



FAZIL SAY

Deutschlandfunk Kultur

Violin Concerto No. 2

'Spring Mornings in the Days of Quarantine'

String Quartet • Sonata for Solo Violin • Leopards

Friedemann Eichhorn, Violin

Gropius Quartett

Konzerthausorchester Berlin • Christoph Eschenbach

**Fazıl
SAY**
(b. 1970)

**Violin Concerto No. 2, Op. 87 ‘Karantina günlerinde bahar sabahları’
('Spring Mornings in the Days of Quarantine') (2020)**

24:33

- | | |
|---|------|
| ❶ I. Allegro ma non troppo | 7:19 |
| ❷ II. Dance: Fast jazz swing | 2:10 |
| ❸ III. Andantino tranquillo, quasi meditazione | 6:23 |
| ❹ IV. Issız gökyüzü ('Barren Skies'): Allegro ma non troppo | 8:36 |

Leopards, Op. 103 for string sextet (2022)

12:45

- | | |
|---|------|
| ❺ I. Allegro assai energico, extremely rhythmical | 8:01 |
| ❻ II. — | 4:40 |

**Sonata for Solo Violin, Op. 92c ‘Ruşen Güneş Anısına’
('In memoriam Ruşen Güneş') (2020)**

10:33

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| ❼ I. Largo espressivo | 5:27 |
| ❽ II. Allegro assai, molto energico | 5:05 |

String Quartet, Op. 29 ‘Divorce’ (2010)

17:25

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| ❾ I. Allegro maestoso | 5:25 |
| ❿ II. Andante | 8:02 |
| ⓫ III. Presto | 3:53 |

Recorded: 21 November 2020 at the Gewehrsaal, Schloss Ettersburg ❾–❿, 12–14 September 2022
at the Konzerthaus Berlin ❶–❹ and 28 February ❺–❻ and 20 November ❼–❽ 2023
at the Festsaal Fürstenhaus, Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt Weimar, Germany
Producers: Sean Lewis ❶–❹, Joachim Müller ❺–❽, Deutschlandradio ❾–❿
Engineers and editors: Sean Lewis ❶–❹, Joachim Müller ❺–❿

Fazıl Say (b. 1970): Violin Concerto No. 2 ‘Spring Mornings in the Days of Quarantine’

String Quartet • Sonata for Solo Violin • Leopards

With his extraordinary pianistic talents, Fazıl Say has connected with audiences and critics alike for more than 25 years, in a way that has become rare in the increasingly materialistic and elaborately organised classical music world. Concerts featuring this artist are something different to the norm – they are more direct, more open, more exciting. In short, they go straight to the heart. He has been commissioned to write music for, among others, the Salzburger Festspiele, the WDR Symphony Orchestra, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Wiener Konzerthaus, Dresdner Philharmonie, Fondation Louis Vuitton, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the BBC. Say has composed 114 works and recorded 60 albums to date, and his *oeuvre* comprises four symphonies, two oratorios, various concertos and numerous works for piano and chamber music, including *İstanbul Symphony (No. 1)*, *Mesopotamia Symphony (No. 2)*, *Black Earth*, *Nazım Oratorio* and the *Mount Ida* series.

Guest appearances have taken Say to countless countries on all five continents, and French newspaper *Le Figaro* called him ‘a genius’.

Violin Concerto No. 2, Op. 87 ‘Karantina günlerinde bahar sabahları’ (‘Spring Mornings in the Days of Quarantine’)

Fazıl Say’s *Violin Concerto No. 2, Op. 87 ‘Spring Mornings in the Days of Quarantine’* was composed in April 2020 from his home in the Turkish town of Urla on the Aegean Sea.

During lockdown, I always went for a walk on the empty beach very early in the morning. Each sunrise had its own colour, texture and atmosphere which subsequently flowed into the composition. – *Fazıl Say*

The four-movement concerto opens with the pastoral ‘ballad of Aurora’. The ensuing jazz dance is followed by a slow movement, ‘quiet morning’. The epilogue of the final movement, ‘sunrise’, presents a meditation by the solo violin, whose monophony captures the atmosphere of deserted streets and beaches, ultimately fading away in *ppp*.

Leopards, Op. 103

Commissioned by the Kronberg Academy, *Leopards, Op. 103*, for string sextet, is a work inspired by the wild, and depicts leopards, one of nature’s most impressive animals, through music.

The composer has previously written works inspired by nature, such as his *Mount Ida* sonata and *Walking Mansion*, however *Leopards* turns the focus to wildlife. It is approximately 13 minutes in length, and draws attention to the protection of the habitats of animals in the wild.

Leopards have powerful senses and mobility, and these traits are characterised by the composer’s unique melodies and energetic rhythms, offering the listener a vivid portrait of the nature of these magnificent animals.

Say comments:

Years ago, I went on a safari with my daughter, Kumru. And seeing leopards was an interesting experience for me. Their speed and agility were impressive. Since the theme of the Kronberg Academy Festival is to protect nature, I composed this work that highlighted protecting the habitats of animals in the wild. I wanted to compose music and express the leopards that impressed me so much through music.

Sonata for Solo Violin, Op. 92c 'Ruşen Güneş Anısına' ('In memoriam Ruşen Güneş')

Say's *Sonata, Op. 92* is dedicated to the memory of his close friend, viola player Ruşen Güneş, who passed away on 30 May 2020.

It is a two-part work of approximately ten minutes and was originally written for solo viola. The piece begins as if it were a lament. In both sections, which make extensive use of the instrument's colour palette and technical possibilities, the focus is on the power of expression in music. The sonata has been adapted for solo violin (as heard on this recording), and solo cello.

Say wanted to write this sonata long before Ruşen Güneş's death. However, the work was subsequently inspired by the emotions he felt on the day Güneş died.

Say's thoughts on the work:

I have finished my solo viola sonata which I will dedicate to the great viola master, Ruşen Güneş. I'm late. I was in a daze the day he died. When I heard the news, this sonata started flowing in my mind. I'm angry at myself for this delay. 'For Ruşen Güneş' could have been written on the dedication page of the sonata. Now it says 'In memory of Ruşen Güneş'. It is a beautiful work. I hope everyone can play this piece in his memory from now on.

String Quartet, Op. 29 'Divorce'

In the composition of this string quartet, I have permitted myself to be led by my personality and experiences and have attempted to relate experiences such as divorce, separation and the failure of a relationship in the language of music with the aid of notes and rhythms. As is the case with my other compositions, this quartet is more a work originating from intuition than the description of a historical event, a journey or a place. Living history is the present that we are currently experiencing.

The beginning of the first movement is somewhat wild, rapid and sorrowful with an irregular rhythm. Intermittent sections ensue, which are reminiscent of a jazz club.

The second movement with a melancholic atmosphere is dominated by colours, the subject of searching, the search for a remedy and unhappiness.

In contrast, the final movement is intended to express the hatefulness, arguments and disputes within a relationship which have been transformed into a profound trauma.

With kind permission of Schott Music, Mainz, Germany



Friedemann Eichhorn



Photo: Guido Werner

One of the most creative and versatile musicians of his generation, German-born Friedemann Eichhorn's artistic activities range from performing early Baroque music on period instruments to classical and contemporary works with renowned orchestras and chamber music partners. Recent highlights include performances with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Christoph Eschenbach, and the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia under Sir Antonio Pappano. Among many other works, Friedemann Eichhorn rediscovered and first recorded the complete violin concertos of French virtuoso Pierre Rode. He has also given the world premieres of Fazıl Say's *Violin Concerto No. 2*, *Violin Sonata No. 2* and *Tristan und Isolde* transcriptions. Eichhorn is a founding member of the Gropius Quartett and the Phaeton Piano Trio. He studied with Valery Gradow at the University of Music and Performing Arts Mannheim, with

Alberto Lysy at the International Menuhin Music Academy and with Margaret Pardee at The Juilliard School, and earned a PhD in musicology from the University of Mainz. Eichhorn holds a violin professorship at the University of Music Franz Liszt Weimar and is artistic director of the Kronberg Academy. He plays the 'ex-Huberman' violin by Jean Baptiste Vuillaume from 1856.

Gropius Quartett



Influenced by Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus style and regarded as a revolutionary visionary in the 1920s, and by personal encounters with Yehudi Menuhin and Mstislav Rostropovich, the Gropius Quartett aims to clarify and illuminate the essence of compositions, bringing works to life through bold and passionate playing. The members of the quartet have known one another since studying together at the International Menuhin Music Academy and The Juilliard School. The quartet's debut concert at the Nationaltheater Weimar in 2018 and an extended exploratory visit to New York in 2019 were followed by prestigious guest appearances at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and the Konzerthaus Berlin. The Gropius Quartett has since performed across Europe as well as in North America. It works closely with composers such as George Alexander Albrecht, Enjott Schneider, Burkhard Egdorf and Sir Karl Jenkins, and in addition has participated in inspiring musical collaborations with Evgeny Kissin, Gidon Kremer, Mischa Maisky and Camille Thomas. The Gropius Quartett's critically acclaimed debut album, featuring works by Mendelssohn, Dvořák and Albrecht, was released in 2024 on Hänssler Classic. www.gropiusquartett.de

Sào Soulez Larivière



Born in Paris in 1998, Franco-Dutch violist Sào Soulez Larivière is rapidly building a thriving career for himself as a versatile musician. Captivating audiences with his playing and original programming, he endeavours to broaden the accessibility and perception of classical music in the modern world. Soulez Larivière was named as the 2023 'Young Artist of the Year' by the International Classical Music Awards (ICMA), and was nominated as a 'Rising Star' by the European Concert Hall Organisation (ECHO), which led to performances in some of Europe's most prominent concert halls during the 2024/25 season. www.saosoulezlariviere.com

Maciej Kułakowski



Born in Poland to a family of classical and jazz musicians, cellist Maciej Kułakowski studied at the Kronberg Academy with Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt. At the age of 19, he won First Prize and a special award at the Witold Lutosławski International Cello Competition. In 2017 he was a finalist of the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels, and in 2019 a laureate of the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) international auditions in London. Kułakowski plays a Giovanni Battista Rugeri cello made in Cremona in 1700, on loan from a charitable trust. www.maciejkulakowski.com

Konzerthausorchester Berlin



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Appearing in over 100 concerts per season, the Konzerthausorchester thrills audiences both at its home in the Gendarmenmarkt in Berlin and on tour. Founded in 1952 as the Berliner Sinfonie-Orchester, it has been known as the Konzerthausorchester Berlin since 2006. In its early days, from 1960 to 1977, the orchestra achieved international recognition under chief conductor Kurt Sanderling. It received its own venue in 1984 with the reopening of the restored theatre in the Gendarmenmarkt. Christoph Eschenbach served as chief conductor from 2019 to 2023, and his predecessor, Iván Fischer, shaped the Konzerthausorchester from 2012 to 2018 and has been its honorary conductor ever since. Joana Mallwitz has been chief conductor since 2023/24.

Christoph Eschenbach



Photo: Pilvax Films

Christoph Eschenbach is in demand as a distinguished guest conductor with the finest orchestras and opera houses throughout the world, including those in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, London, New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Milan, Rome, Munich, Dresden, Leipzig, Gothenburg, Madrid, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Shanghai. He currently holds his thirteenth position as music director with the NFM Wrocław Philharmonic in the city of his birth. Other past positions include music director of the Konzerthausorchester Berlin (2019–23), Orchestre de Paris (2000–10), The Philadelphia Orchestra (2003–08), NDR Symphony Orchestra (1998–2004) and Houston Symphony (1988–99), and he has been honorary conductor of the Bamberger Symphoniker since 2016. In June 2017, Eschenbach received the title of conductor laureate of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C., after serving as its music director from 2010 to 2017. A prolific recording artist, Eschenbach has an impressive discography as both a conductor and pianist. He was mentored by George Szell and Herbert von Karajan. His many accolades include the French distinction of Légion d'honneur, and the prestigious Ernst von Siemens Music Prize in honour of his life's dedication to music.

www.christopheschenbach.com

Fazıl Say's gifts as a ground-breaking pianist are allied to the breadth of his compositions. The *Violin Concerto No. 2* was composed in the midst of the Covid-19 lockdown during which Say was enchanted by the colours and textures of sunrises while walking on the beach, inspiring this atmospheric work. *Leopards* is a vivid piece for string sextet that utilises Say's unique melodies and rhythms. The *Sonata for Solo Violin* is an expressive tribute to the noted Turkish violist, Ruşen Güneş, while *String Quartet 'Divorce'* relates the experience of separation and the failure of a relationship with the language of music.

 Deutschlandfunk Kultur

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(b. 1970)

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|-------------|--|--------------|
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| 5–6 | Leopards, Op. 103 for string sextet (2022)* | 12:45 |
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| 9–11 | String Quartet, Op. 29 'Divorce' (2010) | 17:25 |

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Friedemann Eichhorn, Violin 1–4 7 8

Gropius Quartett 5–6 9–11

Friedemann Eichhorn, Violin I • Indira Koch, Violin II

Alexia Eichhorn, Viola • Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt, Cello

Sào Soulez Larivière, Viola II 5–6 • Maciej Kułakowski, Cello II 5–6

Konzerthausorchester Berlin 1–4 • Christoph Eschenbach 1–4

A co-production with Deutschlandfunk Kultur

A detailed track list and full recording details can be found inside the booklet.

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