



Well, here we are again! A very warm welcome to the second concert of our 2021/22 season which is also the second in our Mini Festival of three concerts in one week. Today we welcome **Coco Tomita** and her father, **Kan Tomita**, to play a selection of Classical and Romantic works for violin and piano.

We are very grateful to all those members who donate, and especially to those who have become **patrons** of the society:

Anne & Anthony Cairns, Suzanne & Tom Connor, Ian Coxon,
Diana Hughes, Chris Mapleton, Sue & Chris Robinson,
Sue & Jerry Symonds, Valerie & Tony Thompson, Karen & Nigel Wood,
Fiona & Nicholas Woolf

Word of mouth is by far our most successful form of marketing, so tell your friends about us and introduce them to our concerts!

A special message from the Chair of OCMS, Suzanne Connor

Welcome to tonight's Festival concert! We are delighted to be able at last to present some wonderful music and musicians to our audience, and hope that you will enjoy their contribution to your well-being! Music produces so many varying feelings in all of us; feelings of joy, peace, mental acceptance, energy as well as resolve. It gives us the opportunity to reflect and make decisions.

I hope you will enjoy this evening's programme and join us for the rest of the season. We have some superb programmes ahead, including music rarely performed and exciting to hear. If you are not a member and would like to be kept informed of future concerts, please give your name and address to the Membership Secretary at the desk or via email.



Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 8.00 pm (doors 7.30 pm)

Oxshott & Cobham Music Society

Presents



Coco Tomita (violin)

Winner of BBC Young Musician of the Year 2020 (Strings Category)

with Kan Tomita (piano)

George Enescu	Ménétrier from <i>Impressions d'enfance</i>
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Violin Sonata in F major, K 376
Francis Poulenc	Violin Sonata, FP 119

Pyotr Tchaikovsky	Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op 42
Maurice Ravel	Violin Sonata No 2 in G major
Jenő Hubay	Carmen: Fantaisie brillante, Op 3 No 3



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George Enescu (1881 – 1955)

Ménétrier from *Impressions d'enfance, Op 28* (1940)

George Enescu is Romania's most famous composer. Indeed, his renown in his home country is such that the village in which he was born, Liveni, was renamed "George Enescu" in his honour.

He was a precocious youngster, very musically gifted and was acknowledged early as a violin virtuoso. Much of his work is influenced by Romanian folk music and he is often characterized as Romania's Bartók.

The suite *Impressions d'enfance* (Childhood Impressions) consists of ten pieces for violin and piano, of which we will hear the first, *Ménétrier* (The Country Fiddler), scored for violin alone.

This short piece showcases a wide variety of virtuoso violin techniques and calls on Romanian folk idioms as well as advanced harmonies to tell its story. Although I'm not a violinist, I suspect it's well beyond the capabilities of most Romanian country fiddlers!



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Violin Sonata No 24 in F major, K 376 (1781)

Mozart composed sonatas for piano and violin throughout his life. These were works for social and domestic situations. Although the description of the work as being for "piano with accompaniment for violin" suggests that the piano would be the dominant partner, as was customary at the time, in this sonata and its companion works from the early 1780s the arrangement is much more equitable and a similar level of skill is required from both players to successfully tackle the work.

Allegro

The first movement is in sonata form with the piano giving out the first main theme with the violin indulging in side commentary before the piano introduces the second theme. Both instruments share the material in the remainder of the exposition. After the repeat, a short development section reviews the two themes before a very literal recapitulation completes the movement.

Andante

The graceful second movement, not too slow, starts with a piano melody which the violin then takes up. A variation on the theme then takes over, but it's not long before the main tune crops up again, in the dominant key and accompanied by copious amounts of trills in both instruments. Then we get the whole first section again, together with a short coda, to complete this ternary form movement.

Rondeau: Allegretto grazioso

The piano takes it away with this carefree rondo. The violin is enchanted with the tune and picks it up with enthusiasm, both instruments getting thoroughly into the swing of things with ascending and descending runs all over the place. The first contrasting episode is ushered in with stern chords in the minor key, but this doesn't presage a change of mood as the major key brightness soon returns. Then we get the main rondo theme again, ending in a modulation to the dominant key to get us to the second contrasting episode. This section is more restrained, and the two instruments introduce the new material together rather than in sequence. The second episode comes back, which in turn leads us to the main theme one last time. All typical Mozart and very charming indeed.



Francis Poulenc (1899 – 1963)

Violin Sonata, FP 119 (1943)

Poulenc, often called “The Smiling Parisian”, was expected to follow in his father’s footsteps and join the family pharmaceutical firm and was not allowed to enrol in music school even though his family was very musical. He was largely self-taught and, after making the acquaintance of Erik Satie, became one of the group of young composers known as *Les Six*. Much of his music is high spirited but later work revealed a more serious side to his nature.

He had a very successful career as a pianist and composer and, being independently wealthy, was able to concentrate on composition without the pressure of earning a regular living. He served in the military in both world wars. Musically, he was a disciple of Stravinsky and rejected the experimentation and formal strictures of the Second Viennese School.

Poulenc’s Violin Sonata was composed in memory of the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca. He had struggled for a long time to write a sonata for a string instrument and this sonata proved just as difficult for him. He was particularly keen not to write anything remotely resembling a 19th-century French violin sonata, of which he observed: “The violin *prima donna* over piano arpeggios makes me vomit”.

Allegro con fuoco

A frenetic start indeed, clearly heavily influenced by Stravinsky and a typically rhythmic Poulenc tune, rapidly moving in both instruments, characterises the opening section. A second, more lyrical theme emerges, swapping between violin and piano and bathed in the luxurious harmony characteristic of Poulenc’s more relaxed moments. A more turbulent episode follows before things slow down a bit and the violin sings an impassioned lament for the deceased poet. Things speed up

again with distinctly Spanish-sounding harmony before a surprising major-key finish.

Intermezzo: Très lente et calme – Modéré sans lenteur

The intermezzo opens with repeated notes like those of a plucked guitar, merging into flamenco-style harmonies. A gently pulsating piano accompanies the violin's soaring melody which expands to occupy most of the movement. The piano then gets a bit of "me time" before the violin joins in with some very astringent harmonies. The movement ends with a stark dissonance and *glissando* on the violin.

Presto tragico

The jagged nature of the first movement returns to start the last movement, although even here a hint of a happier tune tries to break through from time to time. The violin is having none of it, though, and continues the headlong rush, but is finally stilled, allowing the piano to start singing out a smooth melody. Still not satisfied, the violin tries to disrupt proceedings with angular phrases but the piano presses on regardless and eventually the violin yields to the change of mood and joins in the singing melody, adding a few *pizzicato* rejoinders from time to time to make its displeasure clear.

Suddenly everything stops and the violin wails an anguished cry before the music becomes funereal, the violin and piano trading desolate phrases before a coda ends the work with a couple of abrupt chords.

--- INTERVAL ---



Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op 42 (1878)

Tchaikovsky wrote *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* (“Memory of a dear place”) during a summer sojourn at the Ukrainian estate of Nadezha von Meck, his wealthy patron, who he never met, being only allowed to visit the estate when his mistress was away. He loved the place so much that he dedicated the piece to the estate itself, Brailovo, rather than his patron.

The piece is most often heard for violin and orchestra in an arrangement by Alexander Glazunov, but the original was for violin and piano, the only time Tchaikovsky wrote for that combination of instruments.

Méditation

Marked *Andante molto cantabile*, this piece was originally planned as the central movement of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, written a few months before. It is in ABA form, meaning there are two themes, A and B, which occur in the sequence A-B-A. The opening theme is melancholy and presented by the piano alone. When the violin picks up the theme, it does so on its lowest strings, adding to the gloomy atmosphere. The piano breaks into a triplet accompaniment for the second part of the main theme, which persists when the first part of the melody returns, this time with the violin in its upper register. A short middle section features glistening runs on both violin and piano before the main section returns, eventually leading to a major key finish with the violin at the very top of its range.

Scherzo: Presto giocoso

A nervous energy pervades the scherzo, played at breakneck speed by the violin with the piano accompanying with short, stabbing chords. Then, suddenly, a flowing melody in the violin starts the central section and continues unabated until the transition back to the initial theme.

Mélodie: Moderato con moto

The last movement, and the only one in a major key, is the only part of the *Souvenir* to have achieved substantial fame in its own right, and is now regularly featured in lists of “violin favourites”. It is pretty much an unbroken violin melody, the pace picking up a little in the central section, before the main tune comes back with loving commentary by the piano. The short coda is as tender as music gets.



Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937)

Violin Sonata No 2 in G major (1927)

Maurice Ravel, along with Claude Debussy, is most often associated with musical “impressionism”, although both composers rejected the label. However, there is something to it and the characterization has stuck. He incorporated many modern developments into his works, including modernism, baroque, neoclassicism and, in later years, jazz and blues. He was an expert orchestrator and a great experimenter with musical form, exemplified by his best-known work, *Boléro*, in which the same theme is repeated for 18 minutes, varying only in orchestral tone colour.

Ravel felt that the violin and piano were incompatible instruments, so when he came to write works for that combination, he made sure each instrument stayed within its own idiom.

Allegretto

There is a lyricism to this first movement but also some astringent harmony and elements of bitonality. Although the piano and violin trade themes and accompanying patterns, there is always a strong differentiation between the two. A second, more lyrical theme is given to the violin, with the piano providing accompaniment in bare fifths. A

development section explores the two themes until a violin tremolo episode heralds a new singing melody on the violin intertwined with the movement's already stated main material.

Blues: Moderato

Well, it's entitled "Blues", but it's certainly not like any blues being played in the Mississippi Delta in 1927. There are elements of blues styling here, particularly in the violin part with its emphasis on syncopation, blue notes and *glissandi*, and the strummed pizzicato chords at the start are clearly supposed to be reminiscent of the guitar. But Ravel throws bitonality and other modernist techniques into the mix to create a thoroughly modern piece that's never going to be mistaken for the real thing. So sit back and enjoy Ravel's masterful technique in mixing up some very different aspects of modern music of the 1920s.

Perpetuum mobile: Allegro

The last movement references themes from the previous two as well as introducing new material. The tentative start rapidly gives way to a complete violin workout, the piano getting a relatively easy ride with more of a chordal accompaniment. There is absolutely no let up for the violin, though, all the way through to the finish. It does end in G major however, about the only time that chord is heard unblemished in the entire piece!



Jenő Hubay (1858 – 1937)

Carmen: Fantaisie brillante, Op 3 No 3 (1876)

Jenő Hubay was one of Hungary's leading musical figures in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a violin virtuoso whose technique was as prodigious as his moustache. He was seen as the heir to Henri Vieuxtemps, the violin demigod of the day, and he left a legacy by training many of the next generation of violin virtuosi. He was also a prolific composer, particularly for the violin, although little is remembered today.

His “brilliant fantasy” on themes from Bizet's opera *Carmen* was a blatant bit of showmanship. All the most popular tunes are in there, along with all the most gee-whiz violin techniques. There's not a whole lot more to say about it other than to savour the great melodies and sit open-mouthed at the violinist's technique!

Coco Tomita



The UK-based Japanese violinist Coco Tomita won the BBC Young Musician 2020 Strings Category, which quickly led to numerous concert invitations from venues across the UK as well as in her home country, Japan. Previously, she had won numerous prizes at international competitions and festivals, including Gold Medals at the Vienna International Music Competition and Berliner International Music Competition, the Carl Flesch Prize at the Carl Flesch Academy, and first prize at the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra Young Soloist Competition. Coco was born into a musical family and began to play the violin when she was four years old. Two years later, she became a pupil of Natasha Boyarsky, with whom she continued her studies at the Yehudi Menuhin School, and later with Lutsia Ibragimova. Since April 2021, she has been training at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler, Berlin.

At the age of 10, Coco made her debut at the Cadogan Hall, London performing as a soloist with the Southbank Sinfonia. Along with numerous solo and chamber music performances at the Menuhin Hall, Coco has performed and appeared at many prestigious venues in the UK including the Wigmore Hall, Kings Place, Milton Court and the Palace of Holyrood as well as in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland.

After the success of BBC Young Musician 2020, Coco has signed an exclusive agreement with Orchid Classics to record her debut album with pianist Simon Callaghan, which is due to be released in early 2022. She will be accompanied by her father, Kan Tomita, in this concert.

Next Concerts

Saturday 25 September 2021 at 8.00 pm (doors 7.30 pm)

Last concert in our Mini Festival

Catriona McDermid (bassoon)

with the Florian String Quartet

Modern bassoon explorations and a Haydn quartet

Nicola LeFanu

Harlequin Memories

Joseph Haydn

String Quartet No 60 in G major, Op 76 No 1

Roxanna Panufnik

Cantator et Amanda

Toby Young

The Creation of Electricity

This concert is kindly sponsored by Stephen Massil as part of his 80th birthday celebration

Saturday 16 October 2021 at 8.00 pm (doors 7.30 pm)

OCMS present their Patrons' Concert, with the support of the RC Sherriff Trust

Spiritato!

with

Ciara Hendrick (mezzo-soprano)

An evening of little-known Baroque music

The ensemble will perform pieces by

George Frideric Handel

Johann Christoph Pepusch

William Corbett

Antonio Vivaldi

Arcangelo Corelli