

CONCERTS

AT THE UNIVERSITY

AUTUMN—WINTER 2014

Tuesday 21 October 2014

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Clea Friend · tenor violin

Alex Taylor · piano

Programme of works by SHIORI USUI, J.S. BACH and
SCHUBERT.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Tuning In – *first performance*

Shiori Usui (b.1981)

'Tuning in to tenor-violin; its surface, materials, and construction.

Tuning in to tenor-violin; its breathings, mumbling and a taste of its past.

Tuning in to tenor-violin and tuning in to how we want to begin.'

S. Usui

Sonata No. 3 in G minor BWV 1029 (for viola da gamba and harpsichord)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

- I Vivace
- II Adagio
- III Allegro

This sonata was written for a baritone viola da gamba. About the size of a cello, it had six strings and was tuned in fourths and thirds (not unlike a guitar) rather than fifths (like a cello). Its neck was fretted with adjustable gut frets like a lute's. Its bow was rather straighter than a violin bow, and was held underhand. The body of the instrument was held between the legs (viola da gamba means simply "leg viol"). Violas da gamba had flat backs and low-tension gut strings, both features giving the instrument a shimmering sound by comparison to the robust sound of the cello.

Sonata for Arpeggione in A minor D 821

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

- I Allegro Moderato
- II Adagio
- III Allegretto

The Arpeggione Sonata was written in Vienna in November 1824. The sonata is the only substantial composition for the arpeggione (which was essentially a bowed guitar) which remains extant today. It belongs to the same period as the *Death and the Maiden* Quartet, when Schubert was suffering from the advanced stages of syphilis and lapsing into increasingly frequent episodes of depression.

The piece was probably commissioned by Schubert's friend Vincenz Schuster, who was a virtuoso of the arpeggione, an instrument which had been invented only the previous year. By the time the sonata was published posthumously in 1871, the enthusiasm for the novelty of the arpeggione had long since vanished, together with the instrument itself.

Cellist **Clea Friend** was born in London and pursued her studies firstly at Edinburgh University and then at Eastman School of Music in the USA. She has performed with many orchestras and ensembles in the UK, including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, RSNO and recently the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. She is an active chamber musician and in 2009 established Artisan Trio with violinist Aisling O'Dea and pianist Simon Smith. Clea sees her role as not just as a performing musician, but also as a community worker and educator, facilitating a wide variety of people from across all sectors of society to use music as an expressive and communicative tool. In addition to her extensive teaching experience, she has been project manager and animateur for several innovative projects in the UK and abroad, from schools and community centres, to theatres, prisons and war-torn communities. These have included work with SCO Connect, Hear My Music, Share Music, as well as extensive stays in Croatia and Bosnia working with composer and music therapist Nigel Osborne.

Alex Taylor read music at Edinburgh University, graduating with first class honours in 1995. During his time in Edinburgh he studied piano with Peter Evans, and subsequently at the Royal College of Music in London with Irina Zaritskaya. Prizes at national and international competitions, including 2nd prize at the Scottish International Piano Competition in 1998, led to concerts throughout the UK, Europe and as far afield as Japan. Alex has appeared at major international festivals and has performed concertos with, amongst others, the BBC SSO, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and BBC Concert Orchestra. After 5 years on the road, Alex decided to develop his career in other directions, whilst continuing to perform regularly. He worked for several years in production for BBC Radio 3. In 2007 he moved to Norway, working first as Head of Programming for Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra before moving to Oslo, where he currently holds the same position with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Described as a composer with 'individual ears' (The Times), **Shiori Usui's** works have been performed in Japan, Europe and USA by a diverse range of soloists, ensembles, and orchestras, including BBC SSO, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, BCMG with conductor Martyn Brabbins, and Artisan Trio. Many of her compositions are inspired by the sound of human body, deep sea, and various weirdly wonderful things in the world. In 2012, her orchestra piece *Warai* received the Toru Takemitsu Composition Award.

As a composer, Shiori also enjoys working in wider musical contexts; producing a work with students with additional support needs using music and shadow puppetry, and appearing on stage as a 'noise' vocalist and pianist with improvising musicians such as Arve Henriksen, Ilan Volkov, and Grey Area.

The stringed instrument used today is the **tenor violin** which forms part of the 'Violin Octet' as developed by Carleen Hutchins. Hutchins was an American physicist and acoustician who had a particular interest in developing a family of violin instruments, all in acoustical proportion to each other to try and develop a homogenous sound throughout the range. Eight instruments (as the group title suggests) were devised, ranging from a sopranino violin (playing an octave above a normal violin) to a contrabass violin (a large body- and sized - double bass). The tenor violin is the fourth-largest of these instruments, intended to be tuned an octave below the violin.

Not only the deviser and driving force behind the instruments, Carleen Hutchins was also a competent maker, having learnt the craft from Burritt Miller. This instrument is from her own hand whereas others in the Edinburgh University octet were made by others, or by Hutchins in collaboration with others. Despite the heavy promotion of these instruments there remains a comparatively limited repertoire for the full octet, and it is often using a single instrument, such as in this performance, where the instruments are the most successful.

Dr Darryl Martin

Principal Curator, Musical Instrument Museums Edinburgh Reid Concert Hall.

Thanks to Owen Green for sound production of *Tuning In*, to Sean Williams for equipment loan, and to Lucas Kao for filming.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Friday 24 October, 1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

David Gerrard · organ

J.S. BACH Sonata in A minor, BWV 967

FRESCOBALDI Toccata Sesta 'sopra i pedali per l'organo, e senza'

FROBERGER Toccata VI 'Da sonarsi alla Levatione'

KERLL Toccata VI 'Per li Pedali'

KERLL Capriccio Cucu

J.S.BACH Canonic Variations on 'Vom Himmel hoch', BWV 769

BUTTSTETT Fugue in E minor

ADMISSION FREE