



Eva Oertle
Flute



Vesselin Stanev
Piano

Programme

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847)

Lieder ohne Worte ("Songs Without Words")

arranged for flute and piano by Benoît Fromanger

Andante con moto in E major, Op. 19 [b], no. 1 (1831)

Agitato e con fuoco in B minor, Op. 30, no. 4 (1834)

Venezianisches Gondellied ("Venetian Boat Song") in F-sharp minor, Op. 30, no. 6 (1835)

Allegretto grazioso in A major *Frühlingslied* ("Spring Song"), Op. 62, no. 6 (1842)

Presto in C major *Kinderstück* ("Piece for Children"), Op. post. 102, no. 3 (1845)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Sonata in F major, Op. 24 *Spring Sonata* (1800–01)

arranged for flute and piano by Eva Oertle

Allegro

Adagio molto espressivo

Scherzo. Allegro molto – Trio

Rondo. Allegro ma non troppo

Fikret Amirov (1922–1984)

Six Pieces for Flute and Piano (1976)

Bardenweise ("Song of the Bard"). Allegretto

Wiegenlied ("Lullaby"). Andante sostenuto

Tanz ("Dance"). Allegretto grazioso

In den Bergen Aserbajdschans ("In the Mountains of Azerbaijan"). Moderato cantabile

An der Quelle ("At the Source"). Moderato

Nocturne. Andante cantabile

Reinhold Glière (1875–1956)

Mélodie for Flute and Piano, Op. 35, no. 1 (1908)

Andante

Otar Taktakishvili (1924–1989)

Sonata in C major for Flute and Piano (1968)

Allegro cantabile

Aria. Moderato con moto

Allegro scherzando

Spring All Year Round

Music for Flute and Piano

No musical genre has been so closely identified with Felix Mendelssohn as the *Songs Without Words*. On the one hand, this is misguided, since anyone who overlooks the symphonies, overtures, oratorios, and string quartets does not really know who Mendelssohn was as a composer; and yet, at the same time, these short pieces inarguably distill the expression of an era, a culture, a private musical sphere of which Mendelssohn was a part throughout his life. Some of the *Songs Without Words* are literally just that: they suggest solo songs or duets that are lacking only the text of a poem. When Mendelssohn was composing the *Spring Song* (Op.62, no.6) at the piano, two of his hosts' children pulled at his sleeves in jest, and so he took the liberty right then and there of writing the mistakes this caused into the score as erratic staccato notes.

It was around 1800 that Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his Violin Sonatas in A minor and F major, which he obviously intended to comprise a contrasting pair: he initially had them printed together as Opus 23 but then published the F major Sonata separately as Opus 24 in the spring of 1802. Such fascinating contrasts can be found elsewhere in Beethoven's oeuvre (and in his compositional method): think of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, for instance, which he worked on simultaneously. In the case of these two sonatas for violin and piano, the A minor Sonata — a work that is as passionate as it is experimental — contrasts with the bright, songlike, buoyantly pastoral F major Sonata, whose nickname *Spring Sonata* did not originate with Beethoven though it is not out of place. It has long enjoyed a permanent place in the active repertoire of violinists — and now even of flutists.

The works of Fikret Amirov, who died in 1984 in Baku, reflect both the abundance and the state of conflict of a country situated between East and West, between antiquity and modernity. In Amirov's homeland of Azerbaijan, which borders Russia to the north and Iran to the

south, a culture that was thousands of years old remained vibrant. Amirov, who was the son of a legendary folk singer, tried to preserve the songs and dances as well as the fairy-tales and myths of Azerbaijan by translating them into the written scores and forms of Western music. His Six Pieces for Flute and Piano from 1976 show how this kind of translation succeeded and what it sounds like: a musical spring.

Unlike his student Sergei Prokofiev, Reinhold Glière was able to survive the extreme vicissitudes of Russian history with impunity. The son of a German instrument maker, he directed the conservatory in his native Kiev, composed what was hailed as the "first Soviet ballet on a revolutionary subject" (*The Red Poppy*), and received three Stalin Prizes (first class) as well as the honorary title "People's Artist of the USSR". But in 1908, when Glière published his *Mélodie* for Flute and Piano, this glorious future still lay far off. This Russian romance begins simply, like a folk song, but then, through the composer's artistry, blossoms into beguiling arabesques that suggest a burgeoning springtime.

Born in Tbilisi in 1924, where he died in 1989, Otar Taktakishvili was a Soviet dignitary who served as Georgia's Minister of Culture and a representative of the Supreme Soviet. This circumstance did not adversely affect his popularity in his own country, though it did impede his recognition in the West. Still, the Sonata for Flute and Piano from 1968 has nothing to do with political favouritism or Cold War adversaries but can be ranked as one of the most ravishing and fascinating works ever written for these two instruments thanks to its poetic ambiguity, quirky humour, and melancholy lyrical beauty: a springtime for Georgian music.

Wolfgang Stähr

Translation: Thomas May