

REDBRIDGE MUSIC SOCIETY

PIANO RECITAL

JOHN PAUL EKINS



Tuesday 23rd February 2016 8 pm

**Churchill Room, Wanstead Library
Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead E11 2RQ**

PROGRAMME

Ballade in F Major, Op.38	Frédéric Chopin (1810 – 49)
Ballade in B minor, S171	Franz Liszt (1811 – 86)
Warsaw Concerto (arr. for solo piano)	Richard Addinsell (1904 – 77)

INTERVAL

Piano Sonata in Bb, D 960	Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)
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PROGRAMME NOTES

Chopin: Ballade in F Major Op.38

This is the second of Chopin's four *ballades* – single-movement musical forms for solo piano initiated by Chopin who regarded them as dance (balletic) pieces. Although frequently played and recorded they are some of the most exacting pieces to play in the pianist's repertoire. They may have possibly been inspired by the 'literary ballades' fashionable in the 19th century which were dramatic narratives with unusual legendary or historical themes. Chopin's ballades are variants of sonata form and much influenced Liszt and Brahms who wrote their own ballades. The F major ballade Op. 38 was composed between 1836 and 1839 and was dedicated to the composer Robert Schumann. The work opens quietly in the key of F major – listen out for the repeated Cs for both left and right hands – working through various melodic themes which are elaborated on and varied in both tempo and style

Liszt: Ballade in B minor S 171

Liszt composed two ballades; his second (B minor) ballade was written in 1853 inspired by Gottfried Burger's poetic and macabre ballad *Lenore* which deals with weird and supernatural themes of an undead corpse, cemeteries, skeletons and spectres! The work begins with a menacing theme accompanied by ominous rumblings followed by a beautiful and contrasting allegretto. The middle section contains virtuosic militaristic rhythms possibly suggesting "good vs evil". Themes are then transformed and the ballade begins its close with a variant of the forbidding opening theme, finally finishing softly and gently.

Addinsell: Warsaw Concert (arr. For solo piano)

The British film composer Richard Addinsell wrote the *Warsaw Concerto* for the 1941 war-time film *Dangerous Moonlight* essentially a love-story film about a fictional fighter

pilot/composer of the Warsaw Concerto, Stefan Radetzky, who meets American war correspondent Carole Peters in German occupied Poland. The work is a short piece of programme music for piano and orchestra written in the style of Rachmaninov although this evening you will hear it an arrangement for solo piano. The *Warsaw Concerto* became very popular in Britain during WWII and has been so ever since. It has been much adapted, borrowed and arranged in popular music culture from people such as the English crooner *Ronnie Hilton* (1959) to the musical entertainer *Liberace* (1952) and the pop-duo *The Carpenters* (1976).

Schubert: Piano Sonata Piano Sonata in Bb, D.960

Schubert's last piano sonata D960 was written in the final months of his life but was not published until about ten years after his death. Along with the other two late piano sonatas D958 and D959 this last sonata is considered to one of Schubert's most mature and important works. The sonata has four movements (I) Molto moderato, (II) Andante sostenuto, (III) Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza – Trio, (IV) Allegro ma non troppo – Presto. Like the D958/959 sonatas, the D960 can be considered as highly biographical and alludes to other compositions by Schubert and also to stormy and tempestuous times in the composer's life.

JOHN PAUL EKINS - BIOGRAPHY

John Paul Ekins is in great demand as a piano recitalist, concerto soloist and chamber musician and has performed at many prestigious venues in the UK and abroad including the Wigmore Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall and the the Zurich Tonhalle.

He decided to take up a career as a piano soloist at the relatively late age of 16. He discarded a place to read music at Cambridge University and enrolled on a four-year undergraduate course at the Royal College of Music, London, because he felt that the RCM would offer greater practical opportunities for his development as a concert pianist. He graduated from the RCM with First Class Honours in 2009 and in 2011 graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with a Master's of Performance (Distinction). He was the recipient of a Music Education Award from the Musicians Benevolent Fund and receives generous support from Making Music, The Concordia Foundation, The Razumovsky Trust and The Keyboard Charitable Trust.

In 2013 he made his Royal Albert Hall debut performing Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue with the Southbank Sinfonia. He has also performed concertos by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich and Gershwin with orchestras throughout the UK.

International Competition successes include some 19 awards, scholarships and prizes. He was also accepted onto the prestigious Britten-Pears Young Artists Programme and was selected to appear in Making Music's Concert Promoter's Network Brochure 2013-14. He was also the only successful pianist in Making Music's Young Concert Artists Competition 2012 and as such was a Recommended Artist under Making Music's Philip & Dorothy Green Award scheme.

Educational and outreach work is enormously important to John Paul too; he has given workshops and masterclass-recitals with great success in the UK and was recently appointed as piano teacher at St. Paul's School, London. John Paul has been particularly honoured to be presented to Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Prince Philip at a Reception for Young Performers at Buckingham Palace.

Redbridge Music Society's next three recitals events

- Tuesday 22nd March Tatjana Roos – violin recital
- Tuesday 26th April Alexandra Whittingham - classical guitar recital
- Tuesday 24th May Oliver Wass – harp recital/demonstration

All events start at 8 pm and will be held at the Churchill Room, Wanstead Library. They all feature exceptionally talented and award-winning young musicians/

Tickets available at the door on the evening: £10 (visitors) £7 (members)
Full-time students are admitted free.

For information about Redbridge Music Society and for details about membership, please contact
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