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the BBC National Orchestra of Wales

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SHAPIRA: MIDNIGHT JOURNEYS

with narration by Sir Salman Rushdie

ITTAI SHAPIRA *violin*

with

HAGAI SHAHAM *violin*

ROBERT PLANE *clarinet*

THOMAS CARROLL *cello*

SEPHARDIC JOURNEYS | MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN | MAGYAR

BBC National Orchestra of Wales ~ Rumon Gamba
Arpeggione Kammerorchester ~ Robert Bokor





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FOREWORD

MIDNIGHT JOURNEYS Double Concertos by Ittai Shapira

I started composing music in an attempt to regain and connect fragments of memories as an act of recovery from a single act of violence over a decade ago. Eight concertos and fifteen short pieces later, with the help of leading experts in multiple fields, I write music aimed at helping individuals and groups recover and rebuild in the long term. These concertos are examples of works developed through www.soundpotential.org, an organization dedicated to music and healing on a medical, educational and societal level.

Selected sequences from these compositions will be used to work with patients, refugees, women recovering from violence and abuse, veterans with PTSD, and as an educational tool for societal healing.



I TRACK LISTING

ITTAI SHAPIRA (b.1972)**SEPHARDIC JOURNEYS: CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CELLO**

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | <i>i</i> Prayers and Rituals | 11'25 |
| 2 | <i>ii</i> Doubt | 08'18 |
| 3 | <i>iii</i> Rejoicing/Celebration | 06'22 |

Ittai Shapira *violin* Thomas Carroll *cello*

Rumon Gamba conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales

MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN: CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND CLARINET

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 4 | <i>i</i> Kashmir/Methwald | 10'04 |
| 5 | <i>ii</i> Pakistan/Jamila Singer | 12'04 |
| 6 | <i>iii</i> Anything You Want to Be, You Can Be | 10'19 |

Ittai Shapira *violin* Robert Plane *clarinet*

Rumon Gamba conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales

Sir Salman Rushdie *narrator***MAGYAR: CONCERTO FOR TWO VIOLINS**

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------|
| 7 | <i>i</i> Roma | 08'35 |
| 8 | <i>ii</i> The Potion | 09'11 |
| 9 | <i>iii</i> Mulatas/Gypsy Raves | 06'00 |

Ittai Shapira *violin* Hagai Shaham *violin*

Robert Bokor conducts the Arpeggione Kammerorchester

82'20

Tracks 1-3 Produced & edited by Matthew Bennett Engineered by Andrew Mellor & Huw Thomas
Mixed by Andrew Mellor Recorded on 14th & 15th September 2017 in the BBC Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff, Wales

Tracks 4-6 Produced by Alexander Van Ingen Engineered by Andrew Mellor Assisted by Huw Thomas
Edited by Claire Hay Mixed by Andrew Mellor Recorded on 12th & 13th September 2017 in the BBC Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff, Wales
Narration engineered by Duff Harris at Eastside Sound

Tracks 7-9 Produced, engineered & edited by Christian Zimmerli www.zimmerli.de Assistant: Marcus Reineboth
Recorded on 1st & 2nd July 2013 in the Reichshofsaal Lustenau, Austria

Tray photograph by Carlos Gutierrez, NY PR Photo

Executive Producer for Champs Hill Records: Alexander Van Ingen

Label Manager for Champs Hill Records: Joanna Wilson

I PROGRAMME NOTES

Sephardic Journeys: Concerto for Violin and Cello

Sephardic Journeys is a musical work in three main movements, played without interruption. Every section of the piece represents a country or a culture in the Sephardic Jews' past. Each is connected by a reminder of the original motif, representing a sense of nostalgia for the country they left or from which they were expelled, and a sense of excitement for a new chapter in their life. The combination of preserving their tradition while adapting to a new culture played a large role in the fascinating musical world we call *Ladino*.

The idea behind writing this piece is to emphasize a sense of identity and empathy. The Sephardic sound world is rich and vast – a wonderful example of Jewish Heritage.

This is the third large-scale work I am basing on the Jewish tradition. The first was *Magyar* inspired by my violin teacher Ilona Feher, who came to Israel after the Holocaust. The second, *The Ethics*, is my response to *Brundibár* – the children's opera that was performed in the concentration camp Theresienstadt; I was fortunate to have premiered this long-term project at Carnegie Hall in Spring 2015.

I see music as an important opportunity to connect with Jews and non-Jews alike and help expose a facet of Jewish life that is not stereotypical. It is also my wish to explore how a complex history might help us understand the true challenges of achieving a balance between tradition and integration, which seems to be more relevant than ever with the current migrant crisis. From the Judeo-Arabic dialect in Morocco to the history of the Maranos, it is of little wonder that this musical style connects Jewish, Arabic and Christian music in an authentic fashion.

While studying and collecting folk material for this work, I found myself immersed by the many influences that were apparent in this musical genre: music and culture of Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Yemen, Uganda and Latin America. The Concerto is written in three main movements: *Prayers and Rituals*; *Doubt*; *Rejoicing/Celebration*.





On a personal note, while exploring a whole new sound world underexposed within a symphonic context, this project brought me back to my childhood in Israel in the 1980s. On the rare occasion that my parents could not drive me to my violin lessons from Jerusalem to Holon, I would take the 404 bus from the central bus station. It was the popular music played in the background of this setting, the music of Haim Moshe, Zohar Argov, Yehoram Gaon, Margalit Tsanaani, and later on the music of Yasmin Levy, Mor Karbassi, and Rivka Raz that stayed with me all those years and found their expression in this piece.

This piece is dedicated to my parents, who taught me that the right combination of imagination, planning and perseverance can make any journey possible. And what a journey this project has been.

Co-commissioned by the Krueger Foundation; Supported by the Victor Herbert Foundation, and the Adele and John Gray Endowment Fund.

Special thanks: One to One Global, Grasshopper Global

In Memoriam:

Harvey and Constance Krueger

David Kleiman, Heritage Muse

In collaboration with the Ilona Feher Foundation

Midnight's Children: Concerto for Violin and Clarinet

Midnight's Children was written as a quest to integrate my love for British symphonic music and Indian folk music. As my musical response to the epic novel developed, the composition became increasingly influenced by the rare privilege of continuous conversations with its author, Sir Salman Rushdie, and visual artist Alexander Klingspor.

The work is in three main movements, which respond to the three books in the novel, telling the history of India from 1915 to 1978.

The first movement, *Kashmir/Methwald*, starts with a beautiful dawn, depicting the heavenly Kashmiri sky and the growing pains of India's independence from 1947 onwards.

The second, *Pakistan/Jamila Singer*, focuses on the devastating consequences of the Indo-Pakistani partition and consequent wars.

The third, *Anything You Want to Be, You Can Be*, is an epilogue to the novel, looking at future generations and lessons learned from the past.

The harmonic structure is based on numerology and its symbolism in the book, which I translated into their corresponding soundwaves. Thematically, the piece integrates traditional Western music with the musical motifs used in Indian mythology, employing its traditional forms such as the *Raaga*, and the rhythmical *Tihai* and *Taala*.

Influenced by the auspicious number 1001, which appears throughout the novel, the piece starts and ends with the same melodic palindrome-like pattern. The ending has a jazzy feel, which was very popular in Indian culture in the 1970s.

Rushdie's magical realism inspired the sound world of this Concerto, which was the first step in a growing project titled *The Midnight's Children Project*. Alexander Klingspor has finished a beautiful painting with the same title, and an animated version of the painting in the form of a rotating clock with narration is being developed for the concert platform and lectures.

This piece is dedicated to my sister Romy, who not only introduced me to Indian music, but dedicates her life to promoting tolerance and understanding between people of all backgrounds – at midnight and around the clock.

Supported by the Susan W Rose Fund.

In association with Sound Potential, Inc.





MAGYAR: Concerto for Two Violins

The impulse to write a double violin concerto came from a seemingly random place: it was my reaction to the film *Seven Pounds*, in which the main character sets off on a journey to commit seven random acts of kindness. For the seventh and final act, he decides to donate his heart to a woman in need of a transplant and with whom he subsequently falls in love. After the surgery, the woman wakes up only to find that she is cursed with the burden of guilt, having a new heart, yet having to live with the tragedy of losing her lover forever.

The Gypsy, fantasy-like story of the film reminded me of a Gypsy legend and provoked a strong reaction in me – spontaneously generating a sequence of 27 notes in my mind, which would not leave my thoughts for weeks. It reminded me of my violin teacher, Ilona Feher, a Hungarian-born woman who dedicated her life to giving generations of students the gift of music. Like the main character in the film, Feher suffered from loss: she lost most of her family and friends in the Holocaust. In contrast to the character who spent his life running away from his pain, she decisively started a new life, moved to a new country, Israel, and started a new family, one comprised of her students. She was a model of strength and hope for all of us. In her final days, she suggested that I take lessons from her prized student Hagai Shaham (now a well-known violin virtuoso), for whom I wrote this composition. Shaham's musical imprint on this Concerto is unmistakable. In addition to working together as musicians, Shaham and I started a foundation bearing our teacher's name. This was our way of passing forward Ilona Feher's gift of music.

This idea of “paying it forward” is translated into the Double Concerto, with its musical give-and-take between the two solo violin lines. This interplay was sensitively handled by our conductor Robert Bokor, who is himself an accomplished violinist. While researching Hungarian music for this piece, I explored scores by Bartók, Kodály, Ligeti, Hubay, Lakatos and Palya Bea, as well as Hungarian military

and wedding songs. This wide-ranging musical quest was my way of immersing myself in the Hungarian musical tradition – a tradition that formed a foundation for the Israeli school of violin-playing by Ilona Feher.

The first movement, *Roma*, refers to the Gypsy population that originated in India in the Middle Ages. This was an important starting point as it introduced me to a new sound, unlike the stereotypical Romani Gypsy sound that immediately comes to most listeners' minds. This was the catalyst for developing my own sound world.

The second movement, *The Potion*, is inspired by a Gypsy tale in which a woman puts a potion in her lover's drink so that he will marry her. The man wakes up shortly after the potion wears off. Both he and the woman face a shattered illusion and the tragedy of a mistake that cannot be undone. This movement is the heart of the piece, containing the 27-note sequence that conveys both the beauty and tragedy often found in the lives of Gypsies.

The third movement, titled *Mulatas/Gypsy Raves*, is a Hungarian party that lasts all night. It is a series of party dances – an optimistic and playful finale to the *Magyar* (Hungarian) *Concerto*, celebrating the joy and pride of Hungarian culture.

The work was commissioned by and is dedicated to Harvey and Connie Krueger, whose generosity and determination have had an immeasurable impact on Israel's cultural life.

MAGYAR is published in association with CBD Music. I would like to thank Hagai Shaham for his profound artistic influence on this piece, which is written for him, in memory of Ilona Feher.

I would also like to thank Theodore Wiprud and Dave Heath for their musical advice; Stephen Cabell for his tremendous help in editing the score. A special thanks to my devoted colleagues Robert Bokor, Thomas Carroll, Rumon Gamba, Robert Plane; and Champs Hill Records, for making this recording a reality.

© Ittai Shapira





Midnight's Children – text by Salman Rushdie

MOVEMENT 1: KASHMIR/METHWALD

One Kashmiri morning in the early spring of 1915, my grandfather would try and recall his childhood springs in Paradise.

At the precise instant of India's arrival at independence, I tumbled forth into the world. I, Saleem Sinai, had become heavily embroiled in fate.

Silent cousins... monkeys on leashes, ceasing their chatter-cobras coiled in baskets – and the circling fortune-teller, finding history speaking through his lips. Beginning: "A son.....such a son!" And then it comes, "A son, Sahiba, who will never be older than his motherland – neither older nor younger: There will be two heads-but you shall see only one-there will be knees and a nose, a nose and knees....Newspapers praise him, two mothers raise him, bicyclists love him – but, crowds will shove him! Sisters will weep; cobras will creep. Washing will hide him-voices will guide him! Friends mutilate him-blood will betray him! Spitoons will brain him-doctors will drain him-jungle will claim him-wizards reclaim him! Soldiers will try him-tyrants will fry him! He will have sons without having sons! He will be old before he is old! *And he will die...before he is dead*".

And now Miss Mary Pereira made her contribution, condemning the rich-born child to accordions and poverty.

I can still see, a personal letter, signed by the Prime Minister of India; it has a headline "MIDNIGHT'S CHILD" the happy child of that glorious hour!

Understand what I am saying: during the first hour of August 15th 1947 – between midnight and one a.m. – no less than one thousand and one children were born. Inevitably, a number of those children failed to survive, no less than four hundred and twenty. 420 has been, since time immemorial, the number associated with fraud, deception and trickery.

Mian Abdullah opposed the partition; the Hummingbird's hum became higher and higher. Did the bombs fall? Were explosions true?

Having been expelled from one gang, I decided to form my own
"The Midnight Children's Conference!"

MOVEMENT 2: PAKISTAN/JAMILA SINGER

I won't deny it: I never forgave Karachi for not being Bombay. Through the hole in the perforated sheet, Jamila Singer dedicated herself to patriotism.

Love in Bombay: Evelyn Lilith Burns arrived on New Year's Day, 1957...I fell in love with Evie. But love was a curious, chain reactive thing that year.

During 1971, ten million refugees fled across the borders of East Pakistan-Bangladesh. The biggest migration in the history of the human race....Bigger than Exodus, larger than the Partition crowds, the many headed monsters poured into India. Who can say why how who; but the grenade was certainly thrown. People would never forget how a mosque had screamed the terrible agony of war! It's not fair, the buddha thought, and then, like a child, over and over, "it's not fair"

"Saleem...you remember....I feel like to hug you to pieces"

I married Parvati the witch on February 23rd, 1975

Adaam Sinai was born on the stroke of midnight-June 25th, 1975. He was born with ears which flapped so high and wide that hey must have heard the shootings in Bihar and the screams of lathi-charged dock-workers in Bombay.

Dear Children. How can I say this?...Politics..at the best of times a bad dirty business....What can't be cured must be endured. I lied about Shiva's death..I'm still terrified of him.



I shall die with Kashmir on my lips.

Or dreams: because last night the ghost of Reverend Mother appeared to me, staring down through the hole in a perforated cloud.

MOVEMENT 3: ANYTHING YOU WANT TO BE, YOU CAN BE

It's night; Padma is in position: on the wall above my head, a lizard just gobbled up a fly.

"There is a future to think of...Let us be married, Mister"

Children: We've won! Like a magic spell...Saleem returned to the city of his birth, the abode of his deepest nostalgia"

Anything you want to be, you can be!

Unity is invincibility!

As we traveled to Bombay...Picture Singh...merely looked like the old snake charmer.

Adaam was a member of a second generation, far tougher than the first.

All games have morals; for every ladder you climb, a snake is waiting just around the corner, and for every snake, a ladder will compensate.

Yes...it was my Bombay...

How to end? HAPPILY!

BIOGRAPHIES

Photograph by Carlos Gutierrez, NY PR Photo



Ittai Shapira *violin / composer*

In his dual role as violinist-composer, Ittai Shapira is a rarity in the 21st century, but follows a long line of musicians who, in writing and performing their own works, have relished both forms of creativity.

Described by the *New York Times* as "an Israeli dynamo with a flourishing solo violin career" and "Electrifying" by the *London Times*, Ittai Shapira regularly performs with prestigious orchestras across the globe. Engagements include performances with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Belgrade Philharmonic under Sir Neville Marriner,

Cape Town Philharmonic, Czech National Symphony, Detroit Symphony under Yoel Levi, English Chamber Orchestra, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Israeli Virtuosi at Alice Tully Hall hosted by Itzhak Perlman, The Knights, the Philharmonia, Polish Chamber Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Russian Philharmonic with Thomas Sanderling, and the Symphony orchestras of Budapest and Shanghai. Performances include a tour of Finland and Sweden with the Oulu Sinfonia. Shapira made his Carnegie Hall Debut in 2003 with the Orchestra of St. Luke's. He has premiered 19 concertos and recorded 20 CDs.

In addition to performing standard repertoire, he has collaborated with the Daniel Pearl Foundation for an HBO Film, has performed with Glenn Close and Brooke Shields, and is now collaborating with scientists at Weill Cornell Medicine on Music and the Brain as Artist in Residence. Shapira serves as Artist in Residence and Consultant for the Madison Theatre at Molloy College, and has been touring performing his own Concertos for Violin and Orchestra.

Other concertos include “Chunhyang” for violin and soprano, with philosopher Lauren Park, and “The Ethics” in collaboration with anthropologist Natasha Zaretsky, for violin and chorus, premiered at Carnegie Hall in 2015.

Ittai Shapira studied with Ilona Feher in Israel and Dorothy DeLay and Robert Mann at the Juilliard School. He is the co-founder of the Ilona Feher Foundation with his colleague Hagai Shaham, dedicated to the promotion and nurturing of young Israeli violinists.

He is the Founder and Artistic Director of “Sound Potential”, an organization dedicated to medical, educational and societal healing through music.

The Victor Herbert Foundation has recently given him a special award in recognition and support for his unique projects.

For more information, please visit: www.ittaishapira.com and www.soundpotential.org

Hagai Shaham *violin*

Hailed for his thrilling virtuosity, lustrous tone and profound artistic expression, Hagai Shaham is internationally recognized as one of the most exciting Israeli violinists. Shaham was a student of the renowned Professor Ilona Feher. He continued his studies with Emanuel Borok, Arnold Steinhardt and the Guarneri Quartet.

Shaham’s awards include first prizes at the ARD Munich Competition, Ilona Kornhauser competition, Israel Broadcasting Authority Competition, Clairmont and America-Israel Cultural Foundation’s awards.

As a soloist he has performed with many of the world’s major orchestras, including the English Chamber Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Belgian National Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique Français, Taipei, Singapore and Shanghai Symphony

Orchestras, SWF Baden-Baden Symphony Orchestra, Slovak and Belgrade Philharmonic, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra under Zubin Mehta. He performed with Israel Philharmonic as a soloist together with Mischa Maisky and Mehta at the orchestra’s 70th anniversary celebrations.

Mr. Shaham has performed at Carnegie Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Barbican Centre, Wigmore Hall, Paris Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and Pleyel, Salzburg Mozarteum, Vienna Musikverein, Zurich Tonhalle, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and the Schleswig-Holstein, Reingau, Bad Kissingen, Bodensee, Montpellier, Cerventino, Kuhmo, Casals and Israel festivals.

Hagai Shaham has recorded 30 albums for Hyperion, Nimbus, Avie, Chandos, EMI, Naxos and Decca which have been enthusiastically received by international press.

Mr. Shaham is a member of the Shaham-Erez-Wallfisch trio, which performed on major stages in Europe, N. America and Israel. The trio records for Nimbus Recordings (UK).

Hagai Shaham is a professor at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University, and an Artist in Residence at Stony Brook University, New York. He is a co-founder of the Ilona Feher Foundation for promoting young Israeli violinists.

www.hagaishaham.com





Robert Plane *clarinet*

Robert Plane won the Royal Over-Seas League Music Competition in 1992. Since then his solo and chamber career has taken him to prestigious venues across Europe and beyond, performing Mozart's Clarinet Concerto in Madrid's Auditorio Nacional de Música with the City of London Sinfonia, on tour in the USA with the Virginia Symphony and throughout China with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, during which his performance at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts was broadcast live to a TV audience of six million.

Robert has become particularly known for his performances and recordings of the magnificent English repertoire for clarinet.

Gramophone magazine has praised playing of 'ravishing lyricism and conviction by Robert Plane, who has now surely fully occupied the shoes of the late Thea King in his championship of British clarinet music.' His benchmark recording of Finzi's Clarinet Concerto (BBC Radio 3 *Building a Library* recommendation and part of the Naxos British Music Series which won a Gramophone Award in 1999) is still a regular feature of the playlists of both Radio 3 and Classic FM nearly twenty years after its initial release. He subsequently recorded discs of music by Bax (a further Gramophone Award shortlisting), John Ireland, Howells, Alwyn, Holbrooke, Robin Milford and Stanford, including Stanford's Clarinet Concerto with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. In 2017 his album of Hungarian Folk Music (Champs Hill Records) received great reviews.

Robert made his solo debut at the BBC Proms in 2011 in Simon Holt's double concerto 'Centauromachy'. He gave the world premiere of Piers Hellawell's 'Agricolas', with subsequent performances and a CD recording for Delphian with the Ulster Orchestra and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. Other notable premieres include the clarinet concerto by Diana Burrell, with performances with Royal Northern Sinfonia at the Huddersfield Contemporary Festival and at the Barbican, and Nicola LeFanu's

Concertino. Robert has also formed close partnerships with a number of leading chamber ensembles. He has performed and recorded with the Gould Piano Trio for over twenty years and their recording of Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time* was hailed by *Gramophone* as the 'finest modern version' of this monumental work. He has collaborated with the Maggini, Dante, Auer, Carducci, Sacconi, Cavalleri, Brodsky and Tippett quartets, and has given concerts with the Mandelring Quartet in Germany, the UK and on a West Coast USA tour and a series of recitals in Switzerland with the Swiss Piano Trio.

Alongside his solo and chamber work Robert has held the position of principal clarinet with Royal Northern Sinfonia, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He has played as a guest principal with the Royal Concertgebouw, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

www.robertplane.com

Thomas Carroll *cello*

Described by *The Strad* as a player of 'authority and passion, with an unerring sense of direction, full of colour and underpinned by a clear musical intelligence', Welsh cellist Thomas Carroll launched his career when he won both Young Concert Artists Trust, London and Young Concert Artists, New York. He has since gone on to give critically acclaimed debut recitals at Wigmore Hall (London), Alice Tully Hall (NY) and in Boston, California, Florida and Washington DC, as well performing in many major venues and festivals across Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and America.



photography by Kaupo Kikkas

As a concerto soloist Thomas has appeared with orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, London Mozart Players, Royal and London Philharmonic orchestras, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra (conducted by Heinrich Schiff), English Chamber Orchestra, Prague Philharmonic, Sofia Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the Bayerischer Rundfunk Orchestra.

Much in demand as a chamber musician, Thomas has worked with the Belcea Quartet, Chilingirian Quartet, Endellion Quartet, Yehudi Menuhin, Ivry Gitlis, Gidon Kremer, Steven Isserlis, Mischa Maisky, Yo-Yo Ma, Michael Collins, Julian Rachlin and Janine Jansen, among others. He is also a member of Trio Apaches and the London Conchord Ensemble.

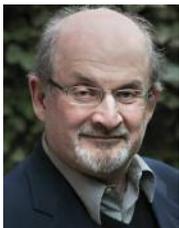
He has recorded over thirty CDs for labels including Champs Hill Records, Orchid Classics, Decca, Naxos, Signum Classics and Paladino Music.

Thomas is Professor of Cello at the Royal College of Music in London and the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, as well as principal cello teacher at the Yehudi Menuhin School.

Sir Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie is the author of thirteen novels including *Midnight's Children*, winner of the 1981 Booker Prize and Best of the Booker in 2008, *The Satanic Verses*, and most recently, *The Golden House*. He is also the author of a book of stories *East, West*, and four works of non-fiction, including his memoir *Joseph Anton*. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a former president of American PEN, Rushdie is currently a Distinguished Writer in Residence at New York University. Salman Rushdie was knighted in 2007 for his services to literature.

www.salmanrushdie.com



Photograph by Beowulf Sheehan

Rumon Gamba conductor

British conductor Rumon Gamba held the positions of Principal Conductor and Music Director of NorrlandsOperan between 2008 and 2015 and Chief Conductor of the Aalborg Symfoniorkester between 2011 and 2015. He was also Chief Conductor and Music Director of Iceland Symphony Orchestra between 2002 and 2010. He regularly leads the BBC orchestras and has appeared at the BBC Proms on a number of occasions.

A champion of new music, Gamba has given several high profile premieres including the world premieres of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys* at English National Opera, Brett Dean's Viola Concerto with the composer and BBC Symphony Orchestra; national premieres of Poul Ruders' *Dancer in the Dark* and Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Blood on the Floor* and *Scherzoid* with NorrlandsOperan and the Australian premiere of the original version of Sibelius' Symphony No.5 with Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Gamba regularly works with orchestras such as WDR Rundfunkorchester, Berner SymphonieOrchester, BBC Symphony, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Belfast, Iceland Symphony, Opera de Toulon, Helsingborg Symphony and Auckland Philharmonia.

Rumon Gamba is an exclusive artist of Chandos Records and appears with their kind permission.

Having studied with Colin Metters at the Royal Academy of Music, Gamba became the first conducting student to receive the DipRAM. The Royal Academy of Music recognised his contribution to music when they made him an Associate that same year.

www.rumongamba.com



Photograph by Andreas Nilsson

Robert Bokor *conductor*

Robert Bokor, Swiss-Serbian conductor has been Chief Conductor of the Arpeggione Orchestra, the resident orchestra at the Palace of Hohenems, Austria, since March 2011. With the Arpeggione Orchestra he has toured extensively through Europe, Asia, North and South America. He is also a frequent guest conductor with over 40 orchestras internationally. From 2008 to 2012 he was Artistic Director of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra and from 2011 to 2015 Artist-in-Residence at the Endless Mountain Music Festival in the USA.

Born in Skopje, Macedonia, in the former Yugoslavia, he grew up in Belgrade where he made his violin solo debut at age of 11 with the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra. After graduating at the University of Arts in Belgrade, he moved in 1991 to Switzerland where he enjoyed a prolific career both as a concertmaster and as a soloist. In 2009 he made his conducting debut with the Arpeggione Orchestra, replacing Vladimir Ashkenazy at very short notice for the concert in Milan's Sala Verdi. Subsequently he was appointed the orchestra's next Chief Conductor, which led to a shift in focus from the violin to conducting.

Sought after as a performer of great stylistic diversity, Robert Bokor has been a strong advocate of contemporary music with his concert appearances including many world premieres. As a passionate and active educator fluent in several languages, Robert Bokor holds masterclasses and workshops worldwide and serves as a judge for national and international music competitions.

www.robertbokor.com

**BBC National Orchestra of Wales**

For over 90 years BBC National Orchestra of Wales has played an integral part in the cultural landscape of Wales, occupying a distinctive role as both broadcast and national symphony orchestra. It performs a busy schedule of live concerts throughout Wales and the rest of the UK, led by its artistic team: Principal Guest Conductor Xian Zhang, Conductor Laureate Tadaaki Otaka and Composer-in-Association Huw Watkins. Part of BBC Wales and supported by the Arts Council of Wales, the Orchestra is an ambassador of Welsh music, championing contemporary composers and musicians. The Orchestra's performances can be heard regularly across the BBC, on Radio 3, Radio Wales and Radio Cymru. BBC NOW performs biennially at BBC Cardiff Singer of the World and annually at the BBC Proms. Internationally, the Orchestra tours to China with Xian Zhang in December 2018 and as part of its extensive South America tour in 2015, the BBC NOW visited the Welsh colony in Patagonia where musicians worked in schools and with the community. The Orchestra's home is at BBC Hoddinott Hall in Cardiff Bay, where BBC NOW continues its work as one of the UK's foremost soundtrack and recording orchestras.



www.bbc.co.uk/bbcnow

Arpeggione Kammerorchester

Arpeggione Kammerorchester, resident orchestra at the Renaissance Palace of Hohenems, Austria, was founded in 1991 by its present artistic director Irakli Gogibedashvili. Since its beginnings the orchestra has played more than 700 concerts in all parts of the world, including Europe, Israel, Russia, Asia, South

America and the USA, and has appeared regularly in major concert halls such as the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Tonhalle Zurich, Santa Cecilia of Rome, Sala Vediti in Milan, the Great Philharmonic Hall St. Petersburg and the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. The orchestra



has produced numerous CDs, its concerts being recorded and broadcast by radio and TV stations such as ORF, SFR, DRS, the Bayerischer Rundfunk, Radio Netherlands, Radio Slovenia and NBC. Arpeggione has collaborated with many of the world's greatest soloists and conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Saulius Sondeckis, Muhai Tang and Kirill Petrenko, amongst others. Robert Bokor has been Arpeggione's Chief Conductor since March 2011.

www.arpeggione.at

ALSO AVAILABLE...



CHRC0082

SHAPIRA - FRENCH SONATAS ITTAI SHAPIRA & JEREMY DENK

"The performance... impresses with its sweep and poise. Shapira balances weight with refinement throughout. Denk is by turns forthright and wonderfully limpid. It's most beautifully done."

"The Ravel, meanwhile, is a treat. Shapira and Denk have terrific fun in the central 'Blues', with its pizzicato twangs and sleazy piano figurations, while the ironies and emotional ambiguities of the outer movements are explored with a subtlety and understated dexterity that prove utterly beguiling. It's a very fine interpretation indeed."

Gramophone



CHRC0043

AMERICAN VIOLIN CONCERTOS ITTAI SHAPIRA

"Inspired by Ernest Hemingway's classic novel of the same title, the work is full of soulful melodies, dramatic orchestration, and dazzling technical passages, all delivered on the recording with Shapira's smooth tone and powerhouse virtuosity."

Sequenza 21

"Violinist Shapira should strengthen his reputation as a composer with this CD, a vibrant mixture of post-modern eclecticism with folk-song and neo-Romanticism."

BBC Music Magazine

"This is a unique and distinctive addition to the category of 'new' classical and each movement is deserving of air time."

WRUV Reviews