



CATERHAM  
SCHOOL



## Final 'Lockdown' Recital

Thursday 2 July 2020, 7.30pm

Mr Tristan Hall  
Head of Academic Music

Help  
Musicians

# Foreword

It has been an absolute pleasure to put together twenty-five lecture recitals for you during these unprecedented times. There has been music ranging from Bach Preludes & Fugues to a 'Rhapsody on a theme of Barbie Girl', Gershwin and many more. It has been wonderful to see so many pupils, current and Old Caterhamians engaging in music and hopefully learning something along the way. Moreover, it has been an honour to share so many of my fantastic jokes with so many of you – I shall use the summer to re-stock on these ready for the new academic year.

I would like to thank everybody who has engaged in these recitals and I am now looking forward to seeing you all in September, where you can continue to make amazing musical memories. The department would like to thank all pupils for their resilience, dedication and musicianship throughout this challenging period and would also like to wish our leavers the best of luck for their future endeavours. We are so very proud of your musical achievements. We would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer break.

Mr Hall, July 2020

## Help our musicians!

Help Musicians (formerly known as the *Musicians Benevolent Fund*) is an independent UK charity for professional musicians of all genres, from starting out through to retirement.

They help at times of crisis, but also at times of opportunity, giving people the extra support that they need at a crucial stage that could make or break their career.

Help Musicians' coronavirus crisis support saw the charity create the Coronavirus Financial Hardship Fund. The initial aim was to alleviate some of the immediate financial pressures that many professional musicians are facing by offering one-off £500 grants. Help Musicians initially made available £5 million for 10,000 applicants but received in excess of 17,000 applications, and in spite of generous donations from across the music industry and from music lovers like yourselves, currently there is a funding gap.

In addition, as we progress through the COVID-19 pandemic, the charity is evolving their hardship funding to reflect the needs of musicians. They will need to provide more financial support over the coming months along with supporting musicians with other business needs to help them recover and return to work. Your support is vital.

Please help us by donating whatever you can and help to support musicians while their future remains so uncertain.

Music touches everyone's life in some way – the individuals behind the music help fill our lives with lasting memories.



Go to <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/caterhammusic> should you wish to donate.

# Programme

## **Chaconne in D minor**

Bach/Busoni (Arr. Hall)

This piece is, in essence, a set of variations on J S Bach's masterpiece, Chaconne in D minor. It was originally composed as an unaccompanied violin piece and is very similar in style and virtuosic demands to his suites for violoncello. Bach is the master of harmony, so much so, that after more than two hundred and fifty years since his death people still study this for A Level music and beyond. However, Bach is unlike many typical Baroque composers; his music includes tints of romanticism all over the place. His love of the diminished chord and suspensions and dissonances all combine to create the dramatic and beautiful pieces which we adore.

## **Prelude in C# minor**

Rachmaninoff

This prelude quickly became an audience favourite. Rachmaninoff ended up resenting this piece since wherever he would perform, audience members would beg for him to perform this, almost reminiscent of our current time equivalent, James Blunt's, *You're Beautiful*.

The piece of music hints towards Rachmaninoff's love of the Russian Orthodox church bells, with the recurring A, G# and C# resonating akin to the chiming of bells in Russian towns and cities. Moreover, the homorhythmic, chordal nature of the main theme almost suggests a hymnal effect, whilst with its minor tonality, produces a dark and almost sinister undertone.

The middle section is an *agitato* section which embraces chromaticism and a sense of chaos and loss of control, leading into a fiery climax that transitions into the reprise of the opening idea. However, this time, Rachmaninoff treats the audience to one of his specialties: big fat chords with rich, resonant bass notes! The short *coda* of this piece is reminiscent of the opening piano chords from Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, with, yet again, more evocations of the aforementioned church bells.

## **Prelude in D Major, Op. 23, No. 4**

Rachmaninoff

This piece of music is, quite simply, beautiful. Here, Rachmaninoff turns the piano into musical nectar with lush melodies and meandering, decorative auxiliary accompaniments that float above the main melodic ideas. It is difficult to put the beauty of this prelude into words, but one could describe the music as almost monothematic, with just one, single idea being explored throughout the entire piece which builds into a typical, Rachmaninoff-esque climax with a thought provoking, stunning ending, where the main theme comes back with a lyrical, inverted countermelody.

## **Prelude in G minor, Op. 23, No. 5**

Rachmaninoff

The rhythm in this prelude shouts 'military'. The crisp triadic opening is both exciting but also sounds very *Russian*; for example, if one were to listen to Khachaturian's Masquerade Waltz, the same sort of 'bass-chord' idea appears there, as does much of the late-Romantic Russian music. The piece as a whole is in a clear ternary form, with the B section moving to the dominant major key, D Major. In contrast, this section showcases Rachmaninoff's skill in writing lyrical melodies with lush harmonies beneath it and his genius at incorporating countermelodies that lend themselves to all the other parts around it. This eventually leads into a long crescendo and accelerando into the return of the A<sup>2</sup> section.

## **Piano Sonata No. 14 in C# minor "Quasi una fantasia", Op. 27, No. 2 (Moonlight)**

Beethoven

- i) **Adagio sostenuto**
- ii) **Allegretto**
- iii) **Presto agitato**

The 'Moonlight' sonata is the thirteenth of thirty-two sonatas that Beethoven composed. It is unconventional in its movement structure, as you would usually expect to have the 'slow' movement second, not first. However, the Adagio sostenuto movement sets the mood for the piece.

The sonata was never originally given the title, 'Moonlight' by Beethoven; this was a nickname that it was given after its original publication. From asking a selection of people, the word 'moonlight' represents sadness, isolation and love or loss of love. It is this analogy that coincides with the fact that the dedicatee of this piece was Giulietta Guicciardi; a young countess who was also a pupil of Beethoven. From letters to his friend, Wegeler in 1801, and latterly Schindler, in 1823, it is clear that this was more than infatuation, but moreover that Beethoven was deeply in love. From the letter to Wegeler, it is mentioned that this love was mutual (although there is nothing to say that this might have been in Beethoven's head!), however Beethoven was not of the required class to marry her and Giulietta ended up marrying another composer of the required *social class*, Count von Gallenberg. This clearly resulting in heartbreak, poor chap!

This sonata is a perfect portrayal of this heartbreak. The Adagio sostenuto sets the sombre scene of a yearning for love with an underlying and constant 'pulse' (the triplet, triadic quavers). The Allegretto movement, in my opinion, is a false reprise; giving off the impression of 'release' or 'reconciliation' however it is both short and almost sarcastic due to the trio idea's sudden, almost-humorous and 'dance-like' contrast to the opening minuet idea. The Presto agitato, is literally emotional chaos! It is full of diminished chords, sudden dynamic changes, rapid arpeggiated runs and tense pedal notes which add to the imagery of self-destructive, mental cessation that he was likely feeling.

This piece of music is unquestionably one of the most iconic and emotionally poignant of the pianistic repertoire.

## **Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C# minor**

Liszt

Franz Liszt was born in Hungary, although he never spoke Hungarian (although making several unsuccessful attempts), he was raised in the French language. At the age of ten, he and his family moved to Vienna, and only on the rare occasion did he return to visit his homeland. Throughout Liszt's music it is apparent that he still held a huge interest and was influenced by Hungarian music which incorporated many different national melodies within his nineteen Hungarian Rhapsodies. Liszt had a fascination with Hungarian folk music, and believed that this was derived from the Gypsies, although this is far from the truth, he still ended up writing a 450-page thesis on this: "The Gypsies and Their Music in Hungary".

The 2nd Rhapsody itself is based on two sections within the piece which are the *Lassan* and *Friska* which mean slowly and fresh. This is unquestionably one of the most famous Pianoforte pieces within the repertoire. It famously featured in a Tom and Jerry cartoon entitled "The Cat Concertos" which was released by Metro-Goldwyn Mayer in April 1947. This might give an indication of the humour and drama combined within this masterpiece.

Towards the end of the piece there is a marking which states "Cadenza ad libitum", which indicates to the performer that he or she should include a section of virtuosic piano playing, which is to be in an improvised style. Many previous performances of this Rhapsody use Sergei Rachmaninov's (1873 – 1943) or Vladimir Horowitz's (1903 – 1989) notated cadenzas; however, I believe, as a distinguished performer, Liszt would expect these to be performed and composed by the performer. This sort of cadenza is typically found in concerti, but Liszt often includes these within several his Hungarian Rhapsodies. Therefore I have written a cadenza myself for this performance.

Liszt always aspired to write piano repertoire to be challenging in terms of both dexterity and musicality. He was heavily inspired by the virtuoso violinist, Nicolo Paganini (1782 – 1840) – it was said that he appeared to be "possessed by the devil" when he performed. This clearly impressed Liszt, and inspired him to push himself, and the piano to their limits. This piece is a prime example of how Liszt creates a vast array of emotion in his music; including drama, humour, tension, and most of all, immense excitement – it's a beast!

# Coming Up

In due course, there will be two performances of note, these will not be performed live, however will include associated talks. These will include:

## **Ballade No. 1 in G minor, Op. 23**

Chopin

## **Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43**

Rachmaninoff