



Tilford Bach Society



Kristiana Ignatjeva - Cello

Alison Rhind - Piano

8 February 2019

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Programme

Generously sponsored by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust

Luigi Boccherini 1743 – 1805

Sonata for cello and piano in A major, G.4

Adagio; Allegro

Luigi Boccherini was a virtuoso cellist, who, although born in Lucca, Italy, had to find employment elsewhere to make a living. He found jobs in various orchestras in Vienna, various Italian cities and Paris, but eventually was employed by the Spanish royal family for the rest of his life. Boccherini composed over 30 sonatas for cello and basso continuo, but didn't mention these in the records he kept of his own compositions possibly because they were early works. The surviving manuscripts are not autographs and the situation is further confused by the fact that a number of unauthorised editions were published in London towards the end of the 18th century, later editions of which were adaptations for cello and piano. So this particular sonata exists in several different versions in the published editions. The version we are to hear starts with an Adagio followed by an Allegro which was clearly intended to showcase Boccherini's skill on the instrument.

Ludwig van Beethoven 1770 – 1827

Sonata for cello and piano in C major, op.102 no.1

Andante – Allegro vivace; Adagio – Tempo d'andante – Allegro vivace

The two Op 102 sonatas were composed in 1815 when Beethoven's increasing deafness was leading to a reduction in his compositional output. It was possibly inspired by his acquaintance with the cellist Josef Linke who was sponsored by the Countess Anna Maria (Marie) von Erdödy, a friend of Beethoven to whom the sonatas are dedicated. This sonata has two movements both of which start with a slow introduction.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky 1840 – 1893

Pezzo Capriccioso

Tchaikovsky composed this work in Aachen in the summer of 1887 while staying with a friend who was in the terminal throes of syphilis. Tchaikovsky seems to have been affected by the suffering of his friend and this is communicated by the sombre mood and key (B minor) of this piece. It is relatively short and took him only a few days to compose, he orchestrated it immediately on finishing the piano version.

Interval

Dmitri Shostakovich 1906 – 1975

Sonata for cello and piano op.40

Allegro non troppo; Allegro; Largo; Allegro

This piece was written in 1934 just prior to the censure by the Soviet authorities of his music, especially the opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk which was reportedly too "bourgeois and decadent" for the Soviet people. Although this sonata seems to...

have escaped criticism, it is full of Shostakovich's characteristic sarcasm and mockery. The first movement is in relatively conventional sonata form built around two lyrical themes. The scherzo which follows "opens with coarse, repetitive sawing from the cello, over which the piano plays a rather heavy-handed melody in which the composer irreverently bites his thumb at those who would make his music more 'accessible'". The third movement is a slow aria followed by a "comically sinister" finale, written in a sort of loose rondo form, which ends abruptly rather than with the triumphant ending favoured by the state apparatchiks. (Quotes from Graham Olsen)

Anton Stepanovich Arensky 1861 – 1906

Romance, no.2 from Four Pieces, Op. 56, for cello and piano

Arensky was born in a music-loving, affluent family in Novgorod, Russia. He was musically precocious and had composed a number of songs and piano pieces by the age of nine. The family moved to St. Petersburg in 1879, after which he studied composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Rimsky-Korsakov. In 1882, Arensky graduated with a Gold Medal in piano and composition; Tchaikovsky awarding him the highest grade for his harmony exam. Despite some harsh comments, Tchaikovsky always tried to include Arensky's works in concerts, indeed Arensky's music shows strong influence by both Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. After graduating, Arensky was immediately appointed professor at the Moscow Conservatory. Among his students were Alexander Scriabin, Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alexander Gretchaninov.

Astor Pantaleón Piazzolla 1921 – 1992

Le Grand Tango

Astor Piazzolla was born to a family of Italian descent in Argentina but moved with his family at the age of 4 to Greenwich Village in New York. He was exposed to both classical music and the tango music of Argentina through records at home and also the jazz scene of his environment in a violent neighbourhood in New York. His musical gifts became apparent as he taught himself to play the bandoneon which his father had picked up in a pawn shop.

He studied composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris who encouraged him to stick with the tango and developed his unique fusion of the tango rhythm with jazz forms. He composed Le Grand Tango for the Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich in 1982. Although structured in a single movement, the work has three broad sections. It opens with the indication "Tempo di tango," in which strongly accented tango rhythms dominate. In the second section, performers are told to allow more motion, with a "libero e cantabile" ("free and singing") spirit. It contains extensive dialogue between the cello and the piano. The final section, for which Piazzolla provided the tempo indication "giocoso" ("humorous"), presents a mood of electric energy and even humour. The music charges forward to its conclusion, giving the cellist many challenging double-stops (playing two notes at once) and glissandos (sliding rapidly through a musical scale).

Notes by Trevor Gray

Kristiana Ignatjeva

Latvian cellist Kristiana Ignatjeva is a scholar studying for her Artist Diploma at the Royal College of Music, London, with Melissa Phelps. She is currently Ian Evans Lombe Scholar. Kristiana has obtained degrees with distinction in Master of Performance and Bachelor of Music. In 2010 Kristiana joined the Purcell School of Music where she studied with professor Robert Cohen.

Kristiana has worked with many prominent musicians including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Pinchas Zukerman, and Nicola Benedetti. In November, she performed a Dvorak concerto with Essex Symphony Orchestra. Last season Kristiana gave performances of an Elgar concerto with Nottingham Symphony Orchestra, the Haydn C major concerto with the London Mozart Players and Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations.

Kristiana has won many international and national competitions, recently being awarded the Muriel Taylor Scholarship (2016) and the First Prize and Unaccompanied Bach Prize at the Violoncello competition at the Royal College of Music, London (2018, 2017 and 2015).

Kristiana has given recitals across Europe and North America in major concert halls including the Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Cadogan Hall. She enjoys playing chamber music and regularly takes part in chamber music festivals across Europe.

Kristiana plays on an Italian cello by Matteo Goffriller kindly loaned by the Royal College of Music, London.

Alison Rhind

Alison Rhind is recognised as one of the leading collaborative pianists specialising in the repertoire for piano and strings. Her ability to accompany was recognised at an early age whilst still at Chetham's School of Music. She read Music at Wadham College, Oxford and completed her studies with Edith Vogel at the Guildhall School of Music before returning to be an accompanist at Chetham's.

In 1994, she moved to the Yehudi Menuhin School where she worked for twelve years. She toured Israel and Germany with the students and was invited to accompany at the prestigious Kronberg Akademie after her recitals there with the school. During this period, she coached many young instrumentalists with whom she has since forged notable recital partnerships particularly the violinists Alina Ibragimova and Nicola Benedetti with whom she toured the USA and Japan.

The Royal College of Music recognised her work and in 2009 created a post for her as Coach for the String Department which she now combines with freelance recital work. She has a collaborative relationship with many teachers who send their students to her specifically for duo coaching.

She lives in Surrey with her three children.



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