

NAXOS

HENZE

Guitar Music • 2

Franz Halász, Guitar

Anna Torge, Mandolin • Cristina Bianchi, Harp
ensemble oktopus • Konstantia Gourzi



Hans Werner Henze (b. 1926)

Guitar Music • 2

There can be few living composers other than Hans Werner Henze who have had such remarkable success with an extraordinary quantity of music in all genres. A brief glance at his catalogue includes a formidable series of stage works (both opera and ballet), ten symphonies and numerous concertos, and it is on these large-scale structures that his stature as one of Europe's foremost composers rests.

Born in Westphalia in 1926 Henze grew up against the background of Nazism, receiving his earliest musical training at the Brunswick State School of Music. He became a reluctant recruit into the Hitler Youth movement and in 1944 his short-lived army service as a radio operator with a Panzer division ended in capture by the British forces and incarceration as a prisoner-of-war. After his release he returned to formal education, studying first with Wolfgang Fortner, and later with René Leibowitz in Darmstadt and Paris. It was, however, the music of Stravinsky, Hindemith and Schoenberg that Henze turned to as models for his earliest neo-classical pieces whose innate lyricism was to mark his œuvre across a sixty-year composing career. Both his early *Violin Concerto* and *First Symphony* of 1947 quickly established Henze as Germany's answer to the musical vacuum resulting from the aftermath of Nazism.

Repelled by Germany's spiritual ugliness, its post-war social attitudes to homosexuality and ashamed of his country's recent past with its culture of denial, Henze moved to Italy in the summer of 1953, eventually settling in a new villa among olive groves in the hills near Rome. From this southern perspective a new, sunny radiance filtered into his compositions generating a sequence of stage works that began in 1955 with *König Hirsch* and culminating, ten years later, with his overtly pacifist opera *The Bassarids*. From the late 1960s there followed a series of politically motivated works that included the notorious première of his oratorio *The Raft of the Medusa*, the chamber piece *El Cimarrón* and his opera *La Cubana*. As well as these

expansive 'public' works Henze found time in the 1970s for a number of chamber pieces that include three string quartets and his two Shakespearean themed guitar sonatas entitled *Royal Winter Music*. Not since his *Drei Tentos* of 1958 had he written for such a large-scale and completely independent solo guitar work.

In *Royal Winter Music* each of the nine movements (six in the *First Sonata* and three in the *Second*) take as their starting point a different character from one of Shakespeare's plays. The *First Sonata on Shakespearean Characters* dates from 1975-76 and was prompted by the distinguished guitarist Julian Bream who some years earlier had jokingly asked for something on the scale of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata*. Henze says of his music, 'The dramatis personae ... enter through the sound of the guitar as if it were a curtain.'

Gloucester is based on the opening monologue of Richard III, 'Now is the winter of our discontent', where harsh dissonance, wide intervals and rhythmic complexity make up a musical portrait of this troubled and destructive personality. A second, gentler idea suggests the 'lascivious pleasing of a lute', but Gloucester's ruthless ambitions become more apparent in percussive gestures that colour this turbulent movement. In *Romeo and Juliet* the composer creates a sweetly sad movement in free design, its two-voice texture mirroring the lovers' dialogue from the familiar balcony scene in Act II. Using rising intervals framing a twelve tone row Henze movingly conveys the longing of the ill-fated lovers. In a resourceful movement that is by turns reflective and urgent Henze employs rapid figuration and harp-like arpeggios that vividly illuminate the captured airy sprite *Ariel* and his hard won attempts for freedom. We encounter Hamlet's *Ophelia* during her madness and at the point of her drowning. Henze commented that he was thinking of the Millais painting of Ophelia walking into the river and singing to herself. Accompanying arpeggios (suggestive of lapping water) underpin fragmentary and halting

references from his opera *We come to the River*. By way of contrast *Touchstone*, *Audrey* and *William* (*As you like it*) form a brief comic and now more tonal movement. *Touchstone* the clown appears with witty staccato phrases, gentle *Audrey* is marked by soft triplet rhythms and the music of the solidly reliable *William* is supported by fifths. The rivalry between *Touchstone* and *William* (who both love *Audrey*) is conveyed in the assertive rhythms of the final passage. If this movement can be likened to a scherzo and trio then *Oberon* completes this six-movement sonata as a rondo. Marked to be played majestically, *Oberon*'s dream-like state concludes this comprehensive survey of guitar techniques in a mood of rapt peacefulness.

Carillon, *Récitatif*, *Masque* is scored for mandolin, guitar and harp and dates from 1974. The extended first part exploits each of the three plucked instruments in a wide range of bell timbres, and within these delicate sonorities Henze encloses a central guitar solo between two unambiguously tonal outer sections. A song-like *Récitatif* with a harp cadenza is followed by a *Masque* in which all three instruments have an equal share of the musical discussion. The three pieces received their première in London in February 1977.

Drei Märchenbilder (Three Fairy Tale Pictures) for solo guitar all derive from his children's opera *Pollicino* written in 1980. Henze based this work on the tale of Tom Thumb and dedicated it to the children of Montepulciano, a small town in Tuscany where he had founded a music festival four years earlier. This 'social' opera explores troubled relationships between parents and children, the injustices of childhood and its poverty and hunger. Poverty has driven *Pollicino*, the little hero, and his six brothers far from home and they are forced to seek refuge in the house of the man-eater *Orco*. All ends happily and the three movements derived from the opera, *Pastorale*, *Arietta* and *Notturmo*, display Henze's ability to create music that is expressive and direct in its infinite lyricism.

An eine Äolsharfe (To an Aeolian Harp) is in all but name a concerto for guitar and fifteen solo instruments. Completed in 1986 and given its première that August by the American guitarist David Tanenbaum, its inspiration is taken once again from literature – the German Romantic poet Eduard Mörike (1804-1875). Like *Royal Winter Music* Henze uses texts as a means to an end, restructuring the essence of a poem into an equivalent musical form. Thus four of Mörike's poems are refashioned into a purely instrumental cycle of four meditations. Henze observed that 'The poems were originally set to music as if they were Lieder texts, and then in a process of gradual sublimation changed into instrumental music.' He also wished to find a 'rapt tone' something which he achieves in his sombre instrumentation whose dark colouring includes alto and bass flutes, viola d'amore and viola da gamba and vibraphone.

In the first movement, which shares its title with the entire work, one can almost imagine music emanating from the evening breeze as it blows through the strings of an Aeolian harp – associated here with the guitar. Henze responds to a poetic text that confronts themes of transience and loss with chromatic yet transparent music and shimmering textures to create a mood of brooding melancholy and sweet reminiscence. In the second movement (*Question and Answer*) woodwind and percussion add their own disturbing commentaries on the trials and tribulations of love. *To Philomena*, a Bagatelle, provides rising thirds and dense textures to contribute to its sense of irrepresible longing. The final movement, *To Hermann*, is based on the 'Dionysus' tone row from *The Bassarids* where, in an emotionally charged tonal drama, Henze demonstrates his exceptional gifts as an orchestrator and writer for the guitar.

David Truslove

Franz Halász



The German guitarist Franz Halász began his international career in 1993, when he was awarded first prize in the Andrés Segovia Competition in Spain and in the same year first prize in the Japan SETO-OHASHI Competition. In 2000 he won an award from the Munich Ministry for Science and Culture and in 2007 took the Bavarian Culture Prize. His many recordings for BIS include the complete guitar music of Joaquín Turina and Toru Takemitsu, and since 2006 he has been recording the guitar compositions of Henze for Naxos. A guest performer at major festivals and events throughout the world, he has worked together with colleagues of high distinction, and since 1995 has collaborated in a duo with the Brazilian pianist Débora Halász. For ten years he served as a professor at the Nuremberg Musikhochschule and since 2010 has held a similar position at the Munich Hochschule für Musik und Theater. He also offers masterclasses at Institutes all over the world including the Manhattan School of Music in New York, the Royal Academy Stockholm, the Academy of Music in Oslo, the Salzburg Mozarteum, São Paulo University, Esmuc in Barcelona and Musikene San Sebastián.

Anna Torge



As a mandolin-player and guitarist Anna Torge has won a number of prizes in national and international competitions. Her career was furthered through the Yehudi Menuhin *Live Music Now* Foundation and other distinctions include the 1997 culture prize of the city of Schrobenehausen. With her study of the mandolin, baroque mandolin and guitar she has herself taught at courses at home and abroad, in particular encouraging the 'mother-tongue method' of learning the guitar.

Cristina Bianchi



Cristina Bianchi was born in Milan and had her first harp lessons at the age of seven with Luciana Chierici at the Milan City School of Music. She completed her diploma with the highest distinction at the age of sixteen and from 1989 to 1995 was principal harpist with the European Community Youth Orchestra and from 1996 to 2001 held the same position at the Genoa Teatro Carlo Felice. From 2001 to 2008 she was principal harpist in the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and in 2007 was appointed professor of harp at the Munich Hochschule für Musik und Theater. She has been a prize-winner in a number of international competitions, including the International Harp Competition in Bloomington, the

Prix Lily Laskine in Paris, the International Harp Contest in Israel and the Victor Salvi Competition in Italy. She has served on juries for various international harp competitions.

ensemble oktopus



Photo: Regine Heiland

The ensemble oktopus for modern music was established in February 2003 by the conductor, composer and artistic director Konstantia Gourzi, devoted to a repertoire principally from the twentieth century and the contemporary for chamber ensemble and chamber orchestra in innovative and exploratory programmes. In 2006 the ensemble gave an acclaimed benefit concert for Yehudi Menuhin – Live Music Now and was nominated for the German Film Music Prize for its soundtrack in 2007 for Christian Wagner's film *Stille Sehnsucht – Warchild*. Members of the ensemble play with Konstantia Gourzi's international opus21musikplus ensemble.

Alto flute: Marta Glowatzky

Bass flute: Vanessa Brenzinger

Oboe d'amore: Hideki Machida

Cor anglais: Vasyli Zakopetz

Bass clarinet: Christoph Gördes

Bassoon: Tobias Albrecht

Percussion: Sebastian Förschl,
Michael Kaszas

Harp: Antonia Schulze-Schreiber

Viola d'amore: Ines Wein.

Viols: Maria Christova, Caitlin Boyle

Viola da gamba: Johannes Fink

Cello: Peter Schmidt,
Joachim Wohlgemuth

Double bass: Jan Jirmasek

Guitar soloist: Franz Halász

Conductor: Konstantia Gourzi

Konstantia Gourzi



Photo: Detlev Schneider

Konstantia Gourzi is among the leading promoters of contemporary music. As prize-winner of the Christoph and Stephan Kaske Foundation she stands in a line with Pierre Boulez and György Ligeti. A composer and conductor, she is the founder and leader of the ensemble oktopus for modern music and of the international network opus21musikplus for the promotion and performance of music with theatre, dance and the visual arts. oktopus is one of the ensembles of the Munich Hochschule for Music and Theatre, where Konstantia Gourzi has served as a professor since 2002, guiding musicians of the future towards new artistic ways of thinking and forms of interpretation. Her work as a successful pioneer in new music is witnessed by her many broadcasts and television appearances.

**Royal Winter Music,
'Guitar Sonata No. 1 on
Shakespearean Characters' 31:31**

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1 I. Gloucester | 6:58 |
| 2 II. Romeo and Juliet | 3:02 |
| 3 III. Ariel | 7:05 |
| 4 IV. Ophelia | 2:44 |
| 5 V. Touchstone, Audrey
and William | 3:55 |
| 6 VI. Oberon | 7:47 |

Carillon, Récitatif, Masque 10:07

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 7 I. Carillon | 6:11 |
| 8 II. Récitatif | 2:18 |
| 9 III. Masque | 1:39 |

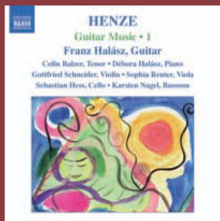
**Drei Märchenbilder aus 'Pollicino'
(Three Fairy Tale Pictures
from 'Pollicino') 5:51**

- (arr. Reinbert Evers for guitar)
- | | |
|--------------------------|------|
| 10 I. Moderato | 1:36 |
| 11 II. Allegretto | 1:38 |
| 12 III. Molto meno mosso | 2:37 |

**Ode an eine Äolsharfe
(Ode to an Aeolian Harp) 22:55**

- | | |
|---|------|
| 13 I. An eine Äolsharfe
(To an Aeolian Harp) | 6:39 |
| 14 II. Frage und Antwort
(Question and Answer) | 3:54 |
| 15 III. An Philomene (To Philomena) | 4:50 |
| 16 IV. An Hermann (To Hermann) | 7:31 |

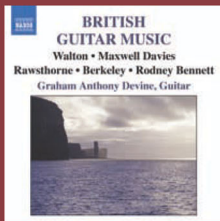
Also available



8.557344



8.557738



8.557040



8.557658



8.557345

DDD

 Playing Time
70:24

 © & © 2010 Naxos Rights International Ltd.
 Booklet notes in English
 Disc made in Canada. Printed and assembled in USA.
www.naxos.com

Few living composers besides Hans Werner Henze have enjoyed such remarkable success across such a wide range of musical genres, from large-scale concert and stage works to chamber and instrumental pieces. Henze's interests are wide-ranging and deeply humanistic, the music heard here drawing inspiration from Shakespearean characters (*Royal Winter Music*), the injustices of childhood (*Three Fairy Tales from 'Pollicino'*), the poetry of Eduard Mörike (*Ode to an Aeolian Harp*) and the sensuous lyricism suggested by the movement titles of his triptych *Carillon, Récitatif, Masque*. Volume 1 is available on 8.557344.

KOPRODUKTION MIT


 Hans Werner
HENZE
 (b. 1926)

Guitar Music • 2

- [1]-[6] **Royal Winter Music, 'Guitar Sonata No. 1 on Shakespearean Characters'** (1975-76) **31:31**
 [7]-[9] **Carillon, Récitatif, Masque** (1974)¹ **10:07**
 [10]-[12] **Three Fairy Tale Pictures from 'Pollicino'** (arr. Reinbert Evers for guitar) (1980) **5:51**
 [13]-[16] **Ode to an Aeolian Harp** (1986)² **22:55**

Franz Halász, Guitar

Anna Torge, Mandolin¹ • **Cristina Bianchi, Harp**¹
ensemble oktopus² • **Konstantia Gourzi**²

A detailed track list can be found on the last page of the booklet.

Recorded at Studio 2, Bayerischen Rundfunk, Germany, on 5th and 6th May, 2007 (tracks 1-6); on 5th November, 2008 (tracks 7-9); on 25th November, 2003 (tracks 10-12); and recorded live at Grosser Saal, Musikhochschule München, Germany, on 7th November, 2004 (tracks 13-16)

Executive Producer BR: Helmut Rohm • Recording Producers: Andreas Fischer (tracks 1-9), Dagmar Birwe (tracks 10-12), Michael Grobe (13-16) • Engineers: Christiane Voit (tracks 1-6), Ulrike Schwarz (tracks 7-9), Peter Urban (tracks 10-12), Michael Grobe (13-16)

Editors: Andreas Fischer (tracks 1-9), Dagmar Birwe (tracks 10-12), Michael Grobe (tracks 13-16)
 Mastering: Andreas Fischer • Publisher: Schott Music International • Booklet Notes: David Truslove

Cover: *Verbunden* by Milena Rehborn (www.milena-rehborn.de)