

Programme Note: Concertino for Seven

Peter Fribbins

Concertino for Seven is scored for flute (doubling piccolo), clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), alto saxophone, violin, viola, 'cello and piano and consists of an original theme and ten variations. The theme is very simple, consisting only of four two-note pairs in thirds.

The piano opens with the theme already somewhat disguised and distorted through fantastical, magical figuration, interspersed with a version for much stiller woodwind. Like Rachmaninov's famous *Paganini Variations*, the theme is not obvious at the outset, and in variation one (*allegro*), begins to coalesce note by note against a driving single-note ostinato. Only in variation two is the theme eventually explicit, heard *forte* in the violin and woodwind, somewhat sinister in context perhaps, undercut as it is with the driving semi-quavers of variation one (a speeded-up diminution and development of the same theme).

Concertino for Seven is the first 'theme and variation' form I have composed – I have struggled before with the form's potential (in inept hands) for structural dislocation. Here I have attempted to make the music sound integrated and 'through composed' so hopefully the listener is not aware of its eleven sections, but of a fluent continuity and one whole unified dramatic structure.

Peter Fribbins 2003

Well-known for his distinctive dramatic and lyrical voice, Peter Fribbins' music is regularly performed in the UK and abroad. Several works have been released on CD to great acclaim, most notably *Porphyria's Lover* and *In Xanadu*. The striking *I Have the Serpent Brought* is frequently programmed by string quartets and the Allegri Quartet are to tour the *Clarinet Quintet* in their 50th anniversary season in 2004. Current commissions include a violin and piano piece to be performed on London's South Bank on April 29th and a Piano Trio to be premiered in Vienna this autumn.