

## BERWALD, FRANZ (1796–1868)

## SEPTET IN B FLAT MAJOR (1817/28)

23'15

for clarinet, horn, bassoon, violin, viola, cello and double bass

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| 1 | I. Introduzione. <i>Adagio – Allegro molto</i> | 8'12 |
| 2 | II. <i>Poco adagio – Prestissimo – Adagio</i>  | 8'40 |
| 3 | III. Finale. <i>Allegro con spirito</i>        | 6'20 |

## DU PUY, ÉDOUARD (?1770–1822)

## QUINTET IN A MINOR for bassoon and strings

21'01

- |   |                              |      |
|---|------------------------------|------|
| 4 | I. <i>Allegro moderato</i>   | 7'45 |
| 5 | II. <i>Andante sostenuto</i> | 5'08 |
| 6 | III. Rondo. <i>Allegro</i>   | 8'06 |

## BERWALD, FRANZ

## QUARTET IN E FLAT MAJOR (1819)

23'43

for piano, clarinet, horn and bassoon

- |   |  |       |
|---|--|-------|
| 7 | I. Introduzione. <i>Adagio – Allegro ma non troppo</i> | 11'17 |
| 8 | II. <i>Adagio</i>                                      | 3'13  |
| 9 | III. Finale. <i>Allegro</i>                            | 9'10  |

TT: 70'51

DONNA AGRELL *bassoon*

LORENZO COPPOLA *clarinet* · TEUNIS VAN DER ZWART *horn*

MARC DESTRUBÉ & FRANC POLMAN *violins*

YOSHIKO MORITA *viola* · ALBERT BRÜGGEN *cello*

ROBERT FRANENBERG *double bass*

RONALD BRAUTIGAM *fortepiano*

#### INSTRUMENTARIUM

Bassoon: Grenser & Wiesner, Dresden, c. 1820

Clarinet: Agnès Guérout, Paris 2000, after Heinrich Grenser (c.1800)

Horn: 'Cor Solo', Couesnon, Paris, 1900

Violins: Anonymous Brescian violin, school of Rogieri, c. 1685 (Marc Destrubé)  
Tilman Muthesius, Potsdam, 2012, after Matteo Goffriller (1725) (Franc Polman)

Viola: Edward Panphilon, England 1669

Cello: Dan Sun, Beijing 2012.

Double Bass: Vincenzo Panormo, London 1804

Piano: Lagrassa, Viennese school, c. 1815 (courtesy of Edwin Beunk)

## Frans Preumayr, a German Bassoon Virtuoso in Sweden

Our recording contains chamber music composed in the early nineteenth century in Stockholm and performed by the well-known bassoon virtuoso, Frans Preumayr (1782–1853), who moved to Sweden from Germany at the beginning of the 1800s with his two brothers, also musicians. In a travel journal written during a European tour in the years 1829–30, Preumayr refers to his ‘precious’ Grenser bassoon from Dresden; the Grenser & Wiesner instrument used on this recording is probably very similar to his.<sup>1</sup>

Several concert reviews from London specifically praised Preumayr’s beautiful tone quality and perfect intonation:

‘Preumayr is the best performer on the bassoon that we ever heard, taking tone, taste and execution into consideration; he makes nothing of a rapid flight from the lowest B flat in the bass to E flat, fourth space in the treble, three octaves and a half!... He displayed great skill and command of his instrument...’<sup>2</sup>

‘Keys in which, to other bassoon players, passages are impracticable, are to him nothing: but not content with a facility or command within the bounds of former *fagotto*-music, he has extended his domain of flourish, and actually can arrive at will upon E flat (4th space treble), and rest there as long as he pleases.’<sup>3</sup>

A member of the Royal Orchestra (Hovkapellet) in Stockholm, Preumayr was surrounded by other eminent musicians, such as his father-in-law, the clarinetist and composer Bernhard Henrik Crusell; Crusell wrote various compositions for Preumayr, including a solo work with orchestra, *Concertino for bassoon* (1828). Franz Berwald, a member of the orchestra’s string section, wrote his *Concert Piece for Bassoon and Orchestra* for Preumayr in 1827, who also performed two works

by the orchestra's *kapellmästare* (conductor), Édouard Du Puy: Concerto for Bassoon and Quintet for Bassoon and Strings.

### Édouard Du Puy, a Don Juan of the North

The exact circumstances surrounding the family background of **Jean Baptiste Édouard Louis Camille Du Puy** are disputed, but most sources suggest that he was born in 1770 in Corcelles, near Neuchâtel in western Switzerland, and died in Stockholm in 1822. Raised in Geneva, Du Puy was sent to Paris in 1783, where he studied the violin with Charles Chabran. As a violin virtuoso, singer, and composer he arrived in Stockholm in 1793, where his musical talents and charisma brought him into higher cultural and social circles. Du Puy's political sympathies with Napoleon resulted in his deportation in 1799, however, and he resumed his career in the Danish capital, appearing regularly on stage as a singer. His performance in the title role of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Copenhagen in 1807 was highly praised, and one of his own works, the popular singspiel *Ungdom og Galskab* (*Youth and Folly*), was premièred in 1806. The discovery of his affair with the crown princess, Charlotte Frederica, brought Du Puy another deportation order in 1809. After a brief sojourn in Paris, he was allowed to return to Stockholm in 1810. Heartily welcomed back, Du Puy enjoyed immense popularity in his various functions as leader, composer, conductor and singer at the Royal Opera, where he appeared in the title roles of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*. A report from the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* on 4th May 1814 enthusiastically confirmed the strength of Du Puy's performance: 'Don Juan was performed by Professor du Puy, so splendidly that we very much doubt that this role has ever been sung better.'

Du Puy is referred to as the 'Don Juan of the North' by various authors, but his reputation as a composer is largely confined to the Scandinavian countries, and little has appeared about him elsewhere. Little is known about Du Puy's **Quintet**

**for Bassoon, Two Violins, Viola and Cello**, but Frans Preumayr mentions performing it in Copenhagen in his travel journal.<sup>4</sup> Du Puy composed two movements, *Allegro moderato* and *Andante sostenuto*, and a third, a rondo (*Allegro*), was added at an unknown date by an oboist in the Royal Orchestra, Carl Anton Philipp Braun; it is included in the score located in the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden. The dramatic, *cantabile* bassoon part contains operatic melodies and virtuosic passagework; noteworthy in Braun's last movement is the three-and-a-half octave range for the bassoon, twice ascending chromatically to E flat", quite exceptional for this time. It has become fashionable among bassoonists to perform the Quintet as a solo concerto with symphony orchestra accompaniment, but we have chosen to record it here in its original setting with string quartet.

### **Franz Berwald, an eccentric Romanticist**

Born in Stockholm in 1796, **Franz Adolf Berwald** was the son of the violinist Christian Friedrich Georg Berwald (1740–1825), who moved to Sweden in 1773 and shortly thereafter joined the Royal Orchestra. Members of this large German clan can be traced to the seventeenth century, and were active as violinists, flautists, oboists, bassoonists and singers in Neumark and Mecklenburg, as well as in Denmark, Russia and Sweden. Franz Berwald is now considered to be the foremost Swedish composer of the early Romantic period, although his musical career could hardly be described as very successful during his lifetime. In the foreword of Robert Layton's biography, one of the few English sources about Berwald, Gerald Abraham describes the musician as 'a very individual and rather fascinating composer... [whose] work was not recognized at its true worth during his lifetime, even in Sweden.'<sup>5</sup> Berwald studied the violin and composition with Édouard Du Puy, and at the age of sixteen was already employed as violinist in the Royal Orchestra. Between 1818 and 1819 the aspiring composer turned to publishing a musical jour-

nal, which unfortunately did not succeed; lacking sufficient funding, he re-joined the orchestra as a violist in 1820. An extended and public literary duel between Berwald and a music reviewer concerning his **Quartet in E flat major for Piano and Winds** (1819) was fought in the publications *Argus* and *Allmänna Journalen*.<sup>6</sup> The first performance took place on 3rd March 1821 at Stora Börssalen in Stockholm with the performers Bernhard Crusell (clarinet), Johann Hirschfeld (horn), Frans Preumayr (bassoon) and Ewa Lithander (piano). An anonymous music critic expressed himself in extremely harsh tones:

‘It seems as if Herr Berwald in his hunt for originality and striving to be impressive solely by means of effects, expressly banished anything melodious in his compositions; for how can one otherwise explain these eternal modulations from one tonality to another, which made such a dreadful impression and gave one’s powers of attention no rest. As soon as a melody was to be heard, it was quickly broken off and the ear tormented incessantly with the most painful dissonances, which in the end became almost completely unbearable.’ (Translation: Layton, p. 34)

In subsequent, lengthy responses Berwald defended his ‘original style’ and accused the critic of making ‘inaccurate postulations’. The Quartet, one of very few written for this combination of instruments, is relatively unknown and seldom performed. Although the work is not structurally innovative, its thematic material is in turn contemplative, humorous and freshly progressive.

The public exchange concerning the Quartet serves to show just how difficult the young composer’s situation in Stockholm was, and lends support to Robert Layton’s hypothesis that Berwald sought more open-minded surroundings in Berlin, where he went to study composition in 1829. While in Berlin, Berwald established a successful orthopaedic institute which provided him with a degree of financial

stability. After spending nearly two decades abroad, he eventually returned to Sweden. His compositions include chamber music in various combinations for strings, winds and piano; choral and stage works; four symphonies, and solo works for violin, piano, voice and bassoon. He was awarded the Order of the Polar Star in 1866 and also became a member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Music just a year prior to his death.

The **Septet for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Violin, Viola, Violoncello und Double Bass** (1817/28) appeared in several versions, and was initially performed in Stockholm on 10th January 1818. The work uses the same instrumentation as Beethoven's highly popular Septet in E flat major; the harmonious blend of instruments form an attractive texture, and Berwald exploits the distinct timbres of the individual wind instruments; operatic melodies abound. This three-movement work, in which Berwald cleverly encloses a *Prestissimo* within the slow movement, was presented in its final version on 6th December 1828 at Stora Börssalen in Stockholm, with the aforementioned wind players Crusell, Preumayr and Hirschfeld; the programme also featured Preumayr's performance of Berwald's Concert Piece for Bassoon and Orchestra.

### A Fine Grenser & Wiesner Bassoon

In 1744 in Dresden, Carl August Grenser established what was to become one of the most highly esteemed woodwind instrument workshops of its time. Receiving the Royal Privilege to provide instruments for the regional court in 1753 as *Hof-Instrumentenmacher*, Grenser quickly developed a widespread reputation. The workshop continued to flourish in the late eighteenth century under the direction of Carl August's nephew, Heinrich, providing woodwind instruments of the highest quality to musicians throughout Europe. Following Heinrich's death in 1813, the business was taken over by the journeyman Samuel Wiesner, who continued

production until the mid-1800s, and is the maker of the bassoon used in this recording. Many examples of Grenser/Wiesner instruments have been preserved in Sweden, where they were highly popular and were used, for example, by players in the Royal Orchestra.<sup>7</sup>

Thirty years ago, I had the good fortune to acquire a rare, intact eleven-keyed Grenser & Wiesner bassoon, which I have had the great privilege to use in over 1,500 performances. Constructed sometime between 1817 and 1825, it came in its original case along with a box of reeds. The address label on the case was partially legible and indicated that it had been sent to Sweden:

*...nologen*

*pp ...Thorvald T...of*

*...gatan 16*

*...kholm*

Although showing signs of wear, the bassoon was in excellent condition and could be played at a pitch of around A=430 Hz. The warm, rich tone quality and stable intonation found throughout all its registers is a typical characteristic of Grenser/Wiesner bassoon models. The accompanying two wing joints and three crooks, in varying lengths, served to accommodate different performing pitches, solving a commonplace problem faced by musicians in the nineteenth century before tuning became standardized.

As they are easily damaged or separated from the instrument, the most fragile parts, crooks and reeds, are hardly ever found together with period bassoons. Old reeds were normally discarded when no longer functional, making a box with six intact reeds an incredibly rare and valuable find. This fine bassoon's measurements have been considered in conjunction with the construction of another (Heinrich) Grenser model produced by the Spanish company, Bonaire. Replicas of the delicate



original crooks, intended for everyday use, have been made by various makers; the historical reeds, also too fragile to play, have provided interesting and useful data.

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<sup>1</sup> Frans Preumayr's *Reisejournal* is located in the Rare Collections of the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden in Stockholm.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous, 'Preumayr's Concert', *Morning Post* (London), 20th July 1830.

<sup>3</sup> James Silg Buckingham, 'Mr Preumayr's Concert', *Athenaeum* (London), 24th July 1830.

<sup>4</sup> Preumayr, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Layton, *Franz Berwald: a critical study of the nineteenth century Swedish symphonist* (London: Blond, 1959), 9.

<sup>6</sup> Franz Berwald: *Die Dokumente seines Lebens*, ed. Erling Lomnäs, Ingmar Bengtsson, Nils Castegren (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1979), 62–71. The review and the resulting public correspondence between Berwald and the author, can be read here in Swedish and German.

<sup>7</sup> Phillip T. Young, 'Inventory of Instruments: J. H. Eichentopf, Poerschman, Sattler, A. and H. Grenser, Grundmann', *Galpin Society Journal* 31/May (1978), 108.

## The Musicians

Performing and recording with some of the most prestigious European period instrument orchestras and ensembles, the bassoonist Donna Agrell has been a member of the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, an international group of specialists in eighteenth and nineteenth century music, since its founding in 1981 by Frans Brüggen. She has additionally instructed generations of young musicians at two of Europe's foremost institutes for historical music studies, the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (from 2000) and the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague (from 1990), and is currently pursuing her doctoral studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands, researching nineteenth-century Swedish bassoon repertoire.

For this recording, she invited friends from six countries to collaborate, all members of the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century: co-leader Marc Destru  , violinist Franc Polman, violist Yoshiko Morita, cellist Albert Br  ggen, bassist Robert Franzenberg and hornist Teunis van der Zwart, along with another leading European period-instrument player, Lorenzo Coppola, principal clarinetist of the Freiburger Barockorchester. They are joined by the eminent pianist Ronald Brautigam, widely acclaimed for his performances and recordings of classical repertoire on historical pianos.

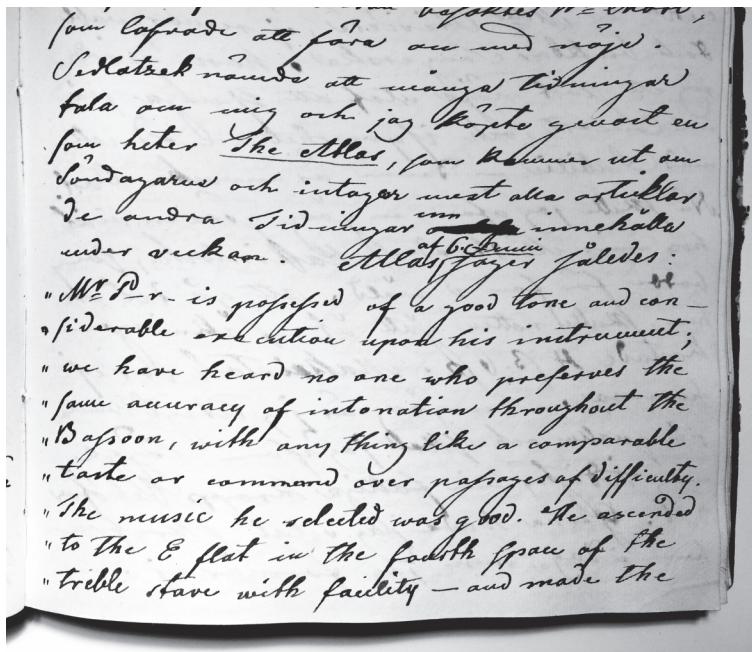


DONNA AGRELL



**THE BASSOON VIRTUOSO FRANS PREUMAYR (1782–1853)**

from the Swedish Museum of Performing Arts (Musikverket / Swedish Performing Arts Agency)



## PREUMAYR'S TRAVEL JOURNAL, 6TH JUNE 1830

in which he quotes (in English) a review printed in *The Atlas*: 'we have heard no one who preserves the same accuracy of intonation throughout the Bassoon, with anything like a comparable taste or command over passages of difficulty.'

The music on BIS's Hybrid SACDs can be played back in Stereo (CD and SACD) as well as in 5.0 Surround sound (SACD).

Our surround sound recordings aim to reproduce the natural sound in a concert venue as faithfully as possible, using the newest technology. In order to do so, all five channels are recorded using the full frequency range, with no separate bass channel added: a so-called 5.0 configuration. If your sub-woofer is switched on, however, most systems will also automatically feed the bass signal coming from the other channels into it. In the case of systems with limited bass reproduction, this may be of benefit to your listening experience.

This project was realized with the generous support of the Charles Burney Fonds  
(Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds), and the Leiden University Academy of Creative and Performing Arts



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#### RECORDING DATA

##### Recording:

January 2015 at Doopgezinde Kerk, Haarlem, The Netherlands  
Producer and sound engineer: Jens Braun (Take5 Music Production)

##### Equipment:

BIS's recording teams use microphones from Neumann and Schoeps, audio electronics from RME, Lake People and DirectOut, MADI optical cabling technology, monitoring equipment from B&W, STAX and Sennheiser, and Sequoia and Pyramix digital audio workstations.

Original format: 24 bit / 96 kHz

Post-production: Editing and mixing: Jens Braun

Executive producer: Robert Suff

#### BOOKLET AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Cover text: © Donna Agrell 2015

Translations: Horst A. Scholz (German); Jean-Pascal Vachon (French)

Front cover and inside inlay: The Grenser & Wiesner bassoon played by Donna Agrell on this recording. Photo © Martin Chang

Back cover: the label on the original instrument case, with a partially legible Stockholm address (see liner notes)

Booklet photo of Donna Agrell: © Annelies van der Vegt

Typesetting, lay-out: Andrew Barnett (Compact Design)

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