

# *Ilkley Concert Club*



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## King's Hall

### Wednesday 15th March 2017



**KATYA APEKISHEVA**



**PHILIP DUKES**



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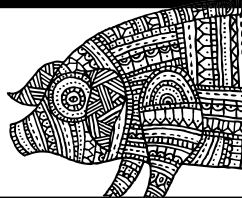
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# TONIGHT S PROGRAMME

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## Schumann

Adagio and Allegro op 70

*(First performance at ICC)*

## Chopin

Impromptus no 1 op 29 in A flat major &  
no 2 op 36 in F sharp major

*(Last performance together 20/03/1963*

*no 2 op 36 last performance 03/10/2001)*

## Schubert

Sonata in A minor D821 (Arpeggione)

*(Last performance at ICC 09/12/1998)*

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## INTERVAL

*(Coffee, tea and bar facilities available in the Winter Garden)*

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## Britten

Lachrymae op 48

*(First performance at ICC)*

## Brahms

Sonata in F minor for viola and piano op 120 no 1

*(Last performance at ICC 05/01/2011)*

## Ilkley Concert Club

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The Club records its appreciation of the invaluable assistance and support given by the City of Bradford Metropolitan Council.



# PROGRAMME NOTES

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**ROBERT SCHUMANN**  
**(1810-1856)**

**Adagio and Allegro op 70**

In 1849, as Richard Wagner kept lookout on the barricades and helped fill the hand grenades of the revolutionaries, Robert Schumann wrote from an embattled Dresden to a friend: ‘I have been working very hard all this time – it is my most productive year, as though the conflicts of the world outside drove me in upon myself giving me a power with which to counter the terrible events...’ Schumann was fascinated by the potential of new, better crafted wind instruments, including the valve horn for which he wrote the two-movement op 70. Schumann was delighted with the new work, declaring ‘I have never been happier with my work’.

Described by Clara Schumann, as ‘a magnificent piece, fresh and passionate, and exactly what I like’, the *Adagio and Allegro* takes full advantage of the valve horn’s agility and versatility. The Adagio, marked *Langsam, mit innigen Ausdruck* (*Slowly, with tender feeling*) is a quiet, introspective duet that contrasts with the *Rasch und feurig* (*Fast and fiery*) passionate second movement, an Allegro in rondo-form. This movement’s bright, vigorous main section contrasts with more poetic episodes that refer back to the Adagio. Despite it being written with the horn specifically in mind, Schumann simultaneously issued the work with parts for both cello and violin and it works especially well in the viola transcription we shall hear tonight. *(Duration: 9 minutes)*

**FREDERIC CHOPIN** **Impromptus no 1 op 29 in A flat major &**  
**(1810-1849)** **no 2 op 36 in F sharp major**

The term ‘impromptu’ was used in the nineteenth century to describe a short piece of music with an improvisatory quality, usually for an instrumental soloist. The most famous are the two sets for piano by Schubert and Chopin’s four impromptus written between 1833 and

1842. Chopin wrote the Impromptu in A flat major op 29 in 1837, followed, in 1839, by the Impromptu in F sharp major op 36. A final impromptu, op 51 in G flat major, was composed in 1842.

The impromptus are all written in a tripartite form with a coda. The virtuosic outer sections of the Impromptu in A flat major are reminiscent of an étude and have been described as ‘light as foam and bright in colour’. The tuneful, nocturne-like middle section reflects Chopin’s emphasis on the importance of achieving a melodic technique on the keyboard similar to the vocal *bel canto*.

The Impromptu in F sharp major op 36 was composed during the summer of 1839 and is the most challenging and complex of the four to interpret, both musically and technically. It begins with a nocturne-like pastoral theme which, in the D major middle section, gradually builds into a dramatic and quasi-heroic crescendo. This section unexpectedly breaks off and, via an unusual and controversial modulation to F major for which Chopin gives very precise performance instructions, the impromptu returns to its main theme. *(Duration: 11 minutes)*

**FRANZ SCHUBERT      Sonata in A minor D821 (Arpeggione)**  
**(1797-1828)            Allegro moderato    Adagio    Allegretto**

The arpeggione was a hybrid cello-sized instrument similar to a viol or viola da gamba, a six-stringed cross between a cello and guitar. Invented in 1823 by two Viennese luthiers, Johann Georg Stauffer and Peter Teufelsdorfer (who called it the guitare d’amour), it was quickly discarded as passé, surviving only by virtue of this sonata which was commissioned by Schubert’s friend and one of the few exponents of the arpeggione, Vincenz Schuster, in 1824 (the same year in which Schubert completed the Death and the Maiden string quartet). Today, the sonata is played with either cello or viola and piano and remains popular with audiences and players, despite the problems attached to transcribing a work for a six-stringed instrument to one with four strings and a smaller compass.

Although filled with the composer's seemingly effortless melodies, dramatic mood changes occur in all three movements. It is tempting to consider these indicative of Schubert's depressive state of mind at this time. In May 1824, he wrote to a friend '... I feel myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world ... whose health will never be right again ... whose most brilliant hopes have come to nothing...'

*(Duration: 24 minutes)*

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## INTERVAL

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*(Coffee, tea and bar facilities available in the Winter Garden)*

**BENJAMIN BRITTEN**  
**(1913-1976)**

**Lachrymae: Reflections on a song  
of John Dowland op 48**

Lachrymae (1950) comprises a series of ten short variations for viola and piano on the song 'If my complaints could passion move' by John Dowland (1563-1626), one of the greatest English composers of lute songs. Britten takes his title directly from Dowland who, in 1604, wrote a set of 'Lacrimae, or Seaven Teares' for solo instrument with keyboard. The wistful sadness that pervades both works reflects Dowland's own pun on his name *semper Dowland, semper dolens* ('always Dowland, always sorrowful') and certainly the listener's overriding impression of Dowland is that of melancholy.

Britten wrote Lachrymae for the distinguished violist William Primrose with whom he gave the first performance at the 1950 Aldeburgh Festival. The Lento introduction quotes Dowland's song directly in the bass line of the piano. This is followed by a sequence of variations or 'reflections', with the song – complete with Dowland's harmonies – re-appearing in the final variation. In the sixth variation, Britten quotes from another song by Dowland, 'Flow my tears'.

*(Duration: 15 minutes)*





# PHILIP DUKES

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It is with great pleasure and much good fortune that we are able to welcome **Philip Dukes** here this evening. The pleasure is because he is an internationally renowned viola player who is making his Ilkley debut, and our gratitude is because he was available and willing to replace Maxim Rysanov at short notice. Although new to Ilkley he will be already known to those of us who have heard the Plane Dukes Rahman Piano Trio on one of their visits to Yorkshire.

As a concert soloist Philip has appeared with many of Britain's professional symphony orchestras. He made his BBC Proms concerto debut in 1995, returning again in 1999, 2005 and 2007. He has recorded a wide range of CDs, most notably the complete works for viola by Rebecca Clarke for Naxos and a debut recording for Deutsche Grammophon of the Triple Concerto by Sir Michael Tippett, recorded live at the BBC Proms with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Andrew Davis. A recent CD released to critical acclaim is the Arnold Bax *Phantasy* for viola and orchestra with the BBC Philharmonic. With the Plane Dukes Rahman Trio he has recorded music by Schumann and Kurtág, and also by Max Bruch. Philip is also a member of the Nash Ensemble with whom he has recorded the complete Viola Quintets by Mozart.

Philip is Professor of Viola at the Royal Academy of Music. In 2006 he was elected a Fellow of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in recognition of his success as an international viola soloist. He was made an Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 2007.

The year 2011 was the twentieth anniversary of Philip's debut recital and the occasion was marked with a Gala Performance at the Purcell Room at the Southbank Centre, with Julian Lloyd Weber and Piers Lane. Classical Music/The Classical Source remarked that '*everything that Dukes produced, be it arabesques, dignified phrases and a wide range of dynamics and not forgetting silences was of special quality*'.

Future engagements include performances in the USA, Spain and Germany, and in London at the Wigmore Hall and St John's Smith Square.

# KATYA APEKISHEVA

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Katya Apekisheva is a '*profoundly gifted artist*'. (Gramophone), whose '*astute colours and brilliant technique*', (The Times) have made her a most sought after pianist. She is in demand internationally both as a soloist and a chamber musician. You may remember Katya was a prize-winner at the 1996 Leeds International Piano Competition. She had a similar success in the Scottish Piano Competition and has received awards such as the London Philharmonic 'Soloist of the Year' and the Terence Judd Award.

In an interview before the inaugural London Piano Festival, (for which she is Co-Artistic Director) Katya explained that she was born into a musical family. '*Both my parents are pianists and repetiteurs in different Moscow opera houses so I was always surrounded by music.*' Katya attended the renowned Gnessin School of Music in Moscow, then went to the Rubin Music Academy in Jerusalem and completed her studies at the Royal College of Music in London. There she was a recipient of the President's Rose Bowl which was presented to her by HRH the Prince of Wales, by whom she has been asked to perform on a number of occasions.

Katya has appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras. As a recording artist she has received widespread critical acclaim for her interpretations. Notable amongst these are her 2008 recording of Grieg's solo piano works and her 2012 release of works by Mussorgsky and Shostakovich. With violinist Jack Liebeck she won a Classical Brit award for their CD of music by Dvorak.

Much sought after as a collaborative artist, Katya has worked with such eminent musicians as Janine Jansen, Natalie Clein, Guy Johnston, Maxim Rysanov, Nicholas Daniel and the Belcea and Aviv Quartets. In this capacity she is a regular guest at major chamber music festivals arounds the world. Katya also has a very successful partnership with fellow pianist Charles Owen. Their CD of works by Stravinsky was released last year. Despite what sounds like a frenetically busy schedule, Katya is Professor of Piano at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

When asked in the above mentioned interview what she sees as her greatest challenges, she replied, '*learning a huge amount of solo and chamber music repertoire at very short notice... It can be thrilling and daunting. You have to live off adrenaline.*' Katya, we are so sorry that you had an entire change of programme at short notice. But relax! We are a warm and appreciative audience who are delighted that you and Philip are here tonight.

*(Biographical notes compiled by Sarah Warnes)*

# CLUB NOTES

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Ilkley Concert Club thanks all the local businesses that advertise in our concert programmes. Many of them have supported us for a number of years, helping to pay for the production of our excellent programmes. Each advertiser provides a local service of high quality and great convenience. In turn, I hope that we, the ICC audience, will take every opportunity to support them by shopping locally.

## MEMORABLE CONCERTS —Alessandro Taverna's comments

*'I still keep fond memories of time spent in Ilkley ... First of all, the warmth of the people involved in the society and the excellent organization. What was really extraordinary was ... the perfect acoustic of the King's Hall and the superb brand new C-Steinway [that] put me immediately at ease. Then the evening surprise came, with an audience of approximately 500 people who occupied the hall in every grade: it clearly tells how much the members and the people in Ilkley care about these concerts and at the same time the efforts rewarded to build such a competent and attentive public. Also the printed programme deserves praise, with its excellent programme notes, the excellent layout and a personally much appreciated temporal indication of the last performance of every piece at ICC.'*

I should add that the superb Vienna Piano Trio told their agent that ICC is 'a hidden gem'. For Chris Skidmore's review of their concert see the Ilkley Gazette or open [concertclub.ilkley.org](http://concertclub.ilkley.org) and click on Concert Reviews.

## ENCORE

The slow movement played so beautifully by the Vienna Piano Trio at the end of the last concert was the *andante con moto* from Brahms Piano Trio no 2 op 87 in C minor. I have conflicting views about encores: sometimes they provide an amusing or entrancing full stop, but there is also a danger that an encore can wipe from the memory the experience of a masterwork such as the Schubert sonata. However, since the concert I've been invaded by very welcome earworms labelled Schoenberg and Schubert, so that did not happen. It also introduced me to a piano trio that I had never heard.

## COFFEE

As you know we had problems with the coffee service at the last concert. Mark and Joe, the lads who organise this for us have been exceptionally reliable, so their absence took us by surprise; it was caused by confusion about the concert date. I was proud of the numerous people who rallied round in the half hour before the concert, and afterwards so that we could at least provide a service downstairs. Please use any Coffee and Tea tickets that you have for future concerts.

David Wharmby (ICC Chairman)

# RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS

**Schumann:** A useful disc containing Schumann's complete arrangements for Viola and Piano comes from Brilliant Classics 94487 (budget price). The artists are Lorenzo Falconi (viola) and Sara Bacchini (piano).

**Chopin:** Louis Lortie is working his way through Chopin for Chandos, and the third volume has attracted high praise (Chandos CHAN 10813 full price). As well as the Impromptus the disc contains a selection of Nocturnes and Piano Sonata no 3. As an alternative the incomparable Arthur Rubinstein performs the complete Waltzes and Impromptus on RCA 09026630472 (upper-budget price).

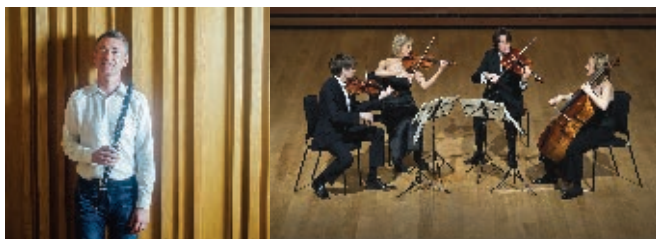
**Brahms and Schubert:** Tabea Zimmerman (viola) and Kirill Gerstein (piano) are the superb performers on this well recorded CD from Myrios Classics-MYR008 (full price). The convenient coupling is the Viola arrangement of Cesar Franck's Violin Sonata.

**Britten:** The Lachrymae is performed by Martin Outram (viola) and Julian Rolton (piano) on an interesting CD from Nimbus-Alliance NI 6253 (full price). The couplings are Frank Bridge's Pensiero, and arrangements for viola and piano of 'There is a Willow grows aslant a Brook' and the Violin Sonata. Britten's Portrait no 2 and Reflections accompany the Lachrymae. Should you prefer the version with chamber orchestra, Philip Dukes is the soloist with the Northern Sinfonia conducted by Steuart Bedford. The disc is from Naxos 8.557205 (medium price), and the other Britten works are Simple Symphony, Temporal Variations, A Charm of Lullabies, and A Suite on English Folk Themes.

Raymond Waud. raywaud@gmail.com

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