

# In memoriam Margaret Kitchin

1914-2008



**Sunday 22 March 2015 at 6pm**

53 Victoria Road  
London N4 3SN

**Variations for viola and piano, Op. 1**

**Hugh Wood**

Rupert Bawden *violin* Claire Kitchin *piano*

**Three Pieces for piano, Op. 30**

**Iain Hamilton**

*Allegro ~ Lento ~ Vivo*

Claire Kitchin *piano*

**Sonata for flute and Piano**

**Paul Hindemith**

*Heiter bewegt ~ Sehr langsam ~ Sehr lebhaft ~ Marsch*

Peter Wakefield *flute* Chris Crocker *piano*

**Sonata for violin and piano no. 1, Op. 12**

**Peter Racine Fricker**

*Allegro ~ Allegretto ~ Adagio*

Rupert Bawden *violin* Chris Crocker *piano*

~~~ SHORT INTERVAL ~~~

**Five pieces, Op. 23**

**Arnold Schoenberg**

*Sehr langsam ~ Sehr rasch ~ Langsam ~ Schwungvoll ~ Waltz*

Anthony Green *piano*

**Nonomiya, Op. 27**

**Alexander Goehr**

Anthony Green *piano*

**Piano sonata no. 2**

**Michael Tippett**

Chris Crocker *piano*

Performances listed under each work title are by Margaret Kitchin and include all known premieres.

### **Variations for Viola and Piano Op. 1 (1958)**

**Hugh Wood (b.1932)**

First performance Wigmore Hall, 7 July 1959, with Cecil Aronowitz (SPNM concert)

First broadcast performance BBC 25 February 1961, with Cecil Aronowitz

Hugh Wood writes:

“The viola variations, Op. 1, was the first in the style which I have more or less followed all my working life. I had a friend who played both viola and piano and who one day at the Dartington Summer School played me the Beethoven C minor variations. This piece was for her. I found that the passacaglia-like chordal theme would fit to my own viola theme. At the end both elements of the Beethoven theme and my theme are revealed together. Mátyás Seiber made some criticisms of this climax of the finale, so I rewrote it.”

The work is dedicated to Wood’s teacher, Iain Hamilton.

### **Three Pieces for piano, Op. 30 (1955)**

**Iain Hamilton (1922-2000)**

First broadcast performance BBC 7 January 1959

First commercial recording Argo RG 425/ZRG 5425, 7 March 1963 (released 1965)

Iain Hamilton writes:

“The Three Pieces for Piano opus 30 were written in 1955 for an album of piano music by various composers which was intended for the moderately accomplished pianist. For this reason they employ little of the virtuoso technique to be found in the earlier Piano Sonata of 1951 or the later Piano Concerto (1960) and Nocturnes with Cadenzas of 1963.

The pieces are marked Allegro, Lento and Vivo and the short work is in the nature of a serenade or divertimento. It is the first of my works which uses a series but there are strongly tonal influences throughout.”



with Iain Hamilton and Peter Heyworth in 1957

Margaret premiered seven other works of Hamilton’s. The Piano Concerto no. 1 (1960) is dedicated to her; the Sonata Notturna for horn and piano (1965) is dedicated to Barry Tuckwell and Margaret.

### **Sonata for flute and Piano (1939)**

**Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)**

Performed at Hovingham Festival on 1 August 1959 with Rainer Schuelein

Between 1935 and 1955 Hindemith wrote 26 sonatas for winds, strings, piano, organ and harp – he could play all these instruments except the harp. He explained some of his motivations to his publisher Willy Strecker in 1939: “You will be surprised that I am writing sonatas for all the wind instruments. I already wanted to write a whole series of these pieces. First of all, there's nothing decent for these instruments except for a few classical things; although not from the present business perspective, it is meritorious over the long term to enrich this literature. And secondly, since I myself have been so interested in playing wind instruments, I have great pleasure in these pieces. Finally, they are serving me as a technical exercise for the big punch with which the Harmonie der Welt ... can hopefully be begun in the spring.” Another motivation may have been the difficulty in getting performances sanctioned by the Nazi regime, which did not approve of his music; the sonatas gave him something to play with his wife. The flute sonata was written in 1936 and premiered the following year during Hindemith’s first visit to the USA, to which he emigrated three years later.

## **Sonata for violin and piano no. 1, Op. 12 (1950)**

**Peter Racine Fricker (1920-1990)**

First performance Switzerland, September 1950, with Maria Lidka

First British performance RCA Galleries, London, 12 December 1950, with Maria Lidka

First broadcast performance BBC 25 July 1951, with Maria Lidka

First commercial recording ARGO ATC1002/RG 6, 17 January 1953, with Maria Lidka

By the time of this sonata, written for Maria Lidka, Fricker had moved from a style influenced by Hindemith, Stravinsky and Bartók to one wholly his own, employing elements of serial technique while never abandoning tonality. The critic Colin Mason described the thematic material in the second movement as "probably the most delicately beautiful" that Fricker had so far composed. Talking to Murray Shafer, the composer commented "...the second movement has a programme, which I have never revealed. At one point I've used an idea of Alban Berg's – a chain of falling sevenths which he used to illustrate a woman laughing. I used the same idea of a chain of falling sevenths to illustrate the same thing, which came in my entirely private programme". The ending recalls a famous saying of Schoenberg.

Margaret went on to premiere five other works of Fricker's. The last of the Four Impromptus Op. 17 (1952) and the Piano Variations Op. 31 (1958) are dedicated to her.

## **Five pieces, Op. 23 (1920-23)**

**Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)**

Performed at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music on 18 November 1960, and at other times.

With these pieces, together with the Serenade for chamber ensemble Op. 24, and the Piano Suite Op. 25, Schoenberg broke a silence of many years. The style of all three works is emotionally cooler and more objective than those he wrote prior to World War I. The first movement of this work treats a 3-note motif in every possible variant – original form, inverted, retrograde, in augmentation and diminution – first in a spare 3-part contrapuntal texture, then in a more playful version (though in a slower tempo). The second movement is violently expressionistic, and uses a 9-note series which governs most of the musical material. The third movement is extremely intricate in texture – a 5-note motif appears in many different forms. Here again the emotional climate is cooler (in his book on Schoenberg the late Malcolm McDonald described it as Expressionist Impressionism). The fourth movement is the scherzo of the set. In the fifth movement Schoenberg for the first time uses a 12-note series (though only in the original form, without transposition or inversions) and reproduces the style of a typical Viennese waltz, with occasional 4/8 and 5/8 bars acting as a homage to the traditional rubato of the piece.

## **Nonomiya, Op. 27 (1969)**

**Alexander Goehr (b. 1932)**

Performed in London on 16 Jun 1970, preceded by a talk by the composer

First British broadcast performance BBC 14 December 1971 (recorded in June)

Margaret's score is inscribed with the composer's handwritten dedication to John Ogden, who gave the première in Macclesfield on 12 May 1969, and a note about the work, the major part of which is quoted below (with permission of Schott & Co.):

"Nonomiya is the title of a Nō play. The piece is not programmatic but there are certain factors which seem to have influenced the composition of it and justify the use of the title. The division into two parts is characteristic of Nō plays of this type. In the first the principal actor (Shitē) declaims a kind of aria. He reappears in the second part (centuries may have elapsed) as a ghost – threatening those who have been responsible for his (her) death. Now his singing moves towards a climax and breaks into a dance. Finally there is a formal exit."

## Piano sonata no. 2 (1962)

Michael Tippett (1905-1998)

Dedicated to Margaret Kitchin "with affection and esteem"

First performance Edinburgh Festival 3 September 1962

First London performance ICA 26 February 1963

Last documented performance Bishopsgate Hall 17 March 1977

The sonata was completed after Tippett's second opera King Priam and takes some material from it. Its single movement is structured as a mosaic of 37 sections each associated with one of eight different tempo markings.

The composer writes:

"Everything in the sonata proceeds by statement. The effect is one of accumulation; through constant addition of new material; by variation and repetition. There is virtually no development and particularly no bridge passages. The formal unity comes from the balance of similarities and contrasts.

The contrasts are straightforward ones of timbres and speeds. But there are also contrasts of function. Music can appear to flow; or to arrest itself especially through the device of ostinato; or temporarily to stop in a silence. These kinds of contrasts are used constantly."

Each of the eight tempi features one or more motifs, some very brief. Only the first five tempi are introduced at the start; Tempo 7 first appears halfway through the piece and Tempo 8 later still. The sonata concludes with a sort of coda in which the sections become very short, bringing the work to a climax with the reintroduction of the Tempo I theme, not heard since the opening.

PIANO SONATA  
FROM OPERA

Tippett substitute  
for development

From DONALD MITCHELL  
EDINBURGH, Monday.

IT is rare indeed to find that a composer's piano sonata directly stems from an opera. But this is the relation offered by Michael Tippett's second piano sonata, given its first performance by Margaret Kitchin at the Freemasons Hall, Edinburgh, in a BBC Invitation Concert to-night.

The elaborate orchestral part for piano was a much remarked-upon feature of Tippett's opera "King Priam" and it is in that novel pianistic invention that this new piece has its origins.

It is a short, one-movement work, spare in texture, bright in sonority and, like most of Tippett's recent music, unconventional in formal conception and in its approach to the medium.

The sonata does not develop in the normal musical meaning of the term, but expands itself by the addition of sections of new material, each with its characteristic tempo. It is from the disposition of the sections in an always changing order that the total form of the work results.

**VARIED RESTATEMENT**

Mr. Tippett's method of varied restatement and block contrast ingeniously circumvents the problem of development, though one sometimes regrets the absence of an extended paragraph.

The principle of organisation, not to speak of the actual nature of the piano writing, is close to that of the opera. But one is also conscious in the sonata that Mr. Tippett may have been influenced by the fashion in evolving a form from given groups of invention which are then subjected to continuous re-ordering.

Instead, however, of leaving the choice of sequence to the performer, he has composed it in advance. A sensible precaution this, which has given us here a work for the piano of real originality.

**RICH INFLECTIONS**

Two string quartets, played by the English String Quartet, completed the contribution of modern composers to the programme.

Shostakovich's sixth quartet, Op. 101, was undeniably rich in melody and many personal inflections of harmony, but one wondered time and time again if its straightforward invention was the stuff of which string quartets are made.

One may question the lack of contrast and perhaps the limited harmonic interest of the string quartet of Peter Maxwell Davies, but I should not hesitate to claim that his work was the more truly chamber-musical of the two.

New Sonata by  
Tippett

A Grandly Eloquent  
Composition

FROM OUR MUSIC CRITIC  
EDINBURGH, SEPT. 3

During the summer the B.B.C. Invitation Concerts forsake Maida Vale to tour the Provinces, alighting wherever convenient at a music festival. The series landed at Edinburgh tonight, when the programme contributed to the Festival's cycle of Shostakovich's string quartets, included one new and one recent English work, and ended solidly with Brahms's F major cello sonata.

The Shostakovich quartet was No. 6, which even in a spirited performance by the English String Quartet could not help impressing one as the least distinguished of the set; one only wondered why the composer, in his high maturity, felt obliged to write it. Peter Maxwell Davies's string quartet, on the other hand, is one of this young composer's most impressive works, very simple in language, elaborately calculated, its intentions strongly felt and firmly communicated; a careful but rather nervous performance veiled but did not conceal these qualities.

The new work was Michael Tippett's second piano sonata, completed for the occasion and dedicated to Miss Margaret Kitchin, who gave this first performance. The composer describes it as "this little work", a classic example of Busonian melos; the sonata is not of monumental proportions, but it is grandly eloquent, one of Tippett's most important and original pieces.

He doubtless regards this one-movement work as an *opaculum* because its form and material grew out of his opera King Priam, but the ideas read full lives of their own, and the form is really a development of the Liszt B minor sonata technique in which a variety of themes (all can be traced back to a single motive, in Tippett as well as Liszt) are shuffled and redealt in different orders so that each new context contributes something to the growth of the music.

Tippett's themes are direct and pianistically basic; trills, tone-clusters, a glissando, arpeggios (which became the accompaniment to a sunny, lyrical, interrupted melody) scales in double octaves, statuesquely graceful or muscular chords. The structure does not grow obviously out of the interaction or collision of the materials, though one of the short subject-groups is quickly absorbed by other longer sections, and two others are eventually seen to be very closely related through their scale movement.

Sibelius would have rolled the thematic germs together into one long final paragraph; Tippett continues to project them one by one on to the screen of the mind, like a cinematic montage sequence, until the end, when the montage is finally seen to make a logical and satisfying pattern. The sonata (just published by Schott) looks good to play, only fairly difficult. The form and diction mark a new stage in Tippett's development as a composer, and we look forward to studying the work more closely.

reviews of the 1962 première