

A lighthouse with a white base and a red band, situated on a grassy hill overlooking the ocean. The sky is a soft, hazy blue.

Enchanted Tracings:

Music of
Carson Cooman



The works on this disc come from a six year period (2003–08) and were specifically chosen to create an interrelated program. Though the works were not originally composed as specifically connected entities, they share many of the same musical preoccupations and contain references to the elements and influences that have informed my music during this period of time—notably my interest in the gestures and structural templates of Medieval and Renaissance sacred and secular music and my intertwined interest in American neo-romanticism and athletic modernism.

— Carson Cooman

Fanfare for DGF (2008; op. 763) for orchestra was commissioned by the Harvard Band Foundation for the inauguration of Drew Gilpin Faust as the 28th president of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Remembering Tomorrow: Trombone Concerto (2004; op. 580) was commissioned by and is dedicated to trombonist Haim Avitsur. Throughout the work, the trombone is placed into a variety of different musical contexts—sometimes those of bleakness and sometimes those of warmth. The work begins with a presentation of the principal musical material by the tubular bells alone. The strings enter with a suspended tapestry, through which the trombone plays its opening melodies. In this section, the trombone has a cantorial role—singing and interacting with the orchestra. These opening musical ideas are developed as the trumpet, horn, and clarinet join the trombone in soloistic roles. A signal gesture on the trumpet is heard once, interrupting the tapestry. When the signal is heard again, the music accelerates into the second section. The second section is fast and bell-like as the trombone sings excited lines through ringing masses of sound. Whirring figurations emerge in the winds and are picked up by the strings. The section grows wilder until it climaxes in hammer chords. From this, the trumpet, bells, and trombone emerge—maintaining and propelling the energy of the section. Gradually, the energy is released, leading into the third section. The third section is chorale-like, combining again suspended sounds in the strings with harmonic motion in the winds in brass. The trombone again plays a cantorial role, interacting with a texture of suspended tonality. A short burst

Carson Cooman (b. 1982) is an American composer with a catalogue of works in many forms, ranging from solo instrumental pieces to operas, and from orchestral works to hymn tunes. He is in continual demand for new commissions, and his music has been performed on all six inhabited continents. His work is published primarily by MMB Music, Inc. and Musik Fabrik (orchestral/instrumental music) and Wayne Leupold Editions, Inc. (organ/choral music). Cooman's music appears on over twenty-five recordings, including seven complete CDs on the Naxos, Albany, and Zimbel labels. Cooman's primary composition studies have been with Bernard Rands, Judith Weir, Alan Fletcher and James Willey. As an active concert organist, Cooman specializes exclusively in the performance of new music. Over 120 new works have been composed for him by composers from around the world, and his performances of the work of contemporary composers can be heard on a number of CD recordings. Cooman is also a writer on musical subjects, producing articles and reviews frequently for a number of international publications. He is currently the editor of *Living Music Journal* and serves as an active consultant on music business matters to composers and performing organizations.



For more information about Cooman's music, visit his website at: <http://www.carsoncooman.com>

Fanfare for DGF, Remembering Tomorrow: Trombone Concerto, In What Time Remains, Oboe Quartet, Enchanted Tracings (Piano Concerto No. 2), and Brass Quintet, and are published by Fabrik Musical Publications (ASCAP), a division of Musik Fabrik, Lagny-sur-Marne, France; www.classicalmusicnow.com

Beyond All Knowing is published by Lauren Keiser Music Publishing (ASCAP)

Nora Skuta, one of the Slovakia's leading musicians, is active as a soloist and chamber pianist. Her repertoire ranges from the works of J. S. Bach to contemporary composers. Skuta has collaborated with numerous significant composers, including Sofia Gubaidulina, Steve Reich, Louis Andriessen, Christian Wolff, and Giya Kancheli. She has performed in recital and festival appearances throughout Europe, North and South America, and Asia, and received a special prize for "best performance of a new work" at the Gaudeamus International Competition in Rotterdam. Her solo CD of John Cage's *Sonatas and Interludes* for prepared piano received double five-star accolades in BBC Music Magazine, Classic FM, and International Record Review. Her large discography includes concerti by a variety of contemporary composers, including a recording of Carson Cooman's first piano concerto on the Naxos label.



Conductor **Kirk Trevor** was music director of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (1985–2003) and is currently music director of the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra (since 1988), and the Missouri Symphony (since 2000). Trevor trained at London's Guildhall School of Music, graduating in cello performance and conducting. He has guest conducted over forty orchestras in twelve countries. His debut with the London Symphony Orchestra was in January 2003 and Carnegie Hall debut in 2007. Trevor is one of the most recorded conductors of the past decade with over fifty recordings of new American music with the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra in Bratislava, plus twenty recordings with other orchestras for the EMI, Koch, Albany, Fatra, Crystal and Carlton Classics labels. Trevor is becoming widely recognized as one of the leading conducting teachers in the world. He has been a master teacher for the American Symphony

Orchestra League as well as the Conductor's Guild. In 1991, Trevor co-founded and has been Artistic Director of the International Workshop for Conductors held in the Czech Republic for a month every summer. IWC is the world's largest conducting school, each year training over 80 conductors from 20 countries. He has released previous discs of Carson Cooman's music on the Naxos and Zimbel labels.

of energy occurs at the end of this section, which leads directly into the fourth and final section—the cadenza. The trombone bursts into the cadenza, not with a forceful shout, but with a whisper. The work winds down to its conclusion—without a loss of speed or energy, but rather by the increase of silence.



In What Time Remains (2005; op. 636) for brass quintet was composed in memory of Ron Frewin, the composer's great-uncle. The work is a elegiac nocturne in one movement. The opening begins with a slow, pulsing gesture in the two trumpets from which the three lower instruments emerge in a melodic discourse. The second section of the work is in a flowing triple meter and moves towards a joyous climax. A quiet and simple duet between trumpet and horn is echoed by trombone and tuba before the final extended section, which recalls and expands the opening material. The work ends peacefully.



Oboe Quartet (2007; op. 735) for oboe and string trio was commissioned by Richard Mason. The oboe quartet genre tends to inspire two different kinds of works: in one type, the pieces are conceived as “mini-oboe concerti” with the oboe defined as a clear solo voice over the backing of the string trio; in the other type of work, the oboe is the “first among equals” in an integrated chamber music discourse. This work falls into the latter category. In the recent years, wonderful oboe quartets from Yehudi Wyner (1999), Elliott Carter (2001), and Fred Lerdahl (2002) have continued to define an American voice in this genre.

This work is cast in a single movement, controlled by a loose variation form with the intent of creating a single musical “line” and narrative. From the beginning to the end, there is continuous melodic and harmonic development, working towards creating a structure which, though tightly controlled, is also somewhat improvisatory in spirit and generally dark in color. The textures throughout do not shy away from exploring some of the more rough-hewn and “raw” sounds of the oboe and strings. The music can be grouped broadly into three sections, each of which is a large-scale variation and each also containing a number of overlapping smaller variations and reprises. The opening, with its nervous cascades of pizzicato strings, is marked “tumbling wildly, with restless energy.” Switching to bowed playing, the cello states the basic musical material of the piece: a whirling series of melodic intervals. An oboe cadenza (“colored” by the strings) begins the development and

leads into a contrapuntal texture with interplay and flourishes between all four instruments. The next section is marked “keening, fierce lament.” (Keening is defined as a “wailing lament for the dead.”) The underlying pulse of the music is slow, but it is full in sonority and passionate in gesture which often employs simple unison colors. The shorter final section contains aspects of both the two preceding sections, as part of the ongoing development. In places, the music moves even further towards the raw and violent in affect. The final coda, however, is slow and lyrical as the oboe sings a last melody over “bell-like” chords in the strings.



Enchanted Tracings (Piano Concerto No. 2) (2008; op. 762) for solo piano and wind ensemble was commissioned for a consortium of Donna Amato, piano, the Carnegie Mellon Wind Ensemble, Denis Colwell, conductor; Keith Kirchoff, piano, the Harvard Wind Ensemble, Thomas G. Everett, Mark Olson, conductors; and Nora Skuta, piano, the Slovak Radio Symphony Winds, Kirk Trevor, conductor. These three marvelous piano soloists served as the inspiration for the work. The concerto bears the dedication “for Walter Simmons, a hero for the cause of American music.” Musicologist Walter Simmons has been an inspirational and passionate advocate for serious American concert music for nearly his entire life. Through his tireless efforts as author, critic, record and concert producer, and lecturer, Walter has brought myriad composers and works to much-deserved attention.

The basic musical material for the entire work is presented near the outset, the pitches Eb – D – G – Ab – E. This cell is used throughout the rest of the concerto both motivically, in transformation, and as a harmonic structural device. Its harmonic identity creates the mix of tonal/modal and atonal constructs that are a preoccupation of my music. The concerto’s title provided the poetic idea behind the musical development. Though more or less equal with the ensemble in the first movement, the piano clearly takes over as leader in the second and third movements as the goal-directed formal narrative of the movements becomes more obvious. The first movement, *Murky Waters*, is a free fantasy in which the piano and ensemble “unpack” the musical potential of the basic material. A number of melodic ideas emerge—some lyrical and some disjunct. A brief coda prepares for the next movement. The second movement, *The Forgotten*, is a lament led by the piano. The harmonic colors of the piano’s sustaining sounds interact with the more linear textures of the winds and brass. The third movement, *Casting Infinity*, is purposeful and structured as a march with trio. The spiky melodic material is treated in a variety of manners (including very tonally within the trio) before a return of material from the first movement pushes the concerto towards its conclusion.

Beyond All Knowing (2003; op. 538) for chamber orchestra was commissioned by Richard Mason and is dedicated to Matthew Burt. The work is mystical in its sound world and attempts to create a “sacred space.” After an opening introduction, the basic material is presented exclusively in perfect 5ths. This material is re-iterated then in a changed form using only perfect 4ths. Then the 4ths material is presented in retrograde, followed by the 5ths material.



Brass Quintet (2007; op. 719) was commissioned by the Aspen Music Festival and is dedicated to composer Alan Fletcher. The piece is cast in a one-movement, loose sonata form. The work begins with a lyrical and slow exposition, marked “distant, unfolding.” A horn solo interrupts the lyrical lines, anticipating the development section. The development is faster in pace and jagged in contour, beginning with all five players in interlocking harmonic interplay. Out of this texture, a series of three duos (trumpet/tuba, horn/trombone, and two trumpets) emerge. The final trumpet duo presents the opening lyrical ideas re-cast as a herald fanfare. A brief, slow interlude leads to the recapitulation, marked “excited, relentless.” A series of hocketing ostinati create the backdrop over which the original material returns. Though the music has a different mood, the structural template is the same as in the exposition. The piece drives forward to its conclusion.



Robert Kozánek, a native of the Czech Republic, has studied at the Conservatory of Pavel Josef Vejvanovský in Jaroslav Kummer and at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague with Miloslav Hejda and Jiri Sušický. Kozánek is laureate of many national and international competitions: Prague Spring 1997, Brno 1997, CIEM Geneve 1998, Gdansk 1999, Markneukirchen 2002, Jeju 2002, Lieksa 2003, Helsinki 2003, and London 2004. He performs as a soloist with many orchestras in the Czech Republic and is an active chamber musician. Since January 2002, he has been principal trombone with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra in Prague.

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Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kirk Trevor, conductor
- [2] *Remembering Tomorrow: Trombone Concerto* (2004) 10:35
Robert Kozánek, trombone,
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kirk Trevor, conductor
- [3] *In What Time Remains* (2005) for brass quintet 05:51
Petr La Garde, Ratislav Suchan, trumpets; Igor Bielik, horn;
Albert Hrubovcak, trombone; Nikolaj Kanisak, tuba
- [4] *Oboe Quartet* (2007) for oboe and string trio 17:24
Igor Fabera, oboe
Robert Marecek, violin; Alexander Lakatos, viola; Jan Slavik, cello
- Enchanted Tracings (Piano Concerto No. 2)* (2008) (15:59)
for solo piano and wind ensemble
- [5] I. Murky Waters 06:21
- [6] II. The Forgotten 06:18
- [7] III. Casting Infinity 03:20
Nora Skuta, piano,
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kirk Trevor, conductor
- [8] *Beyond All Knowing* (2003) for chamber orchestra 08:14
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TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 66:12

World premiere recordings.



Executive producer: **Carson Cooman**
Disc mastering: **Overtone Audio**

Fanfare for DGF (4); *Remembering Tomorrow: Trombone Concerto* (2); *In What Time Remains* (3); *Oboe Quartet* (3); *Enchanted Tracings (Piano Concerto No. 2)* (4); *Beyond All Knowing* (1); *Brass Quintet* (3)

Production Coordination:
Marian Turner and **Kirk Trevor**
Session Production and Editing:
Emil Niznansky

Engineering: **Hubert Geschwandtner**
(1) January 11, 2004; (2) May 24, 2007,
(3) December 8, 2007, (4) May 20, 2008
Slovak Radio Hall, Bratislava, Slovakia

Cover artwork: "*Light Years Ahead*",
Loretta Yoder (www.lorettayoder.com)
Graphic Design: **Jim Manly**

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