



Friday 21 July 2023, 12pm – 1pm  
St Mary's Church, Petworth

**Royal Academy Lunchtimes: Milda Daunoraite (piano)**

## PROGRAMME NOTES

**Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue in D minor, BWV 903**

**J.S. Bach (1685-1750)**

Unique amongst his keyboard pieces, J.S. Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue drew widespread acclaim during his lifetime and prompted the biographer Philipp Spitta to admire its two movements where 'unrestricted storm and stress hold sway'. The Fantasy is a combination of toccata and free recitative allied to an almost improvisatory freedom allowing full rein for expressive possibilities. There follows a three-part Fugue initiated by a rising thematic idea and given rhythmic impetus by its countersubject. Bach's genius is nowhere better found than in a work where creative imagination transcends formal design.

**Sonata No.1 in F-sharp minor, 'Florestan und Eusebius', Op.11  
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

- 1 Introduzione: Un poco adagio - Allegro vivace
- 2 Aria
- 3 Scherzo: Allegrissimo - Intermezzo - Lento
- 4 Finale: Allegro un poco maestoso

Schumann's compositions of the 1830s are for piano alone when his musical expression found release in a series of portraits from *Papillons* to the character pieces of *Kinderszenen* and *Kinderscenen*. While his three piano sonatas suggest formal designs, their emotional traversal is no less wide-ranging. Completed in 1835, the Sonata No.1 in F-sharp minor opens with a brooding introduction that finds outlet in the animated 'Allegro vivace', its restless energy deriving from its opening theme. Cloudless skies inhabit the 'song without words' that is the 'Aria'. Powerful rhythms dominate the 'Scherzo' which encompasses an 'Intermezzo' marked *alla burla, ma pomposo* before yielding to a comical recitative. An expansive finale spans a range of moods, its formal sonata-rondo design, quasi-orchestral textures and frequent rumination eventually concluding in triumphant vein. The work bears a dedication to Schumann's future wife; 'To Clara, from Florestan and Eusebius', a witty reference to the twin aspects of Schumann's personality.

## Piano Sonata SZ 80

Béla Bartók (1881-1945)

- 1 Allegro moderato
- 2 Sostenuto e pesante
- 3 Allegro molto

‘Anyone who met Bartók and was aware of the primordial rhythmic power of his music was surprised by the slender, fragile form of the man’. This recollection from Paul Sacher underlines the composer’s preoccupation with rhythm. If Sacher had been thinking of Bartók’s insistent hammering in *Allegro Barbaro*, there is a strong rhythmic impetus behind the percussive manner of his 1926 Piano Sonata. Whilst the work has an astringency and uncompromising modernity, the motor-rhythms and melodic severity of its opening movement are organised within a classical sonata form structure. The ensuing ‘Sostenuto e pesante’ is no less concentrated, its plaintive, folk-inflected melody developing from repeated note patterns heard at the outset and supported by widely spaced chords, at once austere and captivating. Its introversion is abandoned for a buoyant ‘Allegro molto’, rhythmically obsessive and metrically asymmetrical to conclude a work of rigorous focus and restless intensity.

David Truslove, 2023

**This event is kindly sponsored by the Anstruther Family**



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