

CONCERTS

AT THE UNIVERSITY

AUTUMN–WINTER 2014

Friday 21 November 2014

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Gordon Bragg · violin

James Willshire · piano

Programme of works by **MOZART**, **RESPIGHI**
and **BARTÓK**.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Sonata for violin and piano in G major No.18 K301

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

(i) Allegro con spirito

(ii) Allegro

This violin sonata was composed in Mannheim, Germany, in March 1778 and was first published in the same year as part of Mozart's Opus I collection, which was dedicated to Maria Elisabeth, Electress of the Palatinate. Consequently this collection became known as the Palatine Sonatas.

Sonata for violin and piano in B minor

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

(i) Moderato - Agitato - Tempo 1

(ii) Andante espressivo

(iii) (Passacaglia) Allegro moderato ma energico

Respighi's Violin Sonata was written in 1917 and belongs to the late nineteenth century world of passionate drama and lyricism. The first two movements are Puccini-like in their expression and emotional content, whereas the last movement, no less expressive, is a Passacaglia with elements of the baroque music which Respighi was greatly influenced by.

Romanian Folk Dances

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

Bartók's Romanian Folk Dances were originally written for piano in 1917. They are based on seven Romanian tunes from Transylvania which would have originally have been played on fiddle or shepherd's flute. Zoltan Szekely's version for violin and piano is not just a transcription, but also an arrangement and adaptation of the piece for these two instruments, making the violin part especially 'violinistic' with harmonics, double stops and other special effects. Some of the slight adjustments Szekely made on the original score were to transpose some of the songs: the second movement was transposed from D minor to F-sharp minor, the third from B minor to D minor and the fourth from A major to C major.

Gordon Bragg is currently second violinist of the Edinburgh Quartet, one of Britain's foremost chamber ensembles, playing concerts and teaching throughout the UK.

Gordon was born in Stirling, Scotland in 1984. His first formal music training was at the junior department of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, where he won the school prizes for violin and piano. Gordon graduated in violin performance from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London) in 2006 with first class honours, studying violin with Simon Fischer and Stephanie Gonley. During his time in London, he participated in masterclasses with Rachel Podger, Ralf Gothoni, Zvi Zeitlin and members of the Amadeus, Takacs, Belcea and Juilliard quartets, as well as going on an Erasmus exchange to the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. He was also invited to participate in the International Musician's Seminar in Prussia Cove, Cornwall where he performed in the violin class of Gerhard Schultz (Alban Berg Quartet).

Gordon was concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, and has been a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, playing under the likes of Vladimir Ashkenazy, Claudio Abbado, Myung Whun Chung and Sir Colin Davis, and in the summer of 2007 played in the Lucerne Festival Academy Orchestra under Pierre Boulez.

Following conducting studies in Manchester and Zurich, Gordon has conducted the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie, Bern Kammerorchester, Goettingen Symphonie Orchester, NYOS Camerata, Red Note Ensemble and has taken masterclasses with Bernard Haitink, Sir Mark Elder, Ivan Fischer, Martyn Brabbins and Peter Rundel. Gordon has just completed a spell as assistant to Donald Runnicles at the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and conductor fellow of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Heralded as a 'fabulous technician' with 'torrential virtuosity', **James Willshire** has enthralled audiences in five continents with performances of 'freshness and lucidity', with 'clarity and sensitivity of touch' and 'bravura technique'. His recordings of contemporary British solo piano music have received universal acclaim, being reviewed extensively internationally and broadcast on BBC radio 3. At the age of fifteen James was awarded an Educational Scholarship in the 2000 London International Piano Competition, the youngest British pianist to be thus recognised. Festival performances include concerts at the Lichfield, Cheltenham and Winchester Festivals, the Kilkenny Arts Festival, the Cantilena Festival, the Edinburgh Fringe, the Roman River Festival, 'Il Festival di Londra' in Italy where he gave the opening recital, the Victoria International Arts Festival and the Paxos International Festival. He has given concerts in the Bridgewater Hall, Barbican, and Royal Festival Hall, at which last he gave his debut recital in 2008. Broadcasts include live performances on the Performance Channel and Indian National Radio and appearances on British and Irish Television.

A regular performer of contemporary music, James's debut recording on Delphian featured the complete piano music of the Scottish composer Rory Boyle; it was released in 2011 to critical acclaim, including a five-star review from *The Scotsman*. In October 2013 his recording of piano music by Ronald Stevenson was released; it has since been reviewed by *BBC Music Magazine*, *Gramophone*, received a five-star review in *Classical Music* magazine, and was awarded an IRR Outstanding by *International Record Review*. Other press interest for the recording includes articles in *The Scotsman*, *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, *Sinfini Music*, *The Arts Desk* and *MusicWeb International*. His recording of piano music by David Jennings was chosen as one of MusicWeb International's Recordings of the Year 2013.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Friday 21 November, 7.30pm, Greyfriars Kirk
Edinburgh University Music Society Symphony Orchestra
Russell Cowieson · conductor

SIBELIUS Symphony No. 2

TICKETS: £10.00/£5.00

www.eums.org.uk publicity@eums.org.uk

Friday 21 November, 7.45 pm, Canongate Kirk
Edinburgh University Renaissance Singers
Noel O'Regan · director

Felice Anerio (c.1560-1614): the last Papal Composer

Music by Felice and Giovanni Francesco Anerio, Palestrina and other Roman composers.

TICKETS: £8.00/£5.00 available on the door or at <http://eurs.eusa.ed.ac.uk>