

LSO St Luke's

CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC
RADIO 3

ESSENTIALLY STRAUSS
ELENA URIOSTE & TOM POSTER

Friday 27 October 2023 1–2.05pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Luise Adolpha Le Beau Violin Sonata in C minor
Fritz Kreisler Selection of Miniatures
Richard Strauss Violin Sonata in E-flat major

Elena Urioste violin
Tom Poster piano

Recorded for future broadcast on **BBC Radio 3**

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ACOUSTIC TRIAL

While LSO St Luke's undergoes an acoustic trial, there will be window coverings in place until the end of January 2024. We welcome any feedback you may have on the impact of these coverings, be it acoustically, aesthetically and operationally. Please email tickets@lso.co.uk to share feedback.

THE CRYPT CAFÉ & BAR

The Crypt café and bar is open from one hour before the concert and during the interval (where applicable), selling hot and cold drinks. Please note we can accept card payments only. Only cold drinks will be permitted inside the Jerwood Hall.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER

Wendy Thompson studied at the Royal College of Music, before taking an MMus in musicology at King's College, London. In addition to writing about music she is Executive Director of Classic Arts Productions, a major supplier of independent programmes to BBC Radio.

In accordance with the requirements of Islington Council persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly forbidden without formal consent from LSO St Luke's.

Please make sure that digital watch alarms and mobile phones are switched off during the performance.

Richard Strauss

composer



Richard Strauss was born in Munich in 1864, the son of Franz Strauss, a brilliant horn player in the Munich Court Orchestra; it is therefore perhaps not surprising that some of the composer's most striking writing is for the French horn. Strauss had his first piano lessons when he was four, and he produced his first composition two years later, but surprisingly he did not attend a music academy; his formal education ending rather at Munich University where he studied philosophy and aesthetics, continuing with his musical training at the same time.

Following the first public performances of his work, he received a commission from Hans von Bülow in 1882 and two years later was appointed Bülow's Assistant Musical Director at the Meiningen Court Orchestra, the beginning of a career in which Strauss was to conduct many of the world's great

orchestras, in addition to holding positions at opera houses in Munich, Weimar, Berlin and Vienna. While at Munich, he married the singer Pauline de Ahna, for whom he wrote many of his greatest songs.

Strauss' legacy is to be found in his operas and his magnificent symphonic poems. Scores such as *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Don Juan* and *Ein Heldenleben* demonstrate his supreme mastery of orchestration; the thoroughly modern operas *Salome* and *Elektra*, with their Freudian themes and atonal scoring, are landmarks in the development of 20th-century music, and the neo-Classical *Der Rosenkavalier* has become one of the most popular operas of the century. Strauss spent his last years in self-imposed exile in Switzerland, waiting to be officially cleared of complicity in the Nazi regime. He died at Garmisch Partenkirchen in 1949, shortly after his widely celebrated 85th birthday.

Composer profile by Andrew Stewart

Violin Sonata No 1 in C minor

Luise Adolpha le Beau



1882



14 minutes

- 1 **Allegro**
- 2 **Andante cantabile**
- 3 **Allegro con fuoco - Presto**

Luise Adolpha le Beau was born into a military family in the Grand Duchy of Baden and, unusually for the time, encouraged by her parents to study music from an early age with a view to making a professional career. She made her pianistic debut in Karlsruhe aged 18, playing Ludwig van Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto and Felix Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in D minor. After a short course of lessons with Clara Schumann she undertook a tour of the Netherlands, but then decided that the gruelling life of a touring virtuoso wasn't for her.

In 1876 her parents moved to Munich to enable their daughter to study composition with Josef Rheinberger: from then on Luise added composition to her portfolio career as performer, teacher and occasional music critic. The family later moved several more times, to Wiesbaden, Berlin, and finally Baden-Baden, where, after repaying her parents' support by caring for them in old age, Luise herself died at the age of 77. By then, her list of compositions included a symphony and a symphonic poem, a piano concerto, two operas, choral music, songs,

pieces for solo piano and chamber music, including two sonatas for violin and piano, and one for cello.

The first Violin Sonata dates from 1882, one of Luise's most successful years, in which she also completed a large scale piece for soloists, chorus and orchestra on the Biblical story of Ruth; met Franz Liszt in Weimar (although, to her disappointment, he did nothing to assist her career); won first prize in an international competition with her Cello Sonata, and had her Piano Quartet premiered at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. The Violin Sonata, is a confident piece in the mid-19th century Romantic style. Violin and piano share out the melodic material: the bulk of the virtuoso figuration is, however, assigned to the piano, with the exception of some Mendelssohnian string-crossing passages in the finale. The middle movement is a Romanza-like piece in F minor with a memorably lyrical theme.

Selection of Miniatures

Fritz Kreisler



1925



12 minutes

- 1 **Preghiera**
- 2 **Songs My Mother Taught Me**
- 3 **Midnight Bells**

Viennese-born Fritz Kreisler, praised for his sweet tone and expressive playing style, was one of the most celebrated violinists of his time. Between the ages of seven and twelve he studied at the Vienna and Paris Conservatories. Then made his US debut aged 13 in New York, followed by an American tour, and returned to Austria, where he applied (unsuccessfully) for a job with the Vienna Philharmonic. His stellar solo career of over 60 years began around the turn of the 20th century, and from 1914 onwards he divided his time between Europe and the US, where he eventually settled permanently as a naturalised American citizen.

Kreisler composed many short pieces designed as recital encores. Some were original miniatures; several were pastiches in the style of various Baroque and Classical composers, which at first Kreisler pretended were genuine 'discoveries', before admitting they were his own work. Yet others were transcriptions of well-known pieces by fellow-composers, and the three in this programme belong to the latter category. *Preghiera* (Prayer) is

an arrangement Kreisler made in 1940 of the luscious theme from the slow movement of Serge Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No 2; *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, published in 1914, reworks the most famous song from Antonín Dvořák's cycle *Gypsy Songs*, originally composed in 1880 for a famous tenor at the Vienna Hofoper. *Midnight Bells*, its style the very essence of romantic Vienna, is a 1923 arrangement of the popular waltz duet 'Geh'n wir in's Chambre séparée' from Richard Heuberger's comic operetta *Der Opernball* (The Opera Ball).

Violin Sonata in E-flat major

Richard Strauss



1887



28 minutes

- 1 **Allegro ma non troppo**
- 2 **Improvisation: Andante cantabile**
- 3 **Finale: Andante-Allegro**

Richard Strauss' reputation rests principally on the 15 operas he wrote between 1894 and 1940, and the seven orchestral tone poems starting in 1888 with *Don Juan* and ending a decade later with the autobiographical *Ein Heldenleben*.

Composed a year before *Don Juan*, when the composer was just 23, and first performed in Elberfeld on 3 October 1888, the E-flat Violin Sonata marked the end of Strauss' apprenticeship. It shows him shaking off the mantle of Robert Schumann or Johannes Brahms in favour of quasi-orchestral textures and Wagnerian chromaticism. Even the key – E-flat major – not one normally associated with string music – is prophetic of his 'heroic' ambitions. He selected it also for the first and last of his tone poems, and the confident flourish which introduces the Sonata's energetic first movement anticipates the opening of *Don Juan*.

The lyrical central movement is entitled 'Improvisation', presumably in reference to the improvisatory-style passage which follows the more agitated central section, while the coda briefly quotes the 'Adagio

cantabile' of Ludwig van Beethoven's 'Pathétique' Sonata. A reminiscence of Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* pops up in the scherzo-like Finale, which opens with a slow introduction for piano alone, followed by a fast and furious Allegro of *Don Juan*-like panache.

Elena Urioste

violin



© Chris Gloag

Elena Urioste, recently selected as a BBC New Generation Artist, has been hailed by critics and audiences alike for her lush tone, the nuanced lyricism of her playing and her commanding stage presence.

Since first appearing with the Philadelphia Orchestra at age 13, she has made acclaimed debuts with major orchestras throughout the United States, including the Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Boston Pops, Buffalo Philharmonic, also with the Chicago, National, Atlanta, Baltimore, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Richmond and San Antonio Symphony Orchestras. Abroad, Elena has appeared with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Würzburg Philharmonic, Hungary's Orchestra Dohnányi Budafok and MAV Orchestra and La Orquesta Sinfonica de la Universidad de Guanajuato.

An avid chamber musician, Elena Urioste is the founder and Artistic Director of Chamber Music by the Sea, an annual festival on Maryland's Eastern Shore. She has been a featured artist at the Marlboro, Ravinia, La Jolla, Bridgehampton, Moab, and Sarasota Music Festivals, as well as Open Chamber Music at Prussia Cove, the Cheltenham Music Festival, Switzerland's Sion-Valais International Music Festival, and the Verbier Festival's winter residency at Schloss Elmau. Elena Urioste has collaborated with luminaries such as Mitsuko Uchida, Kim Kashkashian, and members of the Guarneri Quartet, and performs extensively in recital with pianists Tom Poster and Michael Brown.

She is the co-director of the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective, appointed Associate Ensemble at Wigmore Hall in 2020. Elena is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School. Notable teachers and mentors include Joseph Silverstein, David Cerone, Ida Kavafian, Pamela Frank, Claude Frank, Choong-jin Chang, Soovin Kim, and Ferenc Rados. The instruments she uses are the an outstanding Alessandro Gagliano violin, Naples c 1706, and a Nicolas Kittel bow, both on generous extended loan from the private collection of Dr Charles E King through the Stradivari Society of Chicago.

Tom Poster

piano



© Elena Urioste

Tom Poster is a musician whose skills and passions extend well beyond the conventional role of the concert pianist. In demand internationally as soloist and chamber musician across an unusually extensive repertoire, he has been described as ‘a marvel, [who] can play anything in any style’ (*The Herald*), ‘mercurially brilliant’ (*The Strad*), and as having ‘a beautiful tone that you can sink into like a pile of cushions’ (BBC Music).

Tom Poster is co-founder and artistic director of Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective, appointed Associate Ensemble at Wigmore Hall in 2020. With a flexible line-up featuring many of today’s most inspirational musicians, and an ardent commitment to diversity through its creative programming, Kaleidoscope broadcasts regularly on BBC Radio 3 and has recently enjoyed residencies at

the Aldeburgh, Cheltenham and Ischia festivals. Its debut album for Chandos Records, *American Quintets*, was awarded Editor’s Choice in *Gramophone*, and immediately led to an invitation to record a series of albums for the label.

Tom Poster has performed over 40 concertos from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to György Ligeti and has premiered solo, chamber and concertante works by many leading composers. He has made multiple appearances at the BBC Proms, and his exceptional versatility has put him in great demand at festivals internationally.

Tom Poster has recorded albums for BIS, Champs Hill, Chandos, Decca, Orchid and Warner Classics, appearing as soloist and in collaboration with Elena Urioste, Alison Balsom, Guy Johnston, the Aronowitz Ensemble, Aurora Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia and the London Symphony Orchestra.

His compositions and arrangements have been commissioned, performed and recorded by Alison Balsom, Matthew Rose, Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott. His chamber opera for puppets, *The Depraved Appetite of Tarrare the Freak*, received an acclaimed three-week run at Wilton’s Music Hall in 2017.

Elena Urioste and Tom Poster on Strauss

When did you first start learning your instrument and why?

Elena: My earliest musical inspiration for playing the violin came from the television show *Sesame Street*. At the age of two, I saw Itzhak Perlman featured on an episode, chatting and playing his violin. I was instantly enamoured. Apparently I began pestering my parents for a violin immediately, and after three years they finally relented. I was fortunate enough to attend a public school that boasted a stringed instruments programme, and so I began Suzuki lessons at the age of five. Shortly thereafter, I began studying privately.

Tom: I was four, I think, maybe five, when I started learning the piano. Like many kids, I started with the recorder, which I loved. My parents, not musicians themselves but endlessly supportive, found a local teacher who agreed to start me on the piano; she'd never actually taught the piano before, but she gave me a wonderful start. But it was music I fell in love with, rather than a particular instrument – the piano didn't really become the main focus until my mid-teens.

What does Richard Strauss mean to you?

Tom: Pianists don't tend to play a huge amount of Strauss, so I know him more closely as a listener than as a performer, specifically the wonderful operas, songs and tone poems. His glorious Violin Sonata (included in today's programme) is the piece I've played most – it has an enormous and virtuosic piano part, almost like Rachmaninoff, but the piece also has the most exquisite lyricism and tunefulness. It's one of my very favourite pieces to play.

What three Strauss pieces do you recommend to those reading?

Elena: My personal favourites are *Four Last Songs*, *Death and Transfiguration* and the Violin Sonata!

Tom: *Der Rosenkavalier*, the Oboe Concerto and any of the songs, particularly if Jessye Norman is singing.

FUTURE CONCERTS

AT LSO ST LUKE'S

Thursday 2 November 1pm

BAROQUE FANCIES

Henry Purcell I see she flies me; Ah, how sweet 'tis to love; Sweeter than roses

Plus music by **Thomas Arne**, **Louise Farrenc**, **Reynaldo Hahn** and more.

Lucy Crowe soprano
Anna Tilbrook piano

Friday 3 November 1pm

BAROQUE FANCIES

Georg Philipp Telemann Fantasie No 7 in E-flat major

Plus music by **Heinrich Biber**, **Francesco Maria Veracini**, **Robert de Visée** and more.

Rachel Podger violin
Elizabeth Kenny lute
Martin Świątkiewicz harpsichord

Thursday 9 November 1pm

BAROQUE FANCIES

Johann Sebastian Bach
Chromatic Fantasy & Fugue in D minor

Plus music by **Wilhelm Friedemann Bach**, **Viktor Kalabis**, **William Byrd** and more.

Mahan Esfahani harpsichord

Thursday 16 November 1pm

BAROQUE FANCIES

Johann Sebastian Bach Sonata in E major

Plus music by **George Frideric Handel**, **Nicola Fiorenza**, **Georg Philipp Telemann** and more.

Lucie Horsch recorder
Tom Foster harpsichord

WITH THE LSO AT THE BARBICAN

Thursday 16 November, 8pm

DUNCAN WARD & ABEL SELAOCOE

Gary Carpenter Dadaville

Bela Bartók Dance Suite

Samuel Barber

Medea's Dance of Vengeance

Abel Selaocoe arr **Benjamin Woodgates**

Four Spirits (Cello Concerto)

Duncan Ward conductor

Abel Selaocoe cello/voice

Bernhard Schimpelsberger percussion

London Symphony Orchestra

Thursday 23 November, 7pm

BARTÓK, JANÁČEK, DEBUSSY

Béla Bartók Violin Concerto No 1

Leoš Janáček Taras Bulba

Ernest Chausson Poème

Claude Debussy La mer

Duncan Ward conductor

Isabelle Faust violin

London Symphony Orchestra

Thursday 30 November, 7pm

RACHMANINOFF, BENJAMIN & HINDEMITH

George Benjamin Concerto for Orchestra

Paul Hindemith

Symphony: Mathis der Maler

Serge Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No 3

Susanna Mälkki conductor

Kirill Gerstein piano

London Symphony Orchestra

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