

## Paul Lewis

Tuesday 22 April, 7:30pm



### Beethoven

Piano Sonata in C minor, Op 10 No 1

### Mozart

Piano Sonata in C, K330

### Interval

### Brahms

3 Intermezzi, Op 117

### Schubert

Piano Sonata No 18 in G, D 894

---

### Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

#### Piano Sonata in C minor, Op 10, No 1

1 Allegro molto e con brio

2 Adagio molto

3 Finale: Prestissimo

The three sonatas of Beethoven's Op 10 group were planned and developed in Vienna between 1796 and 1798; a period when he was steadily gaining a foothold in Viennese society, cultivating members of Vienna's social elite who would become friends and patrons, and

who would offer numerous commissions in the years ahead. It was to this influential circle that Beethoven would dedicate many works, with each of the Op 10 sonatas inscribed to Countess von Anna Margarete von Browne, the wife of a wealthy officer in Vienna's Imperial Service to whom Beethoven had dedicated the Op 9 String Trios.

Sketches for the three sonatas were begun in February 1796, but progress was interrupted by a series of performances in Berlin, Dresden and Prague from where he wrote to his brother, 'My

art is winning me friends and renown, and what more do I want?' The following summer he succumbed to a bout of typhus further delaying work, and any advance towards this sonata's completion was hampered by his preoccupation with other projects. Cast in three movements, the opening 'Allegro' of Op 10/1 exhibits a wonderfully youthful impetuosity, expressed in the vaulting intervals of its first theme. Uncoiling like a spring, this idea generates further leaping gestures that initiate both the meandering transitional passage and the second subject. A temporary shift to C major alerts us to the central development, its material occupied initially with the opening theme before a new cantabile idea emerges in F minor. The final section illustrates Beethoven's habit of misguiding the attentive listener by placing the return of the secondary theme in the 'wrong' key.

No such games occur in the slow movement, 'Adagio molto', a tender meditation with poetic intentions that expands from its initial homespun theme to a series of beautifully decorated melodic variants. The Finale: ('Prestissimo') begins with a delightful no-nonsense theme that, with its equally playful secondary theme, combines to create much exuberance. Urgent quaver figures, however, cast shadows on the work and hint at the Fifth Symphony, and a short mysterious coda provides one further brief glimpse of the mature Beethoven and the dramatic associations with the key of C minor.

## **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

### **Piano Sonata in C, K330**

- 1 Allegro moderato
- 2 Andante cantabile
- 3 Allegretto

After touring the capitals of Europe during his

childhood, Mozart's years in provincial Salzburg during his late teens and early 20s were deeply frustrating. When he eventually left for Vienna in 1781 he was able to broaden his horizons as a composer. Following his marriage to Constanze Weber, he returned to Salzburg in the summer of 1783, where his wife would meet his father and sister. It was during the return journey that Mozart composed a new symphony (The 'Linz') and, it is thought, this Sonata in C major, K330, was possibly written as teaching material he could use in Vienna.

While his sonatas have never enjoyed the same popular regard as his piano concertos, there is no lack of subtlety of expression or abundant melodic invention, which Leon McCawley has observed the 'combination of textural clarity, simple tunefulness, unfussy accompaniments and restless bravura'. Few would disagree with his assessment in relation to Mozart's K330 sonata, its well-proportioned opening 'Allegro moderato' containing ample two part-writing and patterns of scales and arpeggios to support the notion of it being intended for teaching purposes. Its regular alternation of staccato and legato articulation contribute to the movement's agreeable mood, only darkening briefly in a central panel where there is no obvious thematic allusion to the exposition. Turning to F major for the song-like 'Andante cantabile', its troubled minor key paragraph returns in the closing bars transformed in the comforting assurance of the home key. The march-like finale is an extrovert affair, enlivened by abrupt dynamic contrasts, and its 'concerto' manner pointing to a composer on the threshold of a final creative chapter of extraordinary brilliance.

## Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

### Intermezzi, Op 117

1 Andante moderato

2 Andante non troppo e con molta espressione

3 Andante con moto

In his later years Brahms cultivated the aura of a gruff old man and his persona became the stuff of legend. Whilst writing his Second Quintet for Strings during the summer of 1890 when he was fifty-seven, he contemplated retirement, sorted through his manuscripts and drew up a will. To his publisher he declared 'I have worked enough, now let the young people take over'. Old before his time, he seemed to be obsessed with his mortality and that of his friends. Indeed, the music of his final years is permeated with forebodings of death. During his penultimate year he had written a group of Choral Preludes for organ concluding with 'O Welt, ich muss dich lassen' ('O world, I must leave you') and amongst his Vier letzte Lieder (Four Serious Songs) he set the words 'O death, how bitter art thou'. The latter employs a chain of descending thirds: a melodic interval already a hallmark of several of his late piano pieces, including those of his Op 117 pieces of 1892, three movements hauntingly suffused with an autumnal glow.

At the head of the first, Brahms quotes lines from Johann Gottfried Herder's translation of an old Scottish poem known as Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament: 'Sleep gently, my child, sleep gently and well. It grieves me much to see thee weep'. Both the elegiac mood and tender middle voice melody fit the words perfectly. Comforting thirds warm the ruminations of the central minor key passage, and with the return of the home key, earlier poignancy is restored. An implied melodic line allied to descending arpeggios shape the outer regions of the second Intermezzo, its

transformation from B flat minor to D flat major bringing a new richness of expression. Bare octaves set in motion the third Intermezzo in C sharp minor, its bleak outline drawing inspiration from another of Herder's poetic translations beginning with the words 'O Woe! O Woe! Deep in the Valley'. Only in the central A major passage do ominous shadows briefly disperse. Little wonder its sense of grief prompted Brahms to call this leave-taking a 'lullaby of my sorrows.'

## Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

### Piano Sonata in G, D.894

1 Molto moderato e cantabile

2 Andante

3 Menuetto

4 Allegretto

While Beethoven was undoubtedly a firebrand, Franz Schubert exhibited a more unassuming and gentle personality. He was also the last of the great 19th century composers for whom the writing of piano sonatas was of central importance: of the generation of Romantic figures that followed him (including Chopin, Schumann and Liszt) none wrote more than three sonatas. A restful spirit finds sustained expression in the Sonata in G major.

Completed in Vienna in October 1826, it was dedicated to his friend Josef von Spaun who had established the convivial Schubertiad evenings when many of the composer's songs and chamber works were premiered. The Sonata was published the following year by Tobias Haslinger, but the word 'sonata' was conspicuously absent from the title page, replaced by the more commercially advantageous 'Fantasie, Andante, Menuetto and Allegretto', and offered as a set of character pieces. Perhaps the sonata's mysterious serenity and intimacy, not least the fact that each movement closes pianissimo, might have prompted indifference from a

public more interested in lively dances.

While it can be misleading to associate personal circumstances with creative endeavour, the Sonata's mood is surely influenced by the impact of his incurable illness, and the sudden awareness from 1824 of his own mortality. A letter to a friend made clear his misery: 'Think of a man whose health will never be right again, and who in sheer despair over this always makes things worse instead of better'. His music matured almost overnight: in works including his Octet, the string quartet 'Death and the Maiden' and this autumnal Sonata with its audible restraint and sense of sweet sorrow. The expansive opening movement begins solemnly with a chordal theme of limited intervallic range, its leisurely discourse soon making way for a more animated secondary idea underpinned by waltz-like support. Tensions rise in the G minor development marked by a muscular intensity and a rare appearance of the dynamic *fff*. Calm is eventually restored with the return of the heart-easing main theme.

Its gentle mood continues in the 'Andante', its homespun manner offset by stormy minor key passages in B minor and D minor, each

identified by impetuous outbursts and giving a foretaste of the explosions in the 'Andantino' of D959 written in the composer's last months. Each return of the initial opening phrase brings us further towards a celestial composure, again a preview of things to come. The rhythmically incisive B major 'Menuetto' occupies a certain swagger and gives way to a 'Trio' of melting tenderness. Echoes of the repeated note rhythm from the 'Menuetto' recur in the rustic charm of the Rondo finale, its folk-like character apparent in the blithe melody heard at the outset over a bass drone. To this 'al fresco landscape' Schubert adds two further ideas; one playful, the other an extensive and mercurial episode which frames the principal theme. This makes one final appearance four bars from the end, where repeated chords have the last word. Like the three earlier movements, this one retreats into the unknown evoking either a haze of nostalgia or a premonition of his own demise. Either way it concludes a work described by Robert Schumann, in relation to all of Schubert's sonatas, as the 'most perfect in form and substance'.

© David Truslove, 2025



'Lewis is a wonderfully unfussy and straightforwardly lucid interpreter of these great works, judicious with his rubato, and never imposing unnecessary mannerisms on the music; whether structurally or texturally everything is consistently uncluttered'  
The Guardian

Paul Lewis is one of the foremost interpreters of the Central European piano repertoire, his performances and recordings of Beethoven and Schubert receiving universal critical acclaim. He was awarded CBE for his services to music, and the sincerity and depth of his

musical approach have won him fans around the world. This global popularity is reflected in the world-class orchestras with whom he works, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, London Symphony, Philharmonia, Bavarian Radio Symphony, NHK Symphony, New York Philharmonic, LA Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw and Leipzig Gewandhaus orchestras. His close relationship with Boston Symphony Orchestra led to his selection as the 2020 Koussevitzky Artist at Tanglewood. With a natural affinity for Beethoven, Lewis took part in the BBC's three-part documentary Being Beethoven and performed a piano concerto cycle over 3 concerts at Tanglewood in summer 2022, and then in Boston in 2023 with Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony. He has performed the cycle all over the world and was the first pianist to play the complete cycle in a single BBC Proms season in 2010. In May 2025 he will perform the cycle with the Oslo Philharmonic and Eivind Aadland. Between 2022 and 2025, Lewis embarked on a Schubert Piano Sonata Series, presenting four programmes of the completed sonatas at over 40 venues around the world. In March 2025 he gave the world premiere of Thomas Larcher's Piano Sonata in Oviedo and will give the regional premiere of the piece in Austria, Czech Republic, Holland, Italy, Singapore, Switzerland, United Kingdom

and the USA. In May 2025 Lewis will become the first non-American pianist to chair the jury of 2025 The Cliburn Piano Competition.

Beyond many award-winning Beethoven and Schubert recordings, his discography with Harmonia Mundi also demonstrates his characteristic depth of approach in Romantic repertoire such as Schumann, Mussorgsky, Brahms and Liszt. In chamber music, he works closely with tenor Mark Padmore in lied recitals around the world – they have recorded three Schubert song cycles together – and he is co-Artistic Director of Midsummer Music, an annual chamber music festival held in Buckinghamshire, UK.

Awards Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist of the Year; two Edison awards; three Gramophone awards; Diapason d'Or de l'Annee; South Bank Show Classical Music Award; honorary degrees from Liverpool, Edge Hill and Southampton universities; appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2016 Queen's Birthday Honours

Recital venues Royal Festival Hall, Alice Tully, Carnegie Hall, Musikverein, Konzerthaus, Théâtre des Champs Élysées, Concertgebouw, Berlin Philharmonie and Berlin Konzerthaus Festivals: Tanglewood, Ravinia, Schubertiade, Edinburgh, Salzburg, Lucerne

---

## Maxwell Quartet with Cordelia Williams

Thursday 15 May 7:30pm

A beautiful blend of piano and strings, combining classical and folk traditions. This special collaboration between the Maxwells and Cordelia Williams integrates music from and inspired by the quartet's Scottish homeland with iconic classical music works.





## Sean Shibe

Saturday 3 May 7:30pm

Scottish guitarist Sean Shibe has proven himself a truly original mind at the frontier of classical guitar. He creates unique textures with classical, contemporary and folk repertoire, earning prestigious accolades worldwide.

This programme includes Frank Martin's Quatre Pièces Brèves, written for Andrés Segovia, but unplayed until Julian Bream championed the suite in the 1960s. The first recorded performance of Bach's Cello Suites took place over 100 years after they were likely written.

In Association With Southampton Classical Guitar Society



## Chloë Hanslip and Danny Driver | Bach and Beyond II

Tuesday 10 June 7:30pm

The second in an exclusive series of concerts celebrating the influence of Johann Sebastian Bach. Dmitri Shostakovich was an avid admirer of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach's 'The Well-Tempered Clavier', is thought to be the direct inspiration for Shostakovich's later set of 24 preludes and fugues. This concert unites the two composers in a celebration of Bach's enduring influence.



info@turnersims.co.uk

[turnersims.co.uk](https://turnersims.co.uk)

Box Office

023 8059 5151



Media Partner

# GRAMOPHONE



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



University of  
**Southampton**

Turner Sims is part of the University of Southampton and gratefully acknowledges the support of Arts Council England