

THE LYNN TRIO

Pianist Margaret Lynn, oboist Jane Finch and bassoonist Martin Gatt came together in 2000 to form *The Lynn Trio* but their music-making friendship actually stretches back many years before. Margaret's penchant for wind chamber music has led to performances with artists such as Peter Lloyd, John McCaw and the late Anthony Camden. She was Associate Dean of Music at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts for many years and currently serves as Academic Consultant. Jane Finch has worked as a freelance oboist with the BBC Philharmonic, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, and the Northern Sinfonia. As a soloist and chamber musician she has performed extensively throughout the UK, appearing in prestigious venues such as the Purcell Room and Wigmore Hall, and has broadcast for BBC Radio. Martin Gatt has been principal bassoonist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the London Sinfonietta, and the London Symphony Orchestra, and has performed and recorded as soloist and chamber musician all over the world. He is a Fellow of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and also of the Royal College of Music in London where he is Professor of Bassoon.

JOANNE BODDINGTON

Flautist Joanne Boddington started her studies at the Royal College of Music under Edward Walker and Sebastien Bell. During postgraduate studies at Guildhall she was appointed to her first position with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Six years later she joined the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra as principal piccolo, moving to the Birmingham Royal Ballet and then the BBC Philharmonic as principal piccolo and co-principal flute. Joanne now plays with the Hallé Orchestra, for which she undertakes a great deal of principle work, and teaches at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Frontispiece

"Jane, you must get the children home" by Helen Bradley (1900-1979)
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Madeleine Dring Collected Chamber Works



The Lynn Trio with Joanne Boddington, flute

Jane Finch, oboe • Martin Gatt, bassoon • Margaret Lynn, piano

From an early age it was clear that Madeleine Dring was unusually gifted. Born in London in 1923, to parents who were themselves competent amateur musicians, her innate talents were nurtured in the convivial atmosphere of a household fond of entertaining family and friends around the parlour piano. She won a Junior Exhibition to the Royal College of Music at the age of ten, and continued on to full-time studies and a lifelong association with the College - a bond which she recognized as being the most significant influence on her musical life.

Dring's teachers included Lillian Gaskell (piano), Topliss Green (singing), and Herbert Howells and Ralph Vaughan Williams for composition. Not content with 'three strings to her bow', she also studied drama and mime - forms of theatre which she loved, and in which she participated enthusiastically as writer, composer, actor, singer and pianist. Her wide range of interests and achievements were born of an exceptionally creative and highly original spirit.

Dring's compositions were generally small in scale, for she was most at ease in the intimate world of chamber music. Her songs, dances and idylls were exquisitely crafted miniatures which belonged to a post-war era when light music was immensely popular. By the time of her sudden death in 1977, tastes had already changed and her lighter style of music had become unfashionable. Fortunately, in recent years, an interest in her music is stirring again, and it is to be hoped that she will once more receive the recognition that she so richly deserves. This album opens with one of Madeleine Dring's most popular chamber works - the *Trio for Flute, Oboe and Piano* (1968), which was originally composed for the ensemble *Musica da Camera*. The idiom is reminiscent of the music of Poulenc, especially in the tongue-in-cheek character of the final movement, complete with a romping cadenza for the flute and oboe. The idyllic slow movement brings her lyrical gifts to the fore, the haunting melody at the beginning is tinged with nostalgia and a certain wistfulness.

A number of Madeleine Dring's chamber compositions feature the oboe (her husband, Roger Lord, is a world-renowned player). The *Italian Dance* (1960) is an excellent example of her ability to capture the spirit of the dance form, in this case the Tarantella, which she infuses with her own characteristic harmonic twists. The *Polka* (1962) was also originally for oboe and piano but is presented here in her alternative arrangement for flute and piano. It is a whimsical piece in which the melody flies off in the most unlikely directions, ending up in totally unexpected keys. *Danza Gaya* (1965), on the other hand, was re-arranged for oboe and piano from the original two piano version. This is an exotic rumba full of sunshine and gaiety, with subtle changes of rhythm, texture and accompaniment throughout.

The piano was Dring's favoured instrument - nearly every piece she composed included it, and it was to serve as her main vehicle of musical expression throughout her life. She wrote a substantial amount of music for solo piano, piano duet and two pianos, of which the most widely appealing are the rhythmic studies from her *Colour Suite* (1963). Each of the five studies is an ingenuous invention on a jazzy motif associated with a particular colour, namely, C major - red, D major - yellow, F major - brown, G minor - blue and A minor - pink. As a child, Dring used to colour the keys of the parlour piano as an *aide memoir*.

The title of the penultimate work - *Three Piece Suite* - is indicative of the dry humour that often pervades Dring's work. This launches with the driving piano chords of *Showpiece*, starting in 7/8 and working through a diversity of time signatures, before ending triumphantly in a bold 3/4 statement. The second movement, *Romance*, joins in stark contrast as a gentle, haunting melody in waltz time that perfectly encapsulates and defines the nostalgia-tinged writing that is so characteristic of Dring. The work ends with *Finale* - a characterful concoction of oboe and piano fragments that interweave and chatter, bringing the work to a delicate close with a masterfully understated section marked *più lento e dolce*.

The final work on this album was conceived for oboe, bassoon and harpsichord and premiered by the *Athenaeum Ensemble* in 1971. The choice of the harpsichord and the declamatory style of the opening movement give a clue to possible new explorations, and indeed, each of the three movements inhabits a different sound world. The first movement has the elements of a march but its constantly shifting meters prevent it from settling down. The middle movement entitled *Dialogues* is, in contrast, meditative and almost stark, focusing on pairs of long unfolding lines. The final movement utilises spiky chords and irregular meters topped by (vaguely jazzy) angular melodies, and capped by a final section which simulates the clanging of church bells. Subsequent performances have established that the harpsichord part works particularly well on the piano, and it is this variant which has been recorded here.

We hope you find these few collected chamber works of Madeleine Dring as enjoyable to listen to as we did in recording them.

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Madeleine Dring

(1923 - 1977)

Composer, pianist, singer & actor