

Concerts at The University

Tuesday 16 October 2012

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

'Postcards from Europe'

Marianne Olyver · violin

Robert Schuck · piano

A recital with narration tracing music and
displacement in central Europe 1933-1945



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Sonata in D for violin and piano (1933)

Hans Gál (1890-1987)

Allegretto quasi andante

Scherzo: Vivace

Largo con espressione - Allegro poco sostenuto, ma con fuoco

Born in 1890 near Vienna, Hans Gál achieved early recognition as a composer with the award of the Austrian State Prize for Composition in 1915. During the period after the First World War, he rapidly established his pre-eminence as a composer, particularly following the success of his second opera, *Die Heilige Ente* (The Sacred Duck): this was premiered in 1923 in Düsseldorf, under Georg Szell, and was subsequently performed in some 20 theatres, including Berlin, Prague and Breslau. It was still in the repertoire in 1933.

March 1933 was the major turning point in Gál's career. Following considerable success as a composer during the 1920s, he was appointed Director of the conservatoire in Mainz in 1929, ushering in a highly stimulating and productive period in his life, with several important compositions, including the Violin Concerto and his fourth opera *Die Beiden Klaas*. But the accession to power of the Nazis in March 1933 led to instant dismissal from his post and a ban on all publication or performance in Germany. The Violin Concerto had had its first performance one month earlier, but the opera, which was being prepared for performance in Dresden, could no longer be staged. He returned to Vienna, but was forced to leave by Hitler's annexation of Austria in 1938, and fled to Britain, but it was not until after the Second World War, during which he suffered a period of internment as an 'enemy alien', that he finally obtained a permanent position as lecturer in the Faculty of Music at the University of Edinburgh and acquired British nationality.

The Sonata in D major was written during the summer of 1933 in a village in the Black Forest, where the Gál family had found temporary refuge, before finally resigning themselves to the impossibility of staying in Germany. It was Gál's second violin sonata, the first dating from 1920. The sonata is predominantly lyrical, flowing seamlessly between contrasting moods and reaching an emotional climax in the slow section of the final movement. At the same time the listener may detect clear sonata form in the first movement and total coherence of structure throughout the work. The fast, rhythmically-driven scherzo provides a contrast to the more reflective first

movement, but here too there is a calm middle section suggesting glimpses of a better world. The elegiac Largo moves into a robust, exuberantly energetic Allegro, ending in the D major from which the sonata started out, but not before a nostalgic echo of the Largo.

As a 'continental Briton', Gál brought to his adoptive country a very direct personal link with the Austro-German tradition in which he remained so deeply rooted. He remained creatively active for most of his long life, and, in addition to his extensive output as a composer, which spans all the major genres, he was the author of books on Brahms, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner and Verdi.

As a teacher, performer, scholar, and founder member of the Edinburgh International Festival, he touched countless lives, but for decades his music remained largely unknown. In the last few years however there has been a plethora of excellent new recordings of his music, including symphonies, concertos and chamber works. Performances of his works are becoming increasingly frequent, and include, only last month, staged performances of his opera, *Die Heilige Ente* in Berlin. It seems that his rich musical legacy is at long last being rediscovered.

notes by Eva Fox-Gál and Tanya Fox
Hans Gál Society : www.hansgal.com

Sonata for violin and piano (1927)

Erwin Schulhoff (1894-1942)

second movement - Andante

Erwin Schulhoff was a prolific Czech Jewish composer and virtuoso pianist of German descent. He studied in Prague, Vienna and Leipzig and briefly with Debussy. Following service in the Austrian Army in WWI, he lived and worked in Dresden, Berlin, Prague and Olomouc. Schulhoff variously embraced Serialism, Dada and Jazz. In the 1930s he became committed to Marxism and Soviet Communism and obtained Soviet citizenship. Imprisoned in Prague on June 23rd 1941, following Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union he was subsequently deported to Wurtzburg concentration camp, Bavaria, where he died of TB on August 18th 1942, aged 48.

Gypsy Carnival

Traditional, arr. Jascha Krein

Postcards from Europe is a violin and piano duo specialising in virtuoso gypsy music and works by composers whose lives were also affected by the Rise of the Third Reich: those who perished in concentration camps such as Erwin Schulhoff and Robert Dauber and those who became émigrés such as Hans Gal, Peter Gellhorn and Mieczslaw Weinberg. This research and communication project centres on the cultural, political and social events of 1930's Central Europe. In particular its ambition is to bring to the public the voices of the musicians whose work was called 'entartete' (degenerate) by the regime of the Third Reich and whose voices were suppressed. They focus on both gypsy music and Jewish composers whose music was banned from performance and who themselves were systematically denied work from 1933 onwards.

www.postcardsfromeurope.co.uk

Marianne Olyver was the first girl to be invited to lead the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. She studied in London and Geneva with Max Rostal, Yfrah Neaman, Alfredo Campoli and Emanuel Hurwitz CBE. Her guest appearance on *Womans Hour*, where she performed live, was voted BBC Radio 4 Pick of the Week. Marianne directed the Palm Court Light Orchestra Vancouver Island, and has given recitals extensively in the Far East. She teaches at the Royal Academy of Music, London and has also taught at the Delay Symposium with Itzhak Perlman at The Julliard School, New York. Directing Marianne Olyver and Her Orchestra she has both broadcast and performed at Festivals and major concert halls both in the UK and abroad.

Robert Schuck studied with Peter Gellhorn, at the Royal Academy of Music, King's College, London and was awarded an Italian Government Scholarship to Accademia Musicale Chigianna. He has enjoyed a wide range of work as a pianist for instrumentalists, singers and for dance. He has been a staff accompanist at Dartington International Summer School and was invited by Sir Charles Mackerras to be the repetiteur for Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Prague Estates Theatre - Mozart Bicentennial Celebrations. He teaches at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Friday 19 October, 1.10pm, St Cecilia's Hall

Emma Lloyd · baroque violin

Andrew Woolley · harpsichord

Music by MANCINI, SCARLATTI, GEMINIANI and JAMES OSWALD.

ADMISSION FREE