

# Peter Maxwell Davies

chamber works (1952 to 1987)

Guy Cowley

Ian Pace

Kreutzer Quartet

METIER

**Quartet Movement (1952)**

1		<i>Allegro vivace</i>	<b>2.32</b>
---	--	-----------------------	-------------

**Five Pieces for Piano Op. 2 (1955-6)**

2	I	<i>Andante</i>	1.20
3	II	<i>Allegro</i>	1.30
4	III	<i>Andante</i>	6.19
5	IV	<i>Adagio – non troppo</i>	1.55
6	V	<i>Allegretto</i>	4.43

**Sonata for clarinet and piano (1956-7)**

7	I	<i>Moderato</i>	3.51
8	II	<i>Allegro – Presto – Prestissimo</i>	4.08
9	III	<i>Adagio – Lento molto</i>	7.17

**String Quartet (1961)**

10		<i>Adagio – Allegro – Moderato – Allegro moderato</i>	<b>12.16</b>
----	--	---	--------------

**Hymnos (1967)**

11	I		<b>10.49</b>
12	II		0.24
13	III		0.35
14	IV		1.06
15	V		0.31
16	VI		0.14
17	VII		1.24
18	VIII		0.27
19	IX		1.19
			4.45

**The Seven Brightnesses (1975)**

20	I	<i>Presto – Allegro ritmico</i>	<b>6.38</b>
21	II	<i>Adagio – Lento – Adagio</i>	1.03
22	III	<i>Adagio espressivo</i>	1.14
24	IV	<i>Moderato</i>	1.48
25	V	<i>Allegro</i>	1.23
			1.06

**Little Quartet No.1 (1980)**

25	I	<i>Andante</i>	<b>9.13</b>
26	II	<i>Allegro</i>	2.42
27	III	<i>Lento</i>	2.03
			4.29

**Little Quartet No. 2 (1977, revised 1987)**

28		<i>Adagio – Allegro moderato, flessibile – Adagio</i>	<b>3.58</b>
----	--	---	-------------

## SIR PETER MAXWELL DAVIES

This CD presents performances of works for piano, clarinet and string quartet covering the period 1952 to 1980 (to 1987 if you include the reconstruction of the *Little Quartet* No. 2), that is, from Davies's student days up to the time when he was starting to think about his Third Symphony. Therefore the stylistic range of the works documented on this recording is large, from extended tonal writing in the earliest piece, through serial based works, to spin-offs from a larger work and finally into the less intense language of some compositions of the 80s.

It was in the mid 1980s, just before starting work on the Fourth Symphony, that Peter Maxwell Davies came across *Parade*, a piano work written 40 years earlier when he was 15. He was struck by how many of his current pre-occupations were already prefigured in that piece and proceeded to use some of the thematic material within the Fourth Symphony. We should not be surprised then that the quartet movement written in 1952, during his first year at Manchester University, should display some of the features which were to become a hallmark of his style. This manifests itself particularly in his concern with the structuring of time – similar to Messiaen's approach in works such as *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* and *Visions de L'Amen* - but also by way of the medieval ideas of color and talea – melody and rhythm repeating, but at different rates. Here too is the influence of Bartok, perhaps also of Indian music, which was to form the subject of his final dissertation, as well as, according to Paul Griffiths, jazz?

By 1956 Davies was engaged in what he describes as 'the process of building a composition technique to last a lifetime', a process which, in his opinion, was not completed until his time in America and the composition of the *Second Fantasia on an In Nomine of John Tavener* [1964-5]. The Five Pieces for Piano Op. 2, with the intricate working and reworking of musical material based on small note groupings, is certainly redolent of Schoenberg and Webern as filtered through the works of Boulez and Stockhausen in the early 1950s. Nevertheless the musical processes are recognisable even at this stage, especially in the way that the last movement sums up the previous four by 'commenting' on what has gone before. It is also interesting to view the Five Pieces for Piano, Op. 2 as part of that learning process which led Davies first to the idea of thematic transformation by means of specially constructed pitch sets and later to the use of magic squares in works like *Ave Maris Stella* and the First Symphony.

The Clarinet Sonata has a somewhat curious history since following the first performance (at Darmstadt on 20 July 1957 by Georgina Dobree with the composer); the score was lost and only rediscovered by Kevin Corner in 1983. It is a three movement work with the slow movement last. The first movement reaches an energetic climax towards its end and it is followed by a fiery *scherzo* – the complexity of the piano part reminds us that the composer is no mean pianist.

The medieval influence becomes more overt in the String Quartet written in 1961. The work is based on a *cantus* derived from the composer's carol *Ave Maria* which was written for the choir of Cirencester Grammar School where he was working at the time. The *cantus* is decorated with melismas whose flexible timing is controlled by the players - in the original score these were indicated in black notation, whereas the strictly proportioned *cantus* was written in red, functioning as a frame within which the melodic decorations operate. The second section is a *scherzo* and trio, a formal structure which Davies has never abandoned. The focal slow section follows, typically for Davies nearer the end than the beginning. Here the *cantus* is heard in pedal notes and these lead into the final section where the harmonic implications of the work are summarized – another musical device which would be developed in later works.

*Hymnos* and *The Seven Brightnesses*, were both written for Alan Hacker, clarinettist with the *Pierrot Players* and *The Fires of London*. *Hymnos*, written in 1967, is a *tour-de-force* for both pianist and clarinettist. The music is related to 'O lux quam non videt', one of the Five Motets Davies wrote in 1959, but the dominant influence here is from Indian music in the structuring of large-scale interlocking rhythmic structures. The nine sections divide into three groups of three with the final section being the longest, developing material already heard in the first, fourth and seventh sections. *The Seven Brightnesses*, *The Kestrel Paced Round the Sun* and *The Door of the Sun*, are all works for solo instruments whose titles are taken from poems of George Mackay Brown. These pieces evoke and celebrate the Orkney landscape which had come to mean so much to Davies as a place to retreat and work, and many of later works carry the sense of giving something back to the landscape. *The Seven Brightnesses* is a satellite work of the first symphony in that it utilises the same musical material as that work, and was actually written between movements of the larger piece. This sharing of material between adjacent (but sometimes not so adjacent) works is typical of Davies's working method.

The *Little Quartet* No. 2 is actually earlier than No. 1. First composed in 1977 for the Montepulciano Festival, the score to *Little Quartet* No. 2 was lost in the post and reconstructed from surviving sketches in 1987. Both this quartet and the first quartet, composed in 1980 in memory of Oriel Glock, are written in the simplified language which Davies was to exploit in the larger-scale orchestral works for which he is probably better known by the general public. While the second quartet is something of a celebration of the brightness and gaiety of an Italian summer, the first quartet is sombre and elegiac with a faint echo of Orkney in the viola's tune before the second movement climax which is transformed into the same instrument's opening tune in the final *Lento* movement.

© 2002 Richard MacGregor

#### **...on the works for clarinet - Guy Cowley**

The Clarinet Sonata is balanced as a duo rather than as clarinet with accompaniment, and reminds me of the Brahms Sonatas; his attention to detail is also reminiscent of Berg's *Vier Stücke*. Besides the obvious challenge to the performers of keeping together in such complex music, the clarinetist also has melodic lines that are both constantly wide-ranging in register and detailed in phrasing directions – an effect almost of yearning, whether the music is fast or slow. The Clarinet Sonata is dedicated to Harrison Birtwistle. *Hymnos*, dedicated to and first performed by Alan Hacker and Stephen Pruslin, combines this controlled writing with explosive music, encouraging the performer to take risks; in fact it is difficult to perform this music without an element of abandon. Davies requests some incredibly fast tempos be used - notably the fourth movement and the 'wild' section of the ninth movement which builds, almost out of control, to the clarinet's super-high E flat. The composer is also encouraging an exploration of certain qualities in clarinet sound - with directions such as 'hardest tone', 'piercing', 'harsh' and 'shrill'.

*The Seven Brightnesses*, dedicated to Anna for Alan Hacker to play, is the shortest of the works recorded here but perhaps presents the greatest challenges – it is obvious that Davies had Hacker's unique style and brilliant technique in mind. The wild outer movements cover the whole range of the clarinet - even higher than in *Hymnos* – up to a stratospheric G; these extremely high notes are (unfortunately for the clarinetist) not just confined to *ff* climaxes, but are also woven into *pp dolce* lines. The second movement introduces new techniques – key slaps, harmonics and multiphonics together with more super-high notes – and looks forward to the music of Lachenmann; the third and fourth movements, however, are more melodic with polyphonic writing and phrases similar to that of the Sonata.

### **...on the works for string quartet - Neil Heyde**

The 1961 String Quartet clearly stands apart from the others – not only for its *cantus*-based unfolding, but also for its exceptional fluidity in the treatment of the ensemble. While the *cantus* functions in some respects as a frame, the perception from inside the ensemble is that the frame is itself continually mobile and refracted. The colouristic changes that result from the melody's passing around the quartet create less a quasi-Weberian *Klangfarbenmelodie* than a sense of spatial movement. The 'decorative' melismatic material is often more sharply characterized than the *cantus* and holds the ear, and the resultant shifts of focus and balance, and the constant reconfiguration of the ensemble creates an almost paradoxical impression of mobilized suspension. A further paradox is found in the 'free' melismatic material which in practice is tightly constrained by the *cantus*. A performance is an elaborate tightrope walk in which the strands of the rope are continually shifting. The effect is both powerful and beautiful, and is possibly enriched by being perceived visually as well as aurally.

The two *Little Quartets* also have something of this quality, though without the notational conceit. A directness and simplicity is evident in the way in which the instruments are often paired off, recalling (perhaps curiously) Tippett's quartets; however, the metre fluctuates frequently and a sense of pulse cannot be imposed externally, but needs to be generated by one or more voices, around which the others respond. Discovering this music in performance is rather like finding the keys to a series of doors. I hope something of this esoteric quality can also be heard alongside the simplicity and beauty of the material itself.

The 1952 movement is a compositional showpiece, packing an extraordinary compendium of polyrhythmic games, notational oddities and lightning shifts of instrumental focus into its tiny whirlwind: as Richard McGregor's notes observe, there is a great deal here that prefigures the later work. As players we can perhaps be grateful that the later music allows us more time to explore and enjoy its complexity.

**Guy Cowley** studied with David Hamilton and Alexander Allen at the Junior Department of the Royal College of Music. He continued his studies as a scholar at the Royal College of Music with John McCaw followed by Michael Collins. Two Martin Musical Scholarships enabled him to study classical clarinet with Michael Harris. Guy's interest in contemporary music has led to solo performances at the Aldeburgh Festival, City of London Festival, the Purcell Room and in BBC Radio 3's Sounding the Century. As a freelance clarinetist he has worked with many contemporary music groups including London Sinfonietta and Sinfonia 21. He has recorded music for film, BBC television and radio dramas. Guy also performs on period clarinets and is a member of Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique, The English Baroque Soloists, and Orchestre des Champs-Élysées in Paris.

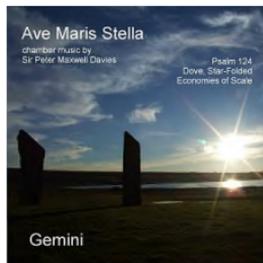
**The Kreutzer Quartet** is one of the most sought after string quartets in the UK. They appear regularly at the major London venues and have made many live and studio recordings for the BBC, and major networks all over Europe. They have taken their eclectic programmes to Italy, Germany, France, Holland, Serbia, Montenegro, Sardinia, the US, Spain, Cyprus, Poland, and Lithuania. Recent critically and publicly acclaimed performances have been at the Warsaw Autumn Festival, de Doelen, Rotterdam, Quartet 2000 in Manchester, and the Vilnius Philharmonic Festival.

The Kreutzers' recordings reflect a commitment to musical exploration. They have been accorded critical acclaim for their CDs of quartets by Gerhard, Finnis, Birtwistle, Coates, Hallgrímsson, various Catalan composers, Rochberg, Schwartz and Harrison. They have a particularly strong association with Metier Records.

The Kreutzer Quartet are Ensemble-in-Residence at Goldsmiths College, London. They have given masterclasses with performers and composers all over the world, ranging from the Vilnius Academy, Bowdoin College, Maine, to the Conservatoire of Cetinje in Montenegro.

**Ian Pace's** international reputation as a pianist, particularly of new music, has taken him to most major festivals: Agora, Aldeburgh, Archipel, Ars Musica, Berlin Biennale, Cheltenham, Geneva, Graz, Huddersfield, IRCAM, Musica Strasbourg, MusikProtocoll, Warsaw Autumn, Wien Modern. He has given world premieres of well over 100 solo works by composers including Julian Anderson, Richard Barrett, James Dillon, Pascal Dusapin, Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnis, Christopher Fox, Volker Heyn, Gerhard Stabler, Jay Allan Yim and Walter Zimmermann. He also performs most of the standard piano literature, combining a study of performance practice issues and aesthetics with a modernist perspective to produce radical and searching interpretations. <http://www.ianpace.com>

Also from Metier Records: Chamber music by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies



## Ave Maris Stella

Psalm 124  
Dove, Star-Folded  
Economies of Scale

Gemini  
MSV 28503

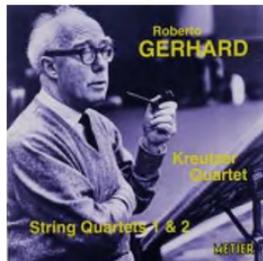
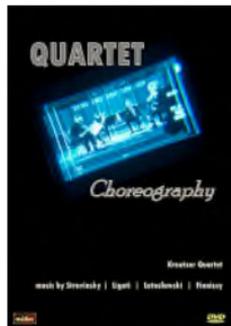
***"Absolutely superb"*** –  
Malcolm Hayes (BBC Music Magazine)

... from the Kreutzer Quartet:

**'Quartet Choreography'**  
DVD (universal play, PAL-NTSC)

Stravinsky: Three Pieces for String Quartet  
Lutosławski: String Quartet  
Ligeti: String Quartet No. 2  
Finnissy: Second String Quartet  
MSVDX101

***"Recommended for essential purchase."*** –  
Peter Grahame Woolf (Musical Pointers)



Roberto Gerhard  
String Quartets 1 & 2  
MSVCD 92032

***"It will be difficult to beat, with first-class playing and admirable recording. Very strongly recommended."*** –  
Arnold Whittal (Gramophone)



### Michael Finnissy

Plain Harmony I-III  
Nobody's Jig : Sehnsucht  
Multiple Forms of Constraint  
String Quartet (no. 1)

MSVCD 92011

***This is rather special... this disc is hot.*** –  
Fabrice Fitch (Gramophone)

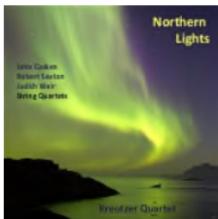


### Catalan Quartets:

Miguel Roger – String Quartet No. 2  
Albert Sarda – String Quartet  
Josep Soler – String Quartets No. 1 & 5

MSVCD 92026

***“A remarkable release. The recording itself... is about as good as they get ... marvelous stuff.”*** –  
Mike Silverton (LaFolia)



### Northern Lights

John Casken – String Quartet No. 2  
Judith Weir – String Quartet  
Robert Saxton – Songs, Dances and Ellipses

MSV 28507

***“The performances seem very fine and totally committed, and the recording quality is excellent. Very strongly recommended.”*** - Robert Matthew-Walker (Musical Opinion)



### Variations

George Rochberg – String Quartet No. 3  
Elliott Schwartz – Bellagio Variations

MSVCD 92051

***“How wonderful ... the Kreutzer Quartet keep the listener engaged throughout. This is a keeper album.”*** - Mark Alburger (21st Century Music)

The Kreutzer Quartet also appear on these CDs

MSV 28513 'Greatest Hits of all Time' (with Christopher Redgate, oboe)

MSV 28581 'Six Sexy Minuets Three Trios; - music by Michael Finnissy

MSVCD 92053 'Taking Flight' – Music by Sadie Harrison

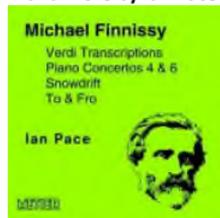
MSVCD 92058 Wilfred Josephs Clarinet music (with Linda Merrick, clarinet)

MSVCD 92104 'Trajectories' – Music by David Gorton

To be released 2013

'Tapestry' - Chamber music by Elliott Schwartz

... and more by Ian Pace



Michael Finnissy

Verdi Transcriptions/Concertos 4 & 6

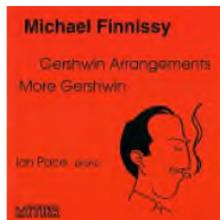
MSVCD 92027 (2CD)

*"Throughout, Ian Pace's technique astounds."* – Michael Oliver  
(International Record Review)

Gershwin Arrangements

MSVCD 92030

*"Strongly recommended."* –  
BBC Music Magazine



'More Light'

Piano Music by Christopher Fox

MSVCD 92022

*"Pianist Ian Pace's performances are exceptional and insightful."* - Andy Hamilton (Classic CD)

MSVCD 92031 Christopher Fox: 'You, Us, Me' (with Amanda Crawley)

MSVCD 92057 (2CD) "Beginner's Mind – piano music by Walter Zimmermann

MSV 77501 Michael Finnissy – The History of Photography in Sound (5CDs)



# DIVINE ART RECORDINGS GROUP

INNOVATIVE | ECLECTIC | FASCINATING | INSPIRATIONAL

Over 500 titles, with full track details, reviews, artist profiles and audio samples, can be browsed on our website. All our recordings are available at any good record store or download provider or direct from our secure online shopping website:

**www.divineartrecords.com**  
(CD, 24-bit HD, FLAC and MP3)

Diversions LLC (Divine Art USA) email: [sales@divineartrecords.com](mailto:sales@divineartrecords.com)

Divine Art Ltd. (UK) email: [uksales@divineartrecords.com](mailto:uksales@divineartrecords.com)

Printed catalogue sent on request

Also available in digital download through Primephonic, Qobuz, iTunes, Amazon, Spotify and many other platforms

follow us on facebook, youtube and twitter



**divine art**



**athene**



**métier**



**diversions**



**historic sound**

WARNING: Copyright subsists in all recordings issued under this label. Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording thereof in any manner whatsoever will constitute an infringement of such copyright. In the United Kingdom, licences for the use of recordings for public performance may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd, 1, Upper James Street, London W1R 3HG.

# Sir Peter Maxwell Davies

chamber works (1952-1987)



metier

msvcd 92055



15631

- |       |  |       |
|-------|--|-------|
| 1     | <b>Quartet Movement (1952)</b><br>Kreutzer Quartet                         | 2.32  |
| 2-6   | <b>Five Pieces for Piano, Op. 2 (1955-6)</b><br>Ian Pace                   | 15.48 |
| 7-9   | <b>Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1956-7)</b><br>Guy Cowley, Ian Pace      | 15.20 |
| 10    | <b>String Quartet (1961)</b><br>Kreutzer Quartet                           | 12.16 |
| 11-19 | <b>Hymnos (1967)</b><br>Guy Cowley, Ian Pace                               | 10.49 |
| 20-24 | <b>The Seven Brightnesses (1975)</b><br>Guy Cowley                         | 6.38  |
| 25-27 | <b>Little Quartet No. 1 (1980)</b><br>Kreutzer Quartet                     | 9.13  |
| 28    | <b>Little Quartet No. 2 (1977, reconstructed 1987)</b><br>Kreutzer Quartet | 3.58  |

**Guy Cowley** clarinet

**Ian Pace** piano

**Kreutzer Quartet**

Music publishers:

Chester Music (tracks 2, 7-9)

Schott & Co. Ltd (tracks 2-6, 10)

Boosey & Hawkes (tracks 11-28)

Producer/Balance Engineer:

David Lefeber

Booklet layout and design:

David Lefeber

New 2012 version :

Stephen Sutton

Cover photo: Largs, Scotland

© 2000 Sadie Harrison

Recorded in the Big School, Christ's Hospital, Horsham on 31 August 2000 (tracks 7-9, 11-24);  
in the church of St. John, Loughton on 17 January 2002 (track 28) and 25 June 2002 (tracks 1, 10, 25-27)  
and in the Great Hall, Kings College, London on 7 September 2001 (tracks 2-6)

Acknowledgements: thanks to Bill Colleran, Ross Lorraine & Kings College London

© 2003 Metier Sound & Vision Ltd

© 2012 Divine Art Ltd

Divine Art Recordings Group: Metier Division

[www.divineartrecords.com](http://www.divineartrecords.com)