

Wethersfield Chamber Concerts

24 April 2022 – 4pm

ERDEM MISIRLIOGLU & EMRE ENGIN

Piano

Violin

PROGRAMME NOTES *by John Woollard*

Franz Schubert (1797-1828): Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major D. 574

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Scherzo & Trio. Presto
- III. Andantino
- IV. Allegro vivace

Not published until 1851, this work of Schubert's early maturity fully deserves the designation "duo" appended by the publisher; unlike Schubert's earlier works for violin and piano, this sonata makes the keyboard a full partner and displays the composer's increasing confidence in writing for piano.

The first of the four movements is an Allegro moderato, in which a few bars of amiable piano introduction become the ambling accompaniment to a low-key, songful violin theme. Soon both instruments offer a much more animated treatment of this material and then a new idea that is essentially an elaboration of the opening piano figure. After an exposition repeat, Schubert subjects these themes to a brief development and standard recapitulation.

The Scherzo (Presto) is a rollicking piece in which a little piano fanfare launches a scurrying violin figure.

The music lurches through some surprising key changes, often coming to a full stop before continuing with quite different material. Embedded between the E major outer sections of this movement is a playful C major trio, featuring highly chromatic writing for the violin.

These high spirits dissipate in time for the Andantino, a mostly lyrical dialogue that drifts from C major to D flat and ultimately A flat, with a few piano trills, violin double stops (nothing to intimidate the amateur domestic players for which this sonata was probably intended), and brief, extroverted outbursts along the way.

Finally comes the Allegro vivace, in which the spirit of the earlier scherzo returns, complete with a short, leaping motif to get the movement off to a joyful start. Again, the music is full of hesitations that signal new harmonic and melodic directions; Schubert packs substantial adventure into this movement's four minutes.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856): Fantasiestücke Op. 73

- I. Zart und mit Ausdruck
(Tender and with expression)
- II. Lebhaft, leicht (Lively, light)
- III. Rasch und mit Feuer (Quick and with fire)

Robert Schumann wrote the pieces over just two days in February 1849, and originally entitled them "Soirée Pieces" before settling on the title Fantasiestücke. The title is one Schumann was fond of, since he used it in several works. This poetic title promotes the fundamental Romantic notion that creative expression is the product of the artist's unrestricted imagination. In addition, the connotations of "fantasy" justify the sudden mood changes. Though they were originally intended for clarinet and piano, Schumann indicated that the clarinet part could be also performed on violin (as today) or cello.

The first piece is in A minor and begins dreamily with hints of melancholy but concludes with a resolution and hope in A major, looking forward to the next movement.

The second piece is in A major and is playful, upbeat, energetic and positive, with a central section modulating to F major with chromatic triplets in dialogue with the piano.

The final piece is again in A major. The pace suddenly drives into a frenzy of passion and fiery energy, bordering on the irrational. The movement pushes the players to their limits as Schumann labels each of the last two sections (of three) of the coda "schneller" (faster). The movement ends exuberantly with a triumphant close.

~~~~~ Interval ~~~~~

# Wethersfield Chamber Concerts

## César Franck (1822-1890): Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major

- I. Allegretto ben moderato (A major)
- II. Allegro (D minor)
- III. Recitativo-Fantasia. Ben moderato  
— Molto lento (ends in F# minor)
- IV. Allegretto poco mosso (A major)

Known for its deftly balanced violin and piano parts and for its cyclic form (possessing a theme or motif that recurs across multiple movements of the work), the piece was written for the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe on the occasion of his marriage in 1886.

Ysaÿe first performed the work at his own wedding celebration and later played it for its public premiere in Brussels at the end of that year. The piece is among Franck's most frequently performed compositions.

Although Franck produced very little chamber music, his Violin Sonata has earned a place as a concert favourite largely because of the broad appeal of its songlike melodies. Unlike most of his instrumental works, which contain three movements, the Violin Sonata contains four.

The soulful character of the first movement, "Allegretto ben moderato," gives way to swirling turbulence in the sonata-form second movement, "Allegro." The third movement, "Recitativo-fantasia," offers mournful, seemingly spontaneous (fantasia-like) minor-mode melodies, and in the final movement, "Allegretto poco mosso," the piano and the violin soar to their upper registers in passionate dialogue, with phrases of one part often recurring in the other. The undulating contours of the opening melodies of the first movement echo throughout the piece.

## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

British-Turkish pianist **Erdem Misirlioglu** is in demand as a solo recitalist, chamber musician and concerto soloist. He frequently appears in UK venues such as Barbican Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Snape Maltings and Wigmore Hall and has had numerous invitations to play across Europe, North and South America and Asia.

In 2006, Erdem was a prize-winner in the International Rachmaninov Competition for Young Pianists and in 2008 went on to win the piano section of BBC Young Musician of the Year, subsequently performing Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. In 2011, Erdem was awarded 1st prize in the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe's intercollegiate piano competition.

A passionate chamber musician, Erdem is also a member of "Trio Isimsiz", a piano trio formed with friends at GSMD. In 2013, they were selected by Young Classical Artists Trust for representation and in 2015, they won first prize and the audience prize in the Trondheim International Chamber Competition. They have released two CDs, which have gained wide critical acclaim.

Erdem completed his undergraduate and postgraduate courses in performance at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he studied with pianists Martin Roscoe and Ronan O'Hora. He was awarded the Lord Mayor's Prize for the highest scoring final recital. During this time, he also enjoyed lessons with distinguished pianists including Richard Goode, Stephen Kovacevich, Lang Lang, Menahem Pressler and Andras Schiff.

A graduate of Maestro Pinchas Zukerman's prestigious violin class, **Emre Engin** has won a number of awards including the 2012 International Istanbul Music Festival 'Young Soloist of the Year', 'Best Emerging Artist' by Donizetti Classical Music Awards and 1st prize at the Ilhan Ozsoy Presidential Violin Competition, among others.

Since completing his bachelor's degree at the Royal College of Music with the generous support of the Yehudi Menuhin Award Scholarship and his master's degree at the Manhattan School of Music on a full scholarship, he recently earned his doctoral degree from the State University of New York, Stony Brook University Music Department. Emre was appointed concertmaster of the New York City based orchestra New Manhattan Sinfonietta by conductor Gurer Aykal in 2018 and has performed solo and chamber performances around the world, including Mozart's Violin Concerto no.5 "Turkish" with Tekfen Philharmonic at the opening concert of 2020 International Istanbul Music Festival.

Emre is a fellow tutti member of the 1st violin section at the English National Opera since 2021.

**We hope that you will join us for our next concerts - on 8 May and 5 June 2022**