Programme note

**Fantasy on Themes by Arthur Bliss (2008)**

**Douglas Finch**

This piece was commissioned by Michael Corby for the occasion of Ronald Stevenson’s 80th Birthday. Bliss’s ballet *Adam Zero*, from which the themes are derived, is an allegory of the cycle of a man’s life – where the world in which he lives is represented by a stage. The second number in the score, entitled *The Stage*, quotes the following passage from Shakespeare:

*All the world’s a stage,*

*And all the men and women merely players:*

*They have their exits and their entrances,*

*And one man in his time plays many parts…*

This piece uses themes from four sections of the ballet: *The Stage, Dance of Summer, Adam’s Fates* and *Dance with Death*. In terms of genre, it lies somewhere between a transcription and a free fantasy. The fantasy is dedicated to Ronald Stevenson.

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