

# Programme Notes

## **Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778 – 1837)**

Introduction, theme and variations, Op 102 (1825)

Johann Nepomuk Hummel – Austrian composer, pianist virtuoso and student and friend of W.A. Mozart. He was inspired by and studied with such great figures of the Classical/Romantic period as Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn and Schubert.

Although Hummel most associated with music for piano, he composed in all musical forms except he wrote no symphonies. Hummel's "theme and variations" were mostly inspired by Mozart's piano sonatas, Beethoven and Haydn's music. The piece begins with a slow introduction in f minor, somehow similar to openings of Beethoven's symphonies, heavy, dark, but still elegant and brilliant, it is a huge opportunity for the soloist to show the beautiful sound of the instrument. The theme, in F major, brings a totally different mood - simple, light and joyful. Variations are written in binary form and the performer has freedom to use the repeats for his own ornamentations. The inclusions of the Tempo di Valse varied theme with two further "Alternativi" are especially attractive, Hummel deviates from the usual set of variations by repeating the theme with a few changes. The piece finishes with a short coda that ends the music on a high note.

## **Malcolm Arnold (1921 – 2006)**

Sonatina for Oboe and Piano, Op 58 (1951)

British Composer Malcolm Arnold's output encompasses works in a variety of genres, including symphonies, several concertos, chamber music for choir and band. He also wrote extensively for the ballet and theater, producing award-winning music for over a hundred films.

When people hear the word "Sonatina", the description of "small" comes to their minds, but not for the Malcolm Arnold. Some say his sonata could be described as "a full-bodied sonata in miniature". This sonatina was inspired by the famous British oboist Leon Goossens, later, Malcolm Arnold would write an Oboe Concerto dedicated to him. The tunes are lyrical and well crafted, there is a contrast of musical styles. The piano part is complex and certainly adds more than just an accompaniment to the piece, I would say it is an active partner for a discussion with an oboe solo. He created three different moods for each of the movements: stylish and charming, dramatic and mysterious, and finally, open and sunny.

*Programme notes by Soniya Rakhmatullina*