

SEPTURA BRASS SEPTET

 **SEPTURA**
BRASS SEPTET
www.septura.org



Extended Press Kit

MANAGEMENT

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ikon|arts
management


ARTIST MANAGEMENT

The standard is absolutely higher than brass playing has ever been before.

Alison Balsom
BBC Radio 2

I heartily recommend Septura to anyone who likes chamber music... I have certainly been concerted to the unique sound world of the brass septet.

Nahoko Gotoh
Bachtrack

The sound of Septura is exceptionally beautiful – warm and rounded but with dazzling brilliance too when required...the perfection of ensemble, balance and intonation is striking.

Nick Barnard
MusicWeb International

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THE BRASS SEPTET

The brass septet is a brand new invention, with no canon of repertoire, no grand history of great compositions. So why not invent a new one? Like musical Robin Hoods, Septura thieve from the richest ensembles to create a counterfactual history – a parallel universe in which, in the world of chamber music, the brass septet rules.

BETTER ON BRASS

SEPTURA

ABOUT

SEPTURA BRINGS TOGETHER LONDON'S LEADING PLAYERS TO REDEFINE BRASS CHAMBER MUSIC THROUGH THE UNIQUELY EXPRESSIVE SOUND OF THE BRASS SEPTET.



SIMON COX

FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, TRUMPET

Simon is Principal Trumpet of Aurora Orchestra, and regularly performs with many of the UK's major orchestras. Following studies at King's College London and the Royal Academy of Music, he spent three years in Finland as a member of the Helsinki Philharmonic.



MATTHEW KNIGHT

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, TROMBONE

Matthew Knight is Co-Principal Trombone of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, where he also serves as Vice-Chairman. He studied at Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music, and now teaches at the Royal College of Music.



SEPTURA

Septura brings together London's leading players to redefine brass chamber music through the uniquely expressive sound of the brass septet.

By creating a canon of transcriptions, arrangements and new commissions for this brand new classical configuration, Septura aims to re-cast the brass ensemble as a serious artistic medium.

Currently Ensemble in Residence at the **Royal Academy of Music**, London, the group is recording a series of 10 discs for **Naxos Records**, each focused on a particular period, genre and set of composers, creating a 'counter-factual history' of brass chamber music.

The first six discs have received critical acclaim, described variously as "**irresistible**" (Fiona Maddocks, The Observer), "**dazzlingly polished**" (Anna Picard, BBC Music Magazine) and "**brass playing at its most exalted**" (Robert Markow, Fanfare). In addition, **Christmas with Septura** was released in November 2016, and Septura's unique version of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* was released in November 2019.

Weaving this ever-increasing repertoire into captivating live events, Septura is gaining a reputation for engaging audiences with innovative and imaginative programming. In 2018-19 the group performed at festivals and venues around the UK and Europe, as well as touring to New Zealand and Japan. Highlights of the 2019-20 season will include a UK Christmas tour, a second tour across the US, and Septura's debut at London's Wigmore Hall.

Septura's members are the leading players of the new generation of British brass musicians, holding principal positions in the London Symphony, Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony, Basel Symphony and Aurora orchestras.

NAXOS RECORDING SERIES

Septura is recording an unprecedented series of 10 discs for Naxos over 5 years.

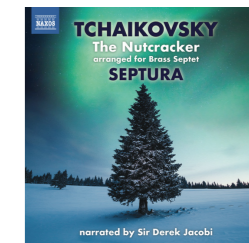
Through transcriptions, arrangements and original works, each disc explores a different period, genre and set of composers, asking the question ‘what if these works of art had been written for brass?’

The series aims to redefine the brass ensemble as a serious artistic medium by creating a canon of classical art-music for brass septet – a ‘counter-factual history’ of brass chamber music.

The first six discs in the series are available now, described variously as “brilliantly done” (Fiona Maddocks, The Observer), “dazzlingly polished” (Anna Picard, BBC Music Magazine) and “brass playing at its most exalted” (Robert Markow, Fanfare). Septura’s next recording will be available for Christmas 2019.

TCHAIKOVSKY: THE NUTCRACKER (AVAILABLE CHRISTMAS 2019)

Brass instruments are a vital part of the festive fabric of Christmas, and Tchaikovsky’s iconic ballet *The Nutcracker* is made even more joyful with the brassy brilliance of Septura. Narrated by pre-eminent actor Sir Derek Jacobi, *The Nutcracker* is set on Christmas Eve, with music both sublimely rapturous and wildly fantastical.

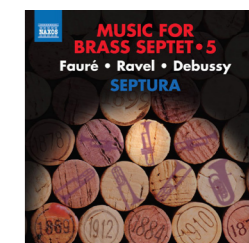


ELGAR, PARRY, FINZI, WALTON: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET 6

Septura head homeward, with a recording of British music from the first half of the Twentieth Century – a golden age in England’s otherwise chequered compositional history. From the many composers of the period whose music endures we have chosen four of the finest: iconic works by Elgar, Parry, Finzi and Walton, re-imagined for the unique sound of the brass septet.

FAURÉ, RAVEL, DEBUSSY: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET 5

Septura turn to one of the most ground-breaking periods of music history: France at the outset of the 20th century. In this fertile compositional field solo brass instruments flourished, but the chamber music landscape was barren. And so the group re-imagine works by the three composers who defined France’s unique musical direction: Fauré, Debussy and Ravel.

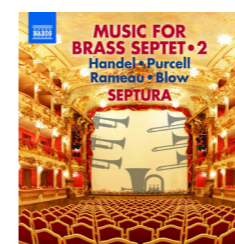


GABRIELI, LASSUS, PALESTRINA, VICTORIA: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET 4

No brass series would be complete without Giovanni Gabrieli, and his music is the starting point as Septura continue on their counterfactual course, imagining that four titans of the counter-reformation - Victoria, Gabrieli, Palestrina and Lassus - had written for brass.

SHOSTAKOVICH, PROKOFIEV, SCRIBIN, RACHMANINOV: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET 3

Stretching back from the stark Soviet soundscape of Shostakovich, through the early modernism of Prokofiev to the pre-revolutionary opulence of Scriabin and Rachmaninov, Septura redresses a lack of original music for brass by these great composers by charting a turbulent seventy years of Russian history.



HANDEL, PURCELL, RAMEAU, BLOW: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET 2

The second volume of Septura’s brass chamber music series takes us back to the 17th Century and the music of Baroque opera, in four contrasting works by Rameau, Blow, Purcell and Handel

BRAHMS, BRUCKNER, MENDELSSOHN, SCHUMANN: MUSIC FOR BRASS SEPTET

What if four celebrated nineteenth-century composers - Mendelssohn, Schumann, Bruckner and Brahms - had written original works for brass septet? This disc explores that fascinating counter-factual twist, re-imagining choral and organ works by those composers.



Also Available **CHRISTMAS WITH SEPTURA**

2019 - 2020 SEASON PROGRAMMES

HUMAN NATURE

Nature has often provided composers and librettists with a way to reflect on aspects of the human condition. Love and loss are portrayed with nature's help in works by three great composers: Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, the first English opera; Fauré's genre-defining *Mélodies*; and Tchaikovsky's iconic ballet, *Swan Lake*.

John Blow *Venus and Adonis*
Bjørn Skjelbred *Imprints*
Gabriel Fauré *Mélodies*
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky *Swan Lake*

ODE TO JOY

As Britain braces itself for Brexit, Septura celebrates the rich musical heritage we share with our European neighbours. The continent's dominant musical power is of course Germany, and our focus is on the two greatest composers from each country: Purcell and Elgar from Britain; and Bach and Beethoven from Germany.

Henry Purcell *Suite from Dido & Aeneas*
J.S. Bach *St Matthew Passion*
Edward Elgar *Serenade for Strings*
Ludwig van Beethoven *String Quartet No. 16*

Encore
Beethoven *Ode to Joy*

NEOCLASSICISM REIMAGINED

Three great 20th-century composers turned to the past, re-imagining the music of the 18th century, each in their own inimitable way. Septura illuminate these neoclassical masterpieces afresh, in new transcriptions of Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Strauss for brass septet.

Sergei Prokofiev *Suite from Op. 12*
Igor Stravinsky *Pulcinella Suite*
Richard Strauss *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*



2019 - 2020 SEASON PROGRAMMES

AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

Septura explore a great transatlantic relationship, charting a course from Debussy's *Préludes*, through Ravel's *Mother Goose*, to his friend Gershwin's *Piano Preludes*, *Songbook* and iconic *An American in Paris*, especially arranged for brass and solo car-horns.

Maurice Ravel *Mother Goose*
Claude Debussy *Préludes*
George Gershwin *Three Piano Preludes*
George Gershwin *Songbook*
George Gershwin *An American in Paris*

ONE EQUAL MUSIC

Marginalised, neglected, ignored for centuries, and only now coming to the fore. The fate of brass chamber music mirrors that of the female composers of the past. Our counterfactual history redresses both balances: placing the music of two female composers, Barbara Strozzi and Clara Schumann, alongside that of their historically more celebrated male contemporaries; and imagining that these women had written for brass.

Giovanni Gabrieli *Exultavit cor meum*
Barbara Strozzi *Il Primo de Madrigali* (selection)
Orlande de Lassus *Lagrima di San Pietro*
Felix Mendelssohn *Organ Sonata in C minor*
Clara Schumann *Piano Sonata in G minor*

ALSO AVAILABLE

Christmas with Septura—featuring Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* suite (recording released Nov 2019)
Easter with Septura

KLEPTOMANIA
Stolen Strings & Pilfered Piano

2020 - 2021 SEASON PROGRAMMES

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

The contrasting sounds of Britain and America

The Twentieth Century saw the development of a deep political partnership between the United Kingdom and the United States. But whilst our two nations share much common ground – not least an affinity for brass instruments – they also each possess very different cultural background, played out in their unique musical styles.

Finzi God is Gone Up

Copland Appalachian Spring

Elgar Serenade

Gershwin An American in Paris

NEOCLASSICISM REIMAGINED

Three great 20th-century composers turned to the past, re-imagining the music of the 18th century, each in their own inimitable way. Septura illuminate these neoclassical masterpieces afresh, in new transcriptions of Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Strauss for brass septet.

Sergei Prokofiev Suite from Op. 12

Igor Stravinsky Pulcinella Suite

Richard Strauss Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme

BORROWED BAROQUE

The brass septet is a brand new invention, and therein lies the root of our compulsion to steal: we have no canon of repertoire, no grand history of great compositions. And so we're inventing one. Like musical Robin Hoods we thieve from the richest ensembles to create a counterfactual history - a parallel universe in which, in the world of chamber music, the brass septet rules.

Rameau Dardanus

Prokofiev Op. 12 Suite

Handel Rinaldo

Stravinsky Pulcinella



2020 - 2021 SEASON PROGRAMMES

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

As Russia continues to dominate headlines and extend its influence throughout the world, Septura explores the unique music of this vast nation.

Prokofiev Suite (from 10 Pieces, Op. 12)

Shostakovich String Quartet No. 8

Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition

CHRISTMAS WITH SEPTURA

The seasonal celebration of Christmas has been the inspiration for so many great musical masterpieces, and brass instruments are a vital part of this festive musical fabric. In this concert Septura focus on some of the highlights of the rich Christmas canon. Where years of repetition have dulled the impact of these wonderful works Septura illuminate them afresh, casting them in a brand new light through the unique and uplifting sound of the brass septet.

Schutz Das Wort ward Fleisch

J.S. Bach Christmas Suite

Praetorius Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Brahms Chorale Prelude on *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*

Handel Highlights from *Messiah*

Tchaikovsky Nutcracker Suite**

**To be performed with a narrator

Encores to Include

In the bleak midwinter, Silent Night, Three Kings

British brass playing is the envy of the world, and when you hear Septura you can hear exactly why.

Jonathan Freeman-Attwood
Principal, Royal Academy of Music

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Septura believe that chamber music should be at the very heart of any student's musical development. Whether your ultimate ambition is to be a soloist, chamber, or orchestral musician, the development of good ensemble skills is essential.

Septura is committed to providing educational opportunities alongside their concerts.

MASTERCLASSES & CHAMBER COACHING

Septura's members are some of the leading British brass players. They are all experienced teachers, teaching at the London music colleges, and regularly giving masterclasses internationally and throughout the UK.

Visiting musical institutions around the world they are able to offer both individual masterclasses, ensemble coaching, and side-by-side ensemble playing as part of their concert package.

FAMILY CONCERTS

Septura work with the wonderful animator Ruth Rosales to produce engaging programmes for family concerts.

SCHOLA SEPTURA SERIES (COMING SOON)

Schola Septura will comprise three collections of music for brass septet - easy, intermediate and advanced standards - guiding students through the development of their ensemble skills as they develop their individual playing.

TOUCH TOURS

Septura's 'Touch Tours' are short (30-45-minute) presentations for blind and visually-impaired people.

Aided by a facilitator the members of the group introduce their instruments and explain how they are played; they demonstrate the wide range of different techniques, mutes and effects that will be used in the programme, and how all the instruments come together in different pieces to create a variety of sounds and musical textures.

Throughout this the participants are able to touch instruments (a trumpet, trombone and tuba) and the different mutes that radically change the sound of each instrument.



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

February 2018 - US Tour; Multiple dates and locations (US debut)

03 June 2018 - Altmark Festspiele; Gardelegen, Germany

07 December 2018 - Tubala Brass Week; Tafalla Spain

April 2019 - Chamber Music New Zealand Tour and Nelson Residency (Multiple dates, New Zealand debut)

June 2019 - Japan Tour; Multiple dates, and locations (Japanese debut)

July 27 2019 - Sounds of the Dolomites Festival; Malga Flavona, Italy (Italian debut)

30 July 2019 - Trakai Fanfare Week, Trakai Lithuania (Lithuanian debut)



UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

08 October 2019 - Detmolder Meisterkonzerte; Detmold, Germany

11 October 2019 - Carinthische Musikakademie; Ossiach, Austria

30 November 2019 - Swansea University; Swansea, United Kingdom

12 December 2019 - Royal Liverpool Philharmonic; Liverpool, United Kingdom

February 2020 - US Tour; Multiple dates and locations

27 February 2020 - Wigmore Hall, London (Wigmore Hall debut)

28 February 2020 - Chiltern Arts Festival

SEPTURA

IN THE PRESS

*An uplifting debut from a magnificent seven. ******

Fiona Maddocks
The Observer

A recital of pure gold.

This is brass playing at its most exalted.

Ritmo

Robert Markow
Fanfare

Beautiful from beginning to end.

Barry Kilpatrick
American Record Guide

It's an inspired idea to take classical pieces and rearrange them for brass septet. It's a unique combination of instruments, and it produces a unique sound, which I love.

John Suchest
Presenter, Classic FM

Beautifully intoned

Paul Driver
The Sunday Times

If you like English pastoral music, and the sound of brass, this album is irresistible.

Fiona Maddocks
The Guardian



SEPTURA

BRASS SEPTET

*Virtuoso playing: glossy,
brilliantly articulated,
audaciously coloured,
technically flawless.*

BBC Music Magazine



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