

**Hannah Laurens & Tom McCoy**  
**Sonatas for Violin and Piano**

The Music Room, Eynsham, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**Programme**

**Wolfgang Amadeus  
Mozart**  
(1756 – 1791)

**Sonata in G major KV 301 (293a)**  
I. Allegro con spirito  
II. Allegro

**Franz Schubert**  
(1797 – 1828)

**Sonata in A major, D.574, 'Duo'**  
I. Allegro moderato  
II. Scherzo. Presto  
III. Andantino  
IV. Allegro vivace

**Jenö Hubay**  
(1858 – 1937)

**Scène de la Csárda No. 4, Op. 32,  
'Hejre Kati' ('Hey Katie!')**

***Interval***

**Francis Poulenc**  
(1899 – 1963)

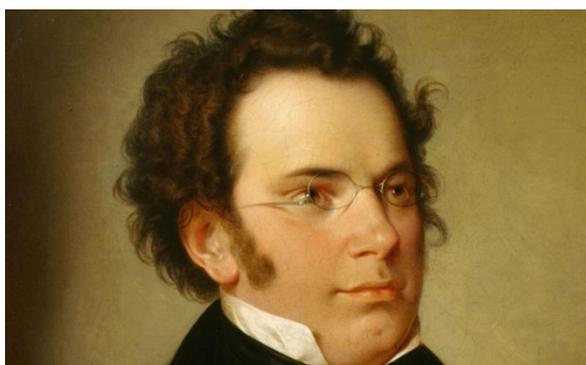
**Sonata in D minor**  
I. Allegro con fuoco  
II. Intermezzo. Très lent et calme  
III. Presto tragico

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

During his travels in 1777 and 1778, Mozart wrote to his father Leopold from Munich, commending Joseph Schuster's six duets for harpsichord and violin: 'if I remain here I shall also write 6 ... for they are very popular here' – a typical example of Mozart's inclination to upstage other musicians. As it turned out, Mozart only stayed 17 days in Munich, but he came back to the idea of writing works for piano and violin in early 1778, completing four of them in just over a month. The resulting set of six 'Mannheim Sonatas' were dedicated to the Electress Palatinate, and are unusual for Mozart in that they had only two movements..



The first movement of the G major Sonata is in sonata form, with both the lyrical opening melody and the playful second subject exploiting syncopated rhythms. These two principal themes are contrasted by the skittish semiquaver figure, which appears at various points in the movement and is inverted in the central development section. Although they are now referred to as 'violin sonatas', the piano has a more dominant role overall: it introduces most of the melodic ideas and has a much greater share of the fast passagework. The charming second movement has a dance-like feel and is in a broad ternary form: the outer G major sections enclosing a central G minor one. Each of these two sections is in a rounded binary form, making the whole movement akin to a minuet and trio.



## Franz Schubert

Schubert grew up in a musical family in Vienna, surrounded by music from an early age. He played both piano and violin, and would have been familiar with chamber works by Mozart and Beethoven that would inspire his own compositions later in life. Schubert wrote his first sonatas for piano and violin at the age of 19, and, like, Mozart, lists the piano first. The fourth sonata has the designation 'Duo', possibly to point out that the two instruments are on equal terms in this work: the opening movement begins with a dialogue between the violin and the left hand melody on the piano, and many of the subsequent themes feature exchanges of musical material between the instruments.

Schubert's early instrumental works use the forms he inherited from Mozart and Beethoven, and the Violin Sonata in A is no exception: the opening movement is in

sonata form, followed by a jocular scherzo, a slow movement and a spirited finale. However, the music within this framework could only be by Schubert: the expansive, lyrical themes, the dance-like rhythms (for example, the slow movement has the feel of a Ländler), the richer textures, and the enigmatic twists of harmony.

### **Jenő Hubayi**

Jenő Hubay was a celebrated violinist and composer. Born into a German family living in Hungary, he was originally called Eugen Huber, but changed his name to the Hungarian form when he was on tour in his twenties. Hubay received his first music lessons from his father, who was a violin professor at the Budapest Academy of Music and concertmaster at the Hungarian National Opera House. When he was thirteen, Hubay went to study with the great violinist Joachim in Berlin, before going on to meet other eminent musicians such as Franz Liszt and Henri Vieuxtemps. In addition to his concertizing and composing, Hubay taught at the Brussels Music Institute before returning to Hungary in 1886 to take on his father's post as Head of the Liszt Academy, where he continued till 1936.



Hubay wrote many pieces for violin, demonstrating his virtuosity on the instrument. Written in the 'gypsy style', which had been popularised by Brahms and Liszt, his many *Scènes de la csárda* contrast slow, expressive *lassú* sections, sometimes having a recitative-like freedom, with faster *friska*.



### **Francis Poulenc**

Poulenc was born into a wealthy Parisian family who intended for him to go into the family pharmaceutical business. However, after the deaths of his parents during his teen years, Poulenc came under the wing of the pianist Ricardo Viñes and is remembered as one of *Les Six*: six French composers in the 1920s whose music seemed to react against the grandiose style of the late romantics. Poulenc's early compositions were seen as somewhat irreverent, but this was only one side of his nature, for he also wrote deeply religious music. He has a neo-classic style, which mimics, manipulates, and pokes fun at a range of music, not just the classics, but also the 'adorable bad music' of the music hall and circus, as if nothing can be taken too seriously.

The Violin Sonata has a darker side to it: composed during the Second World War in 1942 and 1943, and dedicated to the memory of the poet Federico Garcia Lorca, who had been killed in the Spanish Civil War, the music flits from anger to resignation. The opening movement is unsettled, as one mood suddenly gives way to a contrasting one. The turbulent first movement is followed by a beautiful intermezzo, which exploits flamenco-like sonorities and brings an extended period of calm before the finale. The final movement begins with the agitation of the first movement, but starts to become more light-headed and joyous. The ending is enigmatic.

### **Hannah Laurens, violin**

As a very young girl Hannah loved the lyrical sound of the violin and her dream was to be able to play Tchaikovsky's violin concerto. After having studied at the Young Talent Department of the Utrecht Conservatory from the age of 12 and after having graduated (BA, MA) from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, she fulfilled her dream and performed Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto as a soloist with the Hartland Chamber Orchestra. Other highlights include winning 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the National Dutch Violin Competition for the under 17s and performing live on Dutch national television. In the UK Hannah gave recitals in, for example, Salisbury Cathedral Chapel, the Foundling Museum London, and Blackheath Concert Hall. Hannah plays a Montagnana/Cerutti violin, Cremona 1740/1880.

Hannah also teaches the violin and has a class of talented and hard-working students in Eynsham, some of whom bring her fresh eggs and home-baked cookies. In addition to playing and teaching the violin Hannah enjoys doing philosophy. In October she will start an AHRC-funded PhD at the University of St Andrews on Aristotle.

### **Tom McCoy, piano**

Since an early age, Tom has been involved in music, and first learnt the piano from his father. He read Music at the University of Bristol, majoring in piano performance, and then continued with a Master's degree at Royal Holloway, writing a dissertation on the harmonic language of Rachmaninov. Since qualifying as a teacher in 2005, Tom worked at the Marlborough C of E School, where he led the choir on foreign trips to France and Germany, and organised the music for numerous concerts and shows. In order to concentrate more on his own specialism, Tom now works exclusively with the piano, teaching pupils in his home village of Freeland, as well as visiting Kingham Hill School, Stowe School and Oxford High School during the day.