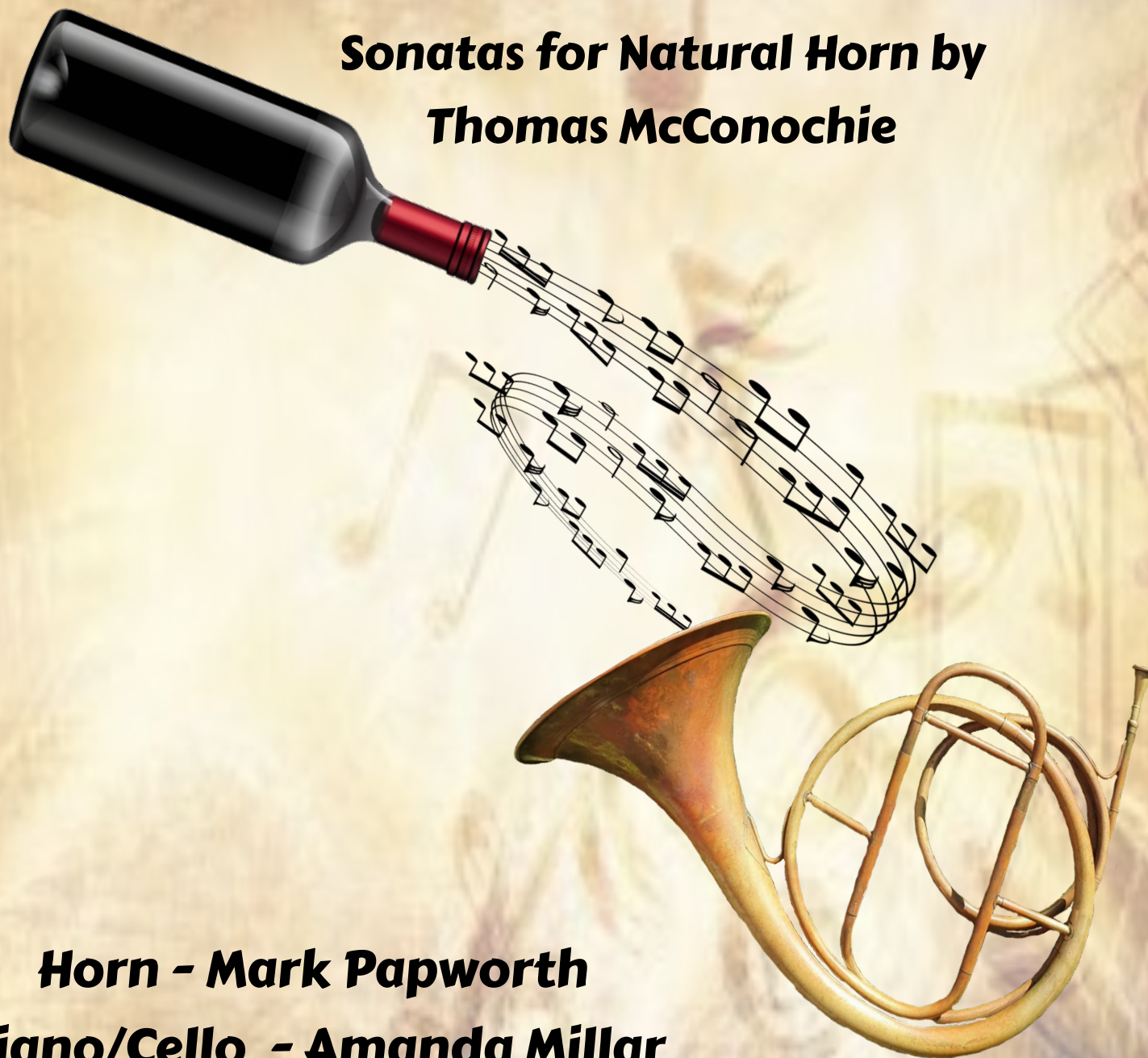


NEW WINE IN AN OLD BOTTLE

**Sonatas for Natural Horn by
Thomas McConochie**



**Horn - Mark Papworth
Piano/Cello - Amanda Millar**

NEW WINE IN AN OLD BOTTLE

Sonata No.1 (in F) for Natural Horn and Fortepiano (Op.14) (TWV 66)

- 1** I - Allegro
- 2** II - Andante (with Oom-Pah Section)
- 3** III - Sonata-Rondo

Thomas McConochie
composer

Horn Sonatina No.5 (in C Minor) Op.16 No.3 (TWV 71)

(A Little Bit of Sturm and Drang)

- 4** I - Presto
- 5** II - Adagio
- 6** III - Presto

Sonata for Natural Horn and Cello (in D Major) Op.22 (TWV 74)

- 7** I - Allegro
- 8** II - Recitative and Aria
- 9** III - Rondo

Sonata No.2 (in E-Flat) for Natural Horn and Fortepiano Op.15 (TWV 67)

- 10** I - Allegro
- 11** II - Andante con moto (Romanza)
- 12** III - Maestoso (Theme and Variations)

Mark Papworth | natural horn
Amanda Millar | piano | cello

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Sonata No.1 (in F) for Natural Horn and Fortepiano (Op.14) (TWV 66)

- 1** *Allegro*
- 2** *Andante (with Oom-Pah Section)*
- 3** *Sonata-Rondo*

When I came to compose my first horn sonata, I was cognisant of the fact that the soloist horn repertoire is actually quite small; there are a few well-known pieces by famous composers that get played frequently. Yet what I, and many other hornists, would really like is not to play the same few pieces repeatedly (fine pieces though they are), but rather to play new compositions in similar styles in addition to the canon of horn repertoire. Perhaps we will even discover new works to add to the core repertoire of soloist horn music. Hence, this horn sonata begins with a subversive nod to Beethoven's horn sonata by starting with a descending F major arpeggio, whereas Beethoven's begins with an ascending F major arpeggio: the same but different.

The humour doesn't stop there! The second movement is in ternary form, with the first section of music sounding like a typical *romanza*, with smooth legato playing and soft cadences, as horn players and audiences would expect. However, the middle section picks up the tempo, changes into the parallel minor key, and features a very detached horn melody over an "oom-pah" accompaniment for maximum hilarity.

The final movement is in sonata-rondo form. The music is in a jaunty 6/8 time with a feeling that will be instantly familiar to horn players and fans of horn music.

Horn Sonatina No.5 (in C Minor) Op.16 No.3 (TWV 71)

(A Little Bit of Sturm and Drang)

- 4** *Presto*
- 5** *Adagio*
- 6** *Presto*

I originally composed this piece as a low horn work for valve horn (in F). It was Mark who initially arranged the piece for natural horn (in E-Flat), taking many passages up an octave into the normal register of both valve and natural horn. I think the result sounds great!

This sonatina stands out from the mainstream horn repertoire because it is in a minor key (every movement is in a minor key) and in the "sturm and drang" style. I drew on the symphonies of CPE Bach and Joseph Haydn as inspiration for this horn sonatina.

Sonata for Natural Horn and Cello (in D Major) Op.22 (TWV 74)

- 7** *Allegro*
- 8** *Recitative and Aria*
- 9** *Rondo*

This work was commissioned by Mark Papworth in 2021. The general brief was to compose a sonata for natural horn and cello in my usual neo-classical style. Mark and Amanda also had some specific requirements for the piece: 1.) the cello part should play a melody at least once in every movement; and 2.) the second movement should be in the form of a recitative and aria and in a minor key.

It was a pleasure working with Mark and Amanda to compose this very rare kind of

sonata. As far as I know, there are only three composers (including myself) who have composed sonatas for natural horn and cello, with Frederic Nicolas Duvernoy (1765–1828) and Aldolphe Blanc (1828–1885) composing sonatas between the late 18th century and mid-19th century, respectively. Their works are rare treasures, and I am very pleased to contribute more music to this niche repertoire.

Sonata No.2 (in E-Flat) for Natural Horn and Fortepiano Op.15 (TWV 67)

- 10** *Allegro*
- 11** *Andante con moto (Romanza)*
- 12** *Maestoso (Theme and Variations)*

I learnt a lot from composing and performing my first horn sonata and applied those lessons as goals for this second sonata. One thing I achieved was having more of a dialogue and call and response between the horn and piano part (rather than just having the melody on the horn all the time). We can hear this in the second subject of the first movement, where the piano plays most of the melody and the horn responds with characteristic "hand stopped chromatic leading tone, to open note" technique that is part of the charm of natural horn music.

In the second movement, both the horn and piano take turns playing the melody and accompanying one another in this straightforward *romanza*. In the third movement, each variation concludes with a *ritornello* played by the piano, which is essentially a re-statement of the B section of the theme/variation.

The Natural Horn

The Natural Horn, also referred to as the Classical Horn or Hand Horn, descended from the hunting horn and was the direct predecessor to the modern day French Horn. During the baroque period, the hunting horn found its way into the orchestra. First for a more realistic effect, and then as a recognised member of the orchestra. During the latter part of the baroque period, horn players started experimenting with inserting their hand in the bell to obtain notes outside of the natural harmonic series. This developed into a codified system which enabled composers during the classical period such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven to use the horn as a lyrical solo instrument. With the emergence of the valved horn during the 1820's and '30's the natural horn died out through most of Europe except for France. The french players had come to appreciate the different sounds of the hand covering the bell to get the different notes, and had become so adept at playing it that they were reluctant to adopt the valved horn.

The natural horn was taught at the Paris Conservatoire until 1903. The natural horn died out for several decades before players developed a renewed interest in it which has led to many modern day players adopting the instrument and dedicating many, many hours to mastering the old techniques. As the interest in playing the natural horn has grown, modern day composers have also begun to appreciate the possibilities associated with writing for the natural horn. It has been a great pleasure for me to work

with Thomas on some new repertoire for the natural horn and to present this CD of new Sonatas featuring the old techniques of natural horn playing.

I would like to say a special thankyou to the people that helped me make this CD possible. Firstly to Thomas McConochie for writing such wonderful new music for the natural horn, and to Amanda Millar for all her hard work in rehearsing and recording this with me. I would also like to thank Martin Wright of Move Records for producing the recording, and my sister in law Nitasha Singh and Hathi Creations for designing the CD cover for me. Finally I would like to say a special thankyou to my wife Kirti Singh for all her support.

MARK PAPWORTH



Mark Papworth – *Natural Horn*

Mark began learning the horn at Winchelsea Primary School with Brian Blackett, before completing high school at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School studying with Russell Davis. After high school Mark moved to Perth to study at the University of Western Australia with Darryl Poulsen. During this time Mark developed a strong interest in studying historical performance practice and played the classical and baroque horn. While studying in Perth Mark also performed in major works by Wagner and Mahler with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. After graduating, Mark pursued his interest in historical performance practice and studied baroque and classical horn at Indiana University with Richard Seraphinoff. Mark regularly performs with orchestras and in chamber music on the baroque, classical and modern horns.



**Amanda Millar –
Piano/Cello**

Amanda is a versatile and passionate freelance performer and educator of piano, cello and voice, based in Melbourne, Australia. She has studied with a number of

prominent Australian soloists, and obtained her Bachelor of Music Performance – Orchestral Instruments (VCA) in 2012, studying cello with Josephine Vains. She also studied piano with Sonya Lifschitz, on which was awarded her AMusA in 2009. A keen accompanist since her school years, Amanda has collaborated with numerous instrumental and vocal soloists all over Melbourne.

Amanda possesses a lasting love of choral music, and has worked with numerous choirs including the Melbourne Women's Choir, Choir Victoria and Melbourne Male Choir. She currently holds the Principal Accompanist position with the Yarra Valley Singers. Amanda is also a keen musical theatre performer, and regularly serves as a repetiteur and orchestral cellist with Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Victoria, as well as other local theatre companies. In addition to this release, Amanda's 2022 recordings include *This Empty Field* by Greg Sneddon, a new Australian work for choral and instrumental ensemble.

**Thomas
McConochie –
Composer**

After completing a doctorate in philosophy at the University of New South Wales in 2017, Thomas completed an Associate in Music Australia (AMusA) diploma, majoring in horn performance, through the Australian Music Examinations Board. In addition to studying composition with his high school music teacher, Estelle Huxley, Thomas has also received advice and guidance from professional composers such as Jim Cotter (ANU), Andrew Schultz (UNSW) and Daniel Rojas (USyd).

Thomas composes music in styles ranging from neoclassical to jazz and world music. His compositions that feature the horn (Thomas' main instrument) have been well received by teachers, students, and professionals worldwide. Horn players who specialise in natural horn especially appreciate Thomas' neoclassical compositions for period instruments, such as his sonatas for natural horn and fortepiano and horn concertos. This has resulted in some interesting commissions such as the *Sonata for Natural Horn and Cello* (op.22) (TWV 74) and *Prelude and Theme and Variations on a Theme by Alexander Laing* (for natural horn and fortepiano) (op.23) (TWV 75).



Thomas' Balinese-Western fusion music has impressed both performers and audiences alike. In 2017, the North Sydney Symphony Orchestra commissioned Thomas to compose an original work for the orchestra's gala concert that year. The resulting work, *Starry Night Over Ubud* (op.6) (TWV 33), combines Balinese musical style and form with Western orchestral conventions. In 2018, Thomas composed an original work for the Suara Jaya Balinese Gamelan Ensemble at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. His composition, *Gilak Mas (Golden Gilak)* (op.7) (TWV 41), is an innovative piece of modern gamelan music based on older gamelan musical forms. In 2021, Thomas' piece, *Symphony No.2 (Balinese Symphony)* (TWV 37) was awarded a 3rd place prize in the Franz Schubert Konservatorium's composition competition. Thomas continues the classical tradition of the composer-performer. Thomas has made professional recordings of many of his works featuring the horn that he has uploaded to his YouTube channel. Thomas appears regularly playing horn with National Capital Orchestra.

Sheet Music Available

Sheet music for all these pieces is available through Corniworld Publications:
corniworld.com/collections/compositions-for-horn