected in his work with the

chamber groups Ensemble 10:10 and the Firebird Ensemble, and his piano duo with Richard Casey specialises in music of the last and current centuries. As an accompanist he is in constant demand, performing and recording with singers and instrumentalists throughout the UK and in Europe, and he regularly plays orchestral piano in the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. He combines his performing career with a position as pianist-in-residence at Huddersfield University and teaching at Leeds University.

Ian is an enthusiast of French Cinema and holds a season ticket at Sheffield Wednesday Football Club.

Programme notes

To open any programme of brass music with a FANFARE has become commonplace, given the suitability of timbre and articulation in providing a ‘call to arms’. This short work by fellow trombonist, JOHN KENNY (1957-), shows an innate understanding of the trombone’s unique character, the accents producing a striking effect in a reverberant acoustic.

PAUL HINDEMITH (1895-1963), one of Germany’s most revered all round musicians, brought a calm authority to anything he undertook. As a conductor, he was quietly spoken, always wearing a pinstriped suit and as a composer he demonstrated an intimate technical knowledge of each and every orchestral instrument. Dating from 1941, the SONATA FOR TROMBONE AND PIANO creates a truly awe-inspiring dialogue between the two protagonists but also succeeds in producing a consummate, neo-classical separation of instrumental tonal character. The outer movements are symphonic in style and share recurring thematic material while the inner two reveal a hauntingly tranquil soliloquy featuring the piano, followed by a bold and robust ‘drinking song’, full of trombonistic bravado.

As an instrumentalist, having new music written especially for you is the ultimate tribute and brings with it a certain challenge and responsibility. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my teacher, mentor and friend ERIC CREES (1952-) for his energetic FLOURISH, written especially for the Fourth International Conservatoire Festival held in St. Petersburg. Having given the World Premiere ‘live’ on Russian Television in the Glazunov Hall of the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in September 2003, this piece is now becoming a popular ‘workout’ for inclusion in trombone recitals.

Unlike other brass instruments, the trombone has been fully chromatic since its birth, a characteristic richly exploited in the Medieval and Renaissance periods. It is odd then that in the musically potent Baroque and Classical periods the instrument only featured as choral reinforcement and in a very small number of concerti for the alto trombone. Here the SINFONIA by GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI (1710-1736) is sensitively adapted by former Los Angeles Philharmonic Principal Trombonist, Ralph Sauer, in such a way as to be compatible with the taste and style of that era, albeit without the traditional basso continuo. Stravinsky evidently also saw the potential in this music, borrowing some of it to form the thematic basis of his well-known ballet, *Pulcinella*.

EXCITO QUOD EVENTIT (trans. *Make It Happen!*) is the first work for trombone by Northumbrian composer, PETER SWAN (1947-). Dedicated to a former pupil of mine, Neil Gallie, I was delighted to give the World Premiere of this substantial tetralogy at the 2006 Saltaire Festival, West Yorkshire (in my own back yard, so to speak). The work unashamedly shows influences of Benjamin Britten and Peter Maxwell Davies plus a few fleeting symphonic glimpses and is, in my opinion, an interesting example of how a piece for a single orchestral instrument can hold the attention of an audience.

Trombonists are always delighted to discover solo works by better known mainstream composers and here I have assembled 'un petit trio' of charming 'lollipops' for the instrument. Swiss composer ARTHUR HONEGGER (1892-1955), dedicated **HOMMAGE DU TROMBONE EXPRIMANT LA TRISTESSE DE LAUTEUR ABSENT** (*Tribute by the Trombone expressing the sadness of the absent composer*) to Serge Koussevitsky (Double Bass virtuoso and Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra). Completed in 1925, this incredibly short piece is nothing short of enchanting. Readers may well be familiar with test pieces written for instrumental examinations at the Paris Conservatoire by composers such as Guilmant, Ropartz, Gaubert, Büsler and Bozza. However, some of them also produced short sight reading exercises with piano accompaniment. One such treasure, marked **ANDANTINO**, dates from 1906, when Spanish composer, **ISAAC ALBÉNIZ** (1860-1909) was living in France. It does, I feel, conjure up all the atmosphere of a sultry Mediterranean evening. Finally, an extract from the opera **HAMLET**. Written in 1868, the audience (and indeed trombone soloist) might be surprised by a beautiful melody played for trombone which forms the Entracte to the first tableau in Act I. French composer, **AMBROISE THOMAS** (1811-1896), better known for his opera **MIGNON**, here creates a striking affinity between the noble and plaintive tone of the trombone and the tragic Shakespearian hero.

LUCIFER, described by my friend and colleague **SIMON WILLS** (1957-), as 'a brief psychotic episode for solo trombone', is based on the five notes **B(Bb)-E-A-Si(Eb)-Ti(B nat.)**. It was originally intended to have a total of 666 notes, or in Biblical parlance 'The Mark of the Beast', but inspiration for the piece apparently ran out at 581! Therefore, the number is hidden 'like a little whiff of Brimstone, in the structure of the music' (composer's own words). As the dedicatee, I gave the World Premiere at the British Trombone Society National Workshop in Cardiff in 2004.

Inspired by and composed for Israel Philharmonic trombonist, Ray Parnes, **PIECE FOR RAY** forms the second part of a three-movement work for woodwinds, trombone, double bass and piano by Israeli composer, **NOAM SHERRIF** (1935-). Dating from 1961, this atmospheric work contains some wonderfully idiomatic writing for trombone reminiscent of a Jewish Cantor. I was honoured to be invited to perform this work before the composer at the 2001 Dartington International Festival.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990) was renowned for his ability to combine a wide range of music styles. **ELEGY FOR MIPPY II** is one of a series of pieces in memory of his brother Bertie's mongrel dog. This descriptive piece paints a vivid picture of a much-loved hound and subtly combines a slow 'blues' tempo with a contrasting 'double speed rant'. The trombonist is instructed to accompany himself by tapping his foot.

Born in Zagreb, capital of Croatia, **STJEPAN ŠULEK** (1914-1986) made an enormous contribution as composer and conductor to musical life in his native country and beyond. Commissioned by the International Trombone Association in 1973, his **SONATA (VOX GABRIELI)** epitomises neo-romantic style with its sweeping melodies and powerful harmonic language. Its obvious appeal and suitability for the instrument has meant that it is now widely regarded as both one of the finest and also the most popular pieces in the repertoire. Like the Hindemith Sonata, its successful performance depends on a virtuoso pianist, a role which is admirably accomplished by my superb recital partner on this disc.

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