



Kenneth Leighton music for violin and piano

Edwin Paling *violin*

Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey *piano*



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Sonata No. 1 (1949)

- 1** Allegro molto appassionato 5'05"
- 2** Lento e liberamente 6'23"
- 3** Presto energico 6'49"

Nocturne (1959) 6'26"

- 4** Molto largo

Sonata No. 2 (1953)

- 5** Moderato patetico 7'13"
- 6** Passacaglia – Lento 7'35"
- 7** Allegro molto e ritmico 5'22"

Metamorphoses (1966) 23'17"

- 8** Adagio sostenuto – tempo giusto e molto ritmico – adagio molto – molto vivace e secco – andante – allegro molto – allegro violente – molto adagio

This recording offers an opportunity to hear the premiere recording of these neglected masterpieces. Discover a new sound world of duo writing for violin and piano. The skilfully crafted music explores new sonorities for the instruments, varying from the opaque and impenetrable, to transparent moments of celestial calm.

Kenneth Leighton 1929-1988

Kenneth Leighton was born in Wakefield in 1929. He was educated at the Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, during which time he was a chorister at Wakefield Cathedral. In addition to singing, he was a prodigious pianist, gaining his Licentiate of the Royal College of Music at the age of fifteen. In 1947 he attended The Queen's College, Oxford on a Hastings Scholarship in Classics. During this time he also continued his music studies with the composer Bernard Rose. In 1951 he graduated with both a BA in Classics and a BMus. In the same year he also won the Mendelssohn Scholarship and following this studied in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi.

From 1952-53 Kenneth Leighton was Professor of Theory at the Royal Marine School of Music, and Gregory Fellow of Music at the University of Leeds from 1953-55. In 1955 he was appointed Lecturer in Music at the University of Edinburgh, where he was subsequently made Senior Lecturer and then Reader. He returned to Oxford University in 1968 as Lecturer in Music and Fellow of Worcester College. In 1970 he was appointed Reid Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh, he held this position until his death in 1988.

Source: Kenneth Leighton Trust, 'Biography', 5 July 2010, *Reid School of Music - ECA*, University of Edinburgh, 6 December 2012 <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/edinburgh-college-art/music/resources/kenneth-leighton-trust/biography>

Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano, Opus 4 (1949)

The First Violin Sonata, Op.4 (1949) was premiered at the Grande Theatre in Bordeaux in July 1949,



with Christopher Strode, to whom the work is dedicated, playing the violin and the composer playing the piano. It was composed during Leighton's time at Queen's College, Oxford, where he was studying with the organist and composer, Bernard Rose. The work, which is also arranged for flute and piano, has three movements, each connected with a sustained note in the piano. Writing in 1957, the musicologist John Cockshoot observed that in all of Leighton's music prior to 1950, the influence of Vaughan Williams, Rubbra and Walton is felt in the 'clear tonality, clear-cut tunes, and melodic attractiveness'.¹

The First Violin Sonata abounds with sustained melodic line. The first movement displays an inventive melodic imitation between the violin and piano, and shows a strong influence of Vaughan Williams in the nostalgic second subject. The second movement begins with a sustained chordal chorale in the piano, which is answered by a more urgent rubato phrase from the violin. The middle section of the second movement, which is infinitely more impassioned, and towards its end marked *Liberamente con fuoco*, gives way to a brief reappearance of the opening chorale. The finale begins with a gigue-like melody in compound time, during which Leighton employs both cross rhythms and rhythms in simple time to create a metric ambiguity. This opening section of the finale shows the influence of Rubbra, particularly of his Second Violin Sonata (1932). The broad, sweeping, and melodic middle section of the movement gives way to the reappearance of the gigue figure, which in turn gradually loses momentum, and concludes with a short and serene quotation from the second movement.

Nocturne for Violin and Piano (1959)

The Nocturne for Violin and Piano was written in 1959, and first performed on the BBC programme 'Music at Night' in 1960, by the dedicatee, Frederick Grinke, and the composer. The Nocturne begins with a tranquil muted melodic line in the violin, which is enhanced by a hypnotic and static motif in the piano, creating an atmosphere of quiet calm. The tranquillity of the opening music is disturbed by a sudden *appassionato* section, which develops into a brief accompanied cadenza-like passage before resolving into the opening theme, this time played unmuted, the melodic line quietly soaring to the highest register of the violin, before a descending temperate syncopation brings the music to a close.

Sonata No.2 for Violin and Piano, Opus 20 (1953)

The Second Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op.20 (1953) was composed just after Leighton graduated from Queen's College in 1951 with both a BMus and a BA in Classics. Following his graduation, Leighton undertook a period of study in Rome with Goffredo Petrassi, whose own neoclassical style was influenced by Bartok, Hindemith and Stravinsky. As John Cockshoot noted, the natural outcome of these influences resulted in a more chromatic style of composition and an investigation into serial technique, resulting in 'a general absence of conventional tonality'.² Although essentially romantic in character, the Second Violin Sonata embraces many of these new influences. Leighton creates a restless mood in the first movement of the Sonata by his use of double-dotted rhythms, a technique frequently used in many other works.

The second movement, marked *Passacaglia*, opens with a serial theme, each variant becoming more spectacular, before diminishing in intensity with the

tranquillity of the violin being highlighted by the piano, again making effective use of double dotted rhythms. In the finale Leighton uses an irregular rhythmic metre to create an atmosphere of turbulence, which after a brief period of calm, reappears, and growing in intensity culminates in a frenetic coda.

Frederick Grinke and the composer premiered the Second Sonata at the Octagon in Bath on 20 November 1954. The work was dedicated to Peter Gregory. Eric Craven Gregory (1888-1959, also known as Peter) was a printer, art-lover and the Chair of the publisher Lund Humphries. Under his patronage, the 'Gregory Fellowships in the Creative Arts' was instituted at the University of Leeds, thus creating an institution 'distinctive for innovative creative arts'³ in the austerity of post-war Britain.

Metamorphoses for Violin and Piano, Opus 48 (1966)

Frances Mason and Ashley Lawrence premiered the Metamorphoses for Violin and Piano at the Barnes Music Club on 25 October 1966. (The same club commissioned the piece, in collaboration with Watney Mann Ltd.) The main motif is stated initially by unaccompanied violin. When joined by the piano, Leighton makes extremely effective use of writing single notes in each hand either one or three octaves apart, thus creating an increasingly heightened tension in the introduction.

In the first of eight transformations of the main theme, marked *tempo giusto e molto ritmico*, Leighton introduces an irregular, spiky semi-quaver figuration, which eventually gives way to an impassioned *adagio* section.

Opening with dramatic chords in the piano, the music gradually subsides into an isolated pianissimo and then provides the first pause in the work. There follows a *vivo* episode in which the violin pizzicato responds to the single irregular quaver movement in

the piano. The mood of the music becomes ever more frenetic, finally finding respite in a tranquil, muted *andante* section, whose final few mesmeric bars give way to a slightly quicker variation of the preceding transformation. A violent and forceful variation follows a second brief pause. A complex assortment of irregular time signatures creates an atmosphere of unrest, the brutal accented cross rhythms culminating in a sweeping melodic *appassionato* in the violin against continuing violent punctuation in the piano.

The final pause precedes what is best described as the epilogue. A *quasi recitativo* passage gives way to a lengthy piano solo marked *adagio sostenuto*. The violin enters, accompanying the piano line with a sequence of high harmonics that eventually gives way to a sustained, expressive melodic line. The quiet calm of the music ultimately concludes with the solo violin in its highest register, creating a mirror image of the opening bars of Metamorphoses.

1. John V. Cockshott, 'The Music of Kenneth Leighton', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 98, No. 1370 (April 1957), p.193.

2. Cockshott, p.193.

3. 'Composer takes new role', 19 May 2010, press release, *University of Leeds*, 4 December 2012 http://www.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/812/composer_takes_new_university_role

Edwin Paling

Edwin was born in Nottingham, England. After studying violin with Sidney Griller at the Royal Academy of Music in London, Edwin began his professional career playing with the Orchestra of the Royal Ballet, Covent Garden (London), the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (Sub-Principal First Violin), then the BBC Midland Light Orchestra (Deputy Leader).

He then moved to Scotland where he became Concertmaster of the Royal Scottish National



Orchestra, a position which he held for over thirty years. Edwin has worked with a vast number of internationally renowned conductors and soloists, and leaves behind a legacy of several hundred critically acclaimed recordings.

During his extremely successful and distinguished career as Orchestra Leader, Edwin also played in the position of Guest Concertmaster with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the BBC Philharmonic and the Northern Sinfonia, amongst other British Orchestras.

Throughout his years in Scotland, Edwin taught the violin and viola and coached Chamber Music at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD) and Douglas Academy, a Secondary School for musically gifted children. He has an international reputation as a gifted teacher, with past-pupils in professional music, playing as soloists and orchestral and chamber musicians throughout the world.



Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey

Born in Tasmania, Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey studied piano in Melbourne where, in 1999, she was one of the few elite young Australian musicians awarded full scholarship for the prestigious Australian National Academy of Music's inaugural Advanced Performance Program. Now teaching classical piano, music history and art theory at the University of Tasmania, Arabella maintains an active performance career.

She performs frequently as a chamber musician; as soloist with organisations such as the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, the State Orchestra of Victoria, and the Melbourne Chorale; and has performed in the United Kingdom with violinist Edwin Paling, and in numerous festivals within Australia.

In addition to her musical talents, she also holds a doctorate degree from the University of Tasmania. Research for her dissertation considered James McNeill Whistler's interest in music and how it influenced his creation of art. Her articles have been published in *The British Art Journal*, *Music and Art* and *The Burlington Magazine*. She has presented lecture-recitals at the Hunterian Museum and Art

Gallery in Glasgow, Scotland; the Freer Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) and at Colby College Museum of Art (Maine, USA), and is a sought-after presenter of pre-concert talks for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

Recorded at Move Records studio

Recording and editing: Vaughan McAlley

Mastering: Martin Wright

Liner notes: Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey and Edwin Paling

Photo of Edwin Paling: Rosalin Lazaroff

Photo of Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey:

Michael Kieran Harvey

Photos of Kenneth Leighton: by kind permission of Josephine Leighton

Front cover painting: *Abstract with Violin* by Alison Lazaroff-Somssich



When Hobart artist Alison Lazaroff-Somssich isn't painting, walking her dog and looking after her lovely husband and two wonderful children she fills in her spare time playing violin in the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

This recording was partly funded by Arts Tasmania and the University of Tasmania. We would also like to thank Rosalin Lazaroff for her assistance during the recording sessions.

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More English music for violin and piano

The music of English composer Lennox Berkeley provides the listener with a diverse, creative and inspired reflection on the artistic influences of his time.

The skilful expertise of his technique juxtaposes the neo-classical with blues and the avant-garde with folk music.

This recording, also performed by Edwin Paling and Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey, includes the premiere recording of both the *Violin Sonata no. 1* and *Violin Sonata no. 2*, in addition to the more familiar *Introduction and Allegro*, *Theme and Variations* and *Sonatina*.

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