

Paulius Rudokas Piano

Doctor of Performance

CLARA WEICK (1819-1896)

Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, Op.20

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Bunte Blätter, Op.99

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, Op.9



Fridays at One

Friday 17 March 2017

“Clara,

You cannot think how your letter has raised and strengthened me...You are splendid, and I have much more reason to be proud of you than you of me. I have made up my mind, though, to read all your wishes in your face. Then you will think, even though you don't say it, that your Robert is a really good sort, that he is entirely yours, and he loves you more than words can say...”

Johannes Brahms (1838)

Today's programme features a selection of cycles written by three iconic German composers of the Romantic era - Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann (née Wieck) and Johannes Brahms. Their compositions are priceless treasures for musicians and music lovers but it is the fascinating personal interactions, influence and relationships that gave rise to their unique contribution to the music canon. The very special selection of cycles based on one theme reveals not only the genius of each composer separately but also draws together and discovers the strong spiritual and psychological connection they all shared.

All three cycles were written during the difficult circumstances of Robert Schumann's mental breakdown, which both Clara and Johannes faced together.

CLARA WIECK (1819-1896)

Variations on a theme by Robert Schumann, Op.20

Clara composed and presented this set of variations to her husband on his birthday with the dedication “To my beloved husband on the 8th of June 1853. This humble, renewed essay by his old Clara”. The work's theme in f-sharp minor, taken from R. Schumann's *Bunte Blätter*, is slow and nostalgic, Robert's original theme remains clear throughout these melodic variations as does the subdued character. With the increased responsibility of raising her children and Robert's declining health, this work was one of Clara's last compositions after deciding to focus on her performing career and teaching instead.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Bunte Blätter, Op.99

- I. Stücklein No.1 - Nicht schnell, mit Innigkeit
- II. Stücklein No.2 - Sehr Rasch
- III. Stücklein No.3 - Frisch
- IV. Albumblatt No.1 - Ziemlich langsam
- V. Albumblatt No.2 - Schnell
- VI. Albumblatt No.3 - Ziemlich langsam, sehr gesangvoll
- VII. Albumblatt No.4 - Sehr Langsam
- VIII. Albumblatt No.5 - Langsam
- IX. Novelette
- X. Praludium
- XI. Marsch
- XII. Abendmusik
- XIII. Scherzo
- XIV. Geschwindmarsch

Written between 1836 and 1849 and published in 1852, *Bunte Blätter* is a unique set of pieces made up of two small collections and six additional pieces. It opens with the three Stücklein, the first of which was presented to Clara as a Christmas gift in 1838. Following are the five Albumblätter, which are slightly more substantial works whilst still remaining delicate and compact. Comparatively Novelette, Präludium, Marsch, Abendmusik, Scherzo,

and Geschwindmarsch are more independent and contrasting pieces. Though *Bunte Blätter* is more a selection of short pieces than a carefully planned and structured opus (such as *Carnaval*), it was received well enough that Schumann decided to further build upon the theme composing his later *Albumblätter*, Op.124.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann, Op.9

- I. Theme - Ziemlich langsam
- II. Variation I - L'istesso tempo
- III. Variation II - Poco più mosso
- IV. Variation III - Tempo di tema
- V. Variation IV - Poco più mosso
- VI. Variation V - Allegro capriccioso
- VII. Variation VI - Allegro
- VIII. Variation VII - Andante
- IX. Variation VIII - Andante (non troppo lento)
- X. Variation IX - Schnell
- XI. Variation X - Poco Adagio
- XII. Variation XI - Un poco più animato
- XIII. Variation XII - Allegretto, poco scherzando
- XIV. Variation XIII - Non troppo Presto
- XV. Variation XIV - Andante
- XVI. Variation XV - Poco Adagio
- XVII. Variation XVI - Adagio

The Op.9 Variations are often considered to be one of Brahms' greatest sets of variations. Brahms was so moved by Clara's variations and performance that he composed his own set of variations on the same theme. The theme used by both is Robert Schumann's *Bunte Blätter*, and is originally marked as 'Ziemlich Langsam' (rather slow). The variations were written the year after Schumann suffered a breakdown and entered an asylum, where he spent the rest of his life. An interesting feature about the main theme is that it's constructed from C#-B-A-G#-A, which could be interpreted as the name of their muse, CLARA.

Programme notes by Paulius Rudokas

In 2008, **Paulius Rudokas** completed his studies at the National M. K. Ciurlionis School of Arts in Vilnius and in 2014 obtained his Masters degree from Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. In 2009-2010 he studied at Hamburg's Academy of Music and Theatre with Professor R. Nattkemper. He is currently studying for a Doctor of Performance degree at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland under the tutelage of Professor Aaron Shorr.

Paulius represented Lithuania in the European Piano Competition in Normandy. In 2014, Paulius and his partner were prize winners in the chamber music category at the International S. Vainiunas Competition. He has participated in masterclasses with renowned performers including Christopher Elton, Olga Kern, Boris Bloch, Jerome Lowenthal, Andrei Gavrilov and Steven Osborne.

Paulius has played with many renowned orchestras including the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Klaipeda Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonic Orchestra di Bacau and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He is regularly invited to perform with Kaunas State Symphony Orchestra. Paulius was honoured by the President of Lithuanian Republic for his international success, and also by the Government of Poland for promoting Polish culture through playing Chopin's music. In 2015, Paulius performed a solo recital in Jakarta (Indonesia) at the Jaya Suprana School of Performance Art to celebrate the school's anniversary where he also offered masterclasses to young players. Paulius was awarded a scholarship from the Yamaha Foundation and is currently supported by the RCS Trust Fellowship.



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland



Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Gleneagles Gala Concert

Friday 17 March 2017, 7.30pm
City Halls

RCS Symphony Orchestra
Sir James MacMillan, Garry Walker **Conductors**

RCS Chorus
Professor Timothy Dean **Chorus Master**

RCS Junior Conservatoire Choir
Andrew Nunn **Chorus Master**

Clara Lafuente García **Cor anglais**

Kate Valentine **Soprano**
Penelope Cousland **Mezzo-soprano**
Jamie MacDougall **Tenor**

MACMILLAN **The Death of Oscar**
MACMILLAN **The World's Ransoming**
BRITTEN **Spring Symphony, Op.44**

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