



BACH TO PARKER
Thomas Gould



I FOREWORD

This album began life as a recital programme in which I interspersed movements from Bach's six Sonatas and Partitas for unaccompanied violin with some of the new works recorded here for the first time. My intention was to show that the extended violin techniques called upon by living composers had evolved from the demanding contrapuntal writing of Bach, whose mighty Chaconne is considered as the summit of the solo violin repertoire. All composers writing solo violin music face the challenge of composing for an essentially monophonic instrument, and it is interesting to see the points of comparison and departure in the way the composers featured on this disc address this inherent limitation. In the case of Mark Bowden's *Lines Written a Few Miles Below* and Nico Muhly's *Long Line* a solution is provided by technology, as both pieces utilise a pre-recorded backing track. The final track on this album is a performance of Miles Davis's classic bebop tune *Donna Lee* (with its close association to the great Charlie Parker) in which my solo is a loose transcription of bassist Jaco Pastorius's famous solo from his version of this tune on the album *Jaco*, and complements the preceding piece *BoBop* by John Hawkins.

I'd particularly like to thank David and Mary Bowerman, Raphaël Mouterde, David O'Brien and Sam Hogarth, who transcribed the solo on *Donna Lee*. I hope you enjoy the journey from Bach to Parker as much as I did in selecting and recording this repertoire, and I hope that many of the new works will take their deserving place in the repertoire of music composed for solo violin.

Thomas Gold

TRACK LISTING

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| 1 | CHACONNE from Partita No.2 in D minor
for solo violin, BWV1004 J.S. BACH | 15'10 |
| 2 | A LONG LINE NICO MUHLY | 06'46 |
| 3 | MR PUNCH GRAHAM WILLIAMS | 05'37 |
| 4 | CHARGED ANNA MEREDITH | 03'56 |
| 5 | QUASI UNA CADENZA NIMROD BORENSTEIN | 05'46 |
| | TWO EXTREMES EWAN CAMPBELL | |
| 6 | <i>i</i> RARE NOTHINGS | 04'12 |
| 7 | <i>ii</i> EVERYTHING, ALL AT ONCE | 04'51 |
| 8 | LA BAROQUE AZIZA SADIKOVA | 03'55 |
| 9 | KUSMETCHE DAI FUJIKURA | 02'09 |
| 10 | LINES WRITTEN A FEW MILES BELOW MARK BOWDEN | 10'55 |
| 11 | BOBOP JOHN HAWKINS | 04'33 |
| 12 | DONNA LEE MILES DAVIS | 02'24 |

Total playing time: **70'16**

Produced and Engineered by Raphaël Mouterde
 Edited & Mastered by Raphaël Mouterde
 Recorded on 10th–12th June 2013 in the Music Room, Champs Hill, West Sussex, UK
 Photographs of Thomas Gould by Laura Bodo Lajber
 Executive Producer for Champs Hill Records: Alexander Van Ingen
 Label Manager for Champs Hill Records: John Dickinson

BACH TO PARKER

Violinist Thomas Gould, born in 1983, is apt to tell interviewers that there is nothing exceptional about his talent. Don't you believe it. Having started learning his difficult yet versatile instrument from the age of three, he continued at the Royal Academy of Music under the great Hungarian violinist György Pauk. Even before graduating, he became leader of the newly founded Aurora Orchestra in 2005 – today one of England's most acclaimed chamber ensembles – and the following year, while continuing to hold that post, became associate leader of the Britten Sinfonia.

Gould has further established himself as one of Britain's leading solo violinists. Most appropriately for a master of such a versatile instrument, he is equally at ease playing Bach and Beethoven as he is performing works by the rising young composers featured on this album, or playing jazz, having joined the swing band Man Overboard Quintet in 2011 (their first album *All Hands on Deck* was released by Champs Hill Records in 2013). Gould is keen to escape the straight-jacket of genre – whether of so-called “classical” or “avant-garde” music – and has played classical repertoire in some unusual venues such as Limelight, Classical Kicks at Ronnie Scott's and the Nonclassical club founded by composer Gabriel Prokofiev: several of the works programmed in this album were first heard under Nonclassical's auspices where new music of all sorts – ranging from rap to electronica, as well as such landmark modernist works as Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* – is performed.

An even older tradition, or rather, common foundation for much of music even today, is Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750). Gould has often programmed Bach's unaccompanied Sonatas and Partitas in his concerts together with several of the new works featured on this album. Bach's *Chaconne* in D minor, the final movement of his Second Partita for Solo Violin, is one of the greatest pinnacles not only of this cycle but of the entire violin repertoire. Lasting about a quarter of an hour, this substantial movement is often performed on its own, not only by violinists but also in arrangements for guitar, piano and even full orchestra. From a recurring theme

based on a descending motif – D-C-B flat-A – Bach weaves variations so masterfully that the piece evolves naturally into three parts: an intense opening section in the home minor key, then a more sweet-toned major section, and finally a return to the minor in a more reflective style.

The young American composer Nico Muhly (b. 1981) is perhaps most famous for his opera *Two Boys*, recently co-produced by English National Opera and New York's Metropolitan Opera. Gould has been associated with Muhly since 2008, when he gave the world premiere of Muhly's concerto for six-string electric violin *Seeing is Believing*, subsequently recording that work with the Aurora Orchestra for Decca. Here, Gould plays Muhly's *A Long Line*: the title refers to the solo violinist's initially long-sustained line, accompanied by the composer describes as "a sequence of chords aggressively played by pre-recorded electronics. As the chords get closer together, the violin line moves from slow and simple long lines towards more athletic, complicated passagework."

Graham Williams (b. 1938) teaches at the Royal Academy of Music where Thomas Gould was a student, and first composed for Gould in 2007 his violin and piano work, *Three Night Pictures*. *Mr Punch* followed in 2011 (the same year in which Williams composed his piano piece *Punch and Judy*), which Gould premiered in 2013 at The Macbeth in north London, as part of a Nonclassical presentation (which also included the premiere of Ewan Campbell's *Everything, All at Once* – see below). Williams describes his solo violin work as "a fragmented fantasy characterisation of *Mr Punch*, who is unpredictable, violent and sad by turns". Starting with a high squeal which might be thought to represent the cry of Punch himself, the work alternates Stravinsky-style pantomime with more lyrical episodes.

Rising Scottish composer Anna Meredith (b. 1978), appears in some ways to be following the footsteps of her compatriot Judith Weir (recently appointed Master of the Queen's Music). Both composers have worked extensively with young musicians,

and take a light and accessible approach to their work (which is not to say they fall into the easy listening category!). Meredith gained widespread attention when commissioned to compose a work for 2008's Last Night of the Proms: she chose to write for five different groups of musicians, each performing with its own conductor in a different corner of the UK – truly putting modern communication via satellite through its paces!

Meredith's solo violin piece, *Charged*, was composed in 2007, just before that burst of fame: she describes it as "my attempt to see how much forward momentum and energy I could get out of a very small starting point. I've tried to give this idea of drive and trajectory by making the violin feel as if it is controlling and suppressing the material and only really letting go towards the end." Starting with tight, scrunchy chords, full of pent-up energy, the piece becomes increasingly exuberant and bouncy.

Born in Israel and raised in France, Nimrod Borenstein (b. 1969) evolved his compositional style from 20th-century techniques such as serialism and "sound clusters" through to his own approach to traditional systems of tonality. He was also trained as a violinist – indeed, he originally came to London to further his studies under Itzhak Rashkovsky at the Royal College of Music before choosing to devote himself to composition – and so has a particular empathy with the violin's expressive potential. *Quasi Una Cadenza*, Op.26, composed in 2002, harks back to Bach's legacy through the prism of a pre-First World War tradition, represented by such violinist-composers as Kreisler and Ysaÿe. Borenstein describes his solo piece: "Both lyrical and virtuosic, *Quasi Una Cadenza* is one of several single movement compositions I have written with the idea of creating short meaningful pieces which by their intensity and rich inner diversity give the illusion of much longer works."

British composer Ewan Campbell (b. 1983) studied at Cambridge under Robin Holloway, then completed his doctorate at King's College London under George Benjamin and Silvina Milstein. He was composer-in-residence with the venerable

Cambridge University Musical Society (CUMS) during the 2012–13 season. As well as teaching both at Cambridge University and at King's College, London, Campbell tutors composers on the Aldeburgh Young Musician Scheme. Campbell writes about his two-movement solo violin work: "*Two Extremes* was written in 2013 for Thom, although the sketches date from a solo viola piece some ten years earlier. The second movement, *Everything, All at Once*, was written with Thom's incredible virtuosity in mind, and uses various musical interpretations of the mathematical Fibonacci series to compound layers of exponentially growing instrumental complexity, creating a vivacious *toccata*." Gould played the premiere of this work at The Macbeth, as part of the same Nonclassical presentation in which he premiered Graham Williams's *Mr Punch* mentioned earlier. The movement *Everything, All at Once* was subsequently partnered with a preceding movement, *Rare Nothings* which, Campbell explains, involves "an unusual 'circular bowing' technique to stimulate the harmonic spectra of an open string."

In the former Soviet Union, Bach's music seemed a tantalizing vision of a higher civilization, one which provoked various responses from the yearning nostalgia of Valentin Silvestrov to more angry and curdled treatments by Alfred Schnittke. The reaction of post-World War II Soviet musicians to Bach's music was further complicated by its close association in their minds with Canadian pianist Glenn Gould's landmark 1957 tour of Moscow and Leningrad (present-day St Petersburg): Glenn Gould not only performed Bach in a manner which was revelatory but he also – without warning – played such "modern" and officially banned composers as Schoenberg, Webern and Krenek. This confluence of Bach with such modern composers has haunted the imagination of Russian and Russian-trained composers ever since.

Inheriting this approach to Bach's music is Uzbekistan composer Aziza Sadikova (b. 1978). Born in Tashkent, Sadikova studied piano and composition from the age of five at the Uspensky Special Music School for gifted children. She then entered

the Tashkent State Conservatory (1996–98), studying composition under Tashkent-born Russian Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky, whom Sadikova describes as the one composer "who really influenced me". She completed her studies in England, first at the Birmingham Conservatoire (studying under Philip Cashian 1998–2001) then Trinity College of Music (Alwynne Pritchard and Stephen Montague 2004–2006). Sadikova's association with Thomas Gould began when he premiered *Variation*, her aggressive take on baroque manners, with the Britten Sinfonia at the 2011 Ether Festival in London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. Sadikova subsequently composed and dedicated *La Baroque* to Thomas Gould in 2012, inspired, she says, by Gould's "contrastingly delicate and highly expressive violin playing"; incorporating "elements of Early and New Music techniques", her piece for solo violin affords "a short glance into the 'soundscape' of Baroque".

Although born in Osaka, Japan, Dai Fujikura (b. 1977) has made England his adopted home since his compositional studies there with Edwin Roxburgh, Daryl Runswick and George Benjamin. Originally aspiring to become a film composer, Fujikura was inspired to write music for the concert hall through his studies of works by Boulez, Ligeti and Takemitsu at London's Trinity College of Music (whence he graduated in 2000, just a few years before Sadikova studied there). Now settled in London with his wife and family, Fujikura has composed for the BBC Proms and for various orchestras including the London Sinfonietta and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, as well as such orchestras as the Símon Bolívar Youth Orchestra and the Munich Chamber Orchestra. *Kusmetche*, composed in 2013, draws from one of his orchestral works, *Banitz Groove!*, its solo violin part being derived from that work's violin duo parts. The resulting solo work, Fujikura explains, "is based on a Bulgarian dance rhythm. *Kusmetche* means 'luck' in Bulgarian".

Mark Bowden (b. 1979) formed with Anna Meredith and three other composers the Camberwell Composers' Collective before being himself appointed Music Fellow of the Rambert Dance Company during the 2011–12 season. With the Polish

choreographer Malgorzata Dzierzon, Bowden created *Lines Written a Few Miles Below*, based on impressions from London's Underground and its passengers. Bowden describes the work: "The choreography for the piece draws on observations of London commuters and portrays the different ways that intimate or private behaviours, such as sleeping, eating, kissing and arguing, can manifest themselves on public transport. The music is constructed from two different elements: the first is an electronic part comprising real sounds collected during various journeys on the London Underground and the second is a live violin line, written for Thomas Gould. Occasionally percussive sounds from the live violin, music from commuters' headphones and ghostly fragments of a busker's melody find their way into the electronic part. The title of the piece is a play on the poem *Lines Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey* by William Wordsworth in which Wordsworth contemplates the 'tranquil restoration' of nature's beauty. Malgorzata and I found it interesting to observe the different ways that people strive to find a personal sense of tranquility within the frenzied subterranean world of the Underground."

BoBop by John Hawkins (b. 1949), a pupil of Malcolm Williamson and Elisabeth Lutyens, was originally composed in 2004 for the violinist Emily Pringle, herself a fan of the jazz pianist Oscar Peterson. Rather than create something in the laid-back style of that pianist, Hawkins composed what he describes as "a bebop-influenced show piece, bluesy and breakneck by turns".

A genuine bebop track associated with another jazz legend, the saxophonist Charlie Parker (1920–55), ends this album. Although Parker is often credited as its author, *Donna Lee* was in fact composed by the jazz trumpeter Miles Davis in 1947, who then recorded the work that year as a member of saxophonist Charlie Parker's quintet. Named after Curly Russell's daughter, Donna Lee Russell, it seems appropriate that this jazz standard is played by Gould together with bassist David O'Brien.

Daniel Jaffé

Thomas Gould performs as soloist with orchestras worldwide including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, LA Phil New Music Group, Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne and West Australian Symphony Orchestra, collaborating with conductors such as John Adams, Nicholas Collon, Paul Daniel and Robin Ticciati. Leader of Aurora Orchestra and associate leader of Britten Sinfonia, Gould appears as soloist and director with both groups and also collaborates regularly with Sinfonietta Riga. Thomas is a guest concertmaster of London Sinfonietta and Mahler Chamber Orchestra, also appearing in the Lucerne Festival Orchestra.

The dedicatee of Nico Muhly's concerto for six string electric violin *Seeing is Believing*, Thomas's recording of this work for Decca Classics received widespread critical acclaim. His



other releases on Champs Hill Records include two albums with his swing band Man Overboard Quintet and one with the Artea Quartet. For Harmonia Mundi, Thomas has recorded Bach's *The Goldberg Variations* (in Dmitry Sitkovetsky's transcription) directing Britten Sinfonia. In 2014 he signed a four-album contract with Edition Classics.

Thomas is an associate of the Royal Academy of Music where he studied with György Pauk, and a former Young Concert Artists Trust (YCAT) winner. He plays a 1782 J.B. Guadagnini violin.

www.thomasgould.com

COMPOSERS

Nico Muhly has composed a wide scope of work for ensembles, soloists and organizations including the American Symphony Orchestra, Boston Pops, Carnegie Hall, Chicago Symphony, countertenor Iestyn Davies, violinist Hilary Hahn, choreographer Benjamin Millepied, New York City Ballet, New York Philharmonic, Paris Opéra Ballet, soprano Jessica Rivera, and designer/illustrator Maira Kalman.



photo: Matthew Murphy

Among Muhly's most frequent collaborators are his colleagues at Bedroom Community, an artist-run label headed by Icelandic musician Valgeir Sigurðsson.

Bedroom Community was inaugurated in 2007 with the release of Muhly's first album, *Speaks Volumes*. In spring 2012, Bedroom Community released Muhly's three-part *Drones & Music*, in collaboration with pianist Bruce Brubaker, violinist Pekka Kuusisto, and violist Nadia Sirota.

Born in Vermont in 1981 and raised in Providence, Rhode Island, Muhly graduated from Columbia University with a degree in English Literature. In 2004 he received a Masters in Music from the Juilliard School, where he studied under Christopher Rouse and John Corigliano. www.nicomuhly.com

Graham Williams studied viola at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and composition privately with Richard Rodney Bennett. He is a prolific composer and his works have received much critical acclaim both here and abroad as well as winning a number of prestigious awards. His orchestral works have been performed by such orchestras as the English Chamber Orchestra, Scottish National Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, the Brunel Ensemble and the City of London Sinfonia. Since the 1990s he has concentrated on composing chamber music. He taught composition at the Royal Academy of Music from 2004 to 2010.



photo: Sally Birmingham

www.grahamwilliams.org

Anna Meredith's music has been performed everywhere from the Last Night of the Proms to flashmob performances in the M6 Services, Latitude Festival to PRADA Fashion Campaigns, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival to the Ether Festival, and broadcast on radios 1, 3, 4 & 6.

photo: Owen Richards



She has been Composer in Residence with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, RPS/PRS Composer in the House with Sinfonia ViVA, the classical music representative for the 2009 South Bank Show Breakthrough Award and winner of the 2010 Paul Hamlyn Award for Composers. She is also signed to Moshi Moshi Records who has released both her EPs including *Nautilus* which was Drowned in Sounds Single of the Year 2012. www.annameredith.com

Nimrod Borenstein's compositions are gaining a worldwide reputation with performances throughout Europe, the USA, Canada, South America, Australia, Israel and Japan.

Vladimir Ashkenazy has given Nimrod his support for many years and has recently conducted two of his major symphonic works, *The Big Bang and Creation of the Universe Op.52* and *If you will it, it is no dream Op.58*, with the Philharmonia Orchestra. Other ongoing collaborations with prominent soloists include Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Pascal Amoyel and Roberto Prosseda who have all premiered his works.



photo: Synced Films

Nimrod is a Laureate of the Cziffra Foundation and an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music. His wide-ranging catalogue numbering over 60 works includes vocal and orchestral music as well as solo instruments pieces and chamber music.

www.borensteinarts.com

Ewan Campbell's compositional preoccupations tend to be in the field of translation: art, poetry, maths, electronics and everyday noises form the direct inspiration for musical sounds and structures. Ewan studied music at both Cambridge and King's College London, where he achieved a PhD under the tutelage of George Benjamin and Silvina Milstein in 2013.

photo: Isla Campbell



Ewan's music has been performed by many ensembles and soloists both in the UK and abroad: The Britten Sinfonia; The Küss Quartet; the Mercury Quartet; recorder quintet Consortium5; Lontano; Clare Hammond; Dr. K Sextet; Ensemble Matisse and the Fukió Saxophone Quartet.



He has been an award winner of several national and international competitions including the Pritchard-Kennedy Choral prize, the Lake District Summer Music Festival (2007), the New York-based Counterpoint International Competition (2011), the Forme Uniche di Continuità nello Spazio International Competition in Adelaide (2012) and the Italian Mare Nostrum International Competition (2012), which lead to the publication of his works in Italy by Edizioni Sconfinate, and a recording released with the Retropalco label.

www.ewan-campbell.com

Aziza Sadikova is a composer from Tashkent, Uzbekistan. She studied with Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky at Tashkent Conservatory and continued her studies at Birmingham Conservatoire and Trinity College of Music. Her music is performed at Festival ASPEKTE

Salzburg, Wien Modern Festival, Klangwerkstatt Festival fuer Neue Musik, Kasseler Musiktage, Young Euro Classics, Randfestspiele Neue Musik Festival, Pyramidales, at Theaterformen Festival in Hannover and at Ilkhom XX New Music Festival in Tashkent. Aziza collaborates with Europe's leading ensembles and performers, such as: Sonar Quartett (Berlin), Junge Deutsche Philharmonie (DE), Kammerakademie Potsdam (DE), Quartet New Generation (Berlin), Zafraan Ensemble (Berlin), Eunoia Ensemble (Basel), Ensemble

Kwartludium (Warsaw), Britten Sinfonia (London), Orfeus String Quartet (UK), Ensemble Nostri Temporis (Kiev) and Ensemble L'Arsenale (Italy).

In her latest projects, music theatre *Voices from Ravensbrueck*, *Kinderoper Versprochen* and *Ein Brief* (after F. Kafka) she explores combination of theatre elements with complex rhythms, forms, and texture contrasts, in which performers become 'actors'.

Aziza Sadikova also works closely with visual artists and choreographers. Her latest project is *Kammeroper* based on work by Arno Geiger.

She has appeared on BBC Radio, Deutschlandradio Kultur, in Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg and in MDR Radio Figaro Dresden. www.azizasadikova.com

Although **Dai Fujikura** was born in Osaka, Japan, he has now spent more than 20 years in the UK where he studied composition with Edwin Roxburgh, Daryl Runswick and George Benjamin.

In 2012 NMC released *Secret Forest*, the first disc devoted exclusively to his music, and in 2013 Creative Commons released *Mirrors*, an album including four of his orchestral works. His chamber music album, *Flare*, has been released on his own label, Minabel, and another album of his works, performed by I.C.E., was released on the KAIROS label in spring 2014.

Dai Fujikura is published by G Ricordi & Co, Berlin – part of Universal Music Publishing Classical. www.daifujikura.com

Mark Bowden is a British composer of chamber, orchestral and vocal music. His work is performed at festivals and events throughout the UK, Europe and the US and can

be heard regularly on radio stations around the world. Mark is currently Resident Composer with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He was the 2011–12 Music Fellow at Rambert Dance Company and the first composer-in-residence at Handel House Museum. Mark is a founder member of the critically acclaimed Camberwell Composers' Collective and was New Music Associate at Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge from 2008–2010. He was Composer-in-Residence in 2011 and 2012 at the

Visby International Centre for Composers in Sweden. www.markbowden.net

John Hawkins, born in 1949, studied composition with Elisabeth Lutyens and Malcolm Williamson. Broadcasts include *A Sea Symphony* (BBC Scottish), part of a trilogy of sea pieces and *This World* for choir and two trumpets, based on words by William Blake (BBC Singers). His short opera *Echoes* was part of Covent Garden's Garden Venture. Also based on Blake's ideas is *Urizen* for viola which has been performed many times worldwide in versions both with piano and with chamber orchestra – it can be seen in several performances on YouTube. John lives in London and is an associate director of the book publishers Thames & Hudson. www.johnhawkinsmusic.co.uk

