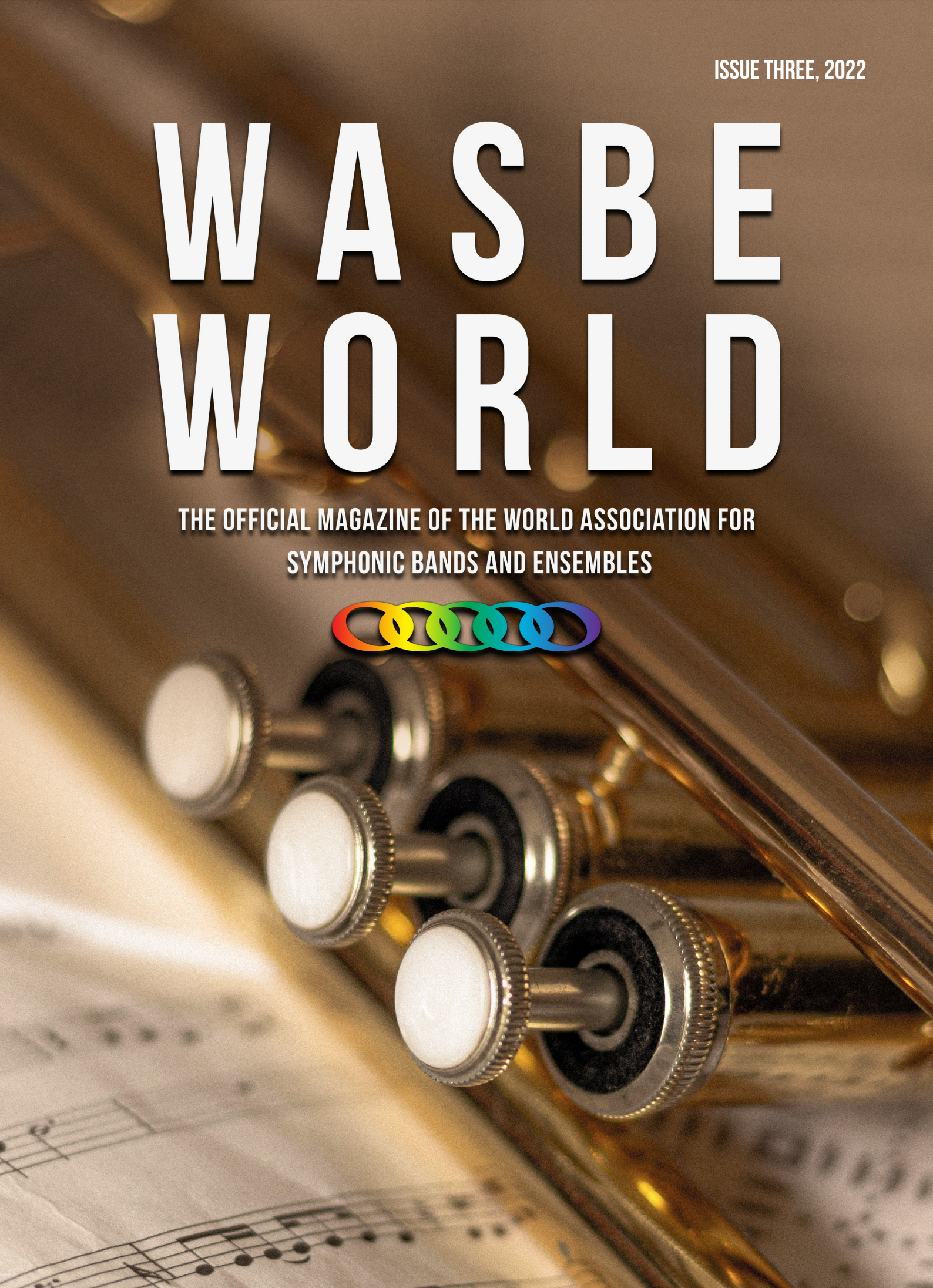


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WASBE WORLD

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR
SYMPHONIC BANDS AND ENSEMBLES



**WASBE WORLD, The Official Magazine of the World
Association for Symponic Bands and Ensembles**

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

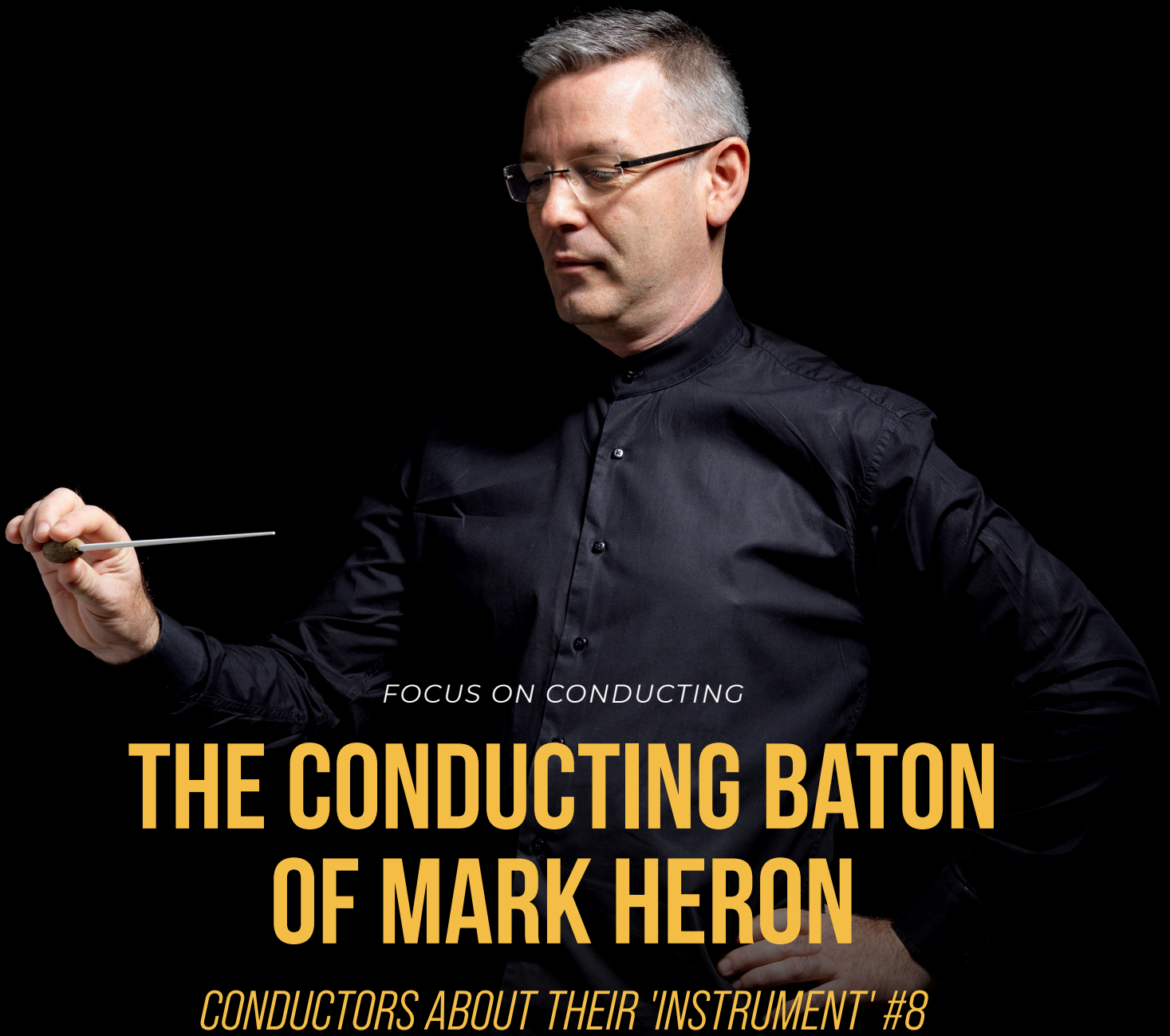
Before writing this message, I revisited out-going President Jim Ripley's message for WASBE World Magazine 2022, No. 2. As always, I was inspired by his words and his ideas. Jim has managed and umpired (yes, a reference to his love of baseball) our association with integrity and imagination. Under his guidance, we stayed connected and were able to gather and celebrate, after waiting three years, in Prague. To use his words against him, Jim did his "part to be involved in becoming connected, staying connected, and inviting others to be connected in the larger world of music through the wind band." He was, and is, a wonderful community builder.

From my perspective, the Prague conference was a massive success! Congratulations to all those involved, whether planning, presenting, performing, or attending. I would also like to acknowledge our out-going board members: Vaclav Blahunek (The Czech Republic), Joop Boerstoeel (The Netherlands), Joseph Cheung (Hong Kong/China), and Miguel Etchegoncelay (Argentina/France). The strength of WASBE is the passion and participation of its members. Thank you for sharing and showing your enthusiasm for the wind band and its community.

Happily, Miguel Etchegoncelay will be rejoining the Board as President-Elect. He has been a wonderful colleague and tireless supporter of WASBE. We will be in very good hands. In addition, we welcome four new board members: Jodie Blackshaw (Australia), Enrique Martinez (Spain), Jesus Ignacio Perez Perazzo (Venezuela), and Rom Shamir (Israel). We look forward to hearing your ideas and working alongside you.

During this period in history, we all understand the need for connection, interaction, sharing, and celebration. Over the next two years, WASBE plans to do just that. We will focus on improving our communication channels; hosting opportunities for our Early Career members; creating more resources (especially for developing bands); and offering more online/regional events. With today's technology, it is much easier to share and learn from one another between conferences. Let's stay connected.

Colleen Richardson, WASBE President



FOCUS ON CONDUCTING

THE CONDUCTING BATON OF MARK HERON

CONDUCTORS ABOUT THEIR 'INSTRUMENT' #8

Why do conductors need a baton? Is every conductor using this? Is it 'a tool', 'an instrument' and does it possess something magical as some people think? Why are there so many kinds of batons for sale, what's the difference between one and another?? Answers to all these questions and to much more we hope to find in this article. Every edition of WASBE WORLD we would like to portrait one conductor to tell his/her stories and personal thoughts about 'the Baton'.



SERIES EDITED BY JOOP BOERSTOEL



Mark Heron is a Scottish conductor noted for dynamic and well-rehearsed performances of an unusually wide repertoire. He has appeared as a guest with most of the BBC orchestras, the Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National, Manchester Camerata, Psappha, Meininger Hofkapelle, and many others. He is Music Director of the Nottingham Philharmonic. Mark has huge expertise in contemporary music and has collaborated with dozens of the greatest living composers. He has recorded more than 25 CDs with the RNCM Wind Orchestra, Royal Air Force bands, and Manchester Camerata on labels such as Chandos, Naxos, NMC, ASC and Polyphonic. Alongside his conducting engagements, Mark has an international reputation as a conducting teacher. He is Professor and Head of Conducting at the RNCM where he leads the College's world-renowned conducting programmes, is a visiting professor to the Royal Air Force, and is frequently invited to teach at masterclasses all over the world. He is the lead content author for the ConductIT project, a free-to-access website which is probably the most comprehensive online resource about conducting.

www.markheron.co.uk

I find it a bit difficult to get excited about conducting batons. Maybe that's not a very promising start to an article such as this! I mean, it doesn't make any sound - at least, it shouldn't - so we probably shouldn't get too obsessed. Doing a bit of googling in advance of writing this, I saw that one leading manufacturer claims their products have a "lightning fast, precise response". What does that mean??!!

If we were going to invent conducting from scratch today, I'm pretty certain it wouldn't involve the use of a little white stick. The reason we use a baton is of course an accident of history, but it's "a thing" and I do use one most of the time.

I don't have a hard and fast rule about it, but I'd never use a stick to conduct a small ensemble doing Stravinsky's *Octet* or *L'Histoire du Soldat*. I may well use a baton for a contemporary piece with around 15-20 players, but probably not for a Haydn or Mozart symphony with a chamber orchestra of that size. Once it gets to 7 or 8 1st violins, so a group of 30 or more, I probably would pick it up. Like everything to do with batons it's a matter of personal preference, but to me that's where the dividing line is.

In my teaching, I do try to persuade students to learn to use a baton. In the end, they may decide not to, but if you become comfortable using it, then you have a choice. It also helps to instill a certain gestural discipline and focus and helps build an awareness of what the different hinges (shoulder, elbow, wrist & fingers) are up to. About 15 years ago, relatively early in my conducting career, I went a couple of years without using a baton at all, even for very large orchestral works. I remember doing Shostakovich's *Lenin-grad Symphony* and after the dress rehearsal my arm felt very tense and sore, although probably nothing compared to the snare drum player's pain! I decided to use a baton in the concert and felt much more relaxed and therefore expressive. Since then, I've always used a baton with large ensembles. I'm not a big fan of the "put the baton down for the slow movement" brigade.

I'm not sure I really buy into all this stuff about balance points: everyone who has explained it to me has a different idea about where the balance point should be: some say it's where the handle ends, others that it's 2cm in front of the handle. I do think the size and shape of the handle is an important factor in finding a relaxed, neutral way to hold the baton. I used to change every couple of years, just for the sake of change: a different handle shape every so often seemed to work for me. About 12 years ago I settled on an oval or pear shape and haven't changed since.



Length is everything! I'm convinced that most batons are too long for most conductors, especially those you might find if you walk into a music store. Mine are 30cm (12 inches) in total, with the handle almost 5cm of that. You'll be hard pushed to find any standard batons for sale that are less than 34cm, many are significantly longer. I'm 185cm tall so my arms are fairly long (a big disadvantage in conducting) and almost every baton I've ever owned I shortened myself. If you are struggling to get comfortable with using a baton, try making it shorter before deciding not to ditch it completely.



I don't think I've ever broken a baton in a rehearsal or concert, although I did once let go of one during a particularly energetic *Firebird danse infernale*. Fortunately, it landed on the floor between the 1st violins and the front row of the audience. I've never stabbed myself or anyone else with baton. Yet...



I honestly can't remember what make my current batons are. They are very similar to Rohema's Bruch model, which I did use for a while with 4cm snapped off the end. I've got 2 of them which I carry with me and use whichever one comes out of the case first. They look pretty tatty, but they must be getting on for 10 years old and it's never occurred to me to change them so I guess I'm happy with them. ****Update**** I've just searched through my old email receipts and found that they are made by a small company in Texas called *Old World Music and Gifts* and I ordered them in December 2013! Maybe I should get a couple of new ones. The shafts are fibreglass, much less likely to break.

My favourite baton story is about a very well-known conductor (who shall of course remain nameless) who broke their baton during a rehearsal. The concertmaster mentioned that several members of the orchestra's brass section were conductors, and maybe someone had a baton that they could lend. As the replacement baton was being passed across the viola section towards the podium, the owner was heard to say, "*Careful though, this one doesn't rush*". Ouch!



FOCUS ON REPERTOIRE

EVERYTHING I DO IS MINGUS

THE WIND MUSIC OF CHARLES MINGUS

ANDREW TRACHSEL,
University of North Texas
19th World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles

The following article is adapted from a presentation prepared for the 19th WASBE Conference in Prague.

"Everything I do is Mingus. That's why I don't like to use the word 'jazz' for my work. I write what I think is classical music too."

Charles Mingus¹

"He has proven that there should be no segregation in music between classical and jazz. And that it is possible to make classical musicians swing by writing it correctly for them."

Ralph Gleason²

CHARLES MINGUS: TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN COLOSSUS

Charles Mingus (b. April 22, 1922, Nogales, AZ; d. January 5, 1979, Cuernavaca, Mexico) was a virtuoso bass player, accomplished pianist, bandleader, and composer. Born on a military base and raised in Watts, California, his earliest musical influences came from the church—choir and group singing—and from hearing Duke Ellington over the radio. He studied double bass and composition in a formal way (five years with Herman Rheinshagen, principal bassist of the New York Philharmonic, and compositional techniques with the legendary Lloyd Reese) while absorbing vernacular music from the great jazz masters, first-hand. His early professional experience, in the 1940s, found him touring with bands like Louis Armstrong, Kid Ory, and Lionel Hampton. Eventually he settled in New York where he played and recorded with the leading musicians of the 1950s—Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Bud Powell, Art Tatum, and Ellington. One of the few bassists to do so, Mingus quickly developed as a leader of musicians. He was also an accomplished pianist who could have made a career playing that instrument. By the mid-50s he had formed his own publishing and recording companies to protect and document his growing repertoire of original music. He also founded the "Jazz Workshop," a group which enabled young composers to have their new works performed in concert and on recordings.

Mingus soon found himself at the forefront of the avant-garde. His recordings bear witness to the extraordinarily creative body of work that followed. They include: *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, *The Clown*, *Tijuana Moods*, *Mingus Dynasty*, *Mingus Ah Um*, *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, *Cumbia and Jazz Fusion*, and *Let My Children Hear Music*. He recorded over a hundred albums and wrote over three hundred scores. He toured extensively through-

out Europe, Japan, Canada, South America, and the United States until the end of 1977 when he was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). He was confined to a wheelchair, and although he was no longer able to write music on paper or compose at the piano, his last works were sung into a tape recorder. From the 1960s until his death in 1979 at age 56, Mingus remained in the forefront of American music. When asked to comment on his accomplishments, Mingus said that his abilities as a bassist were the result of hard work but that his talent for composition came from God.

EARLY PERIOD: TO 1939



THE CHILL OF DEATH (1939/1971)

Duration: 7:42

Publisher: Manuscript

Instrumentation: Same instrumentation as *Adagio ma non troppo*, plus narrator: 2 fl, ob, bsn, 2 cl, bcl, sx quartet with first part alternating between soprano and alto, 2 tpt, 2 hn, 2 tbn, tuba, cello, 2 basses, gtr, 3 perc, and pno

Premiere/Recording: Orchestrated and narrated by Mingus and conducted by Alan Raph on *Let My Children Hear Music* (CBS 1971).

What is immediately evident is that this is an episodic composition and, while intended to be capable of standing alone as a piece of programmatic music, it is more closely tied to the story of the poem than in most of Mingus's later experiments involving words....Not only is the written piece as such utterly remote from the feeling of jazz, stylistically it resembles strongly the 1930s underscores of Max Steiner and Dimitri Tiomkin and their melodramatic borrowings from Wagner and Mahler. (The latter is recalled particularly in Mingus's use of the clarinets, although Ellington could conceivably have been an influence here also...)

HALF-MAST INHIBITION (1939)

Duration: 8:30

Publisher: Manuscript

Instrumentation: 27–29 players, depending on doubling: 3 fl, ob, cl, bcl, 2 asx, 3 tsx, bsx, 5 tpt, 4 tbn, tuba, bass, cello, pno, drumset, 3 perc Baylock version: 22 players (some doubling): fl, ob, 5 cl, 2 asx, 2 tsx, bsx, 4 tpt, 4 tbn, tba, bass, pno, 2 perc, timp, solo cello

Premiere/Recording: Conducted by Gunther Schuller on *Pre-Bird* (AKA *Mingus Revisited*) (Mercury 1960). Modern transcription 1994 by Alan Baylock, University of North Texas.



In May 1960, Mingus connived to have a big-band session for Mercury Records. Leonard Feather had just landed his dream job there as A&R man, responsible for signing and recording artists...Mingus told Feather to come by the Showplace club; he had something to show him. The next night, there were twenty-five people on the bandstand, including Yusef Lateef, Max Roach, Jimmy Knepper, Eddie Bert, and Pepper Adams. He'd gathered the faithful.

Mingus had a box of yellowed music so crumbly the musicians could barely read it. Some of it was *Half-Mast Inhibition*, written in 1940....A few days later, they were in the studio. Gunther Schuller conducted the twenty-five-piece orchestra in a variety of early revived Mingus music, including *Half-Mast Inhibition*.³

Mingus said of the piece, "I had a little thing in there like 'Jingle bells, jingle bells'—not funny style, but because it represented Christmas and Christ," and this does in fact occur five minutes after the start of *Inhibition*. Although twice as long, the composition is as episodic as *The Chill of Death* and incorporates a prominent bowed cello solo; occasional details foreshadow later Mingus pieces, such

as a fast waltz passage and one moment which suggests the opening of *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, but the only jazz feeling in the 1960 recording comes from the interpretation of a couple of trumpet soloists. Although...it is reasonable to accept Mingus's dating of these two compositions as belonging to the period 1939–40, they differ markedly from his other known activities at the time, and indicate depths of his personality already hidden from all but his closest friends.⁴

HALF-MAST INHIBITION
Charles Mingus (1922-79)

Large ♩ = 60 (with edge)

CLARINET, FLUTE, CELLO, BASS, TUBA, PERC. 1, PERC. 2, TRUMPET 1-4, TIMPANI

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13

Edited and Prepared by Alan Baylock

MIDDLE PERIOD: 1957–1971



REVELATIONS (1957)

Duration: 12:00

Publisher: Margun Music

Instrumentation: 15 players: fl (pic), bn, asx, tsx, bsx, hn, tpt, tbn, vib, gtr, hp, pno, bass (2: arco & pizz), drums

Premiere/Recording: Conducted by Gunther Schuller on Modern Jazz Concert (AKA The Birth of the Third Stream) (Columbia 1958)

Mingus had one stroke of luck in 1957 through the good offices of Gunther Schuller. Involved with John Lewis in the Jazz and Classical Music Society (an organization with similar aims to those of the Jazz Composers' Workshop), Schuller had also been responsible for having “third-stream” works by musicians such as Teo Macero, Teddy Charles, and George Russell performed in the “Music in the Making” concert series run by the noted classical conductor David Broekman (who, Mingus claimed in his autobiography, was aware of *The Chill of Death* although he is not known to have performed it). For the fourth Brandeis Festival, Gunther Schuller found himself in the fortunate position of being allowed to commission six new works all intended to reflect the influence of both jazz and European music, to be played by an ensemble including Macero, Charles, John LaPorta, and other JCW sidemen plus Jimmy Knepper and the pianist Bill Evans....The six composers involved were Milton Babbitt, Harold Shapero, Schuller, George Russell, Jimmy Giuffre, and, of course, Mingus. But for the commission, Mingus might never have associated himself with such a project since, as Schuller describes him, he “was a very fiery, often belligerent battler for a place in the sun, fiercely independent.” It is fortunate that he did, though for critic Max Harrison noted that:

“Mingus takes greater risks than the other composers. The unity of his works depends not on their technical organization...but is largely of an emotional order...[Revelations] extends itself as a succession of moods, feelings, atmospheres, melting into and out of each other. This was something which had not then been widely attempted in jazz.” (Jazz Monthly, June 1967)

It is, however, similar to Mingus's early, fully written works, namely *The Chill of Death* and *Half-Mast Inhibition*, with the exception that it incorporates a highly successful two-minute collective improvisation over alternating I minor and IV7 chords (as in *Pithecanthropus Erectus*). According to Schuller, “Part of my recollection is his telling me that this was going to be the first movement of a multi-movement opus,” but what there is of it stands as the most convincing attempt extant of Mingus's efforts to combine jazz and European [Western] music.⁵

Biographer Brian Priestly also surmises that perhaps *Diane* and *Far Wells, Mill Valley* from the 1959 album *Mingus Dynasty*, may be the other two movements intended for *Revelations*.⁶



ADAGIO MA NON TROPPO (1964/1971)

Duration: 8:30

Publisher: Manuscript

Instrumentation: 2 fl, ob, bsn, 2 cl, bcl, sx quartet with first part alternating between soprano and alto, 2 tpt, 2 hn, 2 tbn, tuba, cello, 2 basses, gtr, 3 perc, and pno

Premiere/Recording: Transcribed by Hug Miller, orchestrated by Alan Raph, transcribed by Patrick Brooks. Conducted by Alan Raph on Let My Children Hear Music (Columbia 1971)

The expanded instrumentation, sophisticated form, and melding of classical and jazz elements found in *Adagio ma non troppo* (*Myself When I am Real*) is not an anomaly; in fact, Mingus's first compositions—*The Chill of Death* (1939) and *Half-Mast Inhibition* (1940)—are certainly “third stream,” nearly twenty years before Gunther Schuller coined the term. It was Schuller who championed Mingus's “concert” music, including *Half-Mast Inhibition*, *Revelations* (1957), and premiered and recorded Mingus's posthumous magnum opus *Epitaph*—a 4235-measure, two-hour-long work for thirty instrumentalists.

Adagio ma non troppo began life as *Myself When I am Real*, the opening track on the 1964 solo album *Mingus Plays Piano: Spontaneous Compositions and Improvisations*. In his album liner notes for *Let My Children Hear Music* (which were nominated for a Grammy), Mingus writes:

Now, on this record there is a tune which is an improvised solo and which I am very proud of. I am proud because to me it has the expression of what I feel, and it shows changes in tempo and changes in mode, yet the variations on the theme still fit into one composition. (It is not like some music I hear where the musician plays eight bars and then the next eight bars sound like he is playing another tune). I would say the composition is on the whole as structured as a written piece of music. For the six or seven minutes it was played (originally on piano), the solo was within the category of one feeling, or rather, several feelings expressed as one. I'm not sure whether every musician who improvises can do this.⁷

In 1971 the great choreographer Alvin Ailey selected the piece as one of nine to be orchestrated by trombonist, composer, arranger, and conductor Alan Raph, to be performed by the Joffrey Ballet in *The Mingus Dances*. As he often did with different versions of his music, Mingus renamed the newly orchestrated version *Adagio ma non troppo*, and in this new form it was conducted by Raph and recorded during the November 18, 1971 sessions for *Let My Children Hear Music*, the album Mingus himself named “the best album I have ever made.”

The piece is scored for two flutes, oboe, bassoon, two B-flat clarinets, one bass clarinet, saxophone quartet with first part alternating between soprano and alto, two trumpets, two horns, two trombones, tuba, cello, two contrabasses, guitar, three percussion parts, and piano. During the edit-

ing and mixing of the album, the jazz critic Nat Hentoff interviewed Mingus for the *New York Times*. He told Hentoff:

A critic once wrote in the liner notes for one of my own albums that I had never pinned myself down so that anyone could say, “This is Mingus.” He just doesn't understand that I don't want to be caught in any one groove. Everything I do is Mingus. That's why I don't like to use the word, “jazz,” for my work. I write what I think is classical music too. Of course, there always has to be improvisation in it. A really creative improvisatory solo can be as priceless as Bach or Beethoven. And obviously, if you leave space for improvisers in a symphony, it's going to be different every time it's performed.

Patrick Brooks, retired Director of Bands at Idaho State University, produced the present version of *Adagio ma non troppo*, a painstaking reconstruction resulting from the transcription of both the piano and ensemble versions, and with in-person consultation with original orchestrator Alan Raph. For the UNT Wind Orchestra performance, extended and expanded saxophone passages have been added to supplement, reinforce, and—in the case of the cello part—replace the extended string writing, allowing for more possibilities for performance.

LATE PERIOD: 1979 AND BEYOND



EPITAPH (1940–1962)

Duration: 2:30:00

Publisher: Let My Children Hear Music, Inc. (Hal Leonard)

Instrumentation: 31–43 players (depending on doubling):
Picc, 3 Fl, Ob, Eh, bn, 5 cl, bcl, cbcl, ssx, 3 asx, 2 tsx, 2 bsx, 6
tpt, 6 tbn, tba, 2 bass, 2 pno, gtr, 2 perc, drums

Premiere/Recording: Rediscovered by Andrew Homzy and conducted by Gunther Schuller with an all-star band live at Lincoln Center on *Epitaph* (Columbia 1989). Score completed 2007.

I wrote it for my tombstone.

Charles Mingus

Epitaph has been considered as the first advance in jazz composition since Duke Ellington’s *Black, Brown, and Beige*. Gunther Schuller said that *Epitaph* is “among the most important, prophetic, creative statements in the history of jazz.” *JazzTimes* wrote about *Epitaph* blending atonal passages and improvising solos in a style as challenging as Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* and the *Chicago Sun Times* stated its many, contrary, simultaneous events, which approached Charles Ives’ wildest creations.⁸

GUNTHER SCHULLER:

Children’s Hour of Dream is in many respects one of the more unusual movements in Epitaph. It contains absolutely no improvisation, makes no attempt to swing, is indeed more contemporary “classical” than jazz (but acquires a certain jazz feeling by being performed by jazz players, with their natural jazz inflections); and finally, is built formally on

the principle, first rigorously explored by such composers as Stravinsky and Edgard Varese, of composing a number of relatively short segments of music—themes, motives, ideas, phrases—and then repeating and manipulating the sequencing of these units (there are eight such units in Children’s Hour) in constantly changing patterns. Indeed, the work seems to hark back to Mingus’s studies of early 20th-century music by Bartok, Stravinsky, Ravel, and Debussy.⁹

Epitaph

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LEGACY: PREDICTING THE FUTURE

Legacy on Wind Bands: A hugely significant American composer, with contributions to the wind repertoire.

Legacy on Jazz: Extended Forms & Free Jazz

Legacy on All Music: Classical/Jazz Hybrid; Extended Forms; Extended Instrumentation; Improvisation

Legacy on Inheritors: Mahavishnu Orchestra, Maria Schneider, Wynton Marsalis, Snarky Puppy, Metropole Orkest,

Omar Thomas, etc.

GUNTHER SCHULLER:

One composer who took the twin challenges of extending form and integrating improvisation within larger compositional frameworks very seriously was Charles Mingus. Inspired by Ellington's innovations in this realm, from the earliest days of his career Mingus chipped away at the formal conventions of jazz, both in terms of structure and variety (even complexity) of form. Prime examples of these efforts are Mingus's Half-Mast Inhibition (1940), Pithecanthropus Erectus (1956), Revelations (1957), and Haitian Fight Song (1957). But Epitaph is the summation of all of Mingus's efforts in this direction. It is also his magnum opus, in its extraordinary nearly 130 minutes duration, comprehensively representing all the various Minguses we have come to know over the years.¹⁰

It is as a composer that I believe Mingus must ultimately be assessed as one of the true giants of music. By "a composer" I mean a real composer, beyond an improvising, instantaneously creating composer—say, a great improviser like Louis Armstrong or Charlie Parker—and not a mere tunesmith or a writer of lead sheets (with a 32-bar or 64-bar theme and a few designated chord changes), but a writing-out, sitting-down composer, notating in all detail a full, often extended, composition. In both the quality and quantity of Mingus's compositional achievements, ranging from the briefest miniature pieces to the monumental threehour, 22-movement long Epitaph, to the remarkable range of his instrumental settings, his orchestrations—from huge double orchestras to small quartets and quintets—in his use of instruments not featured in the jazz canon (like the oboe, the bassoon, the contrabass clarinet)—but I wonder why he didn't use the horn more?—and above all, in his extraordinary both historic and stylistic/linguistic breadth, Mingus stands alone. And, if that weren't enough, as a composer Mingus is not only a chronicler of the musical history of jazz—and even to some extent of modern classical music—but also a storyteller, a narrator, a philosopher, a poet, a lover, a socio-political activist and commentator. His multifaceted music reflects and embodies both the beauty and honesty, as well as the turmoil, of his life. In all these respects Min-

gus excels and stands virtually alone until now, at least in the jazz world—except, arguably, for that other great princely composer, whom we know by the name of Duke Ellington. As that America genius said so often in his life—and would say about Chazz—Mingus was "beyond category."¹¹

CHARLES MINGUS:

As I say, let my children have music. Jazz—the way it has been handled in the past—stifles them so that they believe only in the trumpet, trombone, saxophone, maybe a flute now and then or a clarinet (not too many of our "bad"—that is great—people go for the clarinet. Probably because there is not much work available for clarinetists, except for those who play in the studios). But it is not enough. I think it is time our children were raised to think they can play bassoon, oboe, English horn, French horn, full percussion, violin, cello. The results would be—well, the Philharmonic would not be the only answer for us then. If we so-called jazz musicians who are the composers, the spontaneous composers, started including these instruments in our music, it would open everything up, it would get rid of prejudice because the musicianship would be so high in caliber that the symphony couldn't refuse us.

In fact, who wants to be in the symphony anyway, nowadays? If you stop and take note of what jazz has done, and the kind of musicianship which has developed from each instrument (take the trumpet: Louis Armstrong, King Oliver, Maynard Ferguson, Cat Anderson, or the pyrotechnics of Dizzy Gillespie; you never hear that kind of high-note playing in symphonic works), it becomes obvious that it has made each player a virtuoso. That is probably why most European musicians now choose to be jazz musicians rather than classical players because they are always proving that the instrument can do more than is possible.¹²



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Andrew Trachsel, DMA
Professor of Wind Studies
Chair, Division of Conducting and Ensembles

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FERRER FERRAN

CINEPHONICS:

A musical friendship, World Premieres, and first Performances in Germany *Una amistad musical, Estrenos absolutos y Estrenos en Alemania*

Silvia Casado Schneider



Cinephonics, a high-level workshop for symphonic band, welcomed for the second time the prestigious Valencian composer Fernando Ferrer Martínez known by his pseudonym, Ferrer Ferran: "The music is so wonderful that it cannot be described by words, you can only feel it", "... let us be able and the lucky ones to feel that magic that music gives us and to see that what isn't shown in the score."

That opportunity to see what is behind the score was given to 100 musicians at "Cinephonics 11 - Freedom!" for 4 days in August. Ferrer Ferran took over the rehearsals of his compositions - "Bremen's Angel of Death" (world premiere), "Cheers!" in a unique version adapted for Cinephonics 11, and "Dragut, the Pirate" (premiere in Germany) - and he took the musicians as well as the whole audience into his wonderful world of sounds and musical notes.

Ferrer Ferran:

"Music is that feeling floating in the air that all living beings notice but only the lucky ones can feel that wonderful universal abstract language."

That feeling could be noticed in 2018. In that year Ferrer Ferran premiered the overture "Cinephonics Overture" in the Schlosshof Alzey on 29 July 2018, which he had composed especially for Cinephonics. This music piece has already been recorded on CD and is going around the world. A great honour for the event. The composition describes what the spirit of Cinephonics really is, a mixture of all the arts: "spectacle, fun, movement, the arts in parallel united in a common goal, to entertain and move the spectator".

Cinephonics, un taller de alto nivel para banda sinfónica, por segunda vez dió la bienvenida al prestigioso compositor valenciano Fernando Ferrer Martínez conocido por su seudónimo, Ferrer Ferran: "La música es tan maravillosa que no tiene descripción, solamente se puede sentir... seamos capaces y afortunados de sentir esa magia que la música nos da, veamos aquello que no se ve de la partitura."

Esa oportunidad de ver lo que está detrás de la partitura tuvieron 100 músicos en "Cinephonics 11 - ¡Libertad!" durante 4 días en agosto. Ferrer Ferran se ha hecho cargo de los ensayos de sus obras - "El Ángel de la Muerte de Bremen" (estreno absoluto), "El Brindis!" en una versión única adaptada para Cinephonics 11 y "Dragut el Pirata" (estreno en Alemania) - y llevó a los músicos así como al final a todo el público a su mundo maravilloso de sonidos y corcheas.

Ferrer Ferran:

"La música es esa sensación que flota en el aire, que todo ser vivo percibe, pero solo los afortunados son capaces de sentir ese maravilloso lenguaje universal abstracto."

Esa sensación ya se podía percibir en 2018. En aquel año Ferrer Ferran estrenó la obertura „Cinephonics Overture“ el 29 de julio de 2018 en el Schlosshof Alzey que había compuesto especialmente para Cinephonics. Esa obra ya está grabada en CD y gira por todo el mundo. Un honor grandísimo para este gran proyecto. La obra describe lo que realmente es el espíritu de Cinephonics: una mezcla de todas las artes. En palabras del director valenciano, "espectáculo, diversión, movimiento, las artes en paralelo unidas en un fin común: divertir y emocionar al espectador."

**Silvia:**

It is the second time you are the guest conductor of the project "Cinephonics" and you compose a music piece for "Cinephonics" that you dedicate it, too. Which are your motives? Which are your motivation?

Ferrer Ferran:

I think it is a very interesting project.

Very nourished by culture in all the arts. I wish there were more projects of this kind in the world; to bring together and to fuse all the arts, and not only for the enrichment of the public who have the opportunity to attend the concerts, but also for the formation of the musicians and participants. It is an encounter that no one should miss.

All these are the reasons that move me to be there at Cinephonics and to repeat and contribute all that I can offer.

So it is not surprising that he dedicated "Cinephonics Overture" in 2018 "to Gerd Greis, for his extraordinary work and dedication to the wind orchestras in Germany, promoting the symphonic repertoire written for such an ensemble".

For Cinephonics it is a real honour to have people of such a national and international prestige as Ferrer Ferran. Although he has received many awards and recognitions all over the world, in the field of composition and direction, he is not a fan of CVs, and prefers to be known by listening to his own music. Ferrer Ferran says: "Music is the reflection of the soul". So by listening to his music you get to know him.

Silvia:

Es la segunda vez que es director invitado en el proyecto "Cinephonics" y compone una obra para Cinephonics y se la dedica. ¿Cuál son sus motivos? ¿Cuál es su motivación?

Ferrer Ferran:

Me parece un proyecto muy interesante. Muy nutrido de cultura en todas las artes. Ojalá hubieran más proyectos de esta índole en el mundo, juntar y fusionar todas las artes y no sólo para el enriquecimiento del público que tiene la oportunidad de asistir a los conciertos, sino para la formación de los músicos y participantes. Es un encuentro que no se debería perder nadie.

Todos estos son los motivos que me conmueven para estar allí en Cinephonics y repetir y aportar todo lo que en mis manos pueda ofrecer.

Así no sorprende que dedicó "Cinephonics Overture" en 2018 "al maestro Gerd Greis, por su extraordinaria labor y dedicación a las orquesta de viento en Alemania, promocionando el repertorio sinfónico escrito para tal formación".

Para Cinephonics es un verdadero honor contar con personas de tanto prestigio nacional e internacional como es Ferrer Ferran. Aunque haya recibido multitud de premios y reconocimientos en todo el mundo en el terreno de la composición y de la dirección, no es partidario de los currículums. Para él, "la música es el reflejo del alma", y por eso prefiere que uno lo vaya conociendo escuchando su música; que sea su propia música la que hable por él.



However, I would like to highlight two recent recognitions:

In 2022 the "Torre Almenara de Oro" is awarded to Ferrer Ferran — an award of honour — for his whole career and his contribution in promoting the town of Estepona (Spain) through his scores. Ferrer received the "Premio Euterpe 2021 Extraordinario" (Euterpe Extraordinary Award 2021), awarded by FSMCV ("Federation of Musical Societies of the Valencian autonomous Community") by unanimous vote, in recognition of his career and experience in the world of composition and musical conduction, both at a national and international level.

Under his baton "Cinephonics 11 - Freedom!" converted into music the scores of "Cheers!" in a unique version adapted for Cinephonics 11, the ones of "Dragut the Pirate" and of the world premiere of "Bremen's Angel of Death" - a music piece dedicated "to 'Cinephonics', to all its artists and musicians who have brought this spectacular project to life, and especially to the orchestra with its artistic director and founder Gerd Greis".

The world premiere of "**Bremen's Angel of Death**" took place at the closing concert of the symphonic band workshop in the Schlosshof Alzey (Germany) on 28.08.2022, conducted by the composer himself in front of more than 1000 spectators — a real success.

"Gesche Margarethe Gottfried (1785 – 1831), also known today as 'Bremen's Angel of Death', was a German serial killer who between 1813 and 1827 murdered fifteen people, all of them relatives and close friends." (source: blurb of the piece)

Aún así quiero destacar dos reconocimientos recientes:

En 2022 Ferrer Ferran ha sido galardonado con el premio honorífico "Torre Almenara de Oro" por toda su trayectoria profesional y por su contribución a la promoción de Estepona (España) a través de sus partituras. Ferrer recibe el "Premio Euterpe 2021 Extraordinario", otorgado por la FSMCV (Federación de Sociedades Musicales de la Comunidad Valenciana) por unanimidad, en reconocimiento a su trayectoria en el mundo de la composición y dirección musical tanto a nivel nacional como internacional.

Bajo su batuta "Cinephonics 11 - ¡Libertad!" convirtió en música las corcheas de "El Brindis!" en una versión única adaptada para Cinephonics 11, de "Dragut el Pirata" y del estreno absoluto "El Ángel de la Muerte de Bremen" - una obra dedicada "a 'Cinephonics', a todos sus artistas y músicos que han dado vida a este espectacular proyecto, y especialmente a la orquesta con su director artístico y fundador Gerd Greis".

El estreno absoluto de "**El Ángel de la Muerte de Bremen**" tuvo lugar en el concierto de clausura del taller para banda sinfónica en el Schlosshof Alzey (Alemania) el 28.08.2022, concierto que dirigió el autor mismo, y al que asistieron más de 1000 espectadores - un verdadero éxito.

"Gesche Margarethe Gottfried (1785 – 1831), hoy día también conocida como "el Ángel de la Muerte de Bremen", fue una asesina en serie alemana que entre 1813 y 1827 asesinó a quince personas, todas ellas familiares y amigos cercanos." (fuente: Leyenda de la obra)



Silvia:

Ferrer Ferran, where did your idea of setting “Bremen’s Angel of Death” to music come from?

Ferrer Ferran:

After visiting Alzey in 2018 and being the conductor of a fantastic group of musicians in a splendid project created by Gerd Gres, a great symphonic band, I wanted to make a composition in line with the event and I wanted to make a great work that dealt with something particular of the region.

I asked Gerd Greis and he himself made several suggestions and one of them was that of the murderess who was so beloved in her town since she nursed them all to death. That is, she made them sick with poison and took care of them until they died.

I was disturbed by this story and I got down to work.

Silvia:

What is it that fascinates you in this horror story?

Ferrer Ferran:

When Gerd Greis suggested this story to me, I found it difficult to set it all to music. It was a challenge for me, and that’s what made me show more interest in the work. I had to think a lot about how to structure the composition, because I had to show “two faces”, that of the good woman as she was known and the “bad face”, that of the murderess, and all this while carrying a coherent musical logic among them

Silvia:

Ferrer Ferran, ¿De dónde ha surgido su idea de poner en música “El Ángel de la Muerte de Bremen”?

Ferrer Ferran:

Después de mi visita a Alzey en 2018 y estar dirigiendo a un grupo fantástico de músicos en un proyecto espléndido creado por el maestro Gerd Grey, una gran banda sinfónica, quise hacer una composición acorde al evento y quería hacer una gran obra que tratara sobre algo particular del terreno.

Pregunté al maestro Gerd y él mismo me dio varias sugerencias y una de ellas era la de la asesina que tan querida fue en su ciudad puesto que los cuidaba a todos hasta morir. Es decir, ella los enfermaba con veneno y los cuidaba hasta que fallecían.

Me inquietó esta historia y me puse “manos a la obra”.

Silvia:

¿Qué es lo fascinante para Usted en esta historia de horror?

Ferrer Ferran:

Cuando el maestro Gerd me sugirió esta historia me resultó difícil como poner música a toda ella. Era todo un reto para mi, y eso es lo que me hizo mostrar más interés en la obra. Tuve que pensar mucho como estructurar la composición, puesto que debía mostrar “dos caras”, la de la mujer buena que era como se le conocía y la “cara mala”, la de asesina y todo esto a su vez llevando una lógica musical coherente entre sí.



“During the time that her criminal activity lasted, Gesche Gottfried showed social commitment, especially taking care of her sick relatives and friends. To her neighbours, she gave the impression of being a hard-working and caring woman, so all would have compassion for her due to her numerous relatives lost.” (source: blurb of the piece)

Silvia:

Gesche Gottfried is part of the Bremens's history in Germany. Have you visited all the original sites of this history e.g., have you been to Bremen?

Ferrer Ferran

I have not had the opportunity to visit the city of Bremen, but it is a pending subject.

Silvia:

Since you didn't have the possibility to visit Bremen and investigate there.

How did you investigate the story of Gesche Gottfried? Did you also contact the expert Peer Meter?

Ferrer Ferran:

I had to collect documents, to know what happened, I had to research every murder she did, the 15 murders in particular.

I read references of what happened there through some links that Gerd Greis sent me, and also my friend S. Casado helped me to make the story as accurate as possible, which I am very grateful for the help of both of them

“Durante el tiempo que duró su actividad criminal Gesche Gottfried mostraba un compromiso social sobre todo cuidando a sus parientes y amigos enfermos. Frente a sus prójimos dio la impresión de ser una mujer trabajadora y cuidadosa, teniendo todos ellos compasión por ella, ante las numerosas pérdidas familiares.” (fuente: Leyenda de la obra)

Silvia:

Gesche Gottfried forma parte de la historia de Bremen en Alemania ¿Se ha trasladado a los sitios originales de la historia p. e. estuvo en Bremen?

Ferrer Ferran:

No he tenido ocasión de visitar la ciudad de Bremen, pero es una asignatura pendiente que he de hacer.

Silvia:

Como no tenía la posibilidad de visitar Bremen e investigar allí. ¿De qué manera ha investigado la historia de Gesche Gottfried? ¿Ha contactado también al experto Peer Meter?

Ferrer Ferran:

Me he tenido que documentar, saber que fue lo que ocurrió, tuve que documentarme de cada asesinato que hizo, los 15 asesinatos en concreto.

Leí referencias de lo ocurrido allí sobre unos enlaces que me envió Gerd Greis, y también mi amiga S. Casado me ayudó para que la historia fuera lo más exacta posible, del cual estoy muy agradecido por la ayuda de ambos.

**Silvia:**

At what point in Gesche Gottfried's life does the composition begin?

Ferrer Ferran:

When she is already seen as a good woman, when she is taking care of all her sick.

"In her 'modus operandi', she would supply small doses of a mix of arsenic and butter, very common at the time, to her victims in their food. Overtime, these would get ill, and Gesche Gottfried, sarcastically kind, altruistic and resignedly, offered to take care of them during their illness, time that she took advantage of to continue poisoning them." (source: blurb of the piece)

Silvia:

Tell us a little bit about your ideas for setting this true story to music, and thus immerse us a little bit in your world of composition.

Ferrer Ferran:

I had to think a lot about how to make this composition. The good position of a woman taking care of her sick and the ironic position of killing all of them. Moreover, there were as many as 15 of them. I even considered a composition in 15 movements, but I discarded it as it would make the work less interesting. I approached the work in two views of the story, the "good" and the "bad" or rather the "pink" and the "dark". The "good" I resolve it as something beautiful and kind, that essential thing that motivates us to live happily. This is how the com-

Silvia:

¿En qué punto de la vida de Gesche Gottfried comienza la obra?

Ferrer Ferran:

Cuando ya es reconocida como buena mujer al cuidar a todos sus enfermos.

"Ella, en su 'modus operandi', iba suministrando pequeñas dosis de una mezcla de arsénico y manteca, muy común en la época, a sus víctimas, en la comida. Estos con el tiempo, comenzaban a enfermar, y Gesche Gottfried, sarcásticamente amable, desinteresada y resignadamente, se ofrecía a cuidar de ellos durante su convalecencia, tiempo que aprovechaba para seguir envenenándolos." (fuente: Leyenda de la obra)

Silvia:

Cuéntenos un poco sobre sus ideas de poner en música esa historia y así sumergirnos un poco en su mundo de la composición.

Ferrer Ferran:

Tuve que pensar mucho el como hacer esta composición. La postura buena de mujer que cuidaba a sus enfermos y la irónica posición de matar a todos ellos. Además, fueron hasta 15. Llegué a plantearme una composición en 15 movimientos, pero la descarté puesto que perdería interés la obra. Hice un planteamiento de la obra en dos visiones de la historia, la "buena" y la "mala" o mejor dicho la de "color rosa" y la "oscura". La "buena" la resuelvo como algo bonito y bondadoso, eso



position begins. And the “dark” I try to relate the 15 murders in 15 different sections, although they are united and threaded together.

Silvia:

You say that you tell all about that which is “beautiful”/ “good” and that which is “bad”.

With what musical resources and methods do you set these two sides of Gesche Gottfried’s story/character/life to music?

Ferrer Ferran:

It’s about looking for aesthetics that fit the content. For the good/beautiful it is a very clean and clear aesthetic with harmonies that I could call “colours”, producing relaxation and peace.

On the “bad” side, the opposite is true, with more strident harmonies and melodies coming out of the key.

In order to the music to pursue reaching a heart-rending climax, I had to think of a great chase to reach the murderer, not a chase as such, but a mental chase. The moment of the decapitation, a heart-rending “scream” is heard in form of a musical “cluster” among the symphonic instrumental palette. The description of the pursuit of the assassin and her beheading are the maximum climax.

I was imagining the “agony” such a case can give, and this is how I transmitted it in the score.

esencial que nos motiva a vivir felizmente. Así comienza la composición. Y la “oscura” trato de relatar los 15 asesinatos en 15 secciones diferenciadas, aunque unidas e hilvanadas.

Silvia:

Dice que cuenta todo lo “bonito”/“bueno” y lo “malo”.

¿Con qué recursos y métodos musicales pone en música esas dos caras de la historia/del carácter/de la vida de Gesche Gottfried?

Ferrer Ferran:

Se trata de buscar unas estéticas que se ajusten al contenido. Para lo bueno/bonito es una estética muy limpia y clara con unas armonías que podría calificar de “colores”, produciendo relajación y paz.

Y en lo “malo”, lo contrario, son unas armonías y melodías más estridentes saliendo de la tonalidad.

Para que la música fuera persiguiendo el alcanzar un climax degarrador, tuve que pensar en una gran persecución para alcanzar a la asesina, no persecución como tal, pero sí mental. En el momento de la decapitación se escuchan unos “gritos” desgarradores a modo de “cluster” musical entre toda la paleta instrumental sinfónica. La descripción de la persecución a la asesina y su decapitación son el clímax máximo.

Yo imaginaba la “agonía” que puede dar un caso así, y de esta manera lo transmití en la partitura.



The end of the piece is the “renewing spirit” of the people. Maybe one should not do what one’s conscience says; maybe she was mentally ill. People are not “programmed” to do evil, it is mental illness that causes these chaos. The music piece ends with a spiritually reconciling apotheosis.

Silvia:

What is the thread of the piece?

Ferrer Ferran:

The thread of the piece is the melody sung by the flute in the “beautiful” moment of the piece.

Silvia:

For the murders you have chosen musical thematic elements that history has left us. Which elements are they? Why these three musical thematic elements? There are more themes that the history of music has left us.

Ferrer Ferran:

I wanted to give musical and audible recognition to the murders by developing themes that the history of music has left us, thus the musical thematic elements that I used are the “Wedding March” from the opera “Lohengrin” by R. Wagner, for the murders of her husbands and fiancé; the “Sonata Facile” by W. A. Mozart for the murder of the music teacher; and perhaps the most popular and world famous “lullaby” composed by J. Brahms, entitled “Wiegenlied” opus 49 N° 4, for the murders of her children and parents.

El final de la obra es el “espíritu renovador” de las personas. Quizá uno no debe hacer lo que su conciencia dice; quizá era una enferma mental. Las personas no están “programadas” para hacer el mal, es la enfermedad mental la que ocasiona estos caos. La obra termina con una apotheosis reconciliadora espiritual.

Silvia:

¿Cuál es el hilo de la obra?

Ferrer Ferran:

El hilo de la obra es la melodía que canta la flauta en el momento “bonito” de la obra.

Silvia:

Para los asesinatos ha escogido elementos temáticos musicales que nos ha dejado la historia. ¿Qué elementos son? ¿Por qué estos 3 elementos temáticos musicales? Hay más temas que la historia de la música nos ha dejado.

Ferrer Ferran:

Quise dar reconocimiento musical y audible a los asesinatos desarrollando temas que la historia de la música nos ha dejado, así los elementos temáticos musicales que utilicé son el de la “Marcha Nupcial” de la ópera “Lohengrin” de R. Wagner, para los asesinatos de sus maridos y su prometido; el de la “Sonata Fácil” de W. A. Mozart para el asesinato de la profesora de música; y quizá, la “canción de cuna” más popular y reconocida en el mundo entero compuesta por J. Brahms, y titulada “Wiegenlied” opus 49 N° 4, para los asesinatos de sus hijos y padres.



With these musical “hints” I can solve the 15 musical sections, ending in a musical description for the scaffold and the decapitation of the murderess.

I chose these three elements because I thought they are very recognisable in the aforementioned aspects, weddings, lullabies and/or piano lessons.

Silvia:

It seems to me that it is a very complex work. What do you recommend to musicians and/or conductors before performing this work, and what should they bear in mind during their preparation and rehearsal?

Ferrer Ferran:

I have put in what is necessary to make it to be a very complete and coherent composition.

The conductor must know the real history to give the maximum of that “which is not written in the score” and lead the musicians in a more real interpretation, perhaps more tragic in its moments and more moving in others.

For the musicians performing the piece, it would be highly recommended that they know the real history in order to understand all that what the score entails.

It is a highly complex composition and the musicians must know the story of the score. That is why I proceeded to indicate at each sequence of what is happening in all the musicians’ scores, so that the interpretation will

Con estos “guiños” musicales puedo resolver las 15 secciones musicales, terminando en una descripción musical para el cadalso y la decapitación de la asesina.

Escogí estos tres elementos porque pensé que son muy reconocibles en dichos aspectos, las bodas, las nanas y/o en las clases de piano.

Silvia:

Me parece un obra muy compleja. ¿Qué recomienda a los músicos y/o directores antes de interpretar esta obra? ¿Qué deben tener en cuenta durante su preparación y al ensayar?

Ferrer Ferran:

He puesto lo necesario para que resulte una composición muy completa y coherente.

El director debe conocer la historia real para dar al máximo de aquello “que no se ve en la partitura” y conducir a los músicos en una interpretación más real, quizá más trágica en sus momentos y más conmovedora en los otros.

Para los músicos que interpretan la obra sería muy recomendable que conocieran la historia real para así comprender todo lo que la partitura conlleva.

Es una composición de una complejidad alta y los músicos deben saber la historia de la partitura. Por esto he ido indicando cada secuencia de lo que está ocurriendo en todas las partituras de los músicos, de este modo,



be the most accurate/real and will describe in music everything that happened in that tragic story.

Silvia:

In your opinion, what would be the most important skill for musicians to have?

Ferrer Ferran:

Getting the audience "into" the story with their musical interpretation.

Silvia:

After spending so much time on the history of Bremen, now, do you want to visit the historical places where Gesche Gottfried lived?

Ferrer Ferran:

Of course I would. I would love to and I hope to be able to visit the historical places that this story takes us to.

It is an exciting story.

Silvia:

Your catalogue includes several works based on historical facts. Among them "Dragut, the Pirate" which Cinephonics premiered in Germany on 28.08.2022 under your baton and which is dedicated "...to the municipality of Cullera and its inhabitants, a city where the sun, the mountains, the river and the sea make of it a wonderful paradise, being a jewel of the Mediterranean where music occupies a privileged place in the city, enjoying

la interpretación será la más acertada y describirá en música todo aquello que ocurrió en aquella trágica historia.

Silvia:

En su opinión, ¿cuál sería la habilidad más principal que tienen que tener los músicos?

Ferrer Ferran:

Conseguir "meter" al público en la historia con su interpretación musical.

Silvia:

¿Después de haber dedicado tanto tiempo a la historia de Bremen, ahora le ha entrado ganas de visitar los lugares históricos donde vivió Gesche Gottfried?

Ferrer Ferran:

Claro que sí. Me encantaría y espero poder visitar los lugares históricos que lleva esta historia.

Es una historia apasionante.

Silvia:

En su catálogo se encuentran varias obras basadas en hechos históricos. Entre ellas "Dragut, el Pirata" que Cinephonics estrenó en Alemania el 28.08.2022 bajo su batuta y que está dedicada "...al municipio de Cullera y sus habitantes, una ciudad donde el sol, la montaña, el río y el mar hacen de ella un paraíso maravilloso, siendo una joya del Mediterráneo donde la música ocupa un lugar privilegiado en la ciudad, disfrutando de sus dos



its two excellent Music Bands known worldwide for their extraordinary artistic quality". (World premiere: 2019)

What is so fascinating for you about setting historical themes to music?

Ferrer Ferran:

For me it's very interesting, because you make historical culture available to the public, as if they were pedagogical pieces. It's about nourishing the public and society with music and thus making a better world.

Dragut the Pirate docks for the first time in Germany

This symphonic poem, based on 16th century Spanish history, transports the listener to the time of the corsair Barbarossa. In his spectacular work, Ferrer Ferran sets to music the events of the attack on the port city of Cullera, south of Valencia, bathing the shores of the Mediterranean.

On 25 May 1550, the pirate Dragut, lieutenant of the corsair Barbarossa, and his followers attacked the town of Cullera unexpectedly. The sounds of the two big drums on the stage run like cannon shots through the air. Swords are unsheathed in the percussion section and the metallic sound of each blow reaches the marrow. The attack was very successful and the buccaneers made a great haul. The rattling of the chains makes one imagine the prisoners walking under the watchful eye of the victors. The city was com-

excelentes Bandas de Música mundialmente conocidas por su extraordinaria calidad artística". (Estreno absoluto: 2019)

¿Qué es lo fascinante para Usted poner en música temas históricos?

Ferrer Ferran:

Para mí es muy interesante puesto que pones la cultura histórica al alcance del público, como si fueran obras pedagógicas. Se trata de que con música el público y la sociedad se nutra de la cultura y así hacer un mundo mejor.

Dragut el Pirata atraca por primera vez en Alemania

Este poema sinfónico, basado en la historia de España del siglo XVI, transporta al oyente a la época del corsario Barbarroja. En su espectacular obra, Ferrer Ferran pone música a los acontecimientos del ataque a la ciudad portuaria de Cullera, al sur de Valencia, que baña las costas del Mediterráneo.

El 25 de mayo de 1550, el pirata Dragut, lugarteniente del corsario Barbarroja, y sus seguidores atacaron la ciudad de Cullera de forma inesperada. Los sonidos de los dos bombos grandes en el escenario corren como cañonazos por el aire. Las espadas se desenvainan en la sección de la percusión y el sonido metálico de cada golpe llega hasta la médula. El ataque fue muy exitoso y los bucaneros hicieron un gran botín. El traqueteo de las cadenas hace que en la



pletely shaken by the attack and was practically deserted for several decades afterwards.

Ferrer Ferran describes the following sections, which are also indicated in the score:

- Omen
- Targus Reis, called Dragut (1514 - 1565)
- Towards the Town of Cullera
- The Pirate Ship
- The surprising Mediterranean Town of Cullera
- Preparing the Assault on the Town of Cullera (1550)
- Rowing at full Sail
- A presentiment, the Town of Cullera will be sacked
- The Pirate Canteen
- Dragut and his Pirates skirt Cullera to signal the Attack
- Firing the Cannons
- Storming the Town of Cullera
- Dragut and his Pirates fleeing after the Sacking
- Cullera sacked and looted
- The Town of Cullera recovered. Cullera, Paradise

Silvia:

What is the musical basis of the composition, and the thread?

Ferrer Ferran:

The inspiration goes hand in hand with technique and in this case it is the five notes which, developed in all

imaginación se ven los prisioneros andando bajo la vigilancia de los vencedores. La ciudad fue totalmente sacudida por el ataque y quedó prácticamente desierta durante varias décadas después.

Ferrer Ferran describe en su obra las siguientes secciones que además son indicadas en la partitura:

- Presagio
- Targus Reis, llamado Dragut (1514 - 1565)
- Rumbo a la Ciudad de Cullera
- El Barco Pirata
- La sorprendente Ciudad mediterránea de Cullera
- Preparando el asalto a la Villa de Cullera (1550)
- Remando a toda Vela
- Presentimiento, la Villa de Cullera será saqueada
- La Cantina Pirata
- Dragut y sus Piratas bordean Cullera para indicar el Ataque
- Disparando los Cañones
- Asaltando la Villa de Cullera
- Huida de Dragut y sus Piratas después del Saqueo
- Cullera saqueada y desvalijada
- La Ciudad de Cullera recuperada. Cullera, el Paraíso

Silvia:

¿Cuál es la base musical de la obra y el hilo conductor?

Ferrer Ferran:

La inspiración va unida a la técnica y en este caso son las cinco notas las que desarrolladas en todas sus vertientes son el hilo conductor de la obra. En un comien-



their aspects, are the guiding thread of the work. In a mysterious beginning this motif is presented and during the whole course of the work all the phrases and/or melodies arise/emerge from the development of this motif.

The composer refers to the cell of the name DRAGUT (D = re (d); R = reb y re# (des y dis); A = la (a); G = sol (g); UT = do (c)) which is always present throughout the composition.

Ferrer Ferran:

The technique combined with the inspiration and the development of an atmosphere recreated in what happened in Cullera when Dragut assaulted the town, this is the driving motif of the whole thing. In other words: the spectator is listening to the same thing all the time but without realising it.

Silvia:

The big drums seem to have a special and important role. For example in the battle they simulate the cannons. What was your idea?

Ferrer Ferran:

It is a moment of great splendour. I had to think about how to describe the cannons so that they would sound in a "stereo" effect, thinking that there would be several boats attacking Cullera. For this, I placed two big drums on the sides of the orchestra at the front and between themselves the drums sound simulating the cannon.

I also used the big drums to simulate the movement of the boats with their men rowing.

zo misterioso se presenta este motivo y durante todo el transcurso de la obra todas las frases y/o melodías surgen del desarrollo de este motivo.

El compositor se refiere a la célula del nombre DRAGUT (D = re (d); R = reb y re# (des y dis); A = la (a); G = sol (g); UT = do (c)) que siempre está presente en toda la obra.

Ferrer Ferran:

La técnica unida a la inspiración y al desarrollo de un ambiente recreado en lo ocurrido en Cullera cuando Dragut asalta la población, este es el motivo conductor de todo. Dicho de otra manera: el espectador está escuchando lo mismo en todo momento pero sin darse cuenta.

Silvia:

Los bombos parecen tener un rol especial e importante. Por ejemplo en la batalla simulan los cañones. ¿Cuál ha sido su idea?

Ferrer Ferran:

Es un momento de mucho esplendor. Tuve que pensar como describir los cañones para que sonaran en un efecto de "estéreo", pensando que habría varias embarcaciones haciendo el ataque a Cullera. Para esto, situé dos grandes bombos en los laterales de la orquesta en la parte de delante y entre ellos van sonando los bombos simulando el cañón.

Utilicé también los bombos para simular el movimiento de los barcos con sus hombres remando.



Apart from this I would like to mention that the bass clarinet has a very important solo.

At the same time, if we are talking about the battle, I also use the swords of the pirates at the moment of the assault. And also chains simulating the prisoners. Both could be heard very well in the concert.

I also use a cello solo, to imitate the lamentation.

Silvia:

It is a piece about a battle with a lot of pain and lamentation. But pirates also always celebrated and enjoyed life. Have you included this side in your music piece?

Ferrer Ferran:

Yes, it's the moment in the tavern, which is very funny because there is a moment when all the musicians in the orchestra do a body percussion sequence and all the musicians sing at the same time, as if they were toasting with a jug of rum in their hands.

At present, Cullera has two large wind symphony orchestras, and Ferrer Ferran is the chief conductor of one of them.

Silvia:

Do you already know the region of Alzey? What will you do in Alzey in your free time? Rhine-Hesse is very popular of its vine and vineyards.

A parte de esto me gustaría mencionar que el clarinete bajo tiene un solo muy importante.

A su vez si ya estamos hablando sobre la batalla, también utilizo las espadas de los piratas en el momento del asalto. Y también cadenas simulando a los prisioneros. Las dos cosas se podían escuchar muy bien en el concierto.

Un solo de violonchelo lo utilizo para imitar la lamentación.

Silvia:

Es una obra de batalla con mucho dolor y lamentación. Pero los piratas también siempre festejaban y disfrutaban de la vida. ¿Ha incluido este lado en la obra?

Ferrer Ferran:

Sí, es el momento de la taberna que es muy divertido puesto que hay un momento en que todos los músicos de la orquesta hacen una secuencia de percusión corporal y todos los músicos cantan a su vez, como si brindando estuvieran con la jarra de ron en la mano.

En la actualidad, Cullera cuenta con dos grandes orquestas sinfónicas de viento, y de una de ellas Ferrer Ferran es director titular.

Silvia:

¿Ya conoce toda la región de Alzey? ¿Qué hará en su tiempo libre? Hesse Renano (Rheinhessen) es famosa por su vino y sus viñedos.

Ferrer Ferran:

I have already visited the city of Alzey. I don't know the region, but I would love to. We'll see if in my free time I can get to know this city better and of course taste the good wines that the region has to offer.

Ferran Ferran's **"El Brindis" (Cheers!)** could also be seen as a tribute to Germany's largest wine region Rhine-Hesse.

But "El Brindis!" is perfect to celebrate the success of the project in its eleventh edition. The piece's caption says: "Today it will be with music; a kind of music that is written to celebrate those magic moments that life brings us in a commemoration in which we will share a toast with the whole of our audience".

The special arrangement of this "fresh, cheerful, free, easy and joyful music" with a solo part for 12 wine bottles was interpreted in an excellent way by soloist Anne-Kathrin Abt.

Together with the audience, the orchestra toasted the success of the concert with the toast: "Wer Freiheit liebt und Einigkeit, der trinkt auch mal ne Kleinigkeit!" ("Who loves freedom and unity also drinks sometimes a little bit!")

Ferrer Ferran:

"Life is always more enjoyable with a good wine and a toast".

Many thanks to Ferrer Ferran who was willing and took time to talk with me about his compositions and music. It is a delight to interview people who live their passion.

He can be sure that there wasn't any heart left that had not been penetrated by those sounds that are so prized by him and everybody enjoyed this wonderful art.

Ferrer Ferran left more than happiness and harmony. He made us that kind of present you only can feel: the magic of the music.

For more information visit
Homepage/Página web: www.ferrerferran.com
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@OfficeFerrerFerran>

Silvia Casado Schneider

Ferrer Ferran:

Ya he visitado la ciudad de Alzey. No conozco la región, pero me encantaría. Veremos si en mi tiempo libre puedo conocer más esta ciudad y por supuesto probar los buenos vinos que la región nos ofrece.

La obra de Ferran Ferran **"El Brindis!" (Cheers!)** también se podría ver como un homenaje a la mayor región vinícola de Alemania nombrada Rheinhessen.

Pero "El Brindis!" (Cheers!) es perfecta para celebrar el éxito del proyecto en la undécima edición. La leyenda de la obra dice: "Hoy será con música, una música planteada para celebrar esos momentos mágicos que nos ofrece la vida, en una conmemoración en la que brindaremos compartiendo con todo nuestro público."

El arreglo especial de esa "música 'fresca', divertida, desenfadada y jovial" con un solo para 12 botellas de vino fue interpretado con excelencia por la solista Anne-Kathrin Abt..

Junto con el público, la orquesta brindó por el éxito del concierto con el brindis: "Wer Freiheit liebt und Einigkeit, der trinkt auch mal ne Kleinigkeit!". ("Quien ama la libertad y la unión, bebe una pequeñez en ocasión!")

Ferrer Ferran:

"Qué la vida con un buen vino y brindando siempre es más divertida."

Muchísimas gracias a Ferrer Ferran que estaba dispuesto y se tomó el tiempo para hablar conmigo sobre sus composiciones y su música. Es la gloria poder entrevistar a personas que viven su pasión.

Puede estar seguro que no quedó ni un corazón que no haya sido penetrado por esos sonidos tan apreciados por él y que todos disfrutaron de este arte tan maravilloso.

Ferrer Ferran dejó más que felicidad y armonía. Regaló lo que solamente se puede sentir: la magia de la música.

Para más información, visitar
Página web: www.ferrerferran.com
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@OfficeFerrerFerran>

Silvia Casado Schneider

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