

# WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 28 July 2024  
7.30pm

Johan Dalene violin  
Christian Ihle Hadland piano

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) Violin Sonata No. 7 in C minor Op. 30 No. 2 (1801-2)  
*I. Allegro con brio • II. Adagio cantabile •  
III. Scherzo. Allegro • IV. Finale. Allegro*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) Violin Sonata in G minor (1916-7)  
*I. Allegro vivo • II. Intermède. Fantasque et léger •  
III. Finale. Très animé*

*Interval*

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969) Humoresque (1953)  
Kotysanka (1952)  
Slavonic Dance (1952)  
Witraz (1932)

César Franck (1822-1890) Sonata in A for violin and piano (1886)  
*I. Allegretto ben moderato • II. Allegro •  
III. Recitativo-Fantasia. Ben moderato •  
IV. Allegretto poco mosso*

CLASSIC *fm* Wigmore Hall £5 tickets for Under 35s supported by Media Partner Classic FM



This concert is part of the CAVATINA Chamber Music Trust ticket scheme, offering free tickets to those aged 8-25



SUPPORT OUR AUDIENCE FUND: EVERY NOTE COUNTS

Ensure Wigmore Hall remains a vibrant hub of musical excellence by making a donation today.  
wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate | 020 7258 8220



Join & Support  
Donations

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management. In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141. Wigmore Hall is equipped with a loop to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838  
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • Wigmore-hall.org.uk • John Gilhooly Director

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG  
Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



In 1802, **Beethoven** stayed at Heiligenstadt, near Vienna. Whilst there, he completed the three violin sonatas Op. 30, amongst several other pieces. Meanwhile, Beethoven's increasingly pronounced deafness heightened his personal despair. The *Heiligenstadt Testament*, a letter written to his brother Carl, relates: 'How can I, a musician, say to people, "I am deaf"? I shall defy this fate if I can [...] I only live for music'.

Beethoven employs the C minor key signature for the Violin Sonata No. 7 Op. 30 No. 2. The pianist Charles Rosen observes, 'Beethoven in C minor has come to symbolise his artistic character: it reveals Beethoven as a Hero'. His developing compositional instincts take the sonata form away from Mozart's *concertante* style to a more personal medium, exploiting advances in violin technique and piano instrumental sonorities. The first movement begins, as the others do, with an intriguing piano motif. Upon entering, the violin lyrically ornaments the piano part. The brusque, march-like E flat major second theme reinforces the movement's overall character. Both middle movements are of a more positive temperament. The *Adagio cantabile*'s intricate five-part structure is based on the thoughtful and lyrical opening theme. Beethoven considered omitting the brief and coarsely humorous *Scherzo*. The final movement makes manifest Beethoven's inner struggles. Initially in C minor, this rondo unsettles the listener, after which come three distinct and contrasting episodes. The daringly aggressive presto coda builds in energy before ending unexpectedly in C major.

**Debussy's** Violin Sonata in G minor dates from 1916-7, when his terminal cancer had taken hold. His final completed composition, it is the third of an incomplete series of six sonatas. He wrote, 'I only completed this sonata to be rid of the thing, [it] will be interesting as an example of what may be produced by a sick man in wartime'. Debussy's interpretation of the violin-piano duo is distinctive: one instrument leads against the other's counter melody, rather than accompanying each other per se. This creates a different sonority and texture; the instruments challenge one another but, ultimately, are brought closer together. The first movement's poignant opening piano chords immediately transport the listener to a subdued, sad atmosphere. The movement is filled with rhythmic and harmonic ambiguity with an ongoing momentum, regardless of speed. By contrast, the middle movement is mostly light in tone, with capriciousness and coquettishness. The second theme is as melodious as it is sensuous. The final movement begins with running notes on the piano, punctuated with a melodic emphasis from the second theme of the previous movement. The violin then enters with a modified handling of the nostalgic theme from the sonata's opening. The movement, however, requires agility and confidence. Debussy employs an extremely wide violin pitch range, and has the pianist articulate tremolo-like tempi with an atmospheric lightness of touch.

**Grażyna Bacewicz's** gifts as virtuoso violinist and competent pianist threatened to overshadow her reputation as a composer. Her compositional voice is today acknowledged as amongst the 20th Century's most distinctive, particularly regarding the works for her own instruments. Aside from five varied and powerful sonatas, she wrote a host of duo miniatures. Tonight's first three pieces were written shortly after Bacewicz stopped performing to focus on her writing and were published together in a collection intended for students or younger violinists. *Humoresque's* whimsical nature is conveyed though its largely 5/8 time signature. *Kofysanka* is a lullaby that charms with its overtones of French impressionism. The *Slavonic Dance* evidences some brilliant violin writing: a syncopated tune is heard over a driving repeated drone note on the piano. *Witraż* ('Stained glass window') is an earlier piece that was written around the time Bacewicz graduated from the Warsaw Conservatory. It is possible to detect some influence in the writing from Szymanowski, who declared it 'a completely exceptional composition – only 30 bars long, ethereal, swaying full of Art Nouveau ornaments and colours; a nostalgic memory of times past'. Lutosławski recalled hearing its première whilst still a student himself; he thought it 'a miniature of peculiar beauty, woven from delicate wing-like sonorities'.

**Franck's** Sonata in A for violin and piano has such enduring popularity that it is easy to overlook the factors which make the work stand out in the repertoire. How many musical works are written as wedding presents and receive their hastily prepared unofficial première before the assembled reception guests? That however is what the Belgian violinist Ysaÿe did, accompanied by pianist Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène, when he married Louise Bourdeau in 1886.

Rather than beginning with a traditionally fast tempo movement, the initial bars of Franck's sonata are serene in the first movement *Allegretto*. The violin's entry gives rise to the sonata's dominant melodic idea. The piano's second subject is somewhat animated and serves to heighten the intensity between the instruments still further, yet it is the violin's thematic material that holds sway in this richly-scored Romantic sonata. If the opening movement's concluding passages leave listeners wondering what might come next, the answer is provided by the energetic piano part that begins the fast second movement. The violin brings equal gravitas and commitment to the intricately crafted, lengthy movement. The third, designated *Recitativo-Fantasia*, darkens the tone markedly with writing of great emotional depth, before the final movement brings positivity, further intense passions and a summation of the main preceding thematic ideas.

© Evan Dickerson 2024

*Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.*