



KODÁLY & DOHNÁNYI
CHAMBER WORKS FOR STRINGS

SIMON SMITH VIOLIN
CLARE HAYES VIOLIN
PAUL SILVERTHORNE VIOLA
KATHERINE JENKINSON 'CELLO



Kodály & Dohnányi

Chamber Works for Strings

Simon Smith *violin*

Clare Hayes *violin*

Paul Silverthorne *viola*

Katherine Jenkinson *cello*

Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)

Duo for Violin & Cello, Op. 7

1. Allegro serioso, non troppo [8:23]

2. Adagio [9:03]

3. Maestoso e largamente, ma
non troppo lento – Presto [9:04]

Serenade for Two Violins & Viola, Op. 12

4. Allegramente [4:45]

5. Lento, ma non troppo [7:19]

6. Vivo [9:52]

Ernő Dohnányi (1877–1960)

Serenade for String Trio, Op. 10

7. Marcia [2:13]

8. Romanza [3:55]

9. Scherzo [4:43]

10. Tema con variazioni [6:23]

11. Rondo (Finale) [4:32]

Total playing time [70:19]



Kodály and Dohnányi: Chamber Works for Strings

Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) composed several pieces of chamber music in the years up to 1920. In 1905 he wrote an Adagio for violin and piano (subsequently arranged for viola or cello), dedicated to the violinist Imre Waldbauer – one of his most important early champions – and the same year he composed an Intermezzo for string trio. The String Quartet No. 1, Op. 2, was finished in 1909, the same year as his friend Bartók completed his first quartet. The Sonata for Cello and Piano Op. 4 dates from 1910, followed by the Duo for Violin and Cello, Op. 7 (1914), the Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8 (1915), the String Quartet No. 2, Op. 10 (1916–18, contemporary with Bartók's second quartet) and the Serenade for Two Violins and Viola Op. 12 (1919–20). Over the next four decades, until his death in 1967, Kodály composed in a variety of genres, but he never returned to chamber music. The works written between 1910 and 1920 were of great significance in terms of his stylistic development: it was in his chamber music that Kodály's creative voice could be heard at its most imaginative during these years, marking the start of his lifelong quest to integrate elements of Hungarian folk music into his own

musical language.

The **Duo for Violin and Cello**, Op. 7, was an important milestone in the formation of his style, composed soon after Kodály and Bartók first drew up plans for a scientific edition of the Hungarian folk music they had collected and transcribed during the previous decade. Though the score of the Duo for Violin and Cello is dated 'Budapest 1914' at the end, Kodály conceived much of work in the Swiss Alps. Their holiday in the mountains was interrupted by the declaration of World War I, forcing a rapid return home as Kodály later recalled:

The day war was declared, I was with my wife in Zermatt. The whole resort emptied in a few days, and we had to bid farewell to the most monumental mountain sights, as the hotels were closing. We made the last part of the journey to Switzerland in a truck, and had to stay put for several days in a village along the Tyrolean border (Feldkirch). It was there the vision of the Duo suddenly appeared to me. Never before had I thought of scoring for a combination such as this [...] No music paper was to be had in Feldkirch, and so the first movement, which I put on paper there, is written in a school music exercise book. Whether others will ever find anything of the indescribable grandeur of the gigantic mountains or the dim presentiment of a precipitate war in it, remains a great question.

The first performance did not take place until 7 May 1918 in Budapest, when it was played by Imre Waldbauer and Jenő Kerpely at a concert that also included the premieres of the Sonata for Solo Cello and the Second String Quartet. The Duo was subsequently given in Prague, Zurich and London, following publication by Universal Edition in 1922 (the year, incidentally, in which Ravel finished his Sonata for the same combination of instruments). The resolute dignified mood of the first movement was described by Imre Waldbauer as 'Kodály's heroic tone at its most effective.' and the dream-like 'Adagio' is characterized by a kind of rhapsodic impressionism as well as being a fine example of Kodály's brilliantly imaginative and resourceful string writing. The finale is particularly interesting. It begins with a dramatic slow introduction – an accompanied violin cadenza – and this is followed by an urgent rondo driven by exciting folk rhythms. While Kodály doesn't include any genuine folksongs, his language has absorbed some of the melodic and rhythmic contours of the tunes he had collected, as well as structural elements (Kodály's 1906 doctoral thesis was on *The Strophic Structure of Hungarian Folksong*). The Duo is the first of his works

in which the assimilation of these influences are such an important feature of his music, above all in the concluding folk rondo.

The **Serenade**, Op. 12, is the last of Kodály's chamber compositions, and it is certainly one of the most significant written for this unusual instrumental combination (others include Dvořák's *Terzetto*, Op. 74 and Taneyev's *Trio*, Op. 21). It was composed at an exceptionally difficult time in Kodály's life. He was appointed deputy director of the Liszt Academy in Budapest in February 1919 (with Dohnányi as its director), but a succession of short-lived governments led to him being suspended on spurious charges at the end of the same year. He finally returned a year later, but when he composed the Serenade his teaching career hung in the balance as the disciplinary process was still not resolved. He completed the work in March 1920, and the first performance followed quickly, given by members of the Waldbauer Quartet in Budapest on 8 April. Two years later in August 1922 at Salzburg, the Serenade was given at the inaugural festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM), performed by members of the Amar Quartet in which Paul Hindemith was the viola player. Bartók reviewed the Budapest

premiere, describing it as 'the outstanding musical event of the past few months'. Kodály's great contemporary hailed the Serenade as an important contribution to modern Hungarian music:

Written for two violins and viola, and only recently completed, the composition represents the ripest and deepest work of Kodály. [...] The choice of instruments and the overwhelming richness in instrumental effects in spite of these modest means are a sensation in themselves. The spiritual content [...] reveals a personality with a message that is truly new, and the ability to communicate it to us in masterly, concentrated form. [...] It must be regarded as a true modern artistic product of the Magyar race.

Kodály seems to have set himself a challenge in this work, writing for strings, but omitting the cello, his favourite instrument. The result is a texture that has a transparent and airy sonority, apparent from the start of the first movement, marked 'Allegramente', written in sonata form and dominated by a march-like theme (despite being in triple time) and a more lyrical and expressive second subject. In Bartók's review, he singled out the slow movement for special praise:

The second movement is the most remarkable of all, with a sustained double-thread of mysterious drawn-out sevenths and ninths.

The tremolo passages on the second violin – *pianissimo* and *con sordino* – act as a harmonic framework for the dialogue between the first violin and the viola. Swaying, passionate melodies on the viola alternate with ghostly flickering motifs in the first violin. We are transported into a tonal fairy-land, never heard nor dreamed-of before.

The finale is the longest of the three movements, a kind of dance scene in which new themes are introduced alongside others reworked from earlier movements. Though the tempo relaxes from time to time, there is an irresistible sense of forward momentum throughout, and this becomes more intense towards the exhilarating close. It is difficult to disagree with János Breuer's description of the Serenade as Kodály's 'splendid farewell to the genre of instrumental chamber music'.

Ernő [Ernst von] Dohnányi (1877–1960) was encouraged at the start of his career by Brahms, and his musical language was more firmly rooted in the Austro-German tradition than either of his great Hungarian contemporaries, Bartók and Kodály, though he remained on friendly terms with both of them. As well as his work as a composer, Dohnányi was one of the great pianists of his generation (he studied with Eugen d'Albert, among others), and as music director of the Budapest Philharmonic he

was a tireless advocate for new compositions, including Bartók's Dance Suite and Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus*, both of which were performed for the first time at the gala concert to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the union of Buda and Pest in 1923 in which Dohnányi also conducted his own Festival Overture.

Dohnányi's **Serenade for String Trio**, Op. 10 was composed in 1902 and he considered it one of the first works in which he found a more personal style, though his music was still clearly indebted to Brahms. The serenade was a form used by Brahms and by his younger colleague Robert Fuchs (who taught the likes of Mahler, Wolf and Sibelius), as well as by Dvořák. Dohnányi's five-movement structure opens with a characterful march with some distinctly Hungarian colours, and musical ideas that are to infuse much of the rest of the work. The 'Romanza' is an eloquent character piece. After a lyrical viola solo supported by *pizzicato* chords, the tempo quickens for an impassioned central section before a return to the opening theme, this time on the violin. The 'Scherzo' is terse and tensely-argued, full of rhythmic surprises with an expressive Trio section at its core. The fourth movement is set of variations on a chorale-like theme, and this is followed

by a Brahmsian 'Rondo' finale in which the main theme from the first movement returns for the coda.

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I would like to say a special thank you to the individuals who supported this project, and especially to David Payne for his timely and unwavering encouragement.
Simon Smith





Simon Smith (violin)

Simon Smith has performed as a soloist with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, the Philharmonia, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St John's Smith Square.

Recitals throughout the UK have included the Wigmore Hall and the Purcell Room in London. In 2014 he completed an extensive tour of recitals and concertos in Russia, including his Moscow debut. In 2015 performances included concertos in Beijing and Hong Kong, and another complete series of Bach's Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin. In 2016 he released his debut album on Resonus Classics of solo works by Bartók and Kurtág, as well as performing these works in a series of concerts in the UK, and internationally, including a debut concert in Singapore.

A committed chamber musician, Simon was a member of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Octet, performing in concert halls and broadcasts worldwide. His regular partners include pianist Mark Fielding and harpist Anne Denholm.

Simon has been a professor at the Birmingham Conservatoire since 2004. He has given masterclasses throughout the UK

and internationally. Future plans include further visits to Russia and masterclasses in Singapore, Hong Kong, Belgium and Holland.

Simon studied with David Martin and Frederick Grinke, and then with Yfrah Neaman at the Guildhall School of Music, where he was awarded the Gold Medal. He received a DAAD scholarship to continue his studies in Germany with Wanda Wilkomirska.

He plays on a G.B. Rogeri violin, made in 1708.

www.simonsmithviolin.com

Clare Hayes (violin)

Clare Hayes studied the violin at the Royal Academy of Music with Winifred Roberts and Erich Gruenberg, and received chamber music coaching from the Amadeus Quartet on a Leverhulme Scholarship.

She has been a member of the Grammy nominated Emperor String Quartet since 1992 and, following their success as the first British quartet to win the Evian/Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition, they have performed at major festivals and prestigious concert venues throughout the world. The quartet

have made numerous recordings, including the complete works for string quartet by Benjamin Britten and James MacMillan, as well as a recording of the Walton string quartets for which they received their Grammy nomination.

Clare also has a busy and varied freelance career and is a member of the City of London Sinfonia as well as performing regularly with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. She lives in rural Hertfordshire.

Paul Silverthorne (viola)

Paul Silverthorne has combined a busy solo career with the position of Principal viola of both the London Symphony Orchestra from 1991 and the London Sinfonietta from 1988.

On leaving the LSO in October 2015 he was appointed Professor of Viola at the School of Music at Soochow University in Suzhou, China where he has joined the international faculty there. From his base in China he continues to perform and teach in the UK and elsewhere.

His solo performances regularly take him to the USA, the Far East, Australia and Russia as well as closer to home in the UK and Europe.

He has performed with such conductors as Sir Colin Davis, André Previn, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Christopher Hogwood, Oliver Knussen, John Adams and Kent Nagano, with the LSO and other major orchestras in the UK, USA and Europe. After a performance at the Proms, *The Times* described him as '[...] a virtuoso in sensitivity and technique'.

His recordings cover a wide range of repertoire and appear on EMI, Naxos, Chandos, Koch International Classics, ASV, Meridian, Albany and other labels to widespread acclaim. His recent album, 'Beethoven by Arrangement' with pianist David Owen Norris, a collection of works arranged for viola and piano, was issued on the Toccata Classics label and widely praised – '[...] with a performance of the quality here, we can experience the dedicated and delightful musicianship that these players bring to this wonderful music' (*International Record Review*).

www.paulsilverthorne.com

Katherine Jenkinson ('cello)

Katherine Jenkinson is recognised as one of the UK's leading cellists specialising in solo and chamber music. *The Independent*



newspaper recently praised her 'technical security backed up by rare musical sensitivity'. She was musically educated at the Royal Academy of Music where she gained a first class degree, a distinction in performance and the acclaimed Dip RAM. She has since been privileged to become an Associate of this institution (ARAM).

Katherine has performed as recitalist and concerto soloist throughout Europe, in Africa, USA and Asia. Chamber music is a key part of Katherine's life. She has been a member of various groups, most notably The Allegri String Quartet (2008-2011) and The Aquinas Piano Trio with whom she spends much time. Their recordings of trios by Mendelssohn and Saint-Saëns (Guild) gained much praise from both *Gramophone* and *The Strad* and became their 'Choice of the month'. The trio will be performing a 'Schumann Cycle' at Kings Place in 2018 and will also return to the Wigmore Hall after their sold-out debut performance in 2015.

In 2016 Katherine gave the premiere of Three Piece Suite by Oliver Davis written especially for her and her duo partner, Alison Farr. Other composers Katherine has worked closely with include Arvo Pärt, Anthony Payne, Richard Allain and Thomas Hyde for whom she has recorded as soloist

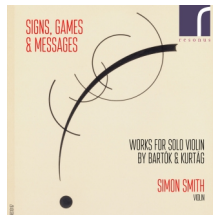
and chamber musician on the Guild label. Katherine has taught performance classes at the Royal Academy of Music, masterclasses at Trinity Laban (as part of the International String Quartet Festival), Kazan Conservatory (Russia), at the Music Conservatory in Kazakhstan as well as Junior Guildhall and Junior Academy.

In 2008, Katherine had the amazing experience of playing to orphans, landmine victims and malaria patients in refugee camps on the Thailand-Burma border.

Katherine plays on an Italian cello by Taningardi made in 1703. She is grateful to the Countess of Munster for their help in the purchase and restoration of this cello.

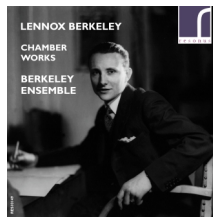
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