



CCM

GUEST ARTIST SERIES
PRESENTS

**COLIN MATTHEWS,
COMPOSER**

*This concert is made possible through the generosity of the
Alexander Zemlinsky Prize for Composition Endowment*

**Wednesday, March 9, 2022
Robert J. Werner Recital Hall
7:30 p.m.**

PROGRAM

Eleven Studies in Velocity for Solo Piano (1987)

Colin Matthews
(b.1946)

- I. Quasi improvvisando*
- II. Leggiero e ritmico*
- III. Con fuoco, quasi recitativo*
- IV. Allegro leggiero*
- XI. Allegro drammatico (for David Bedford)*
Marta Aznavoorian, piano

Nowhere to Hide for Piano Trio (2013)

Colin Matthews

- I. Prologue. Sostenuto*
- II. Berceuse. In memoriam Elliot Carter*
- III. Scherzino. Allegro molto*
- IV. Afterward. Sostenuto*

Lincoln Trio

Desirée Ruhstrat, violin
David Cunliffe, cello
Marta Aznavoorian, piano

Intermission

Hidden Agenda for Piano Trio (2017)

Colin Matthews

- I. Larghetto*
- II. Sostenuto*
- III. Scurrying*
- IV. Coda. Calmo*

Lincoln Trio

Desirée Ruhstrat, violin
David Cunliffe, cello
Marta Aznavoorian, piano

String Quartet No. 2 (1985, rev. 1989)

Colin Matthews

- I. Presto*
- II. Intermezzo 1: Prestissimo*
- III. Scherzo and Trio*
- IV. Interlude*
- V. Intermezzo 2: Chorale*
- VI. Tempo giusto (Presto)*

Beo String Quartet

Jason Neukom, violin
Andrew Giordano, violin
Sean Neukom, viola
Ryan Ash, cello

Program Notes

Eleven Studies in Velocity (1987)

Although, as the title implies, these studies are all fast, they are not in the first place studies in pianistic virtuosity – I am no pianist myself – so much as studies in various ways of composing fast music. All are short and concentrated, with few lasting more than a minute. Since the order of performance and the number of studies played (there is not obligation to play them all) is largely up to the pianist, there is not point in attempting to describe them, except to say that in a complete version one (which should be placed near the end) is a nocturne, with the only slow textures of the eleven, and the final piece is in the nature of a toccata. This work was commissioned by the Finzi Trust with funds made available by Southern Arts. The first performance was given by William Howard on October 2nd 1987 in the Wigmore Hall.

Nowhere to Hide (2013)


When I began work on this trio I had intended it to be in one movement, but the music that has become the first movement took me far longer to write than I had expected, and was certainly not complete in itself. I was thinking of the direction that the rest of the work should take when the news of Elliott Carter's death in November 2012 made me put the trio aside and write a little Berceuse for piano in his memory.

This unanticipated music became the basis of the second movement, and also influenced the mood of the fourth. The third movement takes over the brief scherzo-like episodes from the rather elaborate structure of the first movement (which is as long as the other three movements combined) to provide a lightning-fast 'Scherzino'. The entire piece lasts around 14 minutes.

Nowhere to Hide was Commissioned by the Schubert Ensemble for its 30th Anniversary with funds from the John S Cohen Foundation, the Steel Charitable Trust, the PRS for Music Foundation and the Schubert Ensemble Trust. It was first performed by the Schubert Ensemble at the Cheltenham International Music Festival on July 5th 2013.

Hidden Agenda (2017)

The title, like the music itself, has become a work in progress – when I started to consider the possibilities of the request from the London Bridge Trio last in 2016 I thought that the work might develop into something bigger than the deadline would allow. My previous piano trio, written several years ago, was called 'Nowhere to Hide', whose title came from John Adams' immediate response when I told him that I was writing a piano trio. So this sequel



seemed to demand a similar title, although whether or not there really is a 'hidden agenda' will only become clear when I add the two further movements I intend to write. The two existing movements are, first, a declamatory and forceful introduction dominated by the piano, which gives way to a gentle sequence of descending chords with more lyrical writing for the strings, then a brief scherzo-like section leading back to a quiet reprise of the opening. All of this material will be further developed, beginning with the second movement, where the descending chords are decorated by muted flurries from the strings. The main agenda is now to add the next two movements, and I'm delighted to know that the opportunity to expand the work will be there.

Commissioned for the 2017 Winchester Chamber Music Festival, with financial support from Friends of the Festival, together with Hinrichsen Foundation and Winchester City Council.

First performed at the Winchester Chamber Music Festival, Winchester Discovery Centre, Winchester by the London Bridge Trio in April 2017.

String Quartet No.2 (1985, rev. 1989)

My second string quartet (completed in 1985) in its original form consisted of two movements, lasting some 16 minutes, a Presto and a Berceuse. But I became dissatisfied with the work as a whole, and in 1987 decided to withdraw it for revision, a process which was finally completed in December 1989.

While the first movement – which is throughout very fast and virtuosic – has survived largely intact, the original second movement has disappeared completely, and been replaced by no less than five new movements, all of them short. These are: a hushed prestissimo 'intermezzo' which follows on without a break from the first movement, almost as a coda to it; a scherzo and trio, without reprise of the scherzo; a very brief interlude, upbeat to a slow, chorale-like intermezzo; and a finale which contains elements of recapitulation before being rushed off into an unexpected direction by a very truncated fugue. The duration of this new version of the quartet is no more than that of the old one.

The original commission for the work was funded by Southern Arts on behalf of the Regional Contemporary Music Circuit.



The ALEXANDER ZEMPLINSKY PRIZE for COMPOSITION

Mrs. Louise Zemlinsky endowed the Alexander Zemlinsky Prize for Composition at the University of Cincinnati in 1990 to promote the music of young composers from around the world. The fund is jointly administered by the University of Cincinnati through the Dean of the College-Conservatory of Music, the Alexander Zemlinsky Fund in Vienna, Austria and the Austrian Cultural Institute in New York City.

The Alexander Zemlinsky Prize for Composition serves three purposes:

1) To perpetuate the memory of Alexander Zemlinsky, 2) To discover new works for symphony orchestra that are truly original and have the power to communicate with and engage a broad audience, and 3) To promote and encourage young composers from around the world.

The fund has endowed two major prizes in new music composition. The first is an international competition and prize in orchestral music composition and the second is an international competition and prize in chamber music.

For each competition a respected international jury of composers is assembled to select a short list of five winners with the final selection of first second and third place winners made by a small committee including the Dean of the College-Conservatory of Music.

In 2019, the prestigious panel comprised of composers Carl Vine (Australia), Missy Mazzoli (USA), Iris ter Schiphorst (Austria) and Colin Matthews (UK) selected the Japanese/Dutch composer Aya Yoshida to create a new orchestral work for dance that will premiere at CCM in December 2021. The panel members were all invited for one-week residencies at CCM during which time, lessons, masterclasses, public lectures and a showcase recital of their music would be a feature of the residency.

Tonight's concert features the work of our jurist/composer from the United Kingdom, Colin Matthews.

Dr. Douglas Knehan, Norman Dinerstein Professor of Composition Scholar
Director of the Alexander Zemlinsky Prize for Composition

BIOGRAPHY:

Colin Matthews (b. 1946)

Colin Matthews was born in London in 1946. He studied at the Universities of Nottingham and Sussex, and subsequently worked as assistant to Benjamin Britten, and with Imogen Holst. He collaborated with Deryck Cooke from 1963 until 1975 on the performing version of Mahler's Tenth Symphony. Over five decades his music has ranged from solo piano music through five string quartets and many ensemble and orchestral works. From 1992-9 he was Associate Composer with the London Symphony Orchestra, writing amongst other works a Cello Concerto for Rostropovich. In 1997 his choral/orchestral *Renewal*, commissioned for the 50th anniversary of BBC Radio 3, was given a Royal Philharmonic Society Award. Other orchestral works include *Reflected Images* for the San Francisco SO, *Berceuse* for Dresden for the New York Philharmonic and *Turning Point* for the Concertgebouw Orchestra. He was Composer-in-Association with the Hallé from 2001-10, now Composer Emeritus, making for them his orchestrations of Debussy's 24 Preludes. His Violin Concerto for Leila Josefowicz and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra was premiered in October 2009, *No Man's Land* at the BBC Proms in 2011, and in the same year *Grand Barcarolle* by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Riccardo Chailly. Works since 2012 include *Traces Remain* for the BBCSO, *Spiralling* for *Spira Mirabilis*, and a 5th String Quartet composed for the 75th anniversary of Tanglewood, where he has been visiting composer many times. More recently Matthews has focused on works for voice and ensemble - *A Land of Rain* (2017), *As Time Returns* (2018) and *Seascapes* (2020).

He is Founder and Executive Producer of NMC Recordings, Administrator of the Holst Foundation and Joint President of Britten-Pears Arts. He co-founded the Aldeburgh Composition Course with Oliver Knussen in 1992, and has been composition director of the LSO's Panufnik Scheme since 2005. He was presented with the RPS/PRS Leslie Boosey Award in 2005, honouring an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the furtherance of contemporary music in Britain; and the Gramophone 2017 Special Achievement Award in recognition of his work for NMC. He holds honorary posts with several universities and is Prince Consort Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music.

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