

Innovative Concerts
Inspiring Directors
Exceptional Musicians

Winter Warmer

Musical Director:
Natalia Luis-Bassa

Guitar:
Alan Thomas

St Andrew's Church
Countesthorpe
Saturday 15th January 2011

The award winning Helix Ensemble is an experienced group of musicians based in the East Midlands who enjoy performing chamber or small orchestral music.

HELIX ENSEMBLE

www.helixensemble.co.uk



The Helix Ensemble aims to introduce a variety of contemporary works by composers in the region performed alongside more familiar pieces.

The Helix Ensemble has given the first performances of more than 20 new compositions since their foundation in 1992.

The Helix Ensemble would like to thank St Andrew's Church in Countesthorpe and Active Arts for their support for this evenings concert.



Find out more about the Helix Ensemble, and future concerts, on our website or join our mailing list by leaving your details with one of the members of the Helix Ensemble during the evening.

Innovative Concerts

Inspiring Directors

Exceptional Musicians



Villa-Lobos

Sinfonietta No. 1

Thomas

Rhapsody on a Spanish theme

Interval

Romero

Fuga con Pajarillo

Haydn

Symphony No 104 "London"

Please come and join the musicians of the Helix Ensemble
for a glass of mulled wine and nibbles after the concert in
the Church Hall

Natalia Luis-Bassa – Musical Director



Natalia Luis-Bassa is currently Musical Director of the Haffner Orchestra in Lancaster and the Hallam Sinfonia in Sheffield. Since winning the second prize at the Maazel-Vilar Conductor's Competition in New York in 2002, she has worked both in the UK and abroad with orchestras including the Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela, Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar de Venezuela, Orquesta Filarmónica Nacional de Venezuela, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Paragon Ensemble, Bombay Chamber Orchestra and Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra.

The Venezuelan conductor began her musical studies at the age of 15, where she studied Oboe at the world famous El Sistema. She read music at the University Institute of Musical Studies (IUDEM), an institution that belongs to the Venezuelan musical system, being the first person to obtain a degree in Orchestral Conducting in her native country. She was appointed music director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Falcón and after some years she completed her studies at the Royal College of Music, London and held the RCM Junior Fellowship in Opera Conducting for two years.

Luis-Bassa holds a Master's Degree from The University of Huddersfield where she is a part-time lecturer and has been appointed Elgar Ambassador.

The Royal College of Music, has appointed Natalia as a Professor of Conducting.

Alan Thomas – Composer and Guitar Soloist



The guitarist Alan Thomas was born in Atlanta, and completed his studies at Indiana University and the University of California at San Diego. Based in the UK since 1997, he is much in demand as a recitalist and concerto soloist in music ranging from the Renaissance to the present day, but has been particularly dedicated to contemporary music and the exploration of new sonic resources of the guitar. He has given world premières of over fifty works, including pieces by Ed Bennett, Derek Bermel, Laurence Crane, Gabriel Erkoreka, Michael Finnissy, Christopher Fox, Bryn Harrison, and Evis Sammouris, and in 1997 became the only guitarist ever to win first prize in the International Gaudeamus Interpreters Competition in Holland. His further competition successes include top-prizes in the American Artistic Ambassador, MTNA and Guitar Foundation of America competitions.

Alan has performed extensively throughout the UK, Europe, the United States and Asia, and has been featured at international festivals including Aldeburgh, Spitalfields, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Bath Guitar Festival, Gaudeamus Festival, Ultima, Berlin Festival and the Guitar Foundation of America Festival. His performances have been broadcast on radio worldwide, and he has recorded compact discs on the Accord, Métier, Matchless Records, NMC and Guitar Classics labels, including a critically acclaimed recent release of his own Lennon/McCartney arrangements called *The Long and Winding Road*.

In recent years he has become increasingly active as a composer, focussing on solo and ensemble works for guitar. Highlights of 2007-08 include the world premiere of Alan's concerto *Rhapsody on a Spanish Theme*, as well as new works commissioned by the Cavatina Duo and the Midlands Fretted Orchestra.

Villa-Lobos, Heitor (1887-1959)

Sinfonietta No. 1

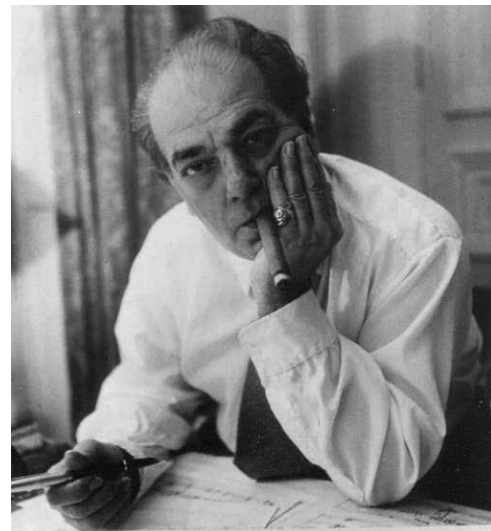
Allegro giusto

Andante non troppo

Andantino

This delightful three movement work was composed in 1916 at the beginning of Villa-Lobos's career and is a loving and artful look back at the music of the classical period, with a good deal of romantic orchestration.

This Sinfonietta is dedicated to the memory of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and utilises the forces of a classical chamber orchestra. Villa-Lobos premiered the first two movements in Sao Paulo in 1922 with the orchestra of the Sociedade de Concertos Sinfónicos.



The work is based on two themes of Mozart, the first theme according to Villa-Lobos is "delicate and subtle, suggesting the European aristocratic elegance of the 18th century" while the second theme he describes as being "violent, deep and mysterious presenting the characteristics of Germanic genius." The intent of the work was apparently to "describe the conflict between culture, represented by the scholastic prejudices and rules, and the temperament of the free, spontaneous artist, independent from any theory."

Alan Thomas

Rhapsody on a Spanish Theme

Theme and variations

Romance

Allegro scherzando

My Rhapsody on a Spanish Theme grew out of my love of the great Romantic pianist-composers, from Chopin and Liszt up to Rachmaninoff. How I would love to be able to play their music on the guitar! While this is unfortunately a ridiculous dream on many different levels, the idea of composing a guitar concerto in the general language and style of these composers nonetheless began to take shape in my mind, not as an act of kitsch, but rather simply from a sincere desire to write and play a Romantic concerto for guitar (one which, despite its title, is not based on folkloristic elements as most of the well-known guitar concerti are, but rather using the language of the Germanic/Russian tradition). Instead of a proper concerto, the model I had in mind was of a more flexible form--a mixture of variations and traditional concerto form.

The "Spanish theme" of the title is the famous Spanish Romance--probably the most well-known piece for classical guitar. It is a beguilingly simple little tune in even note values, presented first in E minor then in modified form in E major. The melody's simplicity made it well suited to use as the basis for my Rhapsody; it is adaptable to a variety of harmonisations, and its essential motivic features (repeated notes and short scalar figures) are very basic and recognisable.

The work is in three movements. After a brief introduction, the Spanish Romance theme is presented, followed by a variation. A transition by pizzicato strings leads to the allegro theme that makes up most of the work's first movement. This theme is derived from motivic features of the Romance melody, preserving the four repeated notes but altering the original's descending three-note scale into a sequence of descending four-note scale patterns.

The second movement transforms the beginning of the minor theme into the major for an extended melody, first presented by the solo guitar and then developed by the orchestra.

The Allegro scherzando that begins the third movement combines the descending four-note scale with the Romance's three-note scale motif (now rising instead of falling). After this rondo-like section, a solo guitar interlude

creates a transition back to a reprise of the Romance tune. The piece then ends with a brief variation which combines the first movement E minor allegro theme and material from the third movement opening, culminating in a presto coda.

Throughout, the roles of the guitar and orchestra are not so much combative (as in many traditional concerti) as they are complimentary, which is just as well since for reasons of volume and sonic frequency the guitar is simply not capable of competing with the orchestra in anything like the way that the piano or violin can.

The Rhapsody on a Spanish Theme is dedicated to a brilliant guitarist and longtime friend, Denis Azabagic, in appreciation of his encouragement and invaluable musical insights and suggestions over the course of the work's composition.

Interval

Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007)

Fuga con Pajarillo

Aldemaro Romero was a self taught Venezuelan pianist, composer, arranger and conductor working in a wide range of musical styles. These included Caribbean, Jazz, Venezuelan dances, and various classical genres: works for large orchestral works, solo and chorus and orchestra, and chamber music.

He is credited with the creation of a new form of Venezuelan music Onda Nueva (New Wave) which was derived from the traditional dance Joropo and influenced by Brazilian Bossa Nova style. During the 50s and 60s he collaborated with various artists such as Charlie Byrd, Dean Martin, Stan Kenton, Tito Puente, touring, recording, and promoting Latin American music abroad. He was awarded the Moscow Cinema Festival's Peace Prize in 1969 for his film score, Simón Bolívar. In 1979 he acquired government funding to found a second major orchestra in the Venezuelan capital, the Caracas Philharmonic Orchestra to promote the music of Romero and other Latin American composers as well as classical repertoire.

The Fuga con Pajarillo para Cuerdas (Fugue on a Pajarillo for String Orchestra) is built on the popular Venezuelan/Columbian dance pajarillo (a dance in 3/4 time), contrasting the dance with a classical fugue. Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel describes the piece, "The pajarillo pervading the melody gives a sense of improvisation and contrast with the predetermined fugal form." The version of the Fuga that will be heard tonight is the original version for strings. Later versions have been made for larger orchestral forces, and improvised sections with folk instruments are inserted in some performances.



Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Symphony No. 104 “London”

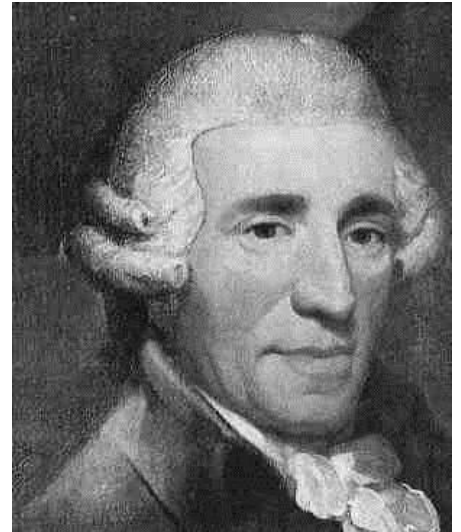
Adagio-Allegro

Andante

Menuetto

Allegro spiritoso

After 30 years of serving the Esterházy court in Austria/Hungary, the death of the music-loving Prince Nicholas gave Haydn the opportunity to leave his provincial environment and to travel to the richest capital of the time – London. When German born violinist and impresario Johann Peter Salomon arrived at Haydn’s door in Vienna announcing, “I am Salomon and I have come from London to fetch you,” the composer could hardly refuse. He was aware of the popularity of his works in England, and coupled with the attractive



financial incentives Salomon offered, the opportunities to compose new works, perform, travel, and meet new people, he gladly accepted the invitation. Haydn’s two residencies in England 1791-2, and 1794-5 proved to be some of the happiest years of his life. All the activities for a man in his 60s seemed to go at breakneck speed, but the composer’s genius thrived and his audiences loved him.

The twelve “London” symphonies, six for each visit, were premiered in subscription concerts organized first by Salomon, and the last three, by his successor, Giovanni Battista Viotti.

Symphony No. 104 in D , the last of the group, has been variously nicknamed “London” or “Salomon” and was first heard in an all-Haydn program at the King’s Theatre on May 4, 1795 led by the composer. Haydn wrote in his diary that “the whole company was thoroughly pleased and so was I. I made 4000 gulden on this evening: such a thing is possible only in England.”

The first movement, after a foreboding introduction, breaks into a fanfare-like theme for the full orchestra, which is followed by a cheerful Allegro. The second movement’s soaring melody has a pleasant Viennese elegance, and the tight energy of the Finale is awesome. Its principle theme is thought to be based on an English street song.

HELIX

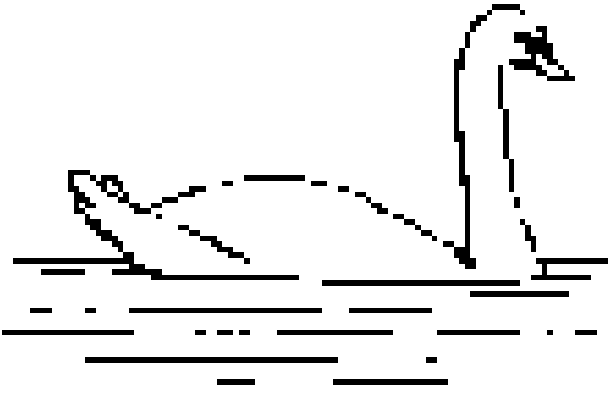
ENSEMBLE

www.helixensemble.co.uk

Musical Director – Natalia Luis-Bassa

Violin	Alison Axton Andrew Chadwick Jayne Cooper Sarah Cresswell Karen Eveson George Fletcher Pete Johnston George Sutcliff Morag Thomson Veronica Urrego Merri Williams	Flute/piccolo	Jo Conquest Annette Negus
		Clarinet	Susan Lansdale Christine Taylor
		Oboe	Anne Allcock Christine Griggs
		Bassoon	Sarah Brookman Shelagh Thomson
Viola	Elspeth Brien Mark Lansdale Sally Smith	Horn	Julian Haslam Roger Swann
'Cello	Margaret Chadwick Imogen Rex Christina Warner	Trumpet	Matthew Lax Trevor Lax
		Trombone	Alex Hewins Sam Haigh
Bass	Naomi Turner	Timpani	Matt Butler

Swann Cottage



A two bedroom holiday cottage in south Derbyshire overlooking the River Derwent.

For photographs, details, prices and availability go to:

www.swanncottage.co.uk

20% of booking fee goes to The Helix Ensemble if you mention this advertisement at time of booking (conditions apply)

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Head Space workshops are designed and run for you by Sue Pike and Alan Warner of the Essential Group. We are well-established management and communications specialists working with a diverse range of commercial, not-for-profit and creative clients.

On behalf of the Helix Ensemble committee, I would like to formally thank you for running your inspirational day. We all found the day thought provoking, each of us coming away with many interesting ideas to consider and implement. Roger Swann, Helix Ensemble



the **essential** group

Sue Pike, Tel 0116 2478008/ 07831 136827 or email sue@suepike.com

Clifton Music Festival 2011

The Church of St Mary the Virgin
Clifton Village NG11 8NH



Thursday 7 July

Jazz Evening – with surprise guests



Friday 8 July

Flossie Malaviale

“Here’s a sensational performer. She intrigues listeners with her quaint French-Geordie accent and charms them with her stories and ready laughter. Yet it’s her singing that bowls them over. An artist’s artist, a people’s artist, here’s a mammoth talent emphatically radiating that magical X-factor. A veritable show stopper!”

Wheaton Aston Festival



Saturday 9 July

The Helix Ensemble with Roger Coull as
Musical Director and Violin Soloist.

“The award winning Helix Ensemble hit on the perfect recipe for their summer evening of music in Southwell Minster. The performers exuded a relaxed sense of enjoyment and the standing ovation they received was thoroughly deserved.”

The historic church St Mary’s in Clifton Village is home to the Clifton Music Festival which is now in its 11th year. The Clifton Festival aims to encourage as many people as possible to experience quality performance within a welcoming atmosphere and pleasant surroundings.

Musicians Notes

Shelagh Thomson (Bassoon) talks to Morag Thomson (Violin)

Morag

True/False?



You recently cycled from London to Paris.

True – amazing though it may seem. It was hard work but a fantastic challenge.

You once played cricket for England.

False – but I would have loved to and was thrilled with our recent Ashes triumph.

You used to play the French Horn.

True (a bit)- I flirted with it but couldn't keep my lip in!

You are the most talented musician in your family.

False – my sister is!

Shelagh

True/False?



You recently cycled from London to Sydney.

False – but I would like to. It is just a matter of finding the time!

Your greatest on stage achievement was in a Panto.

True- I was a creditable Snow White back in 1989. The following year I was cast as a tree – can't think why!

You used to play the violin.

True – and still do, but I find playing the bassoon better because it stops me talking!

You are the most talented musician in your family.

False – my sister is!

If you are you interested in advertising in our programme or sponsoring Helix Ensemble for anything from coffee to a concert please contact Anne: 0115 972 6377

Saturday 9 July 2011
Clifton Music Festival

The Church of St Mary the Virgin
Clifton Village NG11 8NH

Programme to include:

Mozart - Violin Concerto no 3 in G



Roger Coull
Musical Director and Soloist