

LSO St Luke's

CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC
RADIO 3

NEW GENERATION ARTISTS

Thursday 19 September 2024 6–7.05pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Sergei Prokofiev Selections from Ten Pieces for Piano Op 12
César Franck Piano Quintet

Quatuor Arod
Elisabeth Brauß piano

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

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THE CRYPT BAR

The Crypt Bar is open from one hour before concerts and during the interval (where applicable). Please note, card payments only. Only cold drinks are permitted inside the Jerwood Hall.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER

Kate Hopkins is English-language editor (concerts) for Salzburg Festival. She has written articles for organisations including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the Salzburg Festival and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and book reviews for *NB Magazine* and *The Wagner Journal*.

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.

Selections from Ten Piano Pieces Op 12

Sergei Prokofiev



1906 to 1913



18 minutes

- 1 **March**
- 2 **Gavotte**
- 3 **Rigaudon**
- 6 **Legenda**
- 7 **Prelude**
- 8 **Allemande**
- 9 **Scherzo humoresque**
- 10 **Scherzo**

Sergei Prokofiev wrote his Ten Piano Pieces Op 12 between 1906 and 1913. Some began life as student exercises. The collection is less avant-garde than his Second Piano Sonata (1912) and Second Piano Concerto (1912–13) and anticipates the neoclassicism of works such as the ‘Classical’ Symphony (1916–17). Prokofiev scholar David Nice suggests that the Ten Pieces each offer a portrait of one of the composer’s friends, somewhat in the manner of Edward Elgar’s ‘Enigma’ Variations. Prokofiev himself gave the premiere performance of the work in Moscow in 1914.

The Ten Pieces open with a cheeky March that makes witty use of the piano’s contrasting low and high registers. The demure Gavotte and cheerful Rigaudon – with its distinctive ‘skipping’ rhythms – both draw on Baroque dance forms.

David Nice observes that the pensive Legenda contains more emotional depth than anything Prokofiev had yet written. The central ‘Andante religioso’ with its bell-like effects is especially beautiful. The Legenda is followed by a delicate Prelude whose rippling figuration suggests a harp – and indeed, the composer noted the piece could also be performed by this instrument. Next are two humorous movements: an Allemande (another Baroque dance) dominated by stomping rhythms; and a Scherzo humoresque that makes comic use of the piano’s lower register (Prokofiev later arranged this number for four bassoons). The work concludes with a *moto perpetuo* Scherzo: a dizzying display of virtuosity from its hushed beginnings to its closing *fortissimo* chord.

Piano Quintet

César Franck



1879



33 minutes

- 1 **Molto moderato quasi lento – Allegro**
- 2 **Lento, con molto sentimento**
- 3 **Allegro non troppo ma con fuoco**

After years spent teaching and trying in vain to become a successful opera composer, César Franck experienced a remarkable late flowering. During the last eleven years of his life, he wrote most of the works for which he is remembered today. They include this Piano Quintet, composed in 1879. It received its premiere on 17 January 1880 at a concert organised by the Société Nationale de Musique, whose aim was to promote contemporary French composers. Franck's friend and fellow-composer Camille Saint-Saëns was the pianist, appearing alongside the Marsick Quartet.

Legend has it that the Piano Quintet was inspired by Franck's romantic feelings towards one of his female composition students, Augusta Holmès. This would certainly explain its mood of uninhibited passion, which startled even Franz Liszt, and led the composer's wife to have 'a horror' of it. The work's adventurous harmonic language also attracted some unfavourable reactions – including from Saint-Saëns, who allegedly strode off the concert platform at the end of the

performance leaving the score (dedicated to him) behind. Today, however, the work is widely regarded as one of the composer's masterpieces.

The first movement's introduction begins with a dramatic, recitative-like passage for strings, answered by a tender piano melody. In the ensuing Allegro the two main themes are likewise assigned to strings and piano. The first is declamatory, while the second – which returns throughout the quintet as a 'motto' – is unashamedly romantic. The movement's later stages contain passages of near-operatic intensity.

While the second movement also features some impassioned outbursts, its opening and closing sections are exquisitely tender. Striking features include prominent solos for the first violin, and a reminiscence of the 'motto' theme introduced by the piano. Dramatic string tremolos open the finale, in which vigorous dance-like passages alternate with quieter episodes. Franck revisits music from across the work, culminating with a final, ardent variant on the 'motto' theme, before more tremolos sweep the Quintet to its decisive F major conclusion.

Quatuor Arod



© Laure Bernard

Taking their name from J R R Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, Quatuor Arod formed in 2013 at the Conservatoire de Paris, where all four members studied under Jean Sulem. One of the group's first outings was the FNAPEC competition, winning first prize in 2014. Since then, they have undertaken the Pro Quartet residency at the European Centre for Chamber Music.

Pushed into the limelight by their successes at the Carl Nielsen International Chamber Music Competition and the ARD International Music Competition (Munich), Quatuor Arod was named as a BBC New Generation Artist from 2017–2019 and a ECHO Rising Star from 2018–2019. In the five years since their first rehearsal at the Conservatoire, the quartet have performed at some of the world's most prestigious concert halls: the Philharmonie de Paris,

Wigmore Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Oji Hall (Tokyo) and Carnegie Hall.

Critics have hailed the rare energy of the Quatuor Arod in concert as well as the quality of their recordings, the first of which was devoted to Felix Mendelssohn, ahead of dedications to Mathilde Zemlinsky, Franz Schubert, Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and Benjamin Attahir.

In 2023, Quatuor Arod starred in the documentary *Ménage à Quatre* directed by the iconic Burno Monsaingeon, which depicts a funny and intimate portrait of the group.

The quartet also enjoys working with such artists as Elsa Dreisig, Adam Laloum, Antoine Tamestit, Alexandre Tharaud and Camille Thomas. More than just being performers, they are also invested in the music of tomorrow: in 2017, they premiered *Al Asr*, Attahir's first string quartet, commissioned by La Belle Saison and ProQuartet.

Elisabeth Brauß

piano



© Felix Broede

Elisabeth Brauß has been praised by *Gramophone* Magazine for ‘the maturity and sophistication of her thoughtful interpretations’. Born in Hannover in 1995, Brauß is quickly establishing herself as one of the most exciting and versatile musicians of her generation.

As a former member of the BBC New Generation Artist Scheme, Brauß continues to appear regularly with solo, chamber and concerto engagements across the UK. In 2021 she made her debut at the BBC Proms, performing Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Piano Concerto No 23 with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. In a new partnership between this scheme and the Hallé Orchestra, she was awarded the Terence Judd-Hallé Award, given to a NGA graduate considered to be on the cusp of a major international career.

Further recent highlights include the Finnish Radio Symphony, The Hallé, BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony and Ulster Orchestras. During the 2022/23 season, Brauß was Artist in Residence at Edesche Concertzaal, performing both solo and chamber concerts. Brauß also collaborates with the composer Max Richter, and has appeared in his Reflektor Festival at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg.

Since her debut CD in 2017, she has gone on to release three more albums, collaborating with Valentino Worlitzsch, Simon Höfele, and the Beethoven Orchester Bonn featuring compositions by Max Richter to commemorate Beethoven’s 250th anniversary. Brauß’s most recent recording of the Bacewicz Double Concerto with Finnish Radio Symphony, Nicholas Collon & Peter Jablonski was awarded five stars and Concerto of the Month by *BBC Music Magazine*.

In addition to winning first prize at the International Steinway Competition in Hamburg, and the International Grotrian Steinweg Piano Competition in Braunschweig, Brauß was awarded the Prätorius Musikpreis Lower Saxony Prize in 2012. Further accolades include the main and audience awards at the TONALi Grand Prix in Hamburg (2013) and first prize at the Kissinger KlavierOlymp (October 2016).

FUTURE CONCERTS

Thursday 26 September 1pm
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BEETHOVEN DEDICATIONS

Ludwig van Beethoven 12 Variations on
'Se vuol ballare' (from Mozart's 'The
Marriage of Figaro')
Violin Sonata No 9, 'Kreutzer'

Chloë Hanslip violin
Danny Driver piano

Thursday 3 October 1pm
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ORNAMENTS OF THE BAROQUE

A selection of Sonatas by **Georg Philipp
Telemann**

Forma Antiqua

Thursday 3 October 6pm
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ORNAMENTS OF THE BAROQUE

A selection of pieces by **Francesco
Geminiani, Johann Sebastian Bach,
Alessandro Marcello, Francesco
Geminiani, and Antonio Vivaldi**

Victor Julien-Laferrière cello
Justin Taylor harpsichord

Friday 18 October 1pm
LSO St Luke's

NEW GENERATION ARTISTS

A selection of pieces by **John Corigliano,
Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Liszt, and
Frédéric Chopin**

Alexander Gadjiev piano

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