

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 6 May 2024
7.30pm

Jeremy Denk piano
Maria Włoszczowska violin

The Gesualdo Six

Owain Park artistic director, bass
Guy James countertenor
Joseph Wicks tenor
Josh Cooter tenor

Charles Edward Ives (1874-1954)

Violin Sonata No. 4 'Children's Day at the Camp Meeting' (c.1911-6)
I. Allegro • II. Largo • III. Allegro

John R Sweney (1837-1899)

Beulah Land (1879) *arranged by Wilbur Pauley*

Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

I Need Thee Every Hour (1872) *arranged by Wilbur Pauley*

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 3 (1914)
I. Adagio

Ira D Sankey (1840-1908)

There'll Be No Dark Valley

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 3
II. Allegro • III. Adagio cantabile

Interval

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| François Hippolyte Barthélemon (1741-1808) | Autumn (Mighty God, while angels bless Thee) (1797) <i>arranged by Robert Robinson arranged by Wilbur Pauley</i> |
| Charles Edward Ives | From Violin Sonata No. 2 (c.1914-7, rev. c.1920-1) <i>I. Autumn. II. In the Barn</i> |
| Trad/American | Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing |
| Charles Edward Ives | From Violin Sonata No. 2 <i>III. The Revival</i> |
| George Frederick Root (1820-1895) | The Shining Shore ('My days are gliding swiftly by') (1855) <i>arranged by Wilbur Pauley</i> |
| Charles Edward Ives | From Violin Sonata No. 1 (c.1910-4, rev. c.1917-25) <i>I. Andante – Allegro vivace</i> |
| George Frederick Root | Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The Boys Are Marching (1864) <i>arranged by Wilbur Pauley</i> |
| George Kiallmark (1804-1887) | The Old Oaken Bucket (1826) <i>arranged by Wilbur Pauley</i> |
| Charles Edward Ives | From Violin Sonata No. 1 <i>II. Largo cantabile</i> |
| Lowell Mason (1792-1872) | Work Song ('Work, for the Night is Coming') (1864) <i>arranged by Wilbur Pauley</i> |
| Charles Edward Ives | From Violin Sonata No. 1 <i>III. Allegro</i> |

These four violin sonatas, like the first four symphonies of Mahler, are a form of autobiography. They tell and retell Ives's childhood memories of music, desperately trying to recapture their magic, their fervency and sincerity. They abound in social details: farmers singing off-key; rag pianists improvising; mothers worrying; pastors preaching; soldiers dreaming of the old days. This music is often visited by failure (like music in real life) but, in this reconstructed world, the need for expression keeps finding a way.

These sonatas also tell a story of Ives's development as a composer. In reverse order – 4, 3, 2, 1 – Ives starts out somewhat civilised. By the end, he invites you to 'take your dissonance like a man!'

Violin Sonata No. 4 'Children's Day at the Camp Meeting'

A camp meeting was a revival weekend of worship. Ives explains: 'There was usually only one Children's Day in these Summer meetings, and the children made the most of it – often the best of it.' So – a sonata about the intersection of piety and youthful pranks. In the first movement, one group of children marches to a hymn; another boy dutifully practices his fugues. These styles interrupt and overlap wildly. Ives quips that 'the loudest singers, and also those with the best voices, as is often the case, would sing most of the wrong notes.' The counterpoint thickens, until the Deacon rings a gong, and the kids innocently march off as if nothing had happened.

The ravishing second movement, a tone poem of sorts, 'moves around a rather quiet but old favorite Hymn of the children.' The piano reflects 'the outdoor sounds of nature on those Summer days – the west wind in the pines and oaks, the running brook.' In the middle, the kids throw rocks in the brook: *Allegro con slugarocko*. This almost destroys the mood, but again, the Deacon calms them down.

The last movement improvises – with hints of the blues – before revealing the hymn 'Shall We Gather At The River'. This doesn't last long. With a sudden youthful rush, and an off-kilter echo, Children's Day is over.

Violin Sonata No. 3

Ives described the Third Sonata as a weak attempt to please snooty Europeans. You do hear a suspiciously lovely Romanticism – some Brahms, maybe even Reger (!) – but still, plenty of true Ives. Most of the piece centers around the hymn 'I Need Thee Every Hour'.

The first movement has four sections. Each begins by improvising on 'I Need Thee', then pursues its own path. Verse 1 is devout; verse 2 starts to dance; verse 3 escalates to a hoedown; and verse 4 slows for a transcendent, sweet-and-sour recapitulation.

The second movement teleports us to a roadside bar for a witty ragtime apotheosis. The third movement abruptly returns to church. It is easy to imagine Ives the organist, improvising. The music evokes a religious quest, an impassioned searching ('I need thee!'). In the middle, we encounter a bluesy waltz, seemingly incompatible with the rest. But at the shattering climax, Ives combines hymn and

waltz. These ideas weave around each other in a benediction. The violin's 'I Need Thee' is surrounded by luminous chords and blue notes, transforming the well-worn clichés of the American hymn.

Violin Sonata No. 2

The first movement is not about a season, but the hymn 'Autumn', which inspires all of its themes. An otherworldly introduction gives way to fiddling, dancing, a variety of riffs, styles and struggles, until – at last! – the complete hymn thunders out. *In the Barn* is a joyful disaster. It starts with country fiddling, slips slyly into urban ragtime, and as time passes, every imaginable genre makes a cameo – overheated Wagnerian Romanticism, fashionable exoticism, a dizzying tour of the early 20th-century musical world. In the final movement, *The Revival*, the chaos is forgotten. Ives gives the musicians time to inhabit religious ecstasy: a gradual liberation, from timeless depth to foot-stomping passion, that is liberating (and moving) to play.

Violin Sonata No. 1

The First Sonata begins with dark fragments. Once the fast music begins, Ives switches to joking mode. The first clear arrival is the most irreverent joke of all: he has rewritten the hymn 'The Shining Shore' into a lumbering cowboy song! Both violin and piano try to ride this *Allegro* (as it were) into the sunset, but the dark opening returns, even darker.

The second movement, one of Ives's most profound experiments, explores memories of the Civil War, and the idea of division. The violin begins musing over 'The Old Oaken Bucket', an emblem of nostalgia. Ah, the good old days – were they good? Before long, the piece divides in terrifying two, with the marching pianist instructed to drown out the violin. The violin tries to speak, but is barely heard. At last, the violin emerges from behind the piano, only to repeat the piano's march with heartbreaking tenderness. The music turns to 'Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!', and glories of war, as remembered by boastful veterans. But from glory we return to intractable battles.

The last movement opens with a wild piano march: 'Work, for the Night is Coming!' But, shortly after the violin enters, the piece suddenly slips into another tune: 'Watchman, Tell Us of the Night'. 'Watchman' starts out in the guise of ragtime, and visit several styles, before finally becoming itself: an aching, yearning hymn.

Out of eerie stillness the opening reappears. It gathers, like a whole town of marchers, each to different drums, until it reaches an ecstatic climax – hymn, bells, circling bass. This ecstasy does not diminish even as the music quiets, condensing into one last gospel 'Amen'. You can almost hear them all humming there, in the New England countryside, possessed by religious feeling and a sense of the infinite, as the day fades into dusk.

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Charles Edward Ives (1874-1954)

**Violin Sonata No. 4 'Children's Day at the
Camp Meeting'** (c.1911-6)

I. Allegro

II. Largo

III. Allegro

John R Sweney (1837-1899)

'Beulah Land (1879)
arranged by **Wilbur Pauley**
Edgar Page Stites

My Savior comes and walks with me
And sweet communion here have we;
He gently leads me by His hand,
For this is Heaven's borderland.

O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land,
As on thy highest mount I stand,
I look away across the sea,
Where mansions are prepared for me,
And view the shining glory shore,
My Heav'n, my home forevermore!

Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

I Need Thee Every Hour (1872)
arranged by **Wilbur Pauley**
Annie S Hawks

I need thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like thine
Can peace afford.

I need thee, O I need thee,
Every hour I need thee!
O bless me now, my Savior –
I come to thee!

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 3 (1914)

I. Adagio

Ira D Sankey (1840-1908)

There'll Be No Dark Valley

Charles Edward Ives
From Violin Sonata No. 3

II Allegro

II Adagio cantabile

Interval

François Hippolyte Barthélemon
(1741-1808)

**Autumn (Mighty God, while angels bless
Thee)** (1797)
arranged by **Robert Robinson** arranged by **Wilbur
Pauley**
Robert Robinson

Mighty god, while angels bless thee,
May a mortal sing thy name.
Lord of men as well as angels,
Thou art every creature's theme.
Lord of every land and nation,
Ancient of eternal days!
Sounded through the wide creation
Be thy just and endless praise.

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 2 (c.1914-7, rev. c.1920-
1)

I. Autumn

II. In the Barn

*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have
ended*

Trad/American

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 2

III. The Revival

George Frederick Root (1820-1895)

The Shining Shore ('My days are gliding swiftly by') (1855)

arranged by Wilbur Pauley

David Nelson

My days are gliding swiftly by,
And I, a pilgrim stranger,
Would not detain them, as they fly,
Those hours of toil and danger;
For, O, we stand on Jordan's strand;
Our friends are passing over;
And just before, the shining shore
We may almost discover.

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 1 (c.1910-4, rev. c.1917-25)

I. Andante – Allegro vivace

George Frederick Root

**Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The Boys
Are Marching** (1864)

arranged by Wilbur Pauley

George Frederick Root

In the battle front we stood when their fiercest
charge they made,
And they swept us off a hundred men or more;
But before we reached their lines they were beaten
back, dismayed,
And we heard the cry of vict'ry o'er and o'er.

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! The boys are marching,
Cheer up comrades they will come,
And beneath the starry flag we shall breathe the air
again
Of the free land in our own beloved home.

George Kiallmark (1804-1887)

The Old Oaken Bucket (1826)

arranged by Wilbur Pauley

Samuel Woodworth

How dear to my heart are the scenes of my
childhood
When fond recollection presents them to view
The orchard, the meadow, the deep tangled
wildwood,
And ev'ry loved spot which my infancy knew
The wide spreading pond, and the mill that stood by
it,
The bridge and the rock where the cataract fell;
The cot of my father, the dairy house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well.

The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss covered bucket that hung in the well.

Charles Edward Ives

From Violin Sonata No. 1

II. Largo cantabile

Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

**Work Song ('Work, for the Night is
coming')** (1864)

arranged by Wilbur Pauley

Annie Louisa Walker

Work, for the night is coming,
Work through the morning hours;
Work while the dew is sparkling;
Work 'mid springing flowers;
Work when the day grows brighter,
Work in the glowing sun;
Work, for the night is coming,
When man's work is done.

Charles Edward Ives

Violin Sonata No. 1

III. Allegro