

# Robert FÜRSTENTHAL

## CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME THREE

VIOLA SONATA IN F SHARP MAJOR, OP. 60A

CELLO SONATA IN C SHARP MINOR, OP. 44

OBOE SONATA IN E FLAT MINOR, OP. 50

STRING QUARTET IN B MINOR, OP. 40

HORN SONATA IN D MINOR, OP. 54

$E = F^b$

The Rossetti Ensemble

# ROBERT FÜRSTENTHAL: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

by Françoise Farron-Fürstenthal

My husband, Robert Eugen Fürstenthal,<sup>1</sup> was born in Vienna on 27 June 1920, into a Jewish family. He showed an early love for music and for playing the piano. He was a frequent weekend guest in the home of Françoise, his first cousin and his first love (me). There he accompanied my father, who had a beautiful tenor voice and loved to sing, mainly Schubert songs. At that time, Robert also composed a few songs, some to his own poetry. They were mostly simple love-songs, some dedicated to me.

Robert left Vienna in 1939 – without his family, because an unhopd-for opportunity had presented itself. A distant relative of ours, who was living in England and whom no one within our close family knew, was aware of the mortal danger in which the Jews of Vienna lived after Hitler had marched into Austria. This good-hearted relative furnished Robert with an affidavit to go to America and also provided a temporary visa to England to wait there for his journey to the USA – waiting in Vienna would have been too dangerous.

Robert arrived in New York in October 1940; The Jewish Agency asked him where he wanted to settle, and he chose San Francisco. From there he was able to help his mother to join him, but the Nazis got to his father first, and that wonderful man, whom I loved dearly, perished in a concentration camp.

Once in America, Robert joined the US Army (1942–45), serving in the intelligence division in Europe to interrogate German prisoners-of-war. After his return to the US, he married Jane Alexander, an American girl (not Jewish), and they settled in San Francisco. They had a son, Joseph.

<sup>1</sup> He dropped the umlaut on his arrival in the United States but resurrected it for his dealings with Austria.

Back in civilian life Robert entered the civil service as an accountant and rapidly ascended the professional ladder. But his marriage turned sour. He sought solace in the arms of other women, but none seemed to be compatible enough for him to try another union.

Robert eventually discovered that I, his first love, might be the answer to his unhappy situation. He found out that I was living in Boston, phoned me and learned that, although I was married, I had not lived with my husband for the previous six years. He had last been in contact with me, by mail, in 1939. I was then in Switzerland and he proposed that we get married by proxy, I at the American Consulate in Zurich and he at the Consulate in London. But I never received that letter: the Swiss, always very efficient, had sent it back to him, many months later. He showed it to me when we finally got back together again, in 1973, and we mused on what turns our lives might have taken, had I received that letter at the time it had been sent.

One of the first questions I asked was whether he was still composing music. There followed a long silence, and then came the answer: 'No!' Robert had not written a single song or any kind of music since he had left Vienna. Knowing how much music meant to him, I was devastated. From that phone call on, Robert, who still lived in San Francisco, wrote me long letters every single day: he had to catch up on what had happened during 35 years of separation. In addition, he phoned me every single evening.

After a few weeks of getting reacquainted by correspondence and phone conversations, Robert asked me to remain on the line and listen. He had composed his first song since our separation and he played it for me on the piano while I listened on the telephone. I was indescribably happy. I had always believed – although his first compositions were simple and amateurish – that he was gifted.

When we finally met again in person – Robert found an excuse to go to Boston 'on business' – we discovered that the old flame was readily rekindled, and we got married in November 1974.

A reshuffle at the Naval Audit Service, where Robert had worked for about 30 years in San Francisco, necessitated that we relocate to San Diego, where Robert became head of the office. Once installed there, Robert used every free minute, evenings and weekends, to compose. His endeavours really went into high gear, as he discovered the

poetic treasures of Rilke, Eichendorff, Weinheber, Hofmannsthal, Bethge and many others. But only poetry in the German language seemed to inspire him – until his later years, when he discovered the poetry of James Joyce and of William Butler Yeats.

Robert worked at the Naval Audit Service until his retirement in 1985. From then on, he composed full time and his output grew considerably. His work comprises about forty chamber works, among them sonatas for violin and piano, cello and piano, flute and piano, oboe and piano, clarinet (or viola) and piano, a sonata for two pianos, a string quartet, two string trios and about 160 songs and vocal pieces, including two works for choir and string orchestra. And a first album of his songs was released by Toccata Classics in 2016,<sup>2</sup> just weeks after Robert's death, from congestive heart failure, on 16 November. He was 96. The last words he said while he was still lucid were: 'I am happy to have you by my side'. Although he didn't live long enough to hold the CD in his hands, he was sent a copy of the master and so was able to hear that first-ever recording of his music and take pleasure in it.

Some of the songs were performed in the USA, in California and in New York, to enthusiastic audiences. In 1975 there was a performance of Robert's songs to poems by Joseph Weinheber, on the occasion of a Weinheber memorial, in the Palais Palfy in Vienna. The audience went wild! But the 'music world', as it were, at least here in California, is enamoured of newer stuff, less melodic, original for the sake of originality, without soul – or so it seemed to Robert.

We were often asked to explain what inspired each individual work; in the case of songs, the answer is simple: the poetry. What inspired his instrumental works, Robert did not know. As you will hear, his style is avowedly and proudly late-Romantic, for which he made no apology. It seemed to us that there is still room for it in this world.

### **An Autobiographical Addendum**

Now Françoise Farron-Furstenthal, I was born Franziska Trinczer on 19 September 1923 in Vienna. When Hitler marched into Austria, I was fifteen years old and attending the Realgymnasium in the Albertgasse. I was able to find refuge in Switzerland with my

<sup>2</sup> Performed by the baritone Rafael Fingerlos and pianist Sascha El Moissi on Toccata Classics TOCC 0354.

mother in 1939. I wanted to go to Palestine into a kibbutz and help build the country, but my mother would not let me go.

As soon as I was able to emigrate to America, in 1956, I worked during the day and attended night college in the town of White Plains, New York, was accepted to Berkeley in 1960, and obtained my Ph.D. in biochemistry from New York University in 1969. After a post-doctoral stay at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) in Zurich, from 1969 to 1970, I joined Harvard Medical School Faculty as an Assistant Professor for Research. When Robert got in touch with me after 35 years of separation and reignited the old flame, I left Harvard to get married to Robert and share his life from then until death us did part.

*As well as being the wife of Robert Furstenthal, Françoise Farron-Furstenthal was, until her retirement, Associate Professor for Research at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, where her chief interest was, and still is, the mechanism of gene expression in the development of the embryo.*

## **'WHEN I COMPOSE, I AM BACK IN VIENNA'**

by Michael Haas

Robert Fürstenthal's songs and chamber music started to emerge again from the moment he and Françoise re-established contact. His only 'teachers' were the scores of his favourite composers, the most important of whom was Hugo Wolf. In retrospect, the 160 songs and some forty chamber works that resulted from this period represented a learning curve. He composed for himself and Françoise, with the hope of an occasional performance by friends and acquaintances. He was always happy to supply the piano accompaniment. By performing his works himself, he accidentally ensured that much of the surviving material is missing detailed instructions regarding tempo, articulation and expression. To the composer, such issues seemed self-evident; to performers, ambiguity has more often been the result.

When I asked Fürstenthal why he chose in the final quarter of the twentieth century to compose in the style of the late nineteenth, he answered that composing transported him back to Vienna ('Wann ich komponiere, bin ich wieder in Wien'). Nevertheless, such wilful disregard for style and period confronts the listener with a certain degree of disjunction, as well as questions of aesthetics and, indeed, ethics. If Fürstenthal's works were only exquisitely well crafted, it would be easy to dismiss them as derivative. Hollywood itself can offer any number of skilful composers and arrangers who can rattle off works in the style of any composer required. Yet Fürstenthal offers much more than craftsmanship and much that is highly individual, defying one-to-one comparisons with any of his nineteenth-century templates. In the intolerant days of high serialism in the 1950s, '60s and '70s, some music-historians used to argue that such defiantly conservative works are 'the musical language of the perpetrator' – by which is meant music that the Nazis would have accepted had the composer not been Jewish. The argument was used against a number of composers who were banned by the Nazis under their Nuremberg race laws and yet who eschewed twelve-tone composition and atonality. It is made worse in the case of Fürstenthal because of his frequent settings of the poems of Josef Weinheber, an Austrian poet who held unapologetic Nazi sympathies. Yet such arguments imply that the only acceptable music composed by victims must represent the antithesis of a so-called Nazi aesthetic, meaning aggressive atonality (considered 'un-German' by Nazi dogmatists), or replace diatonic tonality with synagogue or *shtetl* folkloric modes – a narrow-minded outlook which swaps one form of intolerance for another. For most composers banned by Nazi race laws, their natural voice had been commandeered by the Nazis in an aggressive attempt to deprive them of any sense of Austro-German cultural identity. Why, one could argue, should they compose the way a Nazi believed a Jew should compose? An analysis of Fürstenthal's music would have to ignore all the norms of time and place, as well as those of identity. Indeed, if anything, Fürstenthal is defiant in his assertion of identity with the very deepest aspects of Austrian culture – a culture he valued only from a pre-Hitler vantage point, even going so far as to see Weinheber as an exponent of a nobler age. When I asked why he set Weinheber, his answer was straightforward: he heard music upon reading the words.

As such, Fürstenthal's music may be understood as a personal immigration into his own, better world where bad things had yet to happen. Although his music grows out of persecution and exile, he is unable to produce a howl of outrage, preferring gentler reverie to a nobler place where World Wars and anti-Semitism weren't allowed to shape destiny. Such works may flummox the musicologist; and yet to the social archaeologist pondering the effects of cultural dislocation, they ask a multitude of questions. Paradoxically, despite being music of sensitivity and warmth, it's no less a product of anger and loss – and a gently dignified response to barbarity.

*Michael Haas is Senior Researcher at the *exil.arte* Zentrum at the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Vienna. He is the author of *Forbidden Music: The Jewish Composers Banned by the Nazis* (Yale University Press, Yale and London, 2013), as well as having been the initiator and producer of the 'Entartete Musik' series of recordings released by Decca. He was also formerly Music Curator at the Jewish Museum in Vienna. His blog can be found at <https://forbiddenmusic.org/>.*

## **POSTCARDS FROM THE PAST: ROBERT FÜRSTENTHAL'S CHAMBER MUSIC, VOLUME THREE**

by William Melton

Although all of the music on this recording recalls music from the waning years of the nineteenth century or the opening of the twentieth, it would be useful to match the works here to the composer's own biographical stations. Françoise Farron-Fürstenthal has concluded that, unfortunately, 'putting Robert's works in any realistic time sequence is a futile undertaking, nay, impossible! I have the originals, and the opus numbers make no sense at all, even in Robert's own handwriting'.<sup>1</sup> She went on to explain that Fürstenthal's Vienna output culminates in Op. 90, and yet one of the earliest works he composed in San Francisco was numbered Op. 72. All the works

<sup>1</sup> E-mail dated 24 March 2019.

in this album have lower opus numbers than that and yet there seems to be little doubt that they were composed for performance with friends in California sometime between 1990 and 2005.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of more specific signposts, the listener might regard these works as generic postcards from 1890s Vienna or, as Martin Anderson has called them, ‘an exercise in time-travel.’<sup>3</sup> For John Lenehan, the pianist on this recording, ‘To be presented with a large body of work, all of which was unfamiliar to us, was both exciting and daunting. We soon discovered music which touched us in its honesty and integrity, harking back to a world long gone but forever present in this composer’s imagination.’<sup>4</sup>

The **Sonata for Horn and Piano in D minor, Op. 54**, begins with an *Andante* [1] in common time. The horn enters, solo, with *mezzo forte* fanfares marked by dotted rhythms and triplet quavers, and the piano entrance in the fourth bar affirms the D minor tonality before wandering in a higher degree of chromaticism. The abbreviated sonata-form architecture soon brings a contrasting section in D major that combines the opening material in the piano with a long-breathed *dolce* horn theme. A *più mosso* passage then ushers in a short developmental phase that displays the themes of the exposition in a rhapsodic, modulatory flow. Finally, twelve bars of recapitulation of the opening fanfare in D minor serve as a coda. The *Allegretto Scherzo* in G minor [2] also begins with dotted rhythms and triplets in common time. The breakneck pace slackens at the *meno mosso* Trio ( $\frac{12}{8}$ ), where sustained horn phrases are supported by persistent crotchet triplets in the piano before a *Da Capo* restores the *fuore* of the opening Scherzo. An *Adagio* [3], also in G minor and common time, begins *dolce* with an extended horn line and slow chordal movement in the piano. A fleeting middle section emphasises B flat major before increasing chromaticism is halted by a *fortissimo* fermata. Afterwards, the reappearance of the opening theme in G minor establishes song form, and after a handful of bars with pungent chromatic twists the *Adagio* ends in G minor, *pianissimo*. The finale, which combines ternary structure with rondo character, begins *Grave* [4] with a quiet introduction in G major and common time before a swaggering horn call

<sup>2</sup> ‘Works by Robert Fürstenthal’ (exilarte.at/editor/ausgabe\_composer.php?id\_composer=21).

<sup>3</sup> E-mail dated 15 March 2019.

<sup>4</sup> E-mail dated 27 March 2019.



launches the *Allegro con brio* in  $\frac{12}{8}$  in B minor. This section (with interpolated  $\frac{15}{8}$  bars) is offset by a contrasting region in B major. The B minor horn call reappears at *Presto* in a truncated coda that closes the movement in B major. Fürstenthal's jubilant exploitation of the wide range of the horn and his deft chromaticism reveal a natural understanding. For Nicholas Korth, the hornist on this recording, 'It has been a joy to discover the music of Fürstenthal. His flowing melodies sit very well for the horn, and the Sonata is a welcome addition to the repertoire.'<sup>5</sup>

The opening *Allegro* [5] of the **Sonata for Cello and Piano in C sharp minor, Op. 44**, is predictably in sonata form. The piano begins with a C sharp minor tremolo ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) that contrasts with the agitated dotted rhythms of the cello, whereas the following E major sphere displays the cello in soothing *dolce* quavers. Two main themes of the exposition return in fragmented form in an extended development featuring rapid triplet quavers in the piano and facile modulations. The recapitulation is brief, and the tonality remains far from settled until C sharp minor returns in the final four bars. The *Scherzando* [6] that follows is a whirlwind of semiquavers in  $\frac{6}{8}$  and G sharp minor. A genial *dolce*  $\frac{6}{4}$  'trio' in B major broadens the pace to *legato* crotchets before increased harmonic restlessness leads back to the G sharp minor *Scherzando* theme, which ends the movement with six *Presto* bars, *fortissimo*. The third-movement *Cantabile* [7] features a soulful cello line in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and B major that is later countered by agitated triplet quavers in G sharp minor in the piano. As the cellist Timothy Lowe commented about another Fürstenthal work, 'The thematic material [...] juxtaposes the rich mellow tone of the cello with faster meandering passages intertwining with the piano.'<sup>6</sup> The starting cello motif returns in different harmonic underpinnings before a transitional section leads the way to the return of B major and variants on the opening that precede a measured, noble Brahmsian close in B major (Ex. 1). The *Agitato* finale [8] is a loose rondo that begins with a five-bar *fortissimo* solo piano introduction in common time. Then the cello joins with an agitated, semiquaver-laden first theme in C sharp minor, which is balanced by a counter-theme, *dolce*, in E major. The starting motif returns but, instead of proceeding

<sup>5</sup> E-mail dated 17 August 2020.

<sup>6</sup> E-mail dated 26 March 2019.

to new material, it is again followed by the second theme in E major. A three-bar codetta gives the opening subject the last word in C sharp minor, *fortissimo*.

# Ex. 1

The **Sonata for Oboe and Piano in E flat minor, Op. 50**, begins *Ruhig* ('Calmly') [9] as a lonely *pianissimo* oboe line in rising fifths is answered by a chordal piano response in E flat minor ( $\text{♭}_4$ ). The theme is then inverted, descending in an inconclusive E flat major/minor. Fluctuating melodic and harmonic progressions precede a

counter-theme in gentle *legato* quavers. Each of the two expositional themes is put through chromatic development before the recapitulation arrives *forte* 21 bars before the end of the movement, which closes *mezzo piano* in E flat major. The *Lebhaft* ('Lively') second movement [10] in  $\frac{3}{8}$  is an F minor scherzo in brisk, mocking manner that finds rest at the bucolic 'trio' in B flat major, *dolce*. A *Da Capo* return brings it to a close in F minor. After a five-bar piano introduction, the next movement, *Sehr innig* ('Very Intimately') [11] ( $\frac{6}{4}$  and  $\frac{4}{4}$ ), delivers a languid but probing B flat minor oboe theme. An intervening B section of modulatory interest returns to *Tempo I*, now outfitted with a surprising D flat major ending. The finale, *Bewegt* ('Animatedly'), in extended ternary form (ABABA) [12], begins with a deliberate *forte* theme from the oboe in E flat which, after some modulation, evolves into a delicate B theme in faraway B major. Each melodic group reappears, B this time in E flat minor, before a codetta based on A finishes the movement in that key.

The **Sonata for Viola and Piano in F sharp minor, Op. 60a**, which also exists in a version for clarinet, is only two movements long. An introduction in E flat major with slow piano chords in  $\frac{3}{4}$  begins the *Andante* [13] with an emphatic *forte* at the viola entrance in F sharp minor at bar 9. The progress of this theme ('its gloriously sweeping and sighing melody worthy of epic sentiment',<sup>7</sup> to quote violist Sarah-Jane Bradley about another Fürstenthal work) is characterised by harmonic instability that persists into the secondary material at *Con moto* ( $\frac{9}{8}$ ). The introduction and A theme repeat in D major/minor, though the melody of A is here given over to the piano. B is repeated in G major before the Introduction and A make a final return in F sharp minor, and the last five bars swell to *forte* before resolving, in fine Brahmsian style, to a *piano* D major final chord. Brahms is also detectable in the second-movement Scherzo ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) [14], where the wild descending theme in A minor conjures that composer's Hungarian style, with the piano adding frequent rhythmic syncopations. This material is reversed, with melody ascending, before a calm *legato* section in E minor does duty for a 'trio', later traversing E flat major and A major plateaux. The opening returns in genial A major and C major garb, and a coda increases the motion towards accented *fortissimo* chords before halting

<sup>7</sup> E-mail dated 29 March 2019.

at a fermata rest. Three ‘trio’ themed *pianissimo dolce* bars then end the work in C major, recalling John Lenehan’s comment about Fürstenthal’s ‘sonatas that start in one key and end somewhere entirely different!’<sup>8</sup>

Fürstenthal’s **String Quartet in B minor, Op. 40**, begins with an *Allegro* [15] in common time. A tremolo background accompanies the sinuous cello line with dotted rhythms which is taken up by the viola in the sixth bar. The B theme is fashioned from the same material, but it is presented more quietly, with swifter note-values and recurrent crotchet backing. The entire exposition is repeated before the development leads the material to F sharp minor by way of imitation in the violins. Steady quavers give the melodic fragments more urgency as modulation is heightened, and a truncated recapitulation fourteen bars from the close serves as a coda. Here the cello contributes an ostinato B in the bass as the dotted rhythms in the first violin lead to a *fortissimo* B minor conclusion. The nimble *Scherzando* [16] in  $\frac{3}{8}$  reaffirms B minor with staccato Bs in the bass answered by swaying melodies in the upper strings. A *ritardando* and fermata on an F sharp major chord seal the first portion of the movement. The short ‘trio’ yields a calmer, legato texture in B major, but at the next *A tempo* the pounding Bs in the bass signal the return of the Scherzo. Finally, a fifteen-bar coda based on the softer ‘trio’ material finishes the movement in D major. A cello line surging upwards from the bass opens the *Lento* [17], in common time and again in B minor. The opening melody is repeatedly passed to the first violin and back to the cello, while the middle voices contribute a languorous backdrop of persistent crotchets. The harmonic underpinnings move to B major before increased motion in all voices leads to a semiquaver-laden variant of the opening at *Meno mosso*. Increased chromaticism precedes a second return of the beginning theme after *Tempo I*, back in its original garb of crotchets. The approach of the close in B major adds the heightened motion of quavers and quaver triplets to a highly charged close. The finale, an *Andante* [18] in common time, begins with an incisive six-bar solo in D major from the second violin. The entrance of the viola with the same motif in bar 7, and cello and first violin later, make the fugal nature of the finale clear. The

<sup>8</sup> E-mail dated 27 March 2019.

texture thickens at *Meno mosso*, with the fugue theme in the cello, a counter-theme in the first violin and running quavers in the middle voices. Forces regroup in D major at a second *Meno mosso* and, after some complicated rhythmic wrinkles, surge to a *fortissimo* B minor finish.

Erik Levi posed the question of whether Robert Fürstenthal's compositions were not 'original contributions to the genre rather than effective exercises in pastiche'.<sup>9</sup> Fürstenthal possessed a talent that might be compared to that of a fine sketch artist, whereas his great models, like Schubert, Hugo Wolf, Brahms and his better followers, such as Jenner, Herzogenberg and Thieriot, were painting in oils. In musical terms, in addition to their lyrical gifts they had a sense for development that went deeper than Fürstenthal's deft but small-scale efforts; the older masters conceived their themes with development already in mind. Still, Fürstenthal does his listeners the service of recalling what Michael Haas called Vienna's 'feverish mixture of Slavic delirium, Latin passion and Teutonic understated beauty',<sup>10</sup> and he did it generously, in different instrumental configurations. His talent sufficed to present a gift from one era to another, and for all such unexpected gifts one should be grateful.

Composer and music will have travelled full circle if contemporary Viennese journalists are given the last word. Renate Wagner of the *Online Merker* wondered 'whether Fürstenthal will ever properly be "discovered" (because most of the works were produced in his last few decades in the U.S., so they are not forgotten, but simply unknown)'.<sup>11</sup> Edwin Baumgartner of the *Wiener Zeitung* was more emphatic: 'Fürstenthal may have been a hobby composer – but what a Master!'<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> 'An Engagement with the Past: Robert Fürstenthal's Songs', *Robert Fürstenthal. Songs and Ballads of Life and Passing*, Toccata Classics TOCC 0354, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> 'Exile, Identity and Music', *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> 'Robert Fürstenthal: Lieder und Balladen vom Leben und Vergehen', *Online Merker*, 13 February 2017 ([onlinemerker.com/robert-fuerstenthal-lieder-und-balladen-vom-leben-und-vergehen/](http://onlinemerker.com/robert-fuerstenthal-lieder-und-balladen-vom-leben-und-vergehen/)).

<sup>12</sup> 'Nur ein Hobby Komponist?', *Wiener Zeitung*, 18 January 2017 ([wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/kultur/klassik/ein-schall-fuer-zwei/868678-Nur-ein-Hobbykomponist.html](http://wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/kultur/klassik/ein-schall-fuer-zwei/868678-Nur-ein-Hobbykomponist.html)).

William Melton is the author of *The Wagner Tuba: A History* (edition ebenos, Aachen, 2008) and *Humperdinck: A Life of the Composer of Hänsel und Gretel* (Toccata Press, London, 2020). He is a contributor to *The Cambridge Wagner Encyclopedia* (2013), whose further writings include articles on lesser-known *Romantics* like Friedrich Klose, Henri Kling and Felix Draeseke. A career orchestral horn-player, he has researched and edited the scores of the 'Forgotten Romantics' series for the publisher edition ebenos.

**The Rossetti Ensemble** was created in 2018 from long-standing collaborations between the pianist John Lenehan, violinist Sara Trickey, violist Sarah-Jane Bradley and cellist Timothy Lowe. Named after Dante Gabriel, the British poet and Pre-Raphaelite artist, the group is passionate about the repertoire of the era and the many composers who derived inspiration from Rossetti's work, such as Debussy and Vaughan Williams. In addition to its performances as a piano quartet, the group is flexible, working with other high-profile instrumentalists and singers to produce imaginative and varied programmes. Under an earlier name, 'Sound Collective', its previous concerts included appearances at King's Place in London and the Lichfield and Ripon International Festivals, and it released a recording, *Concertato*, of chamber works by Lydia Kakabadse, on the Divine Art label in February 2017.

**Nicholas Korth**, 'subtlest of first horns', has held the position of Co-principal Horn with the BBC Symphony Orchestra since 2000. In this capacity he has performed in many Prom concerts at the Royal Albert Hall (including several first and last nights), toured throughout the world and been involved in numerous radio and TV broadcasts. Recent highlights include the obbligato horn part in Mahler's Fifth Symphony in the Suntory Hall in Tokyo under Sakari Oramo, and the Fourth Symphony at the Proms and the Edinburgh Festival under Semyon Bychkov. He appears frequently as guest principal horn and soloist with many other ensembles. He is also a composer, with a passion for the magical world of natural harmony, the extraordinary sounds of overtone singing and the setting of words, in particular those of Gerard Manley



Hopkins. He has worked closely with overtone singer Rollin Rachele, the tenors James Gilchrist and Daniel Norman and soprano Olivia Robinson. As a member of the London Conchord Ensemble he has had much of his music performed (notably in the USA and at the Wigmore Hall) and recorded.

**Malcolm Messiter** ‘plays the oboe like a wizard’ (*Montreal Gazette*) and, according to *Records and Recording*, can best be described as ‘the Heifetz of the oboe’. He has performed all over the world as soloist and was a frequent collaborator with the Amadeus Quartet. More recent performances have included many recitals with pianist John Lenehan and concerts with the London Soloists Ensemble.



**Martyn Jackson**, violin, was born in Yorkshire in 1988 and has performed as a solo artist and chamber musician throughout the UK, much of Europe and in the Middle East. His solo appearances have included performances of the Brahms, Elgar, Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky concertos and a European tour with cellist Henri Demarquette encompassing venues such as the Philharmonie and Konzerthaus in Berlin and Les Invalides in Paris. He made his recital debut in the Purcell Room of the Southbank Centre in London, as part of the Philharmonia Orchestra Martin Musical Scholarship Fund Prize Winners’ Recital Scheme. He was a selected artist on the Countess of Munster Recital Scheme and is a Concordia Foundation Artist. As an orchestral musician, he has frequently served as Assistant Concertmaster of the London Symphony, Philharmonia and



BBC Symphony Orchestras. . The former leader of the Cavaleri String Quartet, in 2016 he was appointed first violin of the Allegri Quartet. He performs on a Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume on loan from Frau Angela Schmeink.

**Sara Trickey** brings her ‘beautifully refined tone’ (*Musical Opinion*) and her ‘fiery and passionate’ style (*The Strad*) to both her solo and chamber career. Formerly a founder member of the prize-winning Brontë Quartet, she is currently a member of the Odysseus Piano Trio and the Joachim String Trio. She has been involved in many chamber-music recordings, receiving encomia in the press for her duo recordings of works by Mathias and Schubert. She also has a keen interest in contemporary music.



**Sarah-Jane Bradley**, an ‘ardent and affecting soloist’ (*The Daily Telegraph*), is well known for her championing of new works for the viola. She has worked as soloist with the Philharmonia, Hallé and BBC Symphony Orchestras, amongst others, and her acclaimed recordings include albums for Chandos, Dutton Epoch, Hyperion and Naxos. A founder member of the Leopold String Trio, and subsequently Sorrel Quartet, Fidelio Piano Quartet and London Soloists Ensemble, she is a sought-after chamber musician.





**Timothy Lowe** is firmly established as one of the new generation of outstanding British cellists. He has played as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe and the UK. His most recent recital at the Wigmore with pianist Andrew Brownell was described as ‘compelling in every respect, probing, virtuosic and yielding by turns – a true example of outstanding musicianship’ (*Musical Opinion*). He is a professor of cello at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Artistic Director of the York Chamber Music Festival.

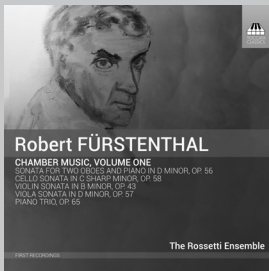


**John Lenehan** has been described as ‘One of our most celebrated musicians’ (*Classic FM Magazine*) and ‘Simply one of the best chamber pianists going’ (*The Scotsman*). He has recorded over 70 albums, and is renowned internationally both as a soloist and chamber musician. He regularly partners artists such as Tasmin Little and Emma Johnson, and is also acclaimed for his work as a composer and arranger.



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‘Fürstenthal’s music isn’t derivative. It’s just using a language that’s no longer spoken. [...] Old-fashioned as they may be, these chamber works have a charm and an appeal that works on a purely musical level.’

—Ralph Graves, WTJU

‘Toccata Classics has been introducing us to some wonderful song repertoire by little known, or completely unknown, composers. This may be one of their finest discoveries yet, and to anyone who loves the Lieder of Wolf, Strauss, and Brahms this CD can be recommended without reservation. [...] a wonderful discovery.’

—Henry Fogel, *Fanfare*



Recorded on 17–19 December 2018 in St Silas the Martyr, Kentish Town, London  
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London (Horn Sonata and Oboe Sonata)

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## ROBERT FÜRSTENTHAL Chamber Music, Volume Three

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### Sonata for Horn and Piano in D minor, Op. 54

**13:20****1** I *Andante*

4:26

**2** II Scherzo: *Allegretto*

2:05

**3** III *Adagio*

3:41

**4** IV *Grave – Allegro con brio*

3:08

### Sonata for Cello and Piano in C sharp minor, Op. 44

**17:52****5** I *Allegro*

4:55

**6** II *Scherzando*

3:23

**7** III *Cantabile*

6:33

**8** IV *Agitato*

3:01

### Sonata for Oboe and Piano in E flat minor, Op. 50

**14:30****9** I Ruhig

4:37

**10** II Lebhaft

2:20

**11** III Sehr innig

4:10

**12** IV Bewegt

3:23

### Sonata for Viola and Piano in F sharp minor, Op. 60a

**12:30****13** I *Andante*

8:14

**14** II Scherzo

4:16

### String Quartet in B minor, Op. 40

**17:26****15** I *Allegro*

6:47

**16** II *Scherzando*

2:23

**17** III *Lento*

5:56

**18** IV *Andante*

2:20

### The Rossetti Ensemble

Nicholas Korth, horn **1**–**4**Timothy Lowe, cello **5**–**8** **15**–**18**Malcolm Messiter, oboe **9**–**12**Martyn Jackson, violin **15**–**18**Sara Trickey, violin **15**–**18**Sarah-Jane Bradley, viola **13**–**18**John Lenehan, piano **1**–**14****TT 75:40**

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