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PHOTO: MARIA FRODL



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Huw Wiggin

## TRIBUTE: KEN BATTY

by Frank Dixon

Ken Batty, who has died aged 91, had already retired from a successful legal career in the mid-1980s when he became one of the most highly regarded non-professional musicians in the Greater Manchester area. He was best known as principal clarinet of the Wilmslow Symphony Orchestra, but also played clarinet and saxophone in big bands, theatre pits and many ad hoc chamber music groups. One of these coalesced into the Cestrian Saxophone Quartet.

The four of us – Ken Batty (soprano), Frank Proctor (alto), Frank Dixon (tenor) and Gordon Robson (baritone) – committed ourselves to regular weekly rehearsals and worked hard to develop into a viable ensemble. Ken was our driving force. Never overtly assertive, he led by quietly authoritative example.

He helped in many other ways, not least by providing us with a wonderfully congenial rehearsal space. This was a beautiful 16th century thatched barn next to his home at Allostock in Cheshire, the county whose Latin name inspired our Cestrian title. 'The Barn' is the title of one of the movements of the *Cestrian Sketches* by Don Ashton, who became our fifth member. Don came to nearly all of our rehearsals, usually bringing new arrangements and compositions. Under Ken's leadership, the Cestrians were the first to play many of Don's works, which now have an assured place in the saxophone quartet repertoire.

Ken's friendship with Don – and indeed with the rest of us – continued after his move in the early 2000s to Lytham, where he continued an active musical life until his final illness ended his playing career. He was an early user of the Sibelius computer program, and produced, under the Batty Press imprint, many quartet arrangements of his own, which he generously sent to the other Cestrians.

It has often been said that chamber music is like the conversation of friends. This old observation certainly holds good for the Cestrians, whose surviving members feel the loss not only of a fine musician but also of a witty, warm and generous companion.

## CASSGB Christmas offer

CASSGB is offering a 25% reduction in membership during December, just in time for Christmas. Membership includes this magazine delivered to your door, free use of our substantial sheet music library, reduced entry to our popular events, reduced price concert tickets and other offers, our free classified ads service and funding opportunities for your projects. We are a UK-based society with members all over the world, delivering our magazine to over 30 countries. Why not gift a membership to a fellow single-reader this Christmas? Visit our website or social media to find out how.

## CASSGB Annual General Meeting

The next CASSGB Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on Sunday 13 January, 3pm at Citadines Hotel, 94-99 High Holborn, London, WC1V 6LF. The AGM is open to all members and is an opportunity to meet the directors of CASSGB and give your views on the future direction of the organisation. Accounts for 2017-18 can be downloaded from the members area of the CASSGB website. Any member wishing to attend should book a place via email ([secretary@cassgb.org](mailto:secretary@cassgb.org)).

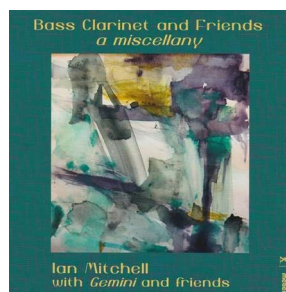
**25% OFF**  
membership during  
December



## Trifarious appointed artists in residence at University of Surrey

Trifarious, comprising Tim Redpath (clarinet/saxophone), Rachel Calaminus (violin/viola) and Nadine André (piano), have been appointed artists in residence at the University of Surrey. Trifarious specialise in the commissioning and performance of new works that bridge classical, jazz and world music. They will present performances, masterclasses, workshops and open rehearsals, bringing music and media students together for collaborative working. More information about Trifarious can be found on their website ([www.trifarious.com](http://www.trifarious.com)).

## Bass Clarinet and Friends CD



The clarinettist Ian Mitchell has released a new two-CD album, *Bass Clarinet and Friends – a Miscellany*, featuring Gemini, Mitchell's own ensemble. The record is released on the Métier label and contains, in Mitchell's

words, music that 'deliberately reflects a wide range of styles' in which 'the bass clarinet is not used as a soloist; rather, it's an equal partner in the chamber ensemble or duo.' Mitchell has recorded a short explanatory film, which is easy to find on YouTube, to accompany the release. The album can be purchased online (<https://divineartrecords.com>) or heard on Spotify.

## Clarinet and Flute London

A new large-scale instrument retailer, Clarinet and Flute London, has opened near London's south bank. The store has evolved from its previous incarnation as the Vibe and has relocated, along with the London Sax.co.uk outlet, to 26 Stamford Street, London SE1 9LQ. Find out more on the shop's website (<https://clarinetandflute.com>).



*Roeland Hendrixx, former principal clarinet of the Belgian National Orchestra, now focuses on his career as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. His latest recording, Dedications, features works for clarinet and orchestra by Mozart, Bruch and Gerald Finzi, whose clarinet concerto he has a uniquely personal relationship with. Michael Pearce meets him*

'Dear Thurston: here is a difficult thing to write about. I was asked to do another score for the Three Choirs at Hereford next September: a work for strings, without a soloist, was specified for the Friday morning September 9th. But for some time I've wanted to do a short concerto for clarinet and strings, and eventually they let me have my way. The first thing is to know whether you will take an unwritten concerto on trust. Naturally, if you are willing to do it, I should be as grateful as I should be delighted.'

Dated 2 October 1948, this letter from Gerald Finzi to the clarinetist Frederick 'Jack' Thurston marks the genesis of Finzi's Clarinet Concerto. In a series of letters between 1948 and 1953, Finzi and Thurston discuss a range of subjects before and after the work's premiere in September 1949, including whether some passages were too high or uncomfortable for the soloist, advice from the composer that Thurston should not rush the last movement, the composer's delight at the first performance, and a suggestion from Ralph Vaughan Williams that a short cadenza be added to the first movement.

Nearly half a century later, these letters found their way to the Belgian clarinetist Roeland Hendrixx, having been looked after in the interim by clarinetist Dame Thea King, Thurston's widow. Sadly, Thurston died of lung cancer in 1953, the same year he married King, who continued to champion 20th-century works by British composers after his death, including the Finzi concerto. She never remarried and died in 2007, aged 81.

Hendrixx says, 'After leaving the Antwerp Conservatoire in 1994, I was doing some freelance work but lacked a sense of direction and was still keen to improve my playing. A few people said to me, go and see Thea King in London, she's a fantastic teacher and will be happy to help you. So I contacted her and visited her London home for five or six private lessons. And I will never forget these lessons. They were so intense and insightful. She really made time for me – it was never just one hour, but two, three, sometimes even four hours. Then at the end of the session, Thea would delicately hint that she needed to practise herself, which was the signal that time was up.'

# RECORDING FINZI

Roeland Hendrixx



# Into the light



Paul Gilson

I play historical instruments now and I have a French instrument by Buffet Crampon Evette & Schaeffer. You can really see the connection between the instrument and compositions of the time

*The discovery of original parts for a concerto by the Belgian composer Paul Gilson – the very first concerto written for saxophone – took saxophonist and researcher Kurt Bertels on a journey of discovery. Bertels has now published and performed the work and will record it in 2020. Stephanie Reeve caught up with him in Brussels*

After a week in Ostend at ClarinetFest with a large number of the world's clarinetists, a quiet break in Brussels was just the ticket. And with the city being such an important historical centre for the saxophone, the chances of finding a saxophonist with an interesting tale to tell were going to be high. A short walk from the excellent Musical Instrument Museum, where many of Adolphe Sax's early instruments are on display, is the Brussels Conservatoire. Here, in a cafe within earshot of a rehearsing violinist, is where I met Kurt Bertels, a young saxophonist currently combining promising careers in performance and research on both modern and historical saxophones. Having studied with Norbert Nozy, he embarked on a PhD researching the music of the 19th-century Brussels Conservatoire saxophone class, with a focus on the music by Paul Gilson. Bertels has already edited and produced urtext editions of five works by Gilson, but it is the first concerto that is of major interest to him. He lives on the outskirts of Brussels, close to where Gilson spent much of his life.

**SR:** What is your interest in historical saxophone?

**KB:** My research is about the 19th-century saxophone, specifically the period of the first Brussels Conservatoire saxophone class from 1867 until 1903. I was a modern player, always playing Belgian music, then I wondered what was happening in 19th-century Belgium. I discovered that the very first saxophone professor here in Brussels was Nazaire Beeckman, a clarinet player at the Brussels Opera. François-Joseph Fétis, the director of the conservatoire, asked Adolphe Sax, who was in Paris, to send his saxophone to Beeckman so that he could learn to play it. One of Beeckman's students was Jean Moeremans, who went on to be a ➡



# NEW POSSIBILITIES

*At Codarts, Rotterdam's University of the Arts, clarinet players can now take courses in a wide range of world music specialisms. Alex Simu teaches clarinet music from the Balkans and Turkey at Codarts. He speaks to Marilou den Outer about these new developments*

Alex Simu was very young when he first found himself on the trail of jazz. But in the country where he grew up, Romania, it was not easy to study it properly. Artistic freedom in the country was hard to find, so he quickly sought this abroad, in Amsterdam and New York. Today, Simu (born in Bucharest in 1981) has been working for three years as a teacher at the world music academy at Codarts, the University of the Arts in Rotterdam. After the bachelor's programme, students can choose a specialism and, in consultation with

teachers, create their own master's programme. It is now possible to study all kinds of world music at Codarts, including Latin (with subcategories of Brazilian music and Caribbean music), Argentine tango and Turkish music (with the subcategories of Anatolian and Ottoman music). The styles are adapted for each instrument, and every department within the world music school now has specialist teachers who regularly give masterclasses. Simu is the clarinet teacher for music from the Balkans and Turkey. Why these areas?

'As a child I played in all kinds of folk orchestras,' says Simu. 'We played all kinds of styles of the countries around us. That's how I discovered that the clarinet is a very versatile instrument.'

The lessons Simu gives are largely about improvisation. 'Knowledge of the musical tradition and language is of course important, but a student should also be encouraged to be creative and develop a musical personality of their own. These two elements together provide an innovative musician.'

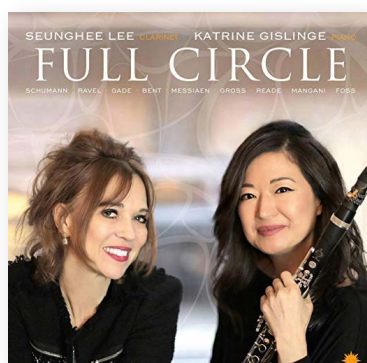
He adds: 'Society also needs a different kind of musician than 50 years ago. In the past, the music schools were meant to deliver musicians for the orchestra that every city had. Now the situation is much more dynamic – there are many different large and small orchestras, and various styles, for example the repertoire of the Netherlands Wind Ensemble, in which classically trained musicians often work with musicians from other traditions. So, if you can only choose one direction at the conservatory, that makes you very vulnerable as a graduate.'

If you are interested in playing the clarinet in Brazilian Choro, Cuban or tango, a lot is possible in Rotterdam, says Simu. There are also many opportunities in jazz, he believes, which is 'a fine, free direction, because although jazz already has a tradition, you can add your own opinion to that music at any time. You are not tied to a type of game – you can play bebop or choose a different jazz language. The jazz clarinet has only a relatively compact history, but a rich palette.' Simu himself is inspired by jazz clarinet players including Benny Goodman, Lester Young, Jimmy Giuffrè, Tony Scott and Buddy DeFranco.

Education at Codarts runs not only according to the curriculum, says Simu. He likes to take students to concerts so that they can gain stage experience. Exchange programmes are also possible, for example in Europe, Turkey, Brazil or Cuba, as well as opportunities for students to work with guest teachers at both the world music and jazz departments. It is now the fourth academic year since the study of clarinet has been available in the jazz and world music departments at Codarts and already there are clarinet students in the Latin, Tango and Turkish music departments, as well as a number of classical clarinet students who are exploring these genres as side subjects. Entrance exams for the academic year 2019-20 will take place in March 2019 – for more information visit [www.codarts.nl](http://www.codarts.nl) or contact Alex Simu via his website ([www.alexsimu.nl](http://www.alexsimu.nl)). ■

Alex Simu

*This article was published originally in De Klarinet magazine, a publication dedicated to the clarinet for Dutch-speaking people in the Benelux and around the world.*



## FULL CIRCLE

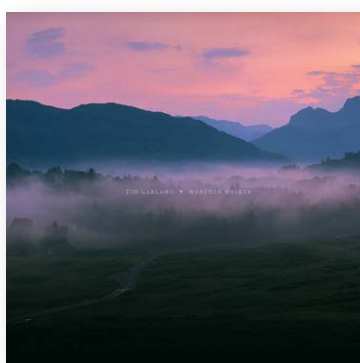
Seunghee Lee (clarinet)  
Katrine Gislunge (piano)  
Musica Solis

*Full Circle* is the latest CD recording by the New York-based clarinetist Seunghee Lee. This is her fifth album for clarinet and piano, and like her earlier albums it contains a mixture of staple repertoire as well as one or two pieces that will be unfamiliar to most listeners. On *Full Circle* we have Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* and other well-known repertoire, albeit appearing infrequently on CD recordings, including: Paul Reade's *Suite from the Victorian Kitchen Garden*, Gade's *Fantasy Pieces*, and a delightful clarinet rendition of Ravel's *Pièce en Forme de Habanera*. Lee also includes a piece of Messiaen on this disc – not the *Abîme de Oiseaux*, which might have been an obvious choice, but the *Vocalise-Etude* which was conceived as a piece for high soprano and piano.

Lee is keen to champion music by USA composers, and the CD features the premiere recording of *Three American Pieces* by Lukas Foss, originally for violin and piano but produced in a new edition prepared by Lee and Richard Stoltzman. Other pieces on the disc given premiere recordings are *Romance* by Brent Sørensen and *Coming Home* by Augusta Gross.

The repertoire on the CD mostly explores the lyrical strengths of the clarinet. The playing and recording quality are first class. Seunghee Lee has also produced a sheet music album and accompanying CD of operatic transcriptions, which complements her *Full Circle* CD of clarinet and piano repertoire. Turn to the music reviews section to read a review of this sheet music album.

Andrew Smith



## WEATHER WALKER

Tim Garland (soprano and tenor saxophone)  
Edition Records

'Crossover' – a style embracing at least two genres of music – has been around since the middle ages, typically blending 'folk themes' with original composition. For single-reed instrumentalists with jazz inclinations, I suppose the earliest efforts fused slave folk chants with early 20th-century dance and bar room music. Thereafter, 'jazzers' willing to indulge in 'crossover' find it quite easy to annoy dedicated fans of each component and pretty difficult to make any money. Thankfully there are some splendid exceptions: Gershwin and Paul Whiteman (*Rhapsody in Blue*), Duke Ellington, Artie Shaw (*Concerto for Clarinet*), the Sauter-Finnegan Orchestra, Stan Getz (the bossa nova craze), Leonard Bernstein (*West Side Story*), Stan Kenton, Eddie Daniels (*Breakthrough*) and, I most sincerely hope, this latest and most intriguing project from Tim Garland.

Garland, who was born in 1966 in Ilford, studied jazz and classical composition at London's Guildhall. He has got plenty of 'previous' in crossover activities. For example: bop/post-bop modern jazz combined with folk music (his Lammas group), English pastoralism (in the Storms/Nocturnes outfit), with classical acoustic material (in Acoustic Triangle), with Chick Corea collaborations (of which more below) and in the Dean Street Underground Orchestra. In all of these he demonstrates an extraordinary technical competence on whatever instrument he selects, be it tenor, soprano, bass clarinet or flute, plus more than a fair share of composition and/or arranging duties.

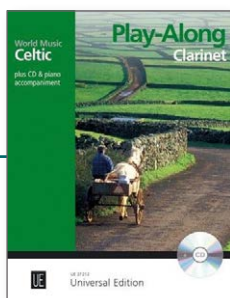
*Weather Walker* delivers a series of what I consider 'soundscapes': 12 individual tracks, each evocative of a landscape, in this case the English Lake District. Composer, conductor and arranger Tim restricts his soloing to tenor and soprano saxophones, backed by a 35-piece string orchestra with an internal octet and 'aided and abetted' by five soloist supporters: Thomas Gould or Magdalena Filipczak (violin), Pablo Held or Jason Rebello (piano) and Yuri Goloubev (double bass). The result is a triumph – an accessible, beautifully recorded (much at the famed Abbey Road Studios) and interesting performance, targeted not only at single-reeders but anyone fond of modern (but not too modern!) cinematic music. Think Vince Mendoza for typical string voicings behind either a rhapsodic or extemporising solo instrument.

Within the 58 minutes' running time we are treated to a wide variety of musical vistas, enhanced both by the tasteful use of symphonic percussion and the provision of generous space for the soloists to improvise freely. I do not mean 'free jazz' improvisation (à la Coltrane) but 'instant solo composition', appropriate to either the mood, the moment or the accompaniment. YouTube carries *Weather Walker* (to my ears with nothing like the fidelity of the CD) as does Spotify. A selection of some of the track titles might help prospective purchasers: 'Rugged Land', 'The Snows', 'The Sky is an Empty Mirror', 'Angry Sun', 'Weather Walker', 'High Fell', 'The Sigh of the Land'. Tim splits his sax contributions between soprano and tenor with some expert excursions into the altissimo register. For those not familiar with his incredible range of single-reedery – especially in the bop/post-bop style – his quite recent work with Chick Corea and The Vigil is well worth a punt (See YouTube: 'Festival de Jazz de Gesteiz 2013', plus many other sessions with the same leader).

Kenneth Morris

# Saxophone



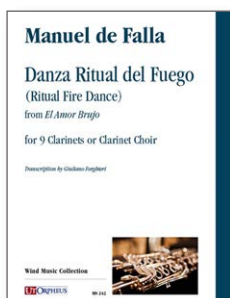


**WORLD MUSIC: CELTIC**  
Traditional, arr Martin Tourish  
Clarinet and CD  
Universal Edition

This book of Celtic music is one of a number of titles from Universal Edition's *World Music* series. Other titles include Irish, Israeli, Russian, Brazilian, Argentinian, klezmer and Balkan music. It is a really good idea to bring the richness and

variety of international musical styles to a wider public in an accessible way. The books are aimed at the intermediate player, although some pieces are easier than others. The collection of Celtic music has eight separate pieces to play, all of different origins: Cornish, Irish, Scottish, Welsh and Breton. The book comes with a piano accompaniment and also an audio CD (with MP3 files). In the *World Music* series, Universal Edition have so far resisted the move being made by some other music publishers who have abandoned CDs in favour of an internet download code. The pieces are usually traditional tunes and are published in a form without any printed articulations. It is therefore up to the player to choose how and where to put articulations in the music.

Andrew Smith



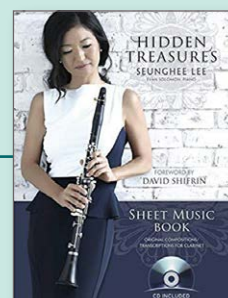
**RITUAL FIRE DANCE**  
Manuel de Falla, arr Giuliano Forghieri  
Clarinet choir  
Ut Orpheus

The front cover says that this arrangement is for nine clarinets or clarinet choir, but the version for review was for mixed choir of E flat, four B flat (of which parts 2 and 3 have divisi), alto or bass horn, and bass. It follows the original in form and begins with trills in clarinets 3 and 4 followed

by the pounding bass line, before parts 1 and 2 bring in the well-known tune. The E flat adds a few sparkles before joining the melody line. The B section is deceptively tricky with the minim-long bars nipping by at quite a pace. While there is a lot of repetition, particularly in the lower parts, the music is relentless and there is always something to think about, whether it is the hairpins up and down, accents or speedy counting of beats.

This is a well thought out arrangement, although the E flat is not used to its full potential given the dramatic nature of the music – but then again, that may be a selling point for some. All parts are demanding, and while clarinet 4 is slightly easier, the players do have a couple of prominent moments. The whole piece is only four minutes long if played fully up to speed, but that will be an intense four minutes! The group I tried this with found it challenging and we stopped several times on the first run-through, mainly as a result of miscounting within the quick two-in-a-bar. However, it was well received and will get included in a future programme.

Stephanie Reeve



Editor's  
choice

**HIDDEN TREASURES**  
Seunghee Lee (clarinet)  
Musica Solis

In 1997 the American clarinetist Richard Stoltzman brought out a highly successful CD called *Aria*, featuring many popular works from the world of opera but without a singer in sight. A sheet music book followed that contained many of these pieces, some easy and some more difficult, such as a stunning version of a fantasy on *Carmen*. Seunghee Lee has taken Stoltzman's concept and produced a new collection of operatic transcriptions for clarinet and piano. This beautifully packaged and presented boxed set of book and CD contains 21 pieces ranging from 'Nessun Dorma' to 'Queen of the Night'. All transcriptions have been done by Lee, and some of the pieces are for the clarinet in A. However, for these pieces there is also a transposed version for the clarinet in B flat.

The operatic transcriptions are fun to play, and are mostly not too technically challenging. The collection also contains one or two transcriptions of non-operatic repertoire, for example a clarinet version of a chromatic Chopin piano *étude*. A strange addition to the collection is a version of the Baermann *Adagio* which, although operatic in style, does seem to sit oddly with the rest of the pieces in the collection. You can find out more about the clarinetist at [www.seungheeclarinet.com](http://www.seungheeclarinet.com).

Andrew Smith