

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH CONCERT SERIES AUTUMN · WINTER 2010

Concerts at The University

Tuesday 2 November 2010

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Student concert

Ailsa Ramage · violin

Alexander Hill · piano

Laura Reading · soprano

Mairi Tully · piano

Programme of works by BEETHOVEN, MOZART, DEBUSSY,
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS, HANDEL and DAVID BAKER.



AILSA RAMAGE · violin
LEWIS KELLY · piano

Sonata No.5 in F major Op.24 'Spring'

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- (ii) Adagio molto espressivo
- (iii) Scherzo, Trio
- (iv) Rondo - Allegro ma non troppo

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote a total of 10 Violin Sonatas, from 1797 to 1812. His Violin Sonata no. 5 in F major (Op. 24) is more often known as the 'Spring Sonata'. This Sonata was published in 1801, the same year as Sonata no. 4 and the String Quintet in C major. Beethoven dedicated all these to Viennese patron Count Moritz von Fries. Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 5 breaks away from Classical traditions; firstly by adding in a *Scherzo* to make four movements, unlike the Classical three-movement format. Beethoven also reinforces the idea that both voices are equal giving the violin the same importance as the piano. In early Classical period, the violin was written as an accompaniment to the piano, rather than the other way round.

The second movement, *Adagio molto espressivo*, shifts to the key of B flat and establishes a meditative mood. The piano first presents the nostalgic melody, upon which the violin then comments for a while. The two instruments then come together to present a gentle dialogue based on the original piano theme. In the third movement, again the piano leads the main theme. The violin follows, repeating the piano deliberately unsynchronised. This playful *Scherzo & Trio* lasts only a minute and brings a little humour into the music. The final movement, *Rondo - Allegro ma non troppo*, begins with a very pleasant lyrical melody first stated by the piano and then the violin. This singing melody returns in various forms; in between are agitated minor passages creating a brief moments of discontent in then music. However, the bright main theme always returns with the two voices intertwined and singing to the end.

A.R.

ALEXANDER HILL · piano

Sonata No.13 in Bb major, K. 333

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

- (i) Allegro

This particular sonata dates back to Mozart's early years in Vienna, where it was published in 1784. There is far more ambiguity surrounding its original date of composition, though based upon the findings of British musicologist, Alan Tyson, it is now thought to have been written in Linz at the end of 1783, around the same time of the 'Linz Symphony'.

The work is in three movements and follows the conventional structure of a sonata: *Allegro; Andante cantabile; Allegretto grazioso*

A gentle pathos is brought to this first movement by the appoggiaturas that appear at the beginning of almost every bar in the first subject of the exposition. However, the general mood is a happy one, with lively motifs and intricate ornamentation bringing a playful and, at times, child-like quality to the music.

Deuxième Arabesque

Achille-Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Debussy's *Deux Arabesques*, composed between 1888 and 1891, represent some of his earliest impressionistic works. The word 'arabesque' has two different meanings in the French language: one refers to a decorative ornament in painting or sculpture, whereas the other is a term used to describe a position in classical ballet. It is quite possible that Debussy was influenced by both connotations in the writing of this piece, as he found inspiration for many of his compositions through the art of Antoine Watteau and even had the *Deuxième Arabesque* performed as a ballet in 1894.

The marking 'Allegretto scherzando' indicates a lively, playful tempo, which is in contrast to the *Première Arabesque*, marked 'Andantino con moto'. The *Deuxième Arabesque* begins with gentle left-hand chords beneath animated trills in the right-hand, which is the characteristic motif on which the whole piece is based. It follows a ternary structure with a reprise of the A section to conclude the piece, which ends almost without warning in the home key of G major.

A.H.

LAURA READING · soprano
MAIRI TULLY · piano

Silent Noon

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

'Silent Noon' is a poem written by English poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti and set to music by Ralph Vaughan Williams. It is a song that is often misinterpreted by singers to be sad when actually it is full of happiness and is summed up quite perfectly in the closing sentence 'the song of love'.

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky,
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

Angels Ever Bright and Fair from *Theodora*

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

'Angels Ever Bright and Fair' is from Handel's oratorio *Theodora*. Often considered more of a dramatic work bordering on opera, the music is often semi staged and is very powerful. In 4th-Century AD, a decree is issued to all citizens of Antioch that they should offer a sacrifice to the Roman goddesses and if they do not as punishment they would be sentenced to death. Theodora, a virginal devout Christian martyr refuses to offer a sacrifice and as punishment is not sentenced to death but in fact told she will be sent to a brothel. 'Angels Ever Bright and Fair' is sung as the guards stand to take her away and she is begging the angels to take her instead. This is a powerful moment where a young girl begs for death to take her in the hope of keeping her body pure.

Someone is Sending me Flowers

David Baker (b.1931)

'Someone is Sending me Flowers' is a comic piece with music written by David Baker; the arranger is Roger Vignoles and the author of the text is Sheldon Harneck. Often the song is performed alongside Flanders and Swann favourites made famous by soprano Sarah Walker. The song is not only a narrative but a joke so therefore the punch line is in the closing statement.

L.R.

Ailsa Ramage started playing the violin when she was aged five in Kent where she was taught by Jennifer Harris and played with the Bromley Youth Orchestra. After moving to Castle Douglas (Dumfries and Galloway) aged thirteen, she was taught by William McNab whilst attending Castle Douglas High School. While at school she was awarded the Higher and Advanced Higher music prizes. She also performed at the Dumfries and District Music Festival and won the open solo violin class in 2007 and 2008. During her 6th year Ailsa attended the Junior Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama where she studied with Angus Anderson. Ailsa has toured with Edinburgh Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. She is now in her third year of a BMus degree at the University of Edinburgh and studying violin with Uli Fenner. In 2009 Ailsa was awarded the Sir Thomas Beecham Scholarship for achievement in instrumental performance in first year. She is currently a member of the University Chamber Orchestra and leads the University String Orchestra.

Today, Ailsa is accompanied by **Lewis Kelly** who is currently studying Architecture at the University of Edinburgh.

Alexander Hill began playing the piano at the age of 7 under the direction of Mark Smith, the current Head of Keyboard at Harrow School, who taught him for the duration of his studies at Watford Grammar School for Boys. Outside the classroom, Alexander found time to accompany the Junior Choir and was selected for the position of pianist in the school Big Band. His talent as a violinist also gained him a place at the Harrow School for Young Musicians, performing at such prestigious venues as the Barbican, St. Johns, Smith Square and the Royal Albert Hall, as well as touring to Venice, Brittany and Nice.

Alexander is currently in his third year of the undergraduate music course at Edinburgh University and studies the piano as a first instrument with Peter Evans. His ever-growing interest in the world of jazz has earned him a place in the Edinburgh University Jazz Orchestra for the second year running, with regular performances held at the Jazz Bar and various other student-orientated venues.

Laura Reading studied at Christ's Hospital School in Sussex before starting her BMus degree at the University of Edinburgh where she is now in her fourth year. Laura is studying voice with Margaret Aronson, is a soprano choral scholar and also a member of the EU Singers. Operatic roles have included First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, Annio in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Rooster / Inn Keeper's Wife in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Soprano soloist and co-producer for *Carmina Burana* Fringe 2009. In Opera Scenes, Nella from *Gianni Schichi*, Madam Wanton from *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Gretel from *Hansel and Gretel*. Future performances include Lady Beaconsfield in EUSOG's production of *Jekyll and Hyde* opening tonight performing until Friday 5th November and one of the soprano soloists in a joint EU Singers and String Orchestra concert here in the Reid Concert Hall on 19th November. Laura is president of Edinburgh Studio Opera and performs the role of Baba the Turk in their production of *The Rake's Progress* in March 2011.

Laura is accompanied on the piano by **Mairi Tully** who is currently a 4th year BMus student at the University of Edinburgh.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT

Friday 5 November

1.10pm

St. Cecilia's Hall

Adam Brown · guitar

ANTONIO LAURO Virgilio

ALFONSO MONTES Preludio de Adios

LEO BROUWER Cuban Landscape with Bells

AGUSTIN BARRIOS Julia Florida

Waltz no.4

JIMMY VAN HEUSEN Like Someone in Love

Darn that Dream

VILLA-LOBOS Choros No.1

GEORGE SHEARING Lullaby of Birdland

ADMISSION FREE