

Thursday 21 October 2021
7pm Silk Street Music Hall



Saxophone Ensemble

Metamorphosis

An exploration of the metamorphosis from composed to improvised music, using Britten's *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid* as a backbone.

Benjamin Britten *Six Metamorphoses after Ovid*

1. [PAN](#) who played upon the reed pipe which was [Syrinx](#), his beloved.
2. [PHAETON](#) who rode upon the chariot of the sun for one day and was hurled into the river Padus by a thunderbolt.
3. [NIOBE](#) who, lamenting the death of her fourteen children, was turned into a mountain.
4. [BACCHUS](#) at whose feasts is heard the noise of gaggling women's tattling tongues and shouting out of boys.
5. [NARCISSUS](#) who fell in love with his own image and became a flower.
6. [ARETHUSA](#) who, flying from the love of Alpheus the river god, was turned into a fountain.

These six richly detailed and varied miniatures for unaccompanied oboe were written for the 1951 Aldeburgh Festival, at which they were given their first performance by Joy Boughton (daughter of the composer Rutland Boughton) in a water-borne concert on the Thorpeness Meare boating lake. The subject-matter is from classical mythology, as retold poetically in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. 'Pan' is a distillation of the essence of woodwind playing, a worthy companion-piece to Debussy's *Syrinx* for flute on the same legend. 'Phaeton' depicts the sun charioteer's headlong progress across the sky, passing behind clouds at one point, and his plunge to earth, with no trace of him left but bubbles rising to the surface of the river. 'Niobe' is a touching lament, which like its subject turns to stone at the end. 'Bacchus' is a vivid and virtuosic scherzo. 'Narcissus' makes use of mirror reflections between the lower and upper registers of the instrument, which finally merge. 'Arethusa' depicts the water nymph's fate in a cascade of trills and arabesques.

Anthony Burton 2017

Guildhall Saxophone Ensemble

Christian Forshaw director

Sopranino saxophone

Aidan May

Soprano saxophones

Charlotte Arthur

Kathryn McGuinness

Jasmine Smith

Charles Curtin

Alto saxophones

Joshua Brown

Reuben Dakin

Alannah Makoni

Catrin Roberts

Tenor saxophones

Ella Sandin

Holly Marriott

David Bevan

Luke Nguyen

Baritone saxophones

Dan Buxton

Laura Harrison

Emily Irvine

Max Lo

Bass saxophone

Jonty Gould

This concert is being recorded and produced live by Guildhall School's Recording & Audio Visual department. It will be available to watch online for free from 27 October.