

# TASMIN LITTLE & MARTIN ROSCOE

The Stoller Hall  
Tuesday 13 October  
7.30pm

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
MANCHESTER CHAMBER  
CONCERTS SOCIETY

IN SUPPORT OF  
HELP MUSICIANS UK



# PROGRAMME

Tasmin Little violin  
Martin Roscoe piano

C SCHUMANN      Three Romances, Op. 22 (10')  
                         *i Andante molto*  
                         *ii Allegretto: Mit zartem Vortrage*  
                         *iii Leidenschaftlich schnell*

BEETHOVEN      Violin Sonata No. 5 in F major, Op. 24 'Spring' (24')  
                         *i Allegro*  
                         *ii Adagio molto espressivo*  
                         *iii Scherzo: Allegro molto*  
                         *iv Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo*

***Interval (15')***

BEACH      Romance, Op. 23 (6')

FRANCK      Sonata in A major (28')  
                         *i Allegretto ben moderato*  
                         *ii Allegro*  
                         *iii Recitativo - Fantasia: Ben moderato*  
                         *iv Allegretto poco mosso*

## C SCHUMANN Three Romances, Op. 22

Clara Schumann is known today mainly as the wife of composer Robert Schumann and the intimate friend of Johannes Brahms. In her 61-year concert career, however, she was considered one of the most distinguished pianists of her day, and was highly influential in programming new works by contemporary Romantic composers. She was also a prolific composer in her early years, at a time when women composers were frowned on by the music world. As she grew older, she lost confidence in herself as a composer, writing *"I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose – there has never yet been one able to do it."*

Clara began to compose again in the summer of 1853, having written little since 1846 and the period of her Piano Trio. The Three Romances were among the last pieces that Clara ever wrote, the Romance being one of Clara's favourite character genres. In this case, Clara demonstrated a gift for melody and produced true chamber music with the two instruments on an equal footing rather than with the piano in an accompanying role.

Clara dedicated the Three Romances to another friend, the great violinist Joseph Joachim. After her death in 1896, these were largely forgotten along with the rest of her music. In recent years, however, the growing interest in women composers has revived performances of her music, and the Three Romances are again heard in the concert hall and on recordings. We can only wonder what she might have achieved if she had lived a century later.

## BEETHOVEN Violin Sonata No. 5 in F major, Op. 24 'Spring'

2020 marks Beethoven's anniversary year, with the musical world marking 250 years since his birth in Bonn. In the Spring Sonata of 1801, we see Beethoven poised on the threshold of his second-period style. He has still not completely bid farewell to the genteel world of Classicism – graceful themes, transparent textures and traditional accompaniment figures are found in abundance – yet mingling with these attributes we also find a robustness and vigour, a boldly independent spirit straining to burst the bonds of classical restraint and moderation.

The suave and refreshing mood of this piece is no doubt behind the nickname 'Spring' Sonata, which did not come from Beethoven himself, but rather came into use after his death. The sonata opens with one of Beethoven's most endearing and unforgettable melodies. Subsequent themes in the movement show a little more musical muscle, but more akin to a soft breeze rustling the leaves than a strong wind, followed by a sweet and lyrical second movement. The third-movement Scherzo is Beethoven's shortest sonata movement: fitting on a single page in the score,

it is without a doubt proof that humour exists in music. The sonata closes with a sweet and subtle (by Beethoven's standards, at least) Rondo that highlights his ability to constantly vary melodies in ways that keep them perennially fresh. The short coda only confirms the joyful and sunny atmosphere that has prevailed throughout the entire composition.

## BEACH Romance, Op. 23

Sexism played a huge part in Amy Beach's life, often affecting the way she was able to work. Amy married Dr. Henry Beach, a Boston-based surgeon 24 years her senior. Henry didn't agree with Amy giving so many recitals, restricting her to just two a year. Due to this, Amy began to focus more on composition. Henry forbade Amy to learn composition formally, so she instead bought an abundance of books on composition, orchestration and arranging so she could learn her own art.

Romance for violin and piano was premiered in 1893 and published within the same year. Technical complexity is at the heart of many of Amy Beach's compositions, with this one being no exception. The relationship between the piano and violin is very special in this particular work, due to the amount of musical communication between the two instruments. Amy's originality is crystallized in Romance, with it being a real homage to technical chamber music from the Romantic era. Romance is dedicated to Maud Powell, a close personal friend of Amy and virtuoso violinist, who premiered the piece with Amy.

As one of the leading representatives of the late-nineteenth-century Romantic style, Amy keeps the feeling of this in Romance. Her use of dramatic dynamics, extremities in range for both instruments, and the way they both fuse together to create one voice is incredibly beautiful. The charm of Romance is perhaps one of its greatest assets, with it really tugging at your heartstrings in some places. The dainty, yet powerful melodic lines sing through the complex piano accompaniment, and show off the versatility of the violin in just six short minutes. The ending of this work acts as a reprise of the beginning, and slowly begins to wind down, before ending on the tonic with a beautiful arpeggiated piano chord.

There is still a long way to go before her works are properly integrated into modern concert halls. Her music is daring, powerful, emotional, complex and full of character, and there is no good reason why she shouldn't be at the forefront of many concerts. Just before she passed away, Amy was concerned that her legacy would be shadowed by gender politics, rather than it being about her musical efforts. She said *'My work has always been judged from the beginning by work as such, not according to sex. The question has rarely ever been raised.'* Even after all the oppres-

sion she received in her lifetime, she still downplayed it to ensure her art was heard in the future.

## FRANCK Sonata in A major

César Franck had his early career shaped by a combination of innate musical talent and an overbearing father, who exploited César's prodigious talent as a pianist, sending him and his violinist brother on well-paid concert tours at the expense of his education at the Paris Conservatoire. His early compositions were showy piano pieces written for such tours, but aged twenty he wrote four piano trios, which secured his reputation as a composer. However, for much of his life he was forced to earn his living quartering Paris as a piano teacher during the week and as a church organist at week-ends. He was also a much-loved teacher of composition both individually and as professor of organ at the conservatoire. Most of his own composition was for organ and, less successfully, for choirs. He did not return to writing chamber music until his later years: the piano quintet in 1879, tonight's sonata in 1886 and the string quartet in 1889. These works are of his best, and established a new era of French chamber music.

The Violin Sonata was written when Franck was 63, as a wedding present for virtuoso violinist and composer Eugène Ysaÿe. Franck presented the work to Ysaÿe on the morning of his wedding. After a hurried rehearsal, Ysaÿe performed the Sonata at the wedding.

There is some evidence that the origins of the work lie in a sonata for cello; Franck certainly authorised a subsequent arrangement for cello. One characteristic of his style that can be seen in the sonata is his use of 'cyclic unity' where ideas from previous movements re-appear, perhaps modified, in later ones. The violin's opening theme of the gentle first movement provides a foundation for the whole work. The following Allegro is more like a conventional first movement, an energetically rising start contrasting with a falling second subject that mirrors the work's opening figure. The third movement is an original Recitative and Fantasy whose opening echoes that of the first movement and whose climax introduces both a theme which will recur in the last movement and another that provides a variant on the work's opening. Much of the final movement is written as a canon on a theme, which is again related to the work's opening. The two parts of the canon are initially separated by a whole bar, but later move closer to just a half bar – a touching metaphor, along with the hint of wedding bells, for Ysaÿe's wedding.

# TASMIN LITTLE

Tasmin Little has firmly established herself as one of today's leading international violinists. She has performed on every continent and in some of the most prestigious venues of the world, including Carnegie Hall, Musikverein, Concertgebouw, Philharmonie Berlin, Vienna Konzerthaus, South Bank Centre, Barbican Centre and Royal Albert Hall, Lincoln Center and Suntory Hall.

Tasmin's concerto appearances include those with Adelaide, City of Birmingham, London, Melbourne, Seattle, Singapore, and St. Louis Symphonies; the Berlin, New York, Hong Kong, Malaysian, London, Netherlands Radio, Royal Liverpool and Royal Philharmonics; the Gewandhaus, Ulster and all the BBC Orchestras; The Philharmonia and Orquestra Sinfonica do Porto - Casa da Musica.

Tasmin's discography and performance schedule reflect her wide-ranging repertoire and she has given numerous World Premiere performances including concerti by Willem Jeths, Robin de Raaf, Stuart MacRae, Robert Saxton and Dominic Muldowney. Her newly commissioned work, *Four World Seasons* by Roxanna Panufnik, was premiered as a live broadcast on the BBC and she remains one of the few violinists to perform Ligeti's challenging Violin Concerto performing it in Berlin, New York, Salzburg, Amsterdam and Philadelphia.

As a recital and chamber music artist she returns to The Wigmore Hall., Australian Festival of Chamber Music, and all the major UK Festivals regularly. Recent recitals have taken her to New Zealand, Hong Kong, Philadelphia, Godella, Dubai, Malta, and to the Newport, Eastern Music and Chauttaqua International Music Festivals in the USA,.

Tasmin is an exclusive recording artist for Chandos Records. Her extensive discography includes her multi award winning recordings of the Elgar, Britten, Szymanowski, Walton, Beethoven Triple, Delius, Coleridge Taylor, and Haydn Wood Violin Concerti, and Sonatas by Strauss, Respighi, Beethoven, Brahms, Ravel, Fauré, Bridge, Ireland, Bliss, Walton and Britten. Her World Premiere recording of Roxanna Panufnik's *Four World Seasons* is coupled with Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

In 2008, Tasmin launched her project, *The Naked Violin*, aimed at breaking down barriers to classical music by releasing a free CD for download on her website, and by performing in communities where music is rarely heard. Within days of the CD release, 6,500 websites had linked to Tasmin's site and within a few months, more than half a million people had visited and downloaded. The project was filmed for television by ITV's *The South Bank Show*.

Tasmin Little is a Fellow of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (FGSM), a Vice President of the Elgar Society, an Ambassador for The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, and for Youth Music, and has received Honorary Degrees from the Universities of Bradford, Leicester, Hertfordshire and City of London. In 2016, she was awarded Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Music (Hon RAM) by the Academy and the University of London. In 2019, she won the BBC Music Magazine Personality of the Year Award. She is the recipient of the Gold Badge Award for Services to Music and in 2012 was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Birthday Honours List, for Services to Music. She plays a 1757 Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin.

# MARTIN ROSCOE

With an extraordinary career spanning over four decades, Martin Roscoe is unarguably one of the UK's best loved pianists. Renowned for his versatility at the keyboard, Martin is equally at home in concerto, recital and chamber performances. His enduring popularity and the respect in which he is universally held are built on a deeply thoughtful musicianship and his easy rapport with audiences and fellow musicians alike. Martin is President of Clitheroe Concerts Society, Artistic Director of Ribble Valley International Piano Week and the Manchester Chamber Concerts Society, and Co-Artistic Director of the Beverley Chamber Music Festival.


A prolific recitalist and chamber musician, Martin tours the UK extensively every season, including regular appearances at Wigmore Hall and Kings Place. He has long-standing associations with Peter Donohoe, Kathryn Stott, Tasmin Little and the Endellion and Maggini Quartets as well as more recent collaborations with Jennifer Pike, Ashley Wass, Liza Ferschtman and the Brodsky, Escher and Vertavo Quartets. One of his most important ensembles, the Cropper Welsh Roscoe Trio (2005-2016), performed many times across the UK, most notably at Wigmore Hall.

Having made over 600 broadcasts, including seven BBC Prom appearances, Martin is one of the most regularly played pianists on BBC Radio 3. Martin has also made many commercial recordings for labels such as Hyperion, Chandos and Naxos. He has recorded the complete piano music of Nielsen and Szymanowski, as well as four discs in the Hyperion Romantic Piano Concerto series. For the Deux-Elles label, Martin has recorded the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, for which he received unanimous critical acclaim. Martin's most recent disc is Volume IV of the complete piano music of Dohnányi, due for release on Hyperion in autumn 2018: the previous three volumes have already invited glowing reviews from the press such as "commanding and warm-hearted... a delectable disc" (Gramophone) and "exuberant and expressive...brilliant technical precision" (BBC Music Magazine, 5 stars).

Teaching has always formed an important part of Martin's life and the development of young talent helps him to constantly re-examine and re-evaluate his own playing. He is currently Professor of Piano at the Guildhall School of Music in London and has been awarded his Fellowship there.

Martin splits his free time between the stunning English Lake District and the Scottish Highlands, which provide inspiration and relaxation, and also enable him to indulge his passion for the countryside and hill-walking.

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