

BIOGRAPHY

A musician's life is relentless, often with little time out from the hectic practice/rehearse/concert cycle. So when pianist Alasdair Beatson was offered the chance to develop his own summer school cum mini-festival in France, he jumped at the chance. Several years ago while performing for the Haddington Music Society in East Lothian, he met David and Fiona Finch, active members of the society, who invited him to play on their 100 year old Steinway grand and Beatson immediately fell in love with its sound.

In 2011 when Beatson was performing in Provence he visited Marsac and gave an informal concert, greeted with much enthusiasm, so the Finches suggested he put together a piano-based event and *Musique a Marsac* was born. "As artistic director Alasdair is in total charge of everything", says Fiona, "we're just the oil on the wheels; providing the venue, raising the money and looking after everyone."

The offer was a gift to Beatson who had been mulling over the possibility of creating space to study chamber music in-depth. On his first visit to Marsac, he was struck by how perfect the small village was for this purpose. "It's a warm, welcoming place, secluded from the rest of the world and protected by the beautiful rolling hills. The freedom and openness of Marsac encourages musicians to have their defences down when they're here, that's when the really beautiful work happens."

"It's a fantastic thing for all of us as we work together on the great masterpieces of the chamber music repertoire intensively and imaginatively. The younger musicians experience an all too rare bridge between student and professional life while older musicians treasure the luxury of being able to rehearse away from the usual scrutiny of the professional world. We need to remind ourselves we're not too old, jaded or busy to continue developing and improving as musicians. Ideally the distinction between the two blurs as everyone contributes equally towards a common goal."

Conway Hall is proud to host a rare London appearance by this collective of top international musicians in a colourful and varied programme spanning more than three hundred years.

For more information on the *Musique à Marsac* please visit www.musique-a-marsac.com.

NEXT AT CONWAY HALL

Sunday October 16th 2016

Pre-concert Recital at 5:30pm

MEGUMI ROLFE (VIOLIN)

BELINDA JONES (PIANO)

Beethoven Violin Sonata No. 2 in A Op. 12

Elgar Romance in E minor Op. 1

Bernstein (arr. Raimundo Penaforte)

West Side Story Suite

Main Recital at 6:30pm

TRIO MARTINU

Schubert Notturmo in E flat D897

Brahms Trio in C minor Op. 101

Dvovák Trio in F minor Op. 65

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CONWAY
HALL
SUNDAY
CONCERTS

Patrons - Stephen Hough, Prunella Scales CBE, Roderick Swanston, Hiro Takenouchi and Timothy West CBE

Director of Music - Simon Callaghan

Sunday October 9th 2016, 6:30pm

MUSICIANS FROM 'MUSIQUE À MARSAC'

VIOLIN

TIM CRAWFORD

VIOLIN

HELENA WINKELMAN

VIOLA

MANUEL HOFER

CELLO

CHIARA ENDERLE

CLARINET

JANIS TRETJUKS

PIANO

ALASDAIR BEATSON

Conway Hall Sunday Concerts are an integral part of the charitable activities of Conway Hall. Conway Hall's registered charity name is Conway Hall Ethical Society (no. 1156033).

Please turn off all mobile phones and electronic devices. No recording and photographing allowed at any time.



PROGRAMME

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1782) / Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91)

LARGO AND FUGUE IN EB K404A NO. 5 (1730/1782)



Robert Schumann (1810-56)

MÄRCHENERZÄHLUNGEN OP. 132 (1853)

I. Lebhaft, nicht zu schnell

II. Lebhaft und sehr markirt

III. Ruhiges Tempo, mit zartem Ausdruck

IV. Lebhaft, sehr markirt



Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

CONTRASTS SZ. 111 (1938)

I. Verbunkos (Recruiting Dance)

II. Pihenó (Relaxation)

III. Sebes (Fast Dance)



INTERVAL

(15 mins)



Helena Winkelman (1974-)

BACCHANALIA (2016)

I. Cloches - liturgie de bronze II. L'ange dans les ronces

III. Heat IV. Intermezzo

V. Consolation - foudres et arcs en ciel VI. Esprits - danse de la sainte colère



Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

PIANO QUINTET IN D MINOR OP. 89 (1906)

I. Molto moderato

II. Adagio

III. Allegretto moderato

Tonight's performance will finish at approximately 8:30pm.

PROGRAMME NOTES

BACH/MOZART LARGO AND FUGUE IN EB K404A NO. 5 (1730/1782)

This piece began life as an organ sonata composed by J.S Bach, an emblem of the late Baroque period. Decades later, Mozart is believed to have transcribed a number of his organ preludes and fugues for string trio, (although there is no concrete evidence of the arrangements scored with his signature) perhaps as a testament to his keen interest in the contrapuntal techniques and harmonic language of Bach. An unmistakable Baroque spirit is felt from its cosmopolitan textures and smooth harmonic lines, which had profound influence on Mozart's compositional style and identity.



SCHUMANN MÄRCHENERZÄHLUNGEN OP. 132 (1853)

Märchenerzählungen ('Fairy Tales') is an archetypal result of Robert Schumann's Romantic ideals and liking for fantasy and literature. Four miniatures of varying character and narrative make up the musical journey, opening with a bubbly introduction skipping along with dainty staccato phrases and delightful melodies. A rustic march and a winding lyrical song follow, before a lively Finale full of vivacious rhythms and capricious clarinet colours rounds the piece off in a joyous mood. Schumann doesn't specify exactly which fairy tales he had in mind when composing each movement, so perhaps you can take this time to imagine what they are.



BARTÓK CONTRASTS SZ. 111 (1938)

We now tune our ears to the sounds of Eastern Europe in Béla Bartók's Contrasts. This chamber work came to life from a conversation between renowned violinist Joseph Szigeti, the 'King of Swing' Benny Goodman and Bartók himself. Verbunkos is a jaunty Hungarian dance that tickles at Goodman's jazz personality, with rhythmic and melodic embellishments reminiscent of both folk and jazz, and a clarinet cadenza that shines a sense of musical freedom akin to jazz improvisation. Pihenó glimmers an atmospheric mood with long, slithering lines and harmonies laden with ominous mystery. Sebes sees the violin take a tonal tranquiliser as the violinist tunes the G-string up to G# and the E-string down to Eb, before the ensemble dashes away with a dose of rhythmic caffeine and exotic musical flavours.



WINKELMAN BACCHANALIA (2016)

Bacchanalia was written by one of tonight's violinists, Helena Winkelman, and received its world premiere at the annual chamber music festival at Marsac in France this August. This piece takes inspiration from Messiaen's Quatour pour la fin du temps ('Quartet for the End of Time'), one of the most important chamber works in contemporary music. The close connection to Messiaen is conveyed from the titles (for example, Cloches - liturgie de bronze stems from Messiaen's Liturgie de Crystal) and the musical references made throughout the piece.



FAURÉ PIANO QUINTET IN D MINOR OP. 89 (1906)

Fauré's first Piano Quintet glistens with an exquisiteness and fluidity that only the French were able to create. The Molto moderato oars through melancholic melodies and piano textures that evoke the serene gestures of water, but the movement also radiates a Brahms-like passion and intensity. A wistful melody in the violin opens the Adagio, which seamlessly opens out in texture, dynamics and shimmers magical warmth that is inherent only in Fauré's writing. The final movement is rich in colourful harmonies and musical dialogues, but free of down beat pulses to achieve a wholly seamless effect before concluding with a bright coda in D major.

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