



T B S



Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux - violin

Joseph Havlat - piano

29 October 2022

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We are most grateful to the Countess of Munster Musical Trust for sponsoring this concert, and to HSH Dr Donatus Prince of Hohenzollern for his financial support for our concerts this year.



Programme

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 - 1791)

Violin Sonata No 24 in F, K.376

Allegro; Andante; Rondeau: Allegretto grazioso

K.376 is the first, in order of publication, of the group of six sonatas dedicated to Josepha von Auernhammer, whose name they have borne to this day. Despite Mozart's sarcastic remarks about her, referring to her as "a fright", she was rather more than a gifted amateur and he much appreciated her talent, playing a number of his two piano works with her. She also had a well-to-do father and so had to be cultivated. It is of interest that this set of sonatas for violin and piano is dedicated to a pianist, and not a violinist, but these first chamber works to be written after Mozart's move to Vienna, and freedom from the restraints of Salzburg, required a violinist as equally accomplished as the pianist: they were no longer piano sonatas accompanied by the violin, although they were published as such. It should also be noted that the dedicatee was a musician and an ordinary burgher rather than a noble patron.

The F major Sonata was written in Vienna during the summer of 1781. Its first movement is lively and energetic, while remaining concise, and the development section has only a loose connection with the opening themes. Like the first, the second movement owes much to Haydn. There is a deliberate absence of contrasts and the middle section is only a variant of the first. Throughout, the two instruments indulge in a beautifully balanced dialogue, creating an idyllic atmosphere. The final Rondo is a more extensive movement and the most significant of the sonata. The coda combines elements from the rustic vigour of the main theme and the first episode in a summation of what has gone before.

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Violin Sonata No 1 in G, Opus 78

Vivace non troppo; Adagio; Allegro molto moderato

The years 1878 and 1879 brought two of Brahms's greatest compositions for violin: the Concerto and the Sonata in G. It seems that the relaxed atmosphere of the Carinthian lake resort of Pörschach, where he had spent consecutive summers, was particularly conducive to the composer's creative motivation. Although numbered as his first violin sonata, Brahms is known to have written at least three such works before this, but they are now lost to us. He was not therefore setting out on a new course when he wrote the G major Sonata, and the work shows a considerable mastery of the form, with violin and piano sharing their roles to perfection. It is a gracious work, where grandeur is never sought.

There are three movements. A Viennese waltz-like cross-rhythm pervades the work right from the first bar but the first movement soon corrects the impression given by the calm tunefulness of the opening passage that this is to be a completely limpid and serene work. It moves away from the major key and becomes more impassioned. The slow movement is pensive and includes a funereal march passage.

Three repeated notes open the finale in an obvious reference to the opening movement. In this finale, Brahms also makes use of his two Op 59 settings of the 'rain' poems by Klaus Groth: Regenlied and Nachklang. The songs are hardly carefree and their sense of yearning is strongly felt here as the movement adopts a rondo form, and its principal episode takes up the theme of the foregoing Andante. In its harmonies the coda again hints at the opening movement, neatly bringing all the material together.

Interval

Top-ups of drinks are available at the table at the entrance

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750)

Sonata No 2 for Harpsichord and Violin BWV 1015

Dolce; Allegro assai; Andante un poco; Presto

The A major Sonata is the second of a set of six which Bach commenced in 1717 at Cöthen but probably finished in Leipzig. Rather than taking the usual basso continuo part, the harpsichord plays a melody line in the right hand, restricting the continuo bass to the left. CPE Bach called them as 'harpsichord trios', because they contain three independent voices and were akin to the trio sonata.

The three parts open the Dolce in canon, each with an identical melody from which the whole movement grows. A lively Allegro in ABA form follows, the first part returning after a long-held pedal note in the bass while the upper parts frolic in cadenza-like abandon. A bass line strides along in the graceful Andante while the upper parts are again in canon for the whole of the movement, the harpsichord imitating the violin throughout. In binary form, with each half repeated, the playful final Presto rushes along in energetic style.

Clara Schumann (1819 - 1896)

Three Romances

Clara Schumann composed her Three Romances for piano in 1853, during what was the last year that she and Robert would have a relatively conventional relationship. Within a year, after a failed suicide attempt, Robert would be living in a mental asylum, and Clara would be left to take care of seven children while also performing and touring internationally. This was also the year that the young Johannes Brahms came into the Schumanns' lives – the start of a musical and personal relationship with Clara that would last over four decades.

Francis Poulenc (1899 - 1963)

Sonata for Violin and Piano Opus 119

Allegro con fuoco; Intermezzo; Presto tragico

The *Violin Sonata* was composed 1944-43, and was dedicated to the memory of the Spanish poet Lorca who died in the Spanish Civil War. The first performance was in Paris, June 21 1943, with the composer at the piano and Ginette Neveu playing the violin.

The Sonata for violin and piano displays many of Poulenc's hallmarks as a composer - short pithy phrases, a gift for melody with wide ranging intervals, chromaticism which always finds its way to harmonic resolution and constant contrast between the dreamy and the acerbic. The sonata is a real partnership, with each instrument taking up ideas from the other, now carrying the melody, now acting as accompanist.

All these elements can be found in the first movement that starts spikily but is answered more lyrically by the piano. Even when the violin introduces a dreamy, calmer section, this soon turns assertive, even though based on the same material. Eventually the movement dances towards a return of the opening theme, and ends on a confident note.

The piano's repeated notes that open the Intermezzo set the more contemplative tone of the movement, the melody passing between the two instruments, the violin's final glissando somehow undermining the whole mood.

The Presto tragico opens frenetically, only later opening up into a wide-ranging melodic line that builds to a 'très violent' climax. The following brief violin cadenza seems suddenly to remember the dedication of the work, and the coda recalls the earlier melody in an elegiac vein, but is brought to a sudden abrupt end.

TBS continues to operate with a retiring collection rather than fixed-price tickets.

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Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux

Born in France, violinist **Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux** is the 2021 grand prize-winner of Young Classical Artists Trust and Concert Guild International Competition. Recent highlights include appearances at Wigmore Hall, a BBC Prom with the dynamic 12 Ensemble (a string collective of world class chamber musicians) and a performance of the Franck Piano Quintet at the Gstaadt Festival with Alina Ibragimova, Lawrence Power, Sol Gabetta and Bertrand Chamayou. Her debut album for Champs Hill records of music for solo violin is due for release later this year.

Charlotte is leader of the prize-winning Quatuor Confluence who are currently young artists in residence at the Fondation Singer-Polignac in Paris. The Quartet studies with Mathieu Herzog (founder member of the Quatuor Ebène).

Joseph Havlat

Joseph Havlat is a pianist and composer from Hobart, Australia. In 2019 he was made a Young Artist at St. John's Smith Square, and was also awarded the first prize in the keyboard section of the Royal Overseas League Music Competition. He frequently works as a chamber musician, having performed with musicians such as James Ehnes, Jack Liebeck, William Bennett and Steven Isserlis, and is also a member of the LSO percussion ensemble with whom he has released a CD on the LSO Live label, including the premiere recording of John Adams' two-piano work 'Roll Over Beethoven'.

Passionate about modern and contemporary music, he is a founding member and original artistic director of contemporary music collective Ensemble x.y. Most recently, he has recorded Steve Law's Piano Concerto with the RSNO for release by Parma Recordings.



Photo: Marc Gascoigne

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