

EARLY 20TH CENTURY JEWELS



DEBUSSY | ROUSSEL
HUYBRECHTS | SCHULHOFF

Nozomi KANDA flute, piccolo
Daniel RUBENSTEIN viola
Ingrid PROCUREUR harp
Didier POSKIN cello
Koenraad HOFMAN double bass



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- * **Claude DEBUSSY** (1862-1918) : Sonata for Flute, Viola & Harp, L. 137 (1915)
- * **Albert ROUSSEL** (1869-1937) : Trio for Flute, Viola & Cello, Op. 40 (1929)
- * **Albert HUYBRECHTS** (1899-1938) : Sonatina for Flute & Viola (1934)
- * **Erwin SCHULHOFF** (1894-1942) : Concertino for Flute/Piccolo, Viola & Double Bass (1925)

Nozomi KANDA-flute, piccolo, **Daniel RUBENSTEIN**-viola
Ingrid PROCUREUR-harp, **Didier POSKIN**-cello, **Koenraad HOFMAN**-double bass

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the 20th-century musical landscape is the stylistic pluralism, visible not only across numerous schools and movements, but also in the language of individual artists who, unrestricted by the prevailing composition rules, would reach for various means of musical expression. The most crucial issues addressed by post-Romantic composers included the sound colour, important both for pre-war impressionists and representatives of sonorism. The CD presents pieces from the beginning of the 20th century, performed by an international group of musicians related to the Belgian performance school, in which the play on the sound colour takes place in the chamber space. The leading pair of instruments are flute and viola - a couple which perfectly complements each other; its sound inspired a number of composers; e.g.,

Debussy, Huybrechts, Roussel, Schulhoff.

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In history of music, the beginning of the 20th century constitutes a symbolic caesura which determines the end of the Romanticism; at the same time, numerous new musical currents emerge. If one were to choose the characteristic feature of the 20th-century musical landscape, it would certainly be stylistic pluralism, manifesting itself not only in the scope of numerous schools and currents, but also in the language of particular artists. In turn, the artists were not limited by dominating composition rules, hence they often reached for various means of music expression. One of the most important issues considered by the composers of that time was sound colour, which moved to the foreground both among the pre-war impressionists and the post-war representatives of sonorism. Let us listen carefully to the pieces from the beginning of the 20th century, in which the composers play with sound in the chamber dimension – with the use of just two or three instruments. The leading pair in those combinations will be flute and viola – a pair which perfectly complements each other and which inspired a number of composers with its sound.

The Sonata for flute, viola, and harp L. 137 was created at the end of Claude Debussy's life. At that time, Debussy was struggling with his progressing cancer. It belongs to the cycle of six sonatas for various instruments, out of which the composer managed to finish only three. Debussy, known for his unique sensibility to sound colour, juxtaposes three characteristic instruments in the Sonata; each of them evokes different associations. The flute with its pastoral sound, the viola singing in a soft voice, and the harp which produces magic atmosphere. Together they create a fascinating sound world which draws the attention of the listener from the first to the last bar. Already in the first movement – *Pastorale* – the instruments present themselves in short solo phrases; after a moment, they start a shy, then each time more and more engaged conversation. The mysterious opening of the second movement – *Interlude* – evolves into the gradually denser dialogue between the flute and viola. In that fragment, the instruments often perform in unison, which allows to listen carefully to their contrasting sound. However, Debussy swiftly moves from *Interlude* to a humoristic minuet opening with a glissando of the harp. The final third movement uses a motif of empty fifths, which at first pulses restlessly in the harp's part and then also appears in the viola's part, adding to the whole a slightly exotic character.

The Trio for flute, viola, and cello, Op. 40 by Albert Roussel, a composer remaining under a strong influence of Debussy's impressionism, is a cheerful work maintained in the classic three-movement sonata form. In each of the three movements of Trio, which fits into the aesthetics of the Neoclassicism, the clear sound of flute definitely differs from viola and cello, which are maintained in the same sound colour. Yet here each of the three instruments were considered as leads. Despite the fact that it is the flute that remains in the foreground, as far as the melodic layer is concerned, the parts of viola and cello are not an accompaniment; on the contrary, they were equally cared for by the composer, thanks to which the texture of some fragments of the piece is extremely dense, as for example in the second movement (*Andante*). It is oneiric in its character and it actually tests Roussel's counterpoint technique. By the way, Roussel was a graduate of the Schola Cantorum where he studied thoroughly Palestrina's pieces. The mysterious, fairylike atmosphere returns once more at the end of the more motoric third movement when the viola, by using natural harmonics, becomes similar to the flute's sound colour.

Sonatina for flute and viola by Belgian composer Albert Huybrechts, however, evokes different emotions. The impressive career of the composer (he won numerous prizes for his chamber music) was ceased by his premature and unexpected death. Sonatina, created in 1934, is pure energy – already from the first sounds of the movement, which Huybrechts described with the adjectives *vif et joyeux* (lively and joyfully), both instruments start teasing themselves with the use of short interval motifs. The second movement brings a moment of relief and it offers an opportunity to listen to interesting harmonies. In the finale, the lively tempo returns and together with the viola's arpeggios, a complex and not always corresponding exchange of opinions between the instruments begins. In that context, it is the last minutes of the movement that are particularly moving – when the flute and viola immerse for a moment into an intimate dialogue suspending the insane tempo for a while. After that it seems that they reach the final agreement summarised with few common chords.

Erwin Schulhoff's *Concertino* presents similarly complex relations. The composer was also under the influence of Debussy. In his abundant works, Schulhoff was inspired by various trends, among which jazz occupied a prominent position. Due to his Jewish origins, his pieces were prohibited in the Nazi Germany and the composer himself was sent to the concentration camp in Wülzburg in 1941, where he died of tuberculosis. His *Concertino*, written in just four days, between 28 May and 1 June 1925, is a colourful example of creative use of motifs drawn from the Czech folklore. Those references are particularly clear in the second and fourth movements, in which the composer reaches for dance rhythm (the second movement uses the characteristic alternation of double and triple metres present in the furiant). A folk motif also appears in the third movement – the flute's melody was based on a melody from the Carpathian region. It turns out that the flute's sound colour perfectly fits into both vivid dance fragments and slow movements of lyrical character. In turn, juxtaposition of high registers of the instrument (sometimes the flautist reaches for the piccolo) with

the nasal and dark sound colour of the viola and double bass brings a fantastic sound effect.

Karolina Kolinek-Siechowicz
Translated by Żaneta Pniewska

Nozomi KANDA's concerts and recital have seen her perform in many countries, including Belgium (Flagey, MIM, Festival des Midi-Minimes, Ars Musica, Festival Mozart, Festival de Wallonie), Spain, France, Luxembourg, Norway, Tunisia and her home country Japan. As a chamber musician, she performed together with artists such as her ex-professor Marc Grauwels, and also with Pascal Moraguès, Francis Orval, Sylvain Creemers, Alexander Dmitriev and many others. She is also a member of Estampes (with Daniel Rubenstein – viola and Ingrid Procureur – harp), the Tokyo-Bruxelles Trio (flute, cello & piano) and of the flute quartet 4Tempi (with Angéline Le Ray, Kristina De Troyer and Charlotte Udø Kjeldsberg). During her studies, Nozomi developed an interest in the shinobue, a traditional Japanese flute, and studied with Kohei Nishikawa, who has a high reputation in this field. She now gives regularly Japanese music concerts with ensembles that include Japanese instruments such as koto, shamisen, shakuhachi and taiko. She also created and performed several shows for children in Belgium and in Japan. She released a CD entitled *4 Reasons* with 4temp, and other CD projects are underway, among others with the Tokyo-Bruxelles Trio and in solo Japanese music. Nozomi Kanda taught flute and Japanese flute at the International Music Academy in Dinant (BE), in Fort-Mahon (FR), at the Wind-orchestra Academy in the Hautes-Pyrénées (FR), at the Jissen Gakuen Joshi High School (JP) and gives regularly Japanese flute seminars in Paris. Graduated from Ferris University in Japan and the Mons Royal Conservatory in Belgium, she studied under Akane Takahashi, Yasukazu Uemura, Yukihiko Nishizawa and Marc Grauwels, then in Paris under Vincent Lucas, as well as with Vincent Cortvrint. Nozomi regularly writes articles for a Yokohama's Newspaper as well as the online magazine BEL2.

Born in Brussels, **Daniel RUBENSTEIN** performed as soloist and chamber music across Belgium, Holland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Luxemburg, Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, Brazil, Turkey, Tunisia, Israel, South Korea and Japan. 1st Prize winner of top National music competitions, Daniel Rubenstein gave his first solo concert at the age of 15 with the National Orchestra of Belgium under Mendi Rodan, performing then under conductors André Vandernoot, Jean-Pierre Wallez, Proinssias O'Duin, Georges Octors, Ronald Zollman etc. As a chamber musician, he performed more than 200 works with nearly 100 musicians such as Abdel-Rahman El Bacha, Brigitte Engerer, Hagai Shaham, Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden, Olivier Charlier, Augustin Dumay, Gil Sharon, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Alexander Dmitriev, Luc Dewez, Miha Haran, Marc Grauwels, Michel Lethiec, Pascal Moragues etc. He is also 1st violinist of the Ensemble Mendelssohn and violist of Estampes. He premiered about 30 new works, some written or dedicated to him, by established composers, including the Israeli Premiere of the Concerto for violin and ud by Aviya Kopelman. Daniel Rubenstein recorded 11 CD which received excellent critics from the International Press (Gramophone, Crescendo, Klassik Heute, Fanfare). Graduated with Honors from the Royal Brussels Conservatory (BE) and the Indiana University (USA) in 3 instruments (violin, viola & piano), his violin professors include Marie-Christine Springuel, José Pingon, his father Jerrold Rubenstein, Marcel Debot, Philippe Hirshhorn, Miriam Fried and Franco Gulli, receiving further training with Nicolas Chumachenco and Boris Belkin. As a violist, he studied with Atar Arad, and as a pianist studied with Orit Ouziel and Robert Redaelli. A dedicated pedagogue, Daniel Rubenstein is Violin and Viola professor at the Mons Royal Conservatory and Chamber Music Associate-professor at the Brussels Royal Conservatory where he also served as guest violin professor, and gives regularly master classes in Belgium and abroad. Since 2009, he is Artistic Director of the Festival Mozart (BE), an International chamber music festival which celebrated in 2015 its 20th anniversary.

The Belgian harpist **Ingrid PROCUREUR** is graduated from the Royal Conservatories of Brussels and Mons and then obtained the First prize in harp at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris.

As an international soloist performing from a vast repertoire, she performed in Europe and in Japan in recitals and as a soloist in music ensembles and in chamber orchestras. She appears with the "Monnaie" Opera Orchestra, the Belgian National Orchestra and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and is often invited by the most prestigious international festivals. Moreover, she formed a duo with the flutist Gérard Noack and joined the Quartz Ensemble. She also plays with Jean-Pierre Van Hees – bagpipe and musette – in a repertoire of traditional Music and is a member of Estampes with Nozomi Kanda and Daniel Rubenstein. Since 2009, she combines the voice of Dominique Corbiau (cons-tenor) and her quartet of mesmerizing sounds of harps. In recent years, Ingrid Procureur and the narrator Eveline Legrand combine music and text. They make people's imagination travel using themes as: "on the edge of the light", "Perfumes, what

are you?", "Smell and listen to the roses". They've done a CD: "Autrement dit les roses" (Editions Autrement Dit). She also created a unique trio called "the Imaginary Trio" calling a bassist and a vibraphonist. Specific pieces for this type of trio didn't exist. So, she enjoyed writing arrangements. Concerned with perfection in sound and in interpretation, Ingrid Procureur demonstrates her pedagogical qualities in teaching at the Royal Conservatory of Mons and in several academies of music. With interests ranging from classical to jazz, Japanese and traditional, her discography is abundant and varied: *The best melodies for flute and harp* (Master Sound), *Japanese Melodies* (Syrinx), *Au gré de la flute*, *Le petit cartable musical* – Quartz, Passion, Flute, Lyrics...

Nozomi Kanda, Daniel Rubenstein and Ingrid Procureur are performing together as a fixed chamber music group called Estampes and dedicated to the repertoire for flute, viola & harp.

It is no real surprise that **Didier POSKIN**, born into a family of musicians, turned towards music at a very early age. His natural talent, together with intensive work, quickly brought out his full potential. Didier Poskin began performing as a soloist at the age of 13. After attending the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles, he was admitted at the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth, a highly specialized school known for teaching exceptionally young, talented musicians. During his three years there, he received the teaching, support and friendship of Edmond Baert, and soon became one of Baert's star pupils. Following his attendance at the Chapelle, Didier Poskin continued to perfect and expand his practical skills, seeking out the help of the great cello pedagogues. These masters included Walter Grimmer in Zurich, Maurice Gendron in Paris, and members of the Amadeus Quartet at the Musikhochschule in Cologne. Furthermore, he regularly attended masterclasses; notably with Pierre Fournier, Reine Flachot, Daniel Chafran, Frans Helmerson and Wolfgang Boettcher. While still at the dawn of his professional career, he was invited to become principal cellist with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Flanders. After being a member of the orchestra for several years, Didier Poskin then turned towards chamber music and he was asked to join the Verdi Quartet in Cologne. During the ten years with this ensemble, he travelled the world and recorded many major compositions, in particular the complete quartet works of Schubert. Today he spends his time teaching and performing as soloist and chamber musician. His generous nature motivates him to transmit his experience and passion to the young pupils of the Royal Conservatory in Brussels, where he currently holds the position of Professor of Cello.

Koenraad HOFMAN has been solo-bassist of the Amsterdam Sinfonietta string orchestra, of the European Union Chamber Orchestra before becoming, in 2003, Solo-bassist at the Flanders Symphony Orchestra. As an active chamber musician, he performed in chamber music concerts all over Europe, South Africa, the United States, Russia, Georgia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bangladesh, Panama, Jamaica and South America. Koenraad Hofman is a member and Artistic Coordinator of Ensemble Oxalys, and performs also regularly as a freelance musician in all major Belgian orchestras as well as the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Suisse. In addition, he performs regularly with renowned ensembles such as Ictus, the Schönberg Ensemble, the Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles, and with many chamber music ensembles such as the Danel Quartet, the Ensemble Mendelssohn etc. Koenraad Hofman works is also teaching double-bass at the Royal Conservatory of Ghent (Belgium).