

Cedric Thorpe DAVIE

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME ONE
FANTASIA NO. 1 ON FOUR SCOTTISH TUNES
DIVERSIONS ON A TUNE BY DR ARNE
KING LEAR: SOLEMN MUSIC
SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR
FESTAL OVERTURE

St Andrews Chamber Orchestra
Bede Williams

CEDRIC THORPE DAVIE: A MUSICAL LEGACY

by Alan Munro

My purpose in writing this introduction is to give the background to the project to record the music of Cedric Thorpe Davie, and explain why I believe it is important to remember him and recognise his achievement. The CTD Project, if we can call it that, arose from a meeting I had about eight years ago with Martin Anderson, founder and owner of Toccata Classics. Martin and I were contemporaries at the University of St Andrews in the mid-1970s. I was reading music in the wonderful music department of that period, of which Cedric was head (more on which below). Although Martin was not studying music, he had a keen interest in classical music – indeed, his knowledge of the subject was at least equal to mine, and far wider when it came to what I might term some of the more esoteric composers, many of whom I had yet to discover.

During our lunch eight years back, we discussed Martin's journey to Toccata Classics, which has the strapline 'great music by unknown composers, unknown music by great composers': its brief is to rescue deserving music from obscurity. That seemed to me to summarise the position of CTD's output. Cedric (the name by which he was known to all of his students – although never to his face!) had been one of the foremost British composers of the 1940s, '50s and '60s, composing in a wide variety of genres, from the more traditional forms to be heard in this recording to film music and vocal and choral works, as well as numerous works for chamber ensembles and brass band, much of it with a decidedly Scottish accent. Well before his death in 1983, Cedric's music had fallen out of favour, not least because of its neglect by the BBC under the modernist regime of William Glock, which regarded tonality as outdated.

It seemed to both Martin and me that Cedric's large output of music was due for reassessment – indeed, renaissance. We discovered that many of his manuscripts were held in the Scottish Music Centre in Glasgow, to which location we betook ourselves, along with the conductor Paul Mann. Looking through the substantial

collection of CTD scores, we selected five works as suitable for inclusion in an initial recording project. The intention is to have these works function as the harbinger of a wider selection of CTD's output – indeed, as part of a wider and more comprehensive coverage on Toccata Classics of Scottish twentieth-century music more generally. All the material we examined was manuscript, which though legible would hardly meet the standards of musicians today. Paul Mann is a distinguished music-editor and typesetter as well as a conductor, and he set these pieces in Sibelius, producing scores of a professional standard.

When we considered the orchestra for the recording, it seemed to us appropriate to return the music to its roots. During his three decades at St Andrews, CTD was 'Mr Music'. He founded the Music Department of the University and formed the chamber orchestra you hear in this recording, guiding both to considerable achievement.

Some words must be said about CTD as teacher. He was to generations of students the most knowledgeable and entertaining of pedagogues. Many of us remember his insightful (and often wry) comments on a wide variety of composers, especially his beloved Sibelius. Mind you, he did have his blind spots – for example, he had scant regard for Bruckner and Mahler, possibly regarding them as a bit too overblown to sit comfortably in the pantheon of classical symphonic form. But when I think back to his series of lectures on, for example, Beethoven or Brahms, I can still recall some of the comments he made, valid then and still so today, and they come back to me every time I hear the music.

I was asked at one point in this project: why CTD? I have two answers. The first is that those of us who knew him half a century ago have a debt to discharge, and we would be ill advised to wait another half-century before doing so. Second, and more important, he is quite simply a composer who deserves to be heard and remembered. I hope you will agree with me.

Alan Munro studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music (now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland) and, under Cedric Thorpe Davie, at the University of St Andrews, graduating MA with Honours. He is a violinist and violist and for a number of years conducted the award-winning London Gaelic Choir, their recordings and broadcasts including several of Cedric Thorpe Davie's choral arrangements.

CEDRIC THORPE DAVIE, LOST SCOTTISH COMPOSER

by Christine M. Gascoigne and Neil Price

Cedric Thorpe Davie was born in London on 30 May 1913. His father, Thorpe Davie, was a remarkable Scot, well-known in Glasgow as a teacher of singing and trainer of choirs. He had started his musical career as a singer, training under the celebrated Polish tenor Jean de Reszke, but turned to teaching after straining and damaging his voice. As a voice-teacher he was enormously successful, having at one time charge of seven choirs, and many of his pupils had careers as professional singers.

The Davies were a family steeped in the arts, two of Cedric's first cousins being Alan Davie, the celebrated artist, and Muir Mathieson, the conductor and cornerstone of British film music. It was, then, into such a family that Cedric was born. His early musical studies were in Glasgow, at the Scottish National Academy of Music (now the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), where he came under the influence of the principal, Dr W. Gillies Whittaker, and R. Harold Thomson, afterwards head of music, BBC Scotland. In 1932, he was awarded a Caird scholarship for study in London and abroad and in that year began to attend the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied piano with the distinguished pianists Egon Petri and Harold Craxton and horn with Aubrey Brain. The following year, he moved to the Royal College of Music, where his principal area of study was composition under Ralph Vaughan Williams and R. O. Morris. Several prizes for composition came his way, including, in 1935, the prestigious Cobbett prize, awarded for a work in 'phantasy' form, the other winners of which have included Frank Bridge, Herbert Howells and John Ireland. During this time, he formed lifelong friendships with the composers Gerald Finzi and Howard Ferguson. In 1935, he went abroad for a year, first to Budapest and then to Helsinki. There he worked hard, composing and studying with Kodály and with the Finnish composer Yrjö Kilpinen. While in Finland, he visited one of his idols, Sibelius, who by that stage had finished his creative work and was living in retirement in Järvenpää. A

number of early works date from this period of study abroad, including a cello sonatina and the opera *Gammer Gurton's Needle*.

On his return to his native shores, the young composer was confronted by a dilemma – whether to settle in London, with its busy and exciting musical life, and its many opportunities for young musicians, or to return to Scotland, where he felt his roots to be. Cedric opted for the latter course, somewhat against the advice of his friends, and took up an appointment at the Scottish National Academy of Music, teaching theory and composition and taking a full part in the busy life of a music college. During the hostilities of the Second World War, he stayed in Glasgow, distinguishing himself in the National Fire Service, fire-fighting through the blitz in the Glasgow dockland and suffering a serious injury.

In 1945, however, the course of his life changed. He accepted an invitation to move from the bustling west-coast city to the small and tranquil town of St Andrews, on the east coast of Fife, as Master of Music in the University. Here for the next thirty years he worked, training choirs and orchestras, giving recitals, as well as teaching and composing, and establishing the Department of Music. He also found time to arrange and edit works for performance by the students he directed. Many of his own compositions during these three decades were for the specific forces at his disposal. The *Variations on a Theme of A. C. Mackenzie*, for instance, first written for the University Orchestra as then constituted, had additional parts added to it as the composition of the ensemble changed. He spent much time searching out and then arranging works for the sometimes bizarre disposition of the student orchestra. The difficulty of obtaining music in the immediate post-war period was thus a considerable stimulus to creative activity. He produced a steady stream of further compositions, many of them in response to commissions – for film and theatre, for youth orchestras and education departments, as well as work for the young and growing Edinburgh Festival.

Indeed, the second Festival, in 1948, marked the beginning of a memorable theatrical partnership. Tyrone Guthrie, Robert Kemp and Cedric Thorpe Davie collaborated in a powerful and spectacular theatrical event which dominated the festival in its opening years – a performance, directed by Tyrone Guthrie, with acting text by Robert Kemp and

music by Cedric Thorpe Davie of *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaites*, by Sir David Lindsay of the Mount.¹ Cedric continued to work with both Robert Kemp and Tyrone Guthrie until their untimely deaths in 1967 and 1971. Much of his output from 1948 onwards reflects his interest in drama. Incidental music, not only for stage plays but also for radio programmes and films (he wrote over twenty film scores), poured from his pen. A high proportion of them have a distinctly Scottish flavour, which is also reflected in his many and beautiful arrangements of traditional Scottish songs.

Somewhat disillusioned by trends in contemporary music, he spent the latter part of his working life more and more devoted to the promotion of music within the University of St Andrews and in particular to the establishment of a Department of Music and the delivery of an Honours course in music, for which he was awarded a professorship. His students remember him as a formidable teacher but also as a 'character' and provider of endless anecdotes. He retired to his cottage in St John's Town of Dalry, Kirkcudbrightshire, in 1978, but his retirement was too brief, and he died on 18 January 1983, just short of his 70th birthday.

His importance as a composer will be determined only by time, but it is unquestionable that he played a major role in the Scottish musical renaissance of the twentieth century.

Christine Gascoigne came to the University of St Andrews in 1975 when her husband David accepted a post in the French Department. She soon found employment in the University Library, where Cedric Thorpe Davie's family had deposited his autograph manuscripts and his correspondence after his death in 1983; the performing scores went to the Scottish Music Archive in Glasgow. Her first job was to catalogue the material in the Library; once that had been done, she was able to collate the

¹ Sir David Lindsay (c. 1486–c. 1555) – knight, poet, diplomat, herald – was the scion of a family that held land on the Mount, outside Cupar, in north-east Fife; he may have attended St Andrews University in 1508–9. He found rapid advancement in the royal household of James V and in 1529 was appointed Lord Lyon King of Arms (the official responsible for regulating Scottish heraldry and judge of the oldest heraldic court in the world still in daily operation). Lindsay's satirical writing, much influenced by Chaucer, was received with an unusual degree of tolerance, and his morality play *Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Thrie Estaites* (the only surviving example of its type in Scottish literature), first performed in 1552, attacks the Three Estates represented in the Scottish parliament: the clergy, the lords and the merchant class. Its revival in 1948 was the first complete modern performance; among the cast was the 22-year-old Stanley Baxter.

St Andrews and the Glasgow material, to produce the definitive volume Cedric Thorpe Davie: Catalogue of Works and Index to Correspondence, published by the University in 1988. Without this volume, none of the present research into the composer would be possible. In 2008, she and David retired to Ely, Cambridgeshire, where they still live and sing in choirs.

Neil Price was an undergraduate at the University of St Andrews from 1970 to 1974, during which time he was a continual member of the Salvator's Chapel Choir directed by Cedric Thorpe Davie, singing in services every week during term time and getting well-acquainted with the Master (and ultimately Professor) of Music. He attended some voluntary courses given by Cedric to broaden his musical knowledge. After graduating, he qualified as a chartered accountant in St Andrews, eventually settling in Orkney where he founded an accountancy practice and directed his own choir, the Mayfield Singers. He is now retired, living in North Queensferry, Fife.

CEDRIC THORPE DAVIE'S ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

by Bede Williams

Cedric Thorpe Davie's orchestral music is best understood in the light of a characteristically candid statement he made late in life, in a 1976 broadcast on *Intermezzo* for BBC Radio 4 Scotland. There he suggested that composers are 'much better employed in justifying their existence by writing music which is actually going to give a lot of pleasure both to the performers and to the audience' than by contributing to 'esoteric' repertoires for a narrow specialist audience.¹ Far from a casual remark, this statement reads as a retrospective manifesto: an articulation of values already embodied in his orchestral output. Davie's conception of 'pleasure' is neither superficial nor evasive, but grounded in fluency of craft, clarity of gesture and a finely judged responsiveness to performers and listeners alike.

His orchestral writing reveals a composer in complete command of his materials: assured, idiomatic and instinctively attentive to instrumental character and balance.

¹ BBC Radio 4 Scotland, 20 November 1976.

This mastery was animated by unusually wide professional experience – across theatre, film, broadcasting and the concert hall – which cultivated a versatility of technique and a refined sensitivity to context. The result is an orchestral voice that is at once practical, polished and deeply communicative, shaped by a distinctly Scottish inflection and yet free of cliché. The works gathered here chart that achievement across a range of forms, from overture and symphony to variation-set, fantasia and incidental music, demonstrating the breadth of Davie's orchestral imagination and the consistency of his artistic aims.

***Festal Overture* (1950)**

Cedric Thorpe Davie's *Festal Overture* ^[1] was composed in 1950 as a celebratory orchestral work commissioned by Walter Susskind to open the inaugural concerts of the newly renamed Scottish National Orchestra in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The ensemble had existed since 1891 as the Scottish Orchestra and adopted the title Scottish National Orchestra in 1950 when it became a fully professional, full-time body (it is now, of course, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra). The commission was a prominent one within Scottish musical life, and Davie – already respected as both a concert and film composer – was a natural choice.

The overture bears several clear accents of Scottish musical language. Its principal theme carries pentatonic inflection, developed through rhythmic variation in a manner consistent with Davie's fluency in folk-derived idioms. A secondary idea unfolds in luminous, almost cinematic, orchestral colour before giving way to a more rustic or archaic episode. Particularly striking is the way Davie transforms his thematic material: ideas appear in evolving 'states' rather than in neatly partitioned contrast – the influence of Sibelius is clear. Again like Sibelius, Davie demonstrates a strong teleological impulse, guiding the listener towards cumulative summits. At the time, William Walton's music held a prominent position among British composers, and it is therefore unsurprising to catch occasional echoes of his style in Davie's work, not least in the orchestral sonority and incisive use of dotted rhythms. The writing for brass is especially effective, reflecting his own early training as a horn-player and his insider's understanding of orchestral

balance. The work projects the confidence of a post-war Scottish musical culture newly animated by national pride and artistic renewal.

Symphony in C major (1945)

Davie's only symphony was composed in the closing months of the Second World War and submitted to the Daily Express Symphony Competition of 1945, where it was awarded second prize by a distinguished panel that included Malcolm Sargent, Arthur Bliss and Constant Lambert. The work was first performed in 1946 at the Royal Albert Hall by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Constant Lambert, with further early performances following, including by the Hallé Orchestra under John Barbiroli.

The score is dedicated 'in honour of my brother', referring to Alan, who after the war became a teacher, and the title page bears the inscription '1945 – the end and the beginning', reflecting both personal and historical transition. The three-movement design aligns with mid-twentieth-century symphonic trends toward concision and structural unity, avoiding the expansive four-movement late-Romantic model while retaining expressive weight. Parallels may be drawn with works such as Sibelius' Third and Fifth Symphonies, both of which adopt a three-movement form. Further comparison can be made with Sibelius' Seventh Symphony (1924), which, although cast in a single movement, is often understood as consisting of three distinct sections. It, too, is in C major and features prominent use of the trombones.

The first movement, *Allegro moderato* [2], opens with timpani and trombones outlining a bold rising fifth, which resolves down a step to a C, a three-note motif that becomes a unifying device throughout the symphony. Transformations of this motif appear in both direct and disguised forms, lending coherence. The *Adagio* second movement [3] sustains tension over extended pedal points – first on E, then on C sharp – with mediant shifts and modal colouring providing harmonic interest. This modal inflection places Davie comfortably within the broader British idiom of the period (Edmund Rubbra comes to mind) without rendering the music derivative; rather, it reveals a composer confident in the clarity and expressive warmth of his writing. The final movement, marked *Allegro non troppo* [4], restores tonic assurance with pithy

melodic cells and subtle Scottish inflections, driving toward a resolute close. Walton's influence is again discernible in the orchestral sonority and rhythmic profile, particularly in the coda.

In spite of its early recognition, the symphony gradually slipped even from occasional performance, a fate shared by many mid-century British works as musical fashions shifted and the generation of its early advocates passed on.

Diversions on a Tune of Dr Arne (1953–54)

Commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and first performed by them at the BBC Proms under the direction of Sir Adrian Boult, Davie's *Diversions on a Tune of Dr Arne* consists of nine variations on a theme by Thomas Arne, the eighteenth-century English composer best known for *Rule, Britannia!*: the theme itself is drawn from Arne's opera *Thomas and Sally* (1760).

Some similarities to Benjamin Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (1945) are apparent in Davie's approach. Indeed, it is plausible that this model was suggested to him by his cousin, Muir Mathieson, the Scottish conductor who worked extensively on film soundtracks, including many composed by Davie himself; Mathieson had also directed the 1946 British educational documentary *Instruments of the Orchestra*, featuring the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent, for which Britten's work was created. Judging by the applause preserved on an early recording, Davie's *Diversions* was a phenomenal success, with the audience even falling for a deliberately comic false ending. A repeat performance at the Proms in 1979 was given by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by the Scottish conductor James Loughran.²

For all the early success of the piece, its promotion proved difficult, to the extent that, in 1982, its publisher, Stainer & Bell, who had acquired the work in the early 1970s, apologised to Davie for being unable to secure further performances and offered

² On this occasion Martin Anderson, by now relocated from St Andrews to London and a Prommer with a season ticket, was able to climb over the railing and greet the composer sitting in the stalls – and take some vicarious pride in the warmth with which the performance was received.

to reassign the copyright back to him. This correspondence grew out of a protracted exchange triggered by inquiries from the Bach Society of Oban, underscoring the ongoing interest in making the work accessible to performers.

Arne's theme is first presented *Allegretto grazioso* as a graceful dialogue between the orchestral sections [5], its lightness and poise culminating in a full *tutti* close. From the outset, Davie signals both his respect for and his willingness to transform his source material. Variation I (*Grave*) [6] offers an immediate and striking contrast, recasting the inherent elegance of the theme into a sombre, almost tragic, register with pronounced military overtones. The brass articulate a skeletal outline of the melody, and the abrupt shift from the original ternary metre into duple time renders the theme nearly unrecognisable. Variation II (*Andante piacevole*) [7] continues this process of transformation. Here, too, the theme is reduced to intervallic traces, delicately embedded in the woodwind above a fluid, lightly textured accompaniment. The effect is one of pastoral serenity, evoking an idyllic riverside scene. A more animated character emerges in Variation III (*Allegro scioltamente* – 'freely', 'easily') [8], where brisk, one-in-a-bar exchanges pass energetically between orchestral groups, recalling something of the antiphonal interplay of the opening statement while intensifying its rhythmic vitality.

The fourth variation (*Adagio*) [9] forms one of the most profound moments in Davie's orchestral writing. Against a soft, sustained backdrop in the lower brass and woodwind, the strings unfold what is less a literal variation than an expressive reimagining of the theme: a continuous, arching melody, at times doubled across several octaves, that suggests an emotive distillation of the original. The scoring here recalls Sibelius – particularly the luminous, suspended textures of *Pelléas et Mélisande* – and creates a sense of expansive stillness.

Relief from this gravity arrives with Variation V (*Comodo*), [10] where lighter textures and rhythmic inflections suggest an Iberian character. But this change of atmosphere is short-lived, since Variation VI (*Tempo giusto*) [11] reintroduces the earlier martial element: distant marching figures gradually coalesce into a forceful tutti, marked by a sense of gathering momentum. In Variation VII (*Poco lento*) [12], the texture thins once

more, and a solo oboe delivers a poignant, almost elegiac, statement built on the skeletal outline of the theme.

Variation VIII (*Allegretto grazioso*) [13] begins to turn back towards the spirit of the original. Here, Davie introduces a distinctly Scottish inflection, and although the theme is cast in duple metre, its contours become recognisable again. The final variation, IX (*Più vivo*) [14], propels the work to an exuberant conclusion. Drawing on jig and reel idioms, Davie combines rhythmic exuberance with contrapuntal ingenuity, culminating – much as in Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* – in a continuous, fugue-like web of animated lines around a chorale texture to bring the work to a triumphant close.

***Solemn Music* (c. 1950)**

Solemn Music [15] is derived from Davie's incidental score to Shakespeare's *King Lear*, written for the 1950 production at Stratford-upon-Avon, directed by Sir John Gielgud and Anthony Quayle. The music was originally scored for solo violin with divisi violas and cellos, a texture conceived in the manner of a viol consort, where the dark, inward sonority suits the gravity of the scene. The transcription for string orchestra was also made in 1950, expanding its sonorities while retaining the restraint and intimacy of the original conception, a testament to his sensitivity as a writer for strings.

Christopher Field – appointed by Davie as a lecturer in the Department of Music of the University of St Andrews in 1964³ – has suggested that the piece may be heard as 'a meditation on John Dowland's famous *Lachrimae* pavan',⁴ a parallel that resonates with its austere melodic contour and suspended sense of lament. As Field notes, 'in the play it was performed by a string quintet at the point in the final act where Lear enters bearing the body of Cordelia.' Conceived for a moment of extreme dramatic stillness, the music unfolds with grave inevitability, demonstrating Davie's ability to distil theatrical tragedy into a concentrated and deeply expressive musical form.

³ In 1987, after 23 years at St Andrews, Dr Field moved to the University of Edinburgh as a senior lecturer, becoming Dean of the Faculty of Music thereafter.

⁴ Programme note for *A Sennet for Cedric Thorpe Davie*, concert held Wednesday 18 May 1988, University of St Andrews.

Fantasia No. 1 on Four Scottish Tunes (1937)

The Scottish accent of Davie's music was not merely an aesthetic preference but part of a wider twentieth-century movement in which composers sought to cultivate distinctive national voices through engagement with folksong. Figures such as Ralph Vaughan Williams encouraged younger composers to explore regional identity rather than default to a pan-European idiom. Davie's own travels during his student years – including time in central Europe studying with Zoltán Kodály and encountering the musical legacies of Bartók and Sibelius – reinforced this outlook. A letter from Gerald Finzi written before one such journey humorously predicted it would be a 'complete waste of time musically' but 'a jolly good holiday',⁵ a remark that hints at generational differences in attitude even within enduring friendships.

Fantasia No. 1 on Four Scottish Tunes [16] was most probably composed at the instigation of Ian Whyte, who conducted its first performance. Whyte, like Davie a student of Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music and soon a central figure in Scottish musical life, served as head of BBC music in Scotland at a time when the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra – founded in 1935 – was actively developing its repertoire. It is therefore plausible that he invited the composer, perhaps drawing on personal acquaintance, to contribute a new work for the orchestra. The fantasia (followed later by a *Fantasia No. 2 on Four Scottish Tunes* in 1964), weaves four melodies – 'Martyrs', 'On Ettrick's Banks', 'My Love's in Germany' and 'Miss Mary Grant's Reel' – into a continuous orchestral narrative. 'Martyrs' is drawn from the Scottish Psalter of 1615. Widely known in Davie's lifetime through its liturgical use, it functions as a unifying element in the fantasia, returning in the closing section to bind the work together. In doing so, Davie effects a subtle but telling synthesis of the sacred and the secular: the remaining melodies are all non-liturgical in origin, and yet 'Martyrs' frames and contextualises them, lending the work a sense of gravity and continuity that transcends its source material. 'On Ettrick's Banks', published as early as 1724 in Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*, introduces a gently pastoral strain. Though initially treated with lyrical restraint, its later return is intensified through throbbing bass syncopations, sustained brass support, and

⁵ Gerald Finzi, letter to Cedric Thorpe Davie dated 12 August 1935, Special Collections, University of St Andrews.

striking horn lines. An energetic episode follows, built on the 'Martyrs' theme over a persistent bass ostinato, before it subsides and 'On Ettrick's Banks' returns to close this section.

'My Love's in Germany', a lament setting a poem by Hector Macneill to an Orkney melody attributed to Colonel Thomas Traill (c. 1630), is introduced by the cor anglais. Its expressive character is underscored by an episode of particular beauty, scored for solo string quartet, underpinned by sustained strings and coloured with delicate touches of harp and flute. 'Miss Mary Grant's Reel', drawn from Angus Cumming's *A Collection of Strathspey or Old Highland Reels* (1780), provides the most animated contrast. Initially led by the flute, its reel character is reinforced through lively, folk-like accompaniment patterns. In the coda, Davie recalls fragments of the preceding material, with 'Martyrs' reasserting itself as the unifying thread, bringing the fantasia to a close in a clear sense of cyclical return.

The fantasia was first broadcast in 1938 by the BBC Scottish Orchestra under Ian Whyte, a significant achievement for the young composer, and later that year received a public performance in Glasgow conducted by George Szell, chief conductor of the Scottish Orchestra from 1936 to 1939. Excerpts were subsequently arranged for smaller forces and circulated beyond Scotland: material derived from the work was heard in New York City in early 1950, in performances at Fort George Presbyterian Church on 29 January 1950 and at Riverside Church on 23 April 1950, both given as part of services marking the tercentenary of the 1650 Psalter.

Cedric Thorpe Davie: Two Radio Broadcasts

The voice of Cedric Thorpe Davie can be heard on two radio broadcasts, in recordings and transcriptions preserved on the Toccata blog. In the earlier one, a transmission in the series *Intermezzo*, CTD talks about his life and music; it was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 Scotland on 20 November 1976, and can be found at <https://toccataclassics.com/cedric-thorpe-davie-on-air/>.

In the other, broadcast in the series *A Time to Talk* on BBC Radio Scotland on 22 May 1978, the writer and cultural historian Maurice Lindsay interviews CTD on his career and views; it can be accessed at <https://toccataclassics.com/a-time-to-talk-maurice-lindsay-talks-to-the-composer-cedric-thorpe-davie/>.

Bede Williams is a conductor and trumpeter whose work is characterised by long-term artistic stewardship, close engagement with composers and a sustained commitment to twentieth- and 21st-century repertoire. He is Deputy Director of Music and Senior Lecturer at the University of St Andrews, where he provides artistic and pedagogical leadership across orchestral, ensemble and outreach activity.

Since 2012, he has shared the musical leadership of the St Andrews Chamber Orchestra with Michael Downes, directing programmes that combine advocacy for new and lesser-known repertoire with regular staples. This recording of orchestral works by Cedric Thorpe Davie brings together performance, scholarship and institutional lineage in a project devoted to one of Scotland's most consequential twentieth-century composers and founder of the orchestra itself, restoring to the recorded catalogue music that has remained unheard for decades.

Bede Williams has worked extensively in new music, giving over forty world and territorial premieres across a wide range of ensembles and contexts. As a conductor with the St Andrews New Music Ensemble, he has directed composer-portrait concerts devoted to Sally Beamish, Tansy Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Paul Mealor, Thea Musgrave and Errollyn Wallen. He has maintained close artistic relationships with Eddie McGuire, performing and recording a wide range of his ensemble works – several written for players and contexts under Bede Williams' direction – and with his late compatriot Lyell Cresswell, whose music he champions both as conductor and trumpeter.

Central to Bede Williams' musical formation was his long association with the late John Wallace, his mentor and collaborator. Their work together encompassed commissioning, performance and recording, including Wallace's *Symphony for Brass Band*, the song-cycle *The Centre of Things*, the chamber opera *Opsnizing Dad*, and the landmark realisation of *The Invisible Symphony*, a complete performance of Gabrieli's *Canzoni et Sonate* (1615) arranged by Wallace. Bede Williams recorded extensively with The Wallace Collection both as chamber musician and conductor of music by Malcolm Arnold, Derek Bourgeois and Jay Capperault. He was also a founding member of Alba Brass, an early-career ensemble with which he toured



Photograph: Vicky Williams

widely across the UK and internationally and recorded a landmark album of Scottish chamber music for brass.

As a soloist, Bede Williams is an internationally recognised trumpeter specialising in contemporary, electro-acoustic and improvised music. He has performed as a soloist with the Auckland Philharmonia, Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Philharmonic and the Glasgow Barons, and has commissioned and premiered concertos by Paul Max Edlin, Ian McQueen, Eve de Castro Robinson and Jeremy Thurlow. His 2015 album *Crystallise* for trumpet and electronics, featuring works by Jonathan Harvey and Michael Clarke, established an important strand of his practice as an improviser. Central to this work is his ongoing collaboration with composer Andrew Knight-Hill, encompassing live performance, site-specific installations, audio-visual works and documentary soundtracks, exploring the interaction between acoustic instruments and spatial, multichannel sound-environments, and the role of the performer within immersive musical narratives.

As a conductor, Bede Williams has worked across all major genres, with a particular interest in programming that elevates the status and appreciation of brass music within broader orchestral audiences. He has guest-conducted many championship-section brass bands in Scotland and, from 2019 to 2025, served as Director of StAMP Brass, introducing more than 1,000 young people to brass instruments through sustained school and community engagement. In 2023 he became a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and in 2024 Chair of the Glasgow Barons.

Born in New Zealand, Williams trained initially as a cornet player in brass bands. He relocated to Scotland to study at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and as a student conductor worked with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Auckland Philharmonia. He graduated in 2011 with a Masters in Conducting. During this period, his performances were described by Michael Tumelty in *The Herald* as 'visionary', 'incisive' and 'sensitive'. He subsequently undertook international conducting master-classes with Martyn Brabbins, Siân Edwards, Leonard Grin, Neeme Järvi, Paavo Järvi, Jorma Panula, Christopher Seaman and Benjamin Zander. He completed his Ph.D. on conducting and interpretation at the University of St Andrews in 2018.

The **St Andrews Chamber Orchestra** brings together the leading instrumentalists of the University under the shared musical leadership of Michael Downes and Bede Williams. The Orchestra presents two major concerts in St Andrews each year, alongside frequent tours across

Scotland and beyond. Founded in 1945 by Cedric Thorpe Davie following his appointment as Master of Music, it has played a central role in the musical life of the University and local community ever since.

The Orchestra draws its players from across the University community, reflecting St Andrews' distinctive approach to music. There is no single conservatoire-style music degree; instead, music operates through a broad range of modules alongside a rich programme of co-curricular and extracurricular activity. As a result, music at St Andrews is best understood not as a department but as a tightly woven tapestry of staff and student-led music-making. Students frequently take leadership roles within ensembles and chamber groups while working closely with professional staff, visiting specialists and composers.

The Orchestra performs a wide-ranging repertoire and benefits from specialist coaching, with particular attention to Baroque and Classical performance practice. It collaborates frequently with distinguished composers who have included Sally Beamish, Paul Max Edlin, Piers Hellawell, Neil Martin and Jeremy Thurlow, and has worked with soloists such as Susan Tomes, Murray McLachlan and Alec Frank-Gemmill, alongside alumni and members of the wider University music community.



Photograph: Graham Deas

Violin 1

Arabella Parmar
Feargus Hetherington
Aaron McGregor
Trent Francis
Amelie Bazile
Daniel Wale
Martha Prindl
Kory Buckingham

Violin 2

Ava Gillan
Andrew Lees
Rosie Wallbanks
Laura Barton
Anna MacQuaker
Caroline Soppitt
Marcus Chan

Viola

Claudia Ng
Marie-Liang Ingrand
Rose Gallichan
Joanna Petrie
Alex Barnard
Callum O'Riordan

Cello

Louie Scott
Rhona Pryce
Roshni Bhaumik
Daniel Armstrong

Double Bass

Ed Lucas
Joe Bradstreet
Louis Backstrom

Flute

Cyrus Tahbaz
Olivia McCormack
Cara Neish (piccolo)

Oboe

George Talmaciu
Arjun Mewar
Alasdair Wilde (cor anglais)

Clarinet

Rachel Leung
Ben Williams
Kaitlin McWilliams (bass
clarinet)

Bassoon

Ben Buckner
Alex Bruce
Ian Gair (contrabassoon)

Horn

Ross Donaldson
Kirstin Spence
Cara Goutcher
Magnus Mackay
Elise Collins

Trumpet

Oliver Jones
Rufus Hornyold-Strickland
Ewan Riddell
Charlotte Ainsworth

Trombone

Gregor Dowall
Alex Philip
Andrew Mullan

Tuba

Evan Weatherwax

Timpani

Issie Hanson

Percussion

Daniel Fairly
Jane Harrison
Callum MacLeod
Karen Robin
Ian Gair

Harp

Dorothy Lee



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Producer-engineer: Bob Whitney

Assistant engineers: Karen Robin, Aiden McGroarty, Ben Irvine
and Joshua Paterson

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CEDRIC THORPE DAVIE Orchestral Music, Volume One

1	<i>Festal Overture</i> (1950)	11:46
	Symphony in C major (1946)	18:28
2	I <i>Allegro moderato</i>	7:32
3	II <i>Adagio</i>	4:50
4	III <i>Allegro non troppo</i>	5:56
	<i>Diversions on a Tune by Dr Arne</i> (1953–54)	16:15
5	Theme: <i>Allegretto grazioso</i>	0:48
6	Var. 1: <i>Grave</i>	1:33
7	Var. 2: <i>Andante piacevole</i>	1:24
8	Var. 3: <i>Allegro sciolitamente</i>	1:08
9	Var. 4: <i>Adagio</i>	2:00
10	Var. 5: <i>Comodo</i>	1:28
11	Var. 6: <i>Tempo giusto</i>	2:19
12	Var. 7: <i>Poco lento</i>	1:59
13	Var. 8: <i>Allegretto grazioso</i> –	1:09
14	Var. 9: <i>Più vivo</i>	2:27
15	<i>Solemn Music</i> from the music to Shakespeare's <i>King Lear</i> , for strings (1950)	3:43
16	<i>Fantasia No. 1 on Four Scottish Tunes</i> (1937)	13:04

TT 63:05

FIRST RECORDINGS

St Andrews Chamber Orchestra
Bede Williams, conductor