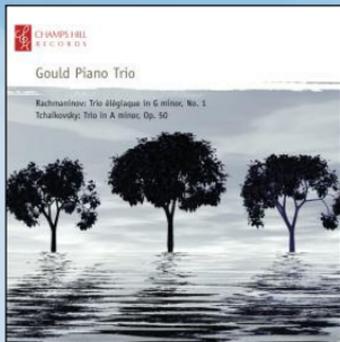


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TRACK LISTING

SONATA FOR CELLO & PIANO IN C MAJOR, Op.119 | SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | <i>i</i> Andante grave | 12'06 |
| 2 | <i>ii</i> Moderato | 05'22 |
| 3 | <i>iii</i> Allegro, ma non troppo | 08'46 |

SONATA FOR CELLO & PIANO IN D MINOR, Op.40 | DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|
| 4 | <i>i</i> Allegro non troppo | 12'47 |
| 5 | <i>ii</i> Allegro | 03'20 |
| 6 | <i>iii</i> Largo | 08'42 |
| 7 | <i>iv</i> Allegro | 04'21 |

8 **NOCTURNE IN D MINOR, Op.19 No.4** | PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893) 05'09

9 **PEZZO CAPRICCIOSO IN B MINOR, Op.62** | PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY 07'31

10 **CHANT DU MÉNÉSTREL, Op.71** | ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV (1865–1936) 04'08

11 **POLOVTSIAN DANCES FROM PRINCE IGOR** | ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833–1887) 04'01

12 **IN THE STYLE OF ALBÉNIZ** | RODION SHCHEDRIN (b.1932) 03'59

Total playing time: **80'15**

Produced, engineered and edited by David Hinitt

Recorded from the 23rd to 25th March 2015 in the Music Room, Champs Hill, West Sussex, UK

Executive Producer for Champs Hill Records: Alexander Van Ingen

Label Manager for Champs Hill Records: Matt Buchanan

FOREWORD

Although my parents grew up in different environments – my mother is of Jewish descent and my father Armenian/Azerbaijani of Christian and Muslim origin – they were both schooled in the Soviet music system. It is because of this history that I find it incredibly natural to have such love for works by Russian composers.

Being given the exciting opportunity to record these masterpieces for Champs Hill Records has brought me one step closer on the limitless path of comprehending the message of these composers.


Jamal Aliyev

The idea to record a programme of solely Russian repertoire came to us instantly. I was born in Ukraine, which at that time was a part of Soviet Union. Both of my parents, also pianists, studied together in Moscow. I was raised and taught by them in the Russian school tradition, so naturally the Russian music and culture has always played a huge role in my life and education. I was enormously happy to be given the amazing opportunity to record these pieces with Champs Hill Records, who provided the best conditions imaginable for us perform the most productive, inspired work. Jamal and I share a similar approach and understanding of this music, as his origins also tied to Russia/the former Soviet Union. Perhaps this is one of the reasons playing with Jamal was so easy and special.


Anna Fedorova

When Prokofiev heard the 20-year-old Rostropovich perform his Cello Concerto in 1947, he was inspired to compose a sonata for him. This late period of Prokofiev's life is rather cello-orientated. As well as re-working the concerto with Rostropovich's assistance, he worked on a concertino and a solo cello sonata, both left unfinished. It was Rostropovich's phenomenal artistry which helped to keep Prokofiev's inspiration alight at a most difficult time for Soviet composers. In common with many other 20th-century Russians, Prokofiev had chosen exile, but he subsequently – and surprisingly – returned, resettling in Moscow in 1936. Twelve years later he and other composers suffered official criticism in the notorious Zhdanov Decree, but in answer to this humiliation he produced an affirmative, attractively diatonic cello sonata, completed in the spring of 1949. In keeping with the authorities' demand for more accessible music, Prokofiev composed a sonata of especially direct and cloudless character, almost entirely free from the subversive or abrasive elements common to many of his earlier works.

At the head of the manuscript of the Cello Sonata Prokofiev wrote "Man! The word has such a proud sound!" – a quotation from Maxim Gorky's play *The Lower Depths*, aptly reflected in the noble bearing of the opening theme. At the recapitulation this melody becomes even more dignified in its sonorous octave doubling. This opening movement is blessed with a prodigal amount of memorable material, remarkable even for such a phenomenally gifted melodist as Prokofiev. A contrasting rhythmic idea is introduced by the cello (*Moderato animato*) and the coda has some hyper-active passage-work, but the over-riding impression is of radiant eloquence and simplicity. The poetic ending includes the imaginative effect of *tremolo*-like oscillation between two harmonics.

The central movement is predominantly playful and childlike, lacking the malicious or sardonic undercurrents of many Prokofiev scherzos, and has a contrasting middle section (*Andante dolce*) based on a generously expressive melody characterised by wide intervals. This is Prokofiev at his most endearing. The principal melody of the sonata-rondo finale, again with many wide intervals, establishes a genial tone, but

here, as in the opening movement, the composer's fondness for unprepared shifts of key adds piquancy. One episode, marked *Andantino*, introduces a more intimate mood amidst the prevailing high spirits, and the coda recalls the very opening theme of the sonata in grandiose manner. Seriously ill in hospital, Prokofiev was unable to attend the premiere, given by Rostropovich and Sviatoslav Richter on 1st March 1950.

Shostakovich began his Cello Sonata in mid-August 1934 and completed it within a few weeks. At that time he cultivated a style of greater simplicity and before he had even begun the sonata he expressed his intention to compose a work in classical style. The piece was commissioned by Viktor Kubatsky, principal cello of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, founder of the Stradivarius Quartet and recital partner of the composer. Having fallen in love with Yelena Konstantinovskaya, a 20-year-old translator, Shostakovich separated from his wife Nina. Divorce papers were prepared, but husband and wife were reunited the following year. The sonata-form opening movement begins with a lyrical though latterly rather restless melody which soon develops into a more strenuous passage with triplet figuration, eventually arriving at a *fortissimo* climax. A second theme, *molto espressivo* in B major, is introduced by the cello. The development section is dominated by an idea which Shostakovich has introduced at the very end of the exposition – an enigmatic, potentially subversive element in low octaves and of distinctive staccato rhythm. In the final section of the movement, marked *Largo*, the cello recalls the first theme above a stalking piano accompaniment in clipped quavers, before the subversive element has the last word deep in bass.

The much shorter second movement is a heavily accented scherzo of rugged humour and with an abundance of material. Scintillating groups of arpeggios played by the cello in *glissando* harmonics are the most striking incidental feature. The ending is dismissive. Bleak and sombre in character, the *Largo* is akin to the final act of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, the opera which was denounced by the Soviet authorities after its premiere in January 1934. The cello introduces both main themes, the first

muted, while the piano plays an accompanying role almost throughout, its only sustained melodic passage being a recall of the noble second theme at a much higher pitch than originally. At times reminiscent of the burlesque parts of the Concerto for piano, trumpet and strings (1933), the *rondo-finale* is characterised by sardonic humour, in extreme contrast with the *Largo*. In the first episode the cello's manic passage-work in 6/8 is pitted against 2/4 in the piano. Later the piano has a long section of even more frenetic semiquavers, before the cello continues the momentum in the background against the second reprise of the opening theme. In the *coda* the *legato* line of the piano is accompanied by the cello's strumming, and again the ending is perfunctory. Both this relatively early work and Prokofiev's late sonata are among the landmark cello works of the 20th century.

Tchaikovsky's publisher Pyotr Jurgenson commissioned the *6 Morceaux* for piano, Opus 19 in 1873. *The Nocturne* in D minor, the fourth piece, is marked *Andante sentimentale* and is based on the kind of memorable theme which came naturally to Tchaikovsky, irrespective of whether he was occupied with symphonies or with works of lesser stature. Its middle section (*Più mosso*, in 3/4) is followed by the return of the opening melody, now with a graceful new accompaniment. Tchaikovsky himself made an arrangement for cello and orchestra in 1888, but this cello and piano version was arranged (and transposed from C sharp minor into D minor) by Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, the cellist for whom Tchaikovsky would compose his *Variations on a Rocco theme*. The soloist in the premiere of the cello version of the Nocturne was Anatoly Brandukov, for whom Tchaikovsky also wrote the *Pezzo capriccioso* in B minor in 1887. Following the arresting introduction, the main theme is a stepwise ascending melody (*molto cantabile e grazioso*) of typically unaffected charm. The "capriccioso" of the title reflects not only the demisemiquaver figuration in the alternating episodes, but also the rhapsodic tendencies of the cello part, as it takes wing with groups of triplets in the principal sections. No less unpredictably, this delightful piece does not finally return to the opening melody, but ends with the brilliant figuration, crescendoing to *fortissimo*, and an abrupt cadence.

Glazunov's *Chant du Ménestrel* (*Minstrel's Song*) dates from 1900 and was originally scored for cello and orchestra. A brief introduction leads to an eloquent melody in F sharp minor, marked *dolce ed appassionato*. After a *Poco più mosso* middle section in D major – less soulful, more genial – the original theme returns, now with melody and accompaniment roles reversed.

Borodin worked on *Prince Igor* intermittently for nearly twenty years. Still unfinished at his death, the opera was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazounov. The story is based on a twelfth-century epic telling of the struggle between Prince Igor, leader of the Russians (who are Christian), and the Polovtsi, a pagan and nomadic eastern tribe. Igor is captured but escapes with the help of Ovlur, a Polovtsian soldier who has converted to Christianity. The *Polovtsian Dances* constitute the finale of Act Two, as sensuous slave-girls perform for Igor's entertainment. This exhilarating sequence displays Borodin's beguiling melodic gift as well as the harsh, fantastic and barbaric qualities which are equally characteristic of the opera in general. Prince Igor was premiered in St. Petersburg on 23 October, 1890. This version for cello and piano has been arranged by the cellist Jamal Aliyev.

Shchedrin's *In the Style of Albéniz* dates from 1952 when he was still a student at the Moscow Conservatoire. Shchedrin originally composed the piece for solo piano but alternative versions include his own 1995 arrangement for cello and piano and several transcriptions by other hands. Pungently Spanish in character, it also has a strong flavour of caricature, with halting rhythms and extravagant, flamenco-like gestures. The result is much more volatile than any music Albéniz himself ever composed. Shchedrin dedicated the piece to his future wife, the famous prima ballerina assoluta Maya Plisetskaya (1925–2015). He later arranged two Albéniz tangos for her.

Philip Borg-Wheeler

I JAMAL ALIYEV

BBC Introducing Classical Artist Jamal Aliyev is rapidly becoming one of the most sought after cellists of his generation.

Aliyev has performed frequently on BBC Radio 3; in 2012 when he was invited to perform on Sean Rafferty's programme *In Tune* following his solo debut BBC Radio 3 live broadcast with the BBC Concert Orchestra at the Menuhin Hall in London. Aliyev has subsequently returned to perform on *In Tune* several times, as well as for a performance for the television station London Live.

Jamal Aliyev has performed in many prestigious festivals including the Menuhin Festival in Switzerland, where he performed solo with the Yehudi Menuhin School Orchestra. He is the First Prize winner of several international competitions, including the Trakya International Competition (2002); V. Antonio Janigro International Competition (2004); Muriel Taylor Cello Competition (2014); Croydon Concerto Competition (2015); Bromsgrove International Competition (2015) and Eastbourne Concerto Competition (2016). Aliyev has also twice won both the Royal College of Music Concerto Competition (2014 and 2015) and the Royal College of Music Violoncello Competition (2014 and 2015), the college where he also studies.

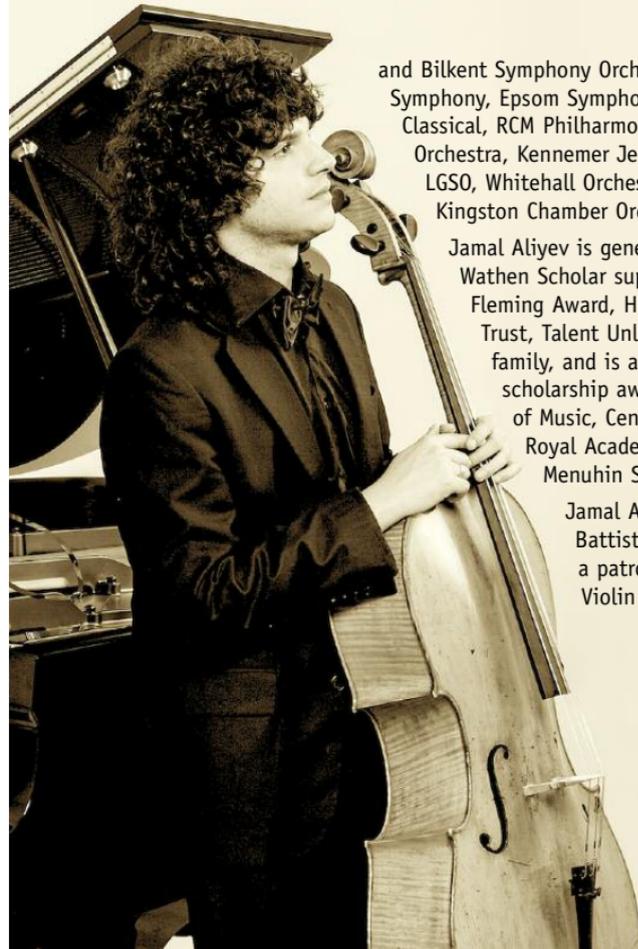
Jamal Aliyev enjoys performing as both a solo artist and a chamber musician across Europe and Asia. He has performed in prestigious venues such as the Wigmore Hall (London), Royal Festival Hall (London), Windsor Castle (UK), The Menuhin Hall (London), Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing), Reims Cathedral (France), the Arts Parliament House (Singapore), the Presidential Concert Hall (Turkey), Istrian Assembly Hall (Croatia), The Saanen Church (Gstaad) and the Rachmaninov Concert Hall (Moscow) amongst others.

As well as his appearance with BBC Concert Orchestra, Aliyev has collaborated as a soloist on several occasions with orchestras including the Presidential Symphony

and Bilkent Symphony Orchestra of Turkey, Guildford Symphony, Epsom Symphony, Croydon Symphony, RCM Classical, RCM Philharmonic, Yehudi Menuhin School Orchestra, Kennemer Jeugd Orkest, Orpheus Sinfonia, LGSO, Whitehall Orchestra, Eskisehir Symphony and Kingston Chamber Orchestra.

Jamal Aliyev is generously sponsored by: Neville Wathen Scholar supported by an Amaryllis Fleming Award, Hattori Foundation, Martin Trust, Talent Unlimited and the Bowerman family, and is a recipient of four full scholarship awards from the Royal College of Music, Central Music School of Moscow, Royal Academy of Music and The Yehudi Menuhin School.

Jamal Aliyev plays on a Giovanni Battista Gabrielli 1752, on loan from a patron of the Beares International Violin Society.





Anna Fedorova is one of the world's leading young pianists. From an early age, she demonstrated an innate musical maturity and outstanding technical abilities. Her international concert career took off while she was only a child, and audiences around the world were stunned by the depth and power of her musical expression. Critics have praised Anna's signature "sweet modesty and wild expression", which rendered listeners "completely taken by surprise, compelled and astonished."

In September 2013 Anna performed Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.2 to open the season of Sunday Morning Concerts at the Great Hall of the Royal Concertgebouw. Within one and a half years, the recording of this concert received over 3,000,000 views on YouTube and was highly praised by several renowned musicians. In November 2015 she returned to the hall's Sunday Morning Concerts series to perform Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.3, in a performance that was streamed live on TV, internet and radio.

She has performed in some of the most prestigious concert halls of Europe, North and South America, and Asia, including the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall, the Tonhalle Zurich, The Palacio de Bellas Artes (Mexico), the Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), Cadogan Hall (London), the Warsaw Philharmonic Concert Hall, the Polish Baltic Philharmonic, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, Hamburg Laeiszhalle, Belem Cultural Centre in Lisbon and many others. She has also appeared at numerous music festivals such as the Verbier Festival (Switzerland), Annecy Classic Festival (France),

Menuhin Festival Gstaad (Switzerland), Ravinia Festival (USA), the IKIF (New York, USA), Violon sur le sable (France), the Rubinstein Piano Festival (Lodz, Poland), the International Piano Festival in Trieste (Italy), the Orpheum Music Festival (Zurich, Switzerland), Musikdorf Ernen (Switzerland), the Corfu Festival of Arts (Greece), the Chopin Festival in Antonin (Poland), International Chamber Music Festival Koblenz (Germany) amongst others.

Having mastered a formidable concerto repertoire, she has played with orchestras around the world, among which are the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orquestra Filarmónica de Buenos Aires (Argentina), the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne (Switzerland), the Residentie Orkest and the Camerata Amsterdam (Netherlands), the Tokyo New City Orchestra (Japan), the Philharmonia of the Nations and the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie (Germany), the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, the Xalapa Symphony Orchestra and the OFUNAM (Mexico), the Israel Chamber Orchestra, the Polish Camerata and many others. Conductors with whom Anna has had the pleasure of performing include Jaap Van Zweden, Alun Francis, Andrew Grams, Howard Griffiths, Justus Franz, Kevin Griffiths, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Jerome Pillement, Shinik Hahm, Alejo Pérez, Martin Panteleev, David Lockington, Bartholomeus Van De Velde and many others.

Anna has claimed top prizes at numerous international piano competitions, including the International Rubinstein 'In Memoriam' piano competition, the Moscow International Frederick Chopin Competition for young pianists, the Lyon Piano Competition and the Verbier Festival Academy Award. She is also two-time laureate of the Dorothy MacKenzie Artist Recognition Scholarship Award at the International Keyboards Institute & Festival (New York, USA). A graduate of the Lysenko School of Music in Kiev (studio of Borys Fedorov), Anna is a student of Norma Fisher at the Royal College of Music in London, as well as a David Young Piano Prize Holder supported by a Soirée d'Or Award and Keyboard Trust. Additionally, Anna studies at the prestigious Accademia Pianistica in Imola, Italy, under professor Leonid Margarius. She has also received artistic guidance from world-renowned pianists such as Alfred Brendel and Menahem Pressler, and is regularly mentored by Steven Isserlis and Andras Schiff.

In Autumn 2014 Anna released her two first albums – a solo CD of works by Brahms, Liszt and Chopin under DiscAnnecy Label and a disc of Rachmaninoff with Piano Classics.