



with Chameleon

Carnival Overture

A. Dvorak

Arr. Cara Houghton

O Virtus Sapientie

H. Von Bingen

Arr. Jessica Tomlinson

Song to the Moon from *Rusalka*

A. Dvorak

Arr. Cara Houghton

Danza de la Mariposa

V. Coleman

Tapas

M. Mellits

INTERVAL

Klezmer from *Tikvah*

B. Beerman

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

P. Dukas

Arr. Sarah Austen

By the Still Waters

A. Beach

Arr. Jessica Tomlinson

Three Preludes

G. Gershwin

Arr. Freya Chambers

Invirtita Ana Lugojana

Traditional

Arr. Jessica Tomlinson

O Fredrik, O Fredrik

Danish String Quartet

Arr. Jessica Tomlinson

Programme

Carnival Overture

Antonin Dvořák wrote the Carnival Overture in 1891 as the second part of a three-overture cycle, "Nature, Life, and Love." Life (Carnival), as it was originally called, portrayed life – as a vast carnival, replete with noisy crowds, vendors, barkers, and even "a pair of straying lovers," as the composer put it.

The first of two pieces written by Dvořák in tonight's programme, this overture showcases the composer's ability to produce music bursting with contagiously joyful energy, whilst also hinting towards his calmer, more lyrical compositional style that will be heard later in 'Song to the Moon'.

O Virtus Sapientie

Written over 900 years ago, 'O Virtus Sapientie' is part of Lux Lucis, a collection of three motets that refer to light, radiance and hope. Hildegard Von Bingen was a German nun and a true polymath; she was highly regarded for her music, writing, philosophy and scientific contemplations, with both Pope Eugenius III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa embracing her work and advice. Given the age in which she lived, her achievements and reputation amongst peers was, and still is, extraordinary.

Our arrangement of 'O Virtus Sapientie' features Eleanor Mills on Bassoon, weaving around Von Bingen's melody and highlighting the vocal nature of the instrument. The free, ornamented approach is typical of such ancient music, with a soft, calming accompaniment that provides space for contemplation.

Song to the Moon from *Rusalka*

Rusalka follows the tale of a water nymph who falls in love with a human man. She sings to the moon and pleads for a human soul so she can be with her prince. A witch, Ježibaba, warns her that she will lose her voice if she becomes human, but this is a bargain that Rusalka is willing to make to be with her true love.

Song to the Moon is this plea, and whilst it could be easy to mistake Rusalka for a fairytale, it is opera, which means tragedy is only around the corner. The prince abandons Rusalka due to her lack of passion, and after a dramatic turn of events Rusalka is made to give him the kiss of death, leaving her to a life of loneliness. The external beauty of Dvořák's song is fractured due to its context, and the longing melody being sung by the water nymph becomes all the more powerful for it.

Danza de la Mariposa

Described as a 'rhythmic, melodic tone poem that gives the listener a tour of the butterflies of South America', Danza de la Mariposa is a solo flute piece bursting with colour and imagery – which is the mark of pioneering composer Valerie Coleman.

With the juxtaposition of an Argentinian Tango and a 'Yaravi' (a Peruvian lament song), this piece demonstrates the full range of the flute and shows the mastery that the composer has of the instrument herself.

Tapas

"Tapas" is in eight short movements all working together to a large extent like a baroque suite. The individual lines fit closely together much like the pieces of a puzzle, each instrument relying on each other to fill in the spaces.

Mellits has created a work that allows for short “tastes” of different musical ideas that work together to create a larger whole. The music has its own sound world, and this new arrangement written specifically for Chameleon explores exciting combinations of timbres across various woodwind instruments.

The original version, which this edition is based on, is for String Trio and was premiered in August 2007.

Klezmer from *Tikvah*

Tikvah is a large-scale multimedia oratorio written for saxophone quartet, soprano voice, dancer, narration and video by Burton Beerman. ‘Klezmer’ is the second movement, performed by solo soprano saxophone, and embraces the traditionally improvisatory and virtuosic sounds of Klezmer music.

The whole work is based on the memoirs of Philip Markowicz, a Torah Scholar and Holocaust Survivor. ‘Tikvah’ is the Hebrew word meaning ‘Hope’ and Beerman states that this work is also based on the themes of hope and redemption. This piece is a product of the migration of European Jews out of Europe after the Holocaust to America where many of the survivor’s stories are now told.

The Sorcerer’s Apprentice

Instantly recognisable from Disney’s *Fantasia*, The Sorcerer’s Apprentice is a magical piece split into two halves: a mysterious, still opening with trickling harmonies in the upper woodwind, followed by a bouncing scherzo featuring Dukas’ iconic bassoon melody.

Dukas was inspired by The great German poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in his ballad ‘*Die Zauberlehrling*’, which tells the story of a magician’s apprentice.

After watching his master bring a broomstick to life to complete household chores, the apprentice wishes to achieve the same thing and orders the broomstick to collect some water. The broomstick enthusiastically complies, but summons so much water that the house

begins to overflow. In the apprentice's attempts to salvage the situation, he breaks the broom in half, which only doubles the chaos!

By The Still Waters

Amy Beach was the first American woman to publish a symphony, a great achievement in itself but even more impressive considering that she thoherself first and foremost, a pianist.

'By the still waters' was originally written for solo piano, and much like her other works, took inspiration from poetry and written word. This piece was based on the Book of Psalms in the King James Version of the Bible:

*"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures,
He leadeth me beside the still waters,
He restoreth my soul ... "*

The calm, reflective essence of the work is achieved by rippling arpeggios that surround a humble, sustained melody that passes around the ensemble, embracing the nature of wind instruments and how they can honour Beach's original work.

Three Preludes

George Gershwin's compositional style fused ragtime, jazz, blues and classical traits in such a manner that it became a genre of its own.

Written only two years after his wildly successful 'Rhapsody in Blue', Gershwin's 'Three Preludes' were composed for his primary instrument: the piano.

The three contrasting movements have been adapted for several different instrumentations, and thanks to the composer's notable style that translates seamlessly across his whole body of work, it is hard to imagine a setting that the Three Preludes wouldn't work in. In fact, this arrangement features every single instrument in Chameleon's line-up.

Invirtita Ana Lugojana

The arrangement of this traditional Romanian folk tune is inspired by a rendition of the same piece by the Nederlands Blazers Ensemble. Originally performed by clarinet, double bass and cimbalom (a percussive string instrument), this melody shows the virtuosity and flexibility of the clarinet

○ Fredrik, ○ Fredrik

○ Fredrik, ○ Fredrik is taken from the Danish String Quartet's album 'Wood Works', a collection of Nordic folk tunes. This piece of contemporary folk music was written by Johannes Rusten – a childhood friend of the ensemble's cellist – and as with the tradition of folk music, it is designed to be played not written down. Every performance brings new inflections and interpretations, with the ensemble improvising an introduction that draws upon the groove of the melody alone. The Danish String Quartet are a GRAMMY nominated ensemble that are described as standing out due to their "nimble charisma, stylish repertoire and the way their light and grainy shading can turn on a dime." (Kate Molleson, The Guardian). Their personality beams through their arrangements, with ○ Fredrik, ○ Fredrik being no exception!



chameleon4tet.co.uk

