



Young Artists' Programme Recital
Bethany Peck *trombone*
Quentin Thomas *piano*

Monday 11 July, 2022 - St Peter's Church

Piece in E flat Minor - Joseph Guy Ropartz (1864-1955)

One of the most technically challenging works for solo trombone, Ropartz' *Piece in E flat Minor* displays a mix of Romantic and Impressionist influences. Ropartz was a French composer and conductor whose musical references often allude to his Breton Heritage. He also wrote and published poetry. He studied at the Conservatoire de Paris under Théodore Dubois and Jules Massenet, and later studied the organ under César Franck. His musical style was influenced by Debussy and César Franck. However he self-identified as a Celtic Breton, writing that he was the son of a country "where the goblins populate the moor and dance by the moony nights around the menhirs; where the fairies and the enchanters - Viviane and Merlin - have as a field the forest of Brocéliande; where the spirits of the unburied dead appear all white above the waters of the Bay of the Departed."

Trombone Concerto - Edward Gregson (b.1945)

Commissioned by the Bedfordshire Education Service for Michael Hext (who won the inaugural BBC Television 'Young Musician of the Year' competition in 1978) this concerto was first performed in 1979 at the Royal College of Music by Hext, with the Bedfordshire County Youth Orchestra conducted by Michael Rose. The work falls into three main sections, played without a break, but conforming to the traditional pattern of concerto structure. After a slow introduction, containing most of the motivic and rhythmic ideas used in the work, there follows the main fast section which is itself divided into three parts and concludes with a fierce climax. The slow and rather intense middle section is linked to a cadenza for the soloist, at first unaccompanied, leading to accompanied references to earlier material. The final section is a scherzo which ends dramatically with a re-statement of the opening slow introduction. A brisk coda concludes the work. The writing for trombone is virtuosic, encompassing the whole range of the instrument, but it also exploits the rather beautiful lyrical sound of which this instrument is capable.

Concerto for trombone - Kazimierz Serocki (1922-1981)

Lento espressivo - Allegro; Largo, molto cantabile; Allegretto grazioso; Allegro
Serocki's *Concerto for trombone* was written in 1953. Along with his *Suite for four trombones* and *Sonatina for trombone and piano*, it is one of those pieces by the Polish composer that demonstrates his great familiarity with the secrets of the instrument. The concerto is also an example of his use of motifs inspired by Polish folklore as well as

neoclassical style. The work comprises four movements. The first is a highly virtuoso show of trombone playing interspersed with striking entries from the piano. The second is an example of music with truly romantic, great expressive power. The third is a dazzling, light and playful scherzo. The finale is again light, witty and playful music with a considerable virtuoso element. Serocki's *Concerto for trombone* was premiered during Juliusz Pietrachowicz's graduation concert on 18 December 1954. Collaboration with this virtuoso, the first trombone player in the Warsaw Philharmonic, was the main inspiration for all of Serocki's works for the trombone. The composer knew very well what combination of sounds or specific articulations are possible on the instrument and made a brilliant artistic use of them.

Bethany Peck has just completed a BMus (Hons) in trombone study at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. A native of Northamptonshire, Bethany began her brass studies at the age of seven, firstly with the cornet, then the baritone before finally settling on the trombone. She soon became involved with the Northamptonshire County Music Ensembles and became principle trombone of the County Youth Training Brass Band at the age of ten before taking the principle seat in the County Youth Brass Band when she was twelve. At the same time, Bethany was a member of the highly acclaimed, multi award winning Youth Brass 2000. She was with the National Children's Brass Band of Great Britain for two years, sitting principle in the second, before moving to the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, taking part in seven courses over four years. At the age of thirteen, Bethany gained a Music Scholarship to Oundle School. In her final year, she was awarded best musician in the annual Hepburn Music Competition. At school, she was Principle Trombone in the Symphony, Wind and Jazz Orchestras. With the Jazz Orchestra, she twice performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Out of school, Bethany was appointed solo trombone of Rushden Town Band and, over three years, supported the band's promotion from second section to championship. During her time at RWCMD, Bethany joined the City of Cardiff Melingriffith Band as solo trombone before moving to 2nd Trombone at The Flowers Band. Towards the end of 2021, Bethany twice played professionally with the all-female Firdaus Orchestra at the Dubai Expo 2020.

Quentin Thomas was Head Chorister at Westminster Abbey and gained scholarships to The King's School Canterbury, Oxford University, with post-graduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and the National Film & Television School. His four Masters' Degrees and Associateship to the Royal College of Organists are indicative of his diverse interests across the music world that have encompassed composition, conducting, performing and music education. Composing hi-lights include two Oscar nominations in Hollywood's Short Film category; being an in-house composer for a publisher whilst still at school; three operas, one opening a Deutsche Oper am Rhein, Dusseldorf season. He has written diverse works ranging from song cycles to orchestral works, sound designs to choral and dance works for leading artists in most of the London major concert venues. Quentin has toured extensively as a recitalist, accompanist and conductor, working with many a choir and chorus. He was for three years the invited organist and repetiteur for the European Union Youth Orchestra, and recorded Alison Balsom's first CD (organ and trumpet) to wide acclaim with EMI. As an educationalist, Quentin is Director of Music at Oundle. He was for eight years Director of Music at Haileybury taking the choir to the finals of the BBC Songs of Praise Choir of the Year three times. Prior to this, he taught at the Yehudi Menuhin School and worked with the London Sinfonietta Education Programme.

Supported by Francis & Rachel Terry, and Kate Wishart