



Benjamin GODARD (1849-1895)
Sonata No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20 *

- | | |
|---------------------|------|
| 1. Prélude (Lento) | 2:56 |
| 2. Gavotte | 2:14 |
| 3. Adagio | 4:37 |
| 4. Menuet (Allegro) | 5:05 |

Christian SINDING (1856-1941)

Suite in D minor, Op. 123 **10:05**

5. IV. Andante (Chaconne) – Non troppo allegro
 – Con brio – Moderato – Meno mosso – Andante *

Franz von VECSEY (1893-1935)

Preludio e Fuga in C minor

- | | |
|------------------------|------|
| 10. Preludio (Andante) | 4:21 |
| 11. Fuga (Allegro) | 5:38 |

Léon de SAINT-LUBIN (1805-1850)

12. Fantaisie sur un thème de Lucia di Lammermoor, Op. 46 **5:58**

Joseph JOACHIM (1831-1907)

13. Schottische Melodie † **2:24**

Benjamin GODARD

Sonata No. 2 in A minor, Op. Posth. * **14:15**

- | | |
|--|------|
| 6. Sarabande (Molto moderato e pomposamente) | 1:58 |
| 7. Rigodon (Vivace) | 3:11 |
| 8. Adagio ma non troppo | 6:05 |
| 9. Bourrée (Allegretto non troppo) | 3:01 |

Total Time:

57:31

- Première recording *
 First release on CD †

Vaughan Jones *violin*

Recorded at Monkswood Studios, Waltham Abbey, UK, July - September, 2013

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 & St. John the Baptist Church, Glastonbury, UK

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The Hidden Violin

Romantic Virtuoso Works
for Solo Violin

GODARD

SINDING

VECSEY

JOACHIM

SAINT-LUBIN

VAUGHAN JONES *violin*

includes
PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS





The Hidden Violin

This recording aims to cast a spotlight on some of the remarkable, yet forgotten music written for the solo violin between c.1840 and 1919. The long shadow of JS Bach and his own *Partitas and Sonatas for Solo Violin* looms over some of the works contained on this disc, yet many of the movements liberate themselves from this influence, displaying a resourcefulness and an array of moods that draw the listener into what can otherwise be the precariously narrow sound world of the solo violin. Many of the pieces have never been recorded before and some, particularly the *Second Godard Sonata* and Saint-Lubin *Fantaisie*, deserve to take their place beside Bach, Bartók and Ysaÿe as interesting additions to the central works in the solo violin repertoire.

Benjamin Louis Paul Godard displayed considerable musical talent at an early age, sufficient to be enrolled at the Paris Conservatoire at the age of ten. Although an accomplished violinist (a pupil of the famed Belgian virtuoso Henri Vieuxtemps), it was as a composer that his fame spread in his native France, as well as in Germany and Spain. His output runs to a formidable 450 works, covering every genre, with the exception of sacred music. He wrote three symphonies, eight operas, much chamber music, a huge stock of salon pieces (many displaying a brilliance in piano writing

peculiar for a string player) and over one hundred songs. His talent as a poet found expression in his *Symphonie légendaire*, combining elements of a symphony with that of a song cycle and including poems by the composer himself. Of his operas, *Jocelyn* and *La vivandière* have had the most success, with the latter sadly being completed by Paul Vidal, after Godard's death from tuberculosis at the age of 45.

Godard's two sonatas for solo violin appear to have been written at opposite ends of his composing career. The first may date from the early 1870s whereas the second may have been written near the end of his life (suggested by its posthumous publication). Both however share many stylistic traits, particularly in their incorporation of elements of the 18th-century French suite into a more formal four movement sonata. The *First Sonata* is dedicated to the violinist Léon Reynier who played regularly in a string quartet with Godard on viola. It starts with a brooding and fiery *Prélude* which is followed by a *Gavotte* in ternary form, the outer sections having a *pesante* feel which contrast pleasingly with the light and buoyant inner one. The *Adagio* uses a repetitive figure consisting of a dotted crotchet and four demisemiquavers as its rhythmic template and masterfully leads the listener to a rousing climax at the end. The *Sonata* finishes





Benjamin Godard c.1893 © Bibliothèque nationale de France

with a *Menuet* and two da capo trios which inhabit the world of Mozart far more than that of Bach.

Published in 1896, the *Sonata No. 2* starts with a *Sarabande* and the wonderful instruction 'Pomposamente' which calls to mind a rather self important hen strutting around! The ensuing *Rigodon* skips along joyously with only a few moments of introspection (in the C minor second section) to briefly unsettle its equanimity. The dominant movement of the work is the *Adagio ma non troppo*, which despite the innocence of its first subject, has the broadest

range of any of the sonata's movements, leaving us lingering in mid air at the finish. Soon everything is resolved with a coquettish *Bourrée* that swings from forte to piano in rapid succession and condenses elements that less melodically gifted composers would have spun out into a more large scale movement. It is all written with ridiculous ease – a quality that was once levelled against Saint-Saëns, before the true depth of his talent was fully appreciated.

Christian Sinding has in many ways suffered a similar fate to that of Benjamin Godard, in that most people



at the mention of his name may know of the charming *Rustle of Spring* and perhaps recall the famous Heifetz recording of his *Suite for Violin and Orchestra Op. 10*, but little else. Yet his range was wide, with four symphonies (of which the first is considered the strongest) as well as the opera *Der heilige Berg*. He contributed many works to the chamber music repertoire and as the composer of around 250 songs, is considered to be Norway's most important composer in that genre. Sinding, like his renowned contemporary Grieg, studied at the Conservatory in Leipzig and spent all in all forty years in Germany. As a result, he absorbed the melodic and tonal palettes of Wagner, Strauss and Liszt and there is often a lugubrious quality in his writing which nods towards the orchestral writing of the latter of the three.

His *Suite for Solo Violin, Op. 103* was written in 1919, just after the end of the First World War. Although it is difficult to assess his state of mind at the time, the music hints at a restlessness and monomania that unsettles the coherency of the whole. The highlight of this seven movement work is the affecting *Chaconne (Andante)*. Although it is written in the style of the late 19th century, the opening third harks back to Bach's own *Chaconne*, with its hypnotic lines of musical thought. The difference between the two is that Sinding's writing is less organic, more changeable, and switches from contrasting moods, often with a jolt! The last third of the *Chaconne* contains an impressive

climax which, despite the composer being a violinist, has a pianistic quality to it. The piece concludes as it begins, with a recapitulation of the solemn opening, returning the listener to some sense of resolution.

The Hungarian violinist Franz von Vecsey (1893 – 1935) was an incredibly precocious talent: at the age of eight he was taken on as a student of Jenő Hubay and so impressed Joachim two years later that the latter conducted for the young soloist's performance of the Beethoven Violin Concerto in 1904. Shortly afterwards, Jean Sibelius rededicated his Violin Concerto to the young violinist after its original dedicatee, Willy Burmeister, had withdrawn prior to the work's premiere. Vecsey's career was interrupted by the onset of the Great War in 1914 and when he resumed his concert career in the 1920s, he was now a mature artist. Yet despite the brilliance of his technical mastery, his playing was hallmarked by a certain emotional detachment and lack of individuality. Indeed Carl Flesch noted that '... his playing... was undistinguished musically. . . his musical education was left to chance – to the vagaries of concert life. The outcome was an impoverishment of his personality which prevented his full artistic development'. In later years his appearances became more sporadic and he died in Rome aged 42 after an operation which failed to remove a pulmonary embolism.

Vecsey composed a number of works for the violin,





Franz von Vecsey and Joseph Joachim c.1903

including this *Preludio e Fuga in C minor* which dates from 1914. The *Preludio* has a deeply tragic feel to it, a sense of searching for something unattainable, yet there are passages of aching beauty as well. The *Fuga* is a serious affair, with a heavy downward chromatic first subject. It is a test for the violinist, as the player must try and negotiate the chordal writing (often of three and four notes simultaneously) without distorting the rhythm of the melodic line. There is a constant build up of tension and, although the effect is intense, it has a forward momentum

which mesmerises the listener. Of all the works contained on our recording, this is the one that owes the greatest debt to JS Bach's *Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin*. It is an early 20th-century reworking from a musician steeped in these masterpieces.

If Vecsey's reputation as performer and composer deserves a reappraisal, then it is also time to mention Napoléon Antoine Eugène Léon de Saint-Lubin, as his name has been almost completely erased from the annals of 19th-century violin playing. Little is known

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LARCHETTO.

Musical score for LARCHETTO, Op. 10 by Leon de Saul. The score consists of nine staves of music. The first staff is the main melody in 3/4 time, marked "Cresc." and "rit.". The second staff is the bass line, marked "Cresc." and "rit.". The third staff is a second bass line, marked "Cresc.", "rit.", "chico.", and "marcato.". The fourth staff is a third bass line, marked "Cresc.", "chico.", and "rit.". The fifth staff is a fourth bass line, marked "P.". The sixth staff is a fifth bass line, marked "A.", "rit.", and "Allegro.". The seventh staff is a sixth bass line, marked "sul G.", "rit.", and "p.". The eighth staff is a seventh bass line, marked "cresc.", "rit.", and "p.". The ninth staff is an eighth bass line, marked "A.", "rit.", and "sul D.". The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.



of his life apart from the fact that he was born in Turin to a French language teacher father but moved to Hamburg at the age of four. In 1820 he moved to Vienna and found great success there as well as becoming acquainted with Beethoven. The great master wrote a cadenza for him (in Saint-Lubin's capacity of *Kapellmeister* at the Josephstädter Theater), which sadly perished during the Second World War. It was while teaching music in Hungary that Saint-Lubin dedicated himself to the pursuit of technical mastery along the lines of Nicolò Paganini, whom he may have heard in the flesh. From 1830 to his death he resided in Berlin and in his house organised concerts in which Liszt, Mendelssohn and Spohr performed. He died aged 44 in 1850 after years of ill health.

Saint-Lubin's *Fantaisie sur un thème de Lucia di Lammermoor, Op. 46* takes the famous sextet *Chi mi frena in tal momento* near the end of Act 2 as its basis. It may be that Saint-Lubin experienced the première of Donizetti's masterpiece in either Vienna or Berlin and was moved to create his own rendition of this memorable theme. Tellingly, the piece is dedicated to his violinist friend Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, whose own achievements may have even surpassed that of the great Paganini himself. There is little doubt that Ernst's playing had a magnetic effect on his listeners and attracted many followers as well as imitators. In his *Fantaisie*, Saint-Lubin certainly displays a wide

array of techniques, such as simultaneous left hand pizzicato and cantilena playing, ricochet interspersed with rapid arpeggios, double stopped tremolos, with the melody punctuated on a higher string, and downward scales of triple stopping.

Of all the composers featured on this disc, the name of **Joseph Joachim** is surely the most eminent. Yet it can hardly be said that any of his compositions has gained a wide acceptance and even his attractive *Second Violin Concerto, 'In the Hungarian Style'* is still only rarely performed. Joachim was born near Pressburg in 1831 and by the age of 12 began studying with Mendelssohn in Leipzig, an association which had a profound influence on the young man. During Joachim's long and illustrious career he built up lasting friendships with many of the 19th century's greatest composers and was the dedicatee of Brahms's *Violin Concerto*, on which he advised the composer, as well as those of Schumann and Dvořák, neither of which he performed publicly. He also helped Max Bruch in the revision of his first *Violin Concerto* which he first performed in 1868. That same year, Joachim moved to Berlin where he set up the famous Königliche Hochschule für Musik, which today is one of Europe's leading conservatories of music. In 1903 Joachim recorded five sides for The Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. and these remain an invaluable resource for discovering more about the style of this great musician, revealing a rhythmic fluidity and purity of



Schottische Melodien

für Violine *Joseph Joachim*

Andantino
dolce

Jan 19 16. Auf dem Dr. Joh. Joachim in Göttingen, abgeschrieben von Math. Sch. 26. Wittfand

Schottische Melodie by Joseph Joachim
 © Brahm-Institut an der Musikhochschule Lübeck



sound which were his hallmarks.

The *Schottische Melodie* which closes this recording is a transcription of a famous melody entitled *Oh where, tell me where has my Highland laddie gone*, which is more commonly known as *The Bluebells of Scotland*. There are two manuscripts, one, which has almost faded away, in Joachim's own hand and another copied out by a Mr. Walther Schulz of Stuttgart, who was the grandson and biographer of the composer Bernard Molique. The copied out score was used as the basis for this recording and bears the inscription 'Jan 1916 Für Herrn Dr. Joh Joachim in Göttingen, abgeschrieben von Walther Schulz, Stuttgart' ('January 1916 for Dr. Johannes Joachim in Göttingen, copied by Walther Schulz, Stuttgart'). It may be that the original manuscript was in Mr. Schulz's possession and in 1916 he gave a legible, handwritten copy to Johannes, the eldest of Joachim's six children whose father had passed away nine years earlier.

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Vaughan Jones was born in 1970 and started playing the violin at the age of eight. He studied under David Gregory before attending Charterhouse School as a music scholar. He then pursued his studies at the Birmingham Conservatoire and Royal College of Music before spending seven years as a freelance orchestral violinist based in London. Now he divides his time between teaching, arranging music and exploring lesser known string repertoire from the 18th and 19th centuries with the Manor House String Quartet, which he founded in 2006. Vaughan continues his studies with Hungarian violinist Kato Havas OBE to whom he is greatly indebted for her wisdom, humour and liberating approach to music. Vaughan plays on an instrument made in 2011 by luthier Martin McClean from Moneymore in Northern Ireland.



