

## Geneva Lewis

Geneva Lewis *violin*

Llŷr Williams *piano*

**Pittville Pump Room**

**Tuesday 9 July**

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<b>Charles Ives</b>	Violin Sonata no.4, 'Children's Day at the Camp Meeting'	9'
<b>Erich Wolfgang Korngold</b>	Suite from 'Much Ado about Nothing', op.11	16'
<b>Johannes Brahms</b>	Violin Sonata no.1 in G major, op.78 'Regensong'	26'

### About the Programme

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**Charles Ives** Violin Sonata no.4, '*Children's Day at the Camp Meeting*'

*Animé et tres décidé*

*Assez vif et bien rythmé*

*Andantino, doucement expressif*

Ives assembled the Violin Sonata No. 4 around 1916, using works that he had composed from 1900 to 1916. He wrote this account of it.

“It is called "Children's Day" because it is based principally on the church hymns sung at the children's services. At the summer Camp Meetings in the Brookside Park, the children (more so the boys) would get marching and shouting the hymns. The slow movement recalls a serious time for children, "Yes, Jesus Loves Me"— except when old Stone Mason Bell and Farmer John would get up and shout or sing – and some of the boys would rush out and throw stones down on the rocks in the river.”

**Erich Wolfgang Korngold** Suite from 'Much Ado about Nothing', op.11

- i. Overture (*Overture*)
- ii. Mädchen im Brautgemach (*Bridal Morning*)
- iii. Holzapfel und Schlehwein (*Dogberry and Verges*)
- iv. Intermezzo - Gartenszene (*Garden Scene*)
- v. Hornpipe (*Hornpipe*)

Korngold's incidental music for Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing* was composed in 1919 for a production at the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna in 1920.

*The Bridal Morning*, a graceful ternary-form movement, depicts Hero, the bride-to-be, on her wedding morning, happily unaware that Claudio has been tricked into doubting her fidelity. Occasional “modern” harmonies enliven the prevailing Romantic language. The *Garden Scene* is a slow, flowing waltz with Romantic modulations and sudden key shifts, following the plot unfold as Benedict and Beatrice fall in love. Korngold's Hornpipe is a lively dance in rondo form, with a cheerful refrain containing delightful rhythmic shifts and episodes that include folk-like drones, brief touches of minor,

and even a quick descending passage in whole tones. The piece ends with an unexpected humorous tag. The Suite remains popular for its expressivity, humour and robust good spirits.

**Johannes Brahms** Violin Sonata no.1 in G major, op.78 'Regensong'

*i. Vivace non troppo*

*ii. Adagio*

*iii. Allegro molto moderato*

The years 1878 and 1879 brought two of Brahms's greatest compositions for violin, the *Concerto* and the *Sonata in G*. Although numbered as his first violin sonata, Brahms is known to have written at least three such works before this, but they are now lost to us. He was not therefore setting out on a new course when he wrote the *G major Sonata*, and the work shows a considerable mastery of the form, with violin and piano sharing their roles to perfection. It is a gracious work, where grandeur is never sought.

There are three movements. A Viennese waltz-like cross-rhythm pervades the work right from the first bar but the first movement soon corrects the impression given by the calm tunefulness of the opening passage that this is to be a completely limpid and serene work. It moves away from the major key and becomes more impassioned. The slow movement is pensive and includes a funereal march passage.

Three repeated notes open the finale in an obvious reference to the opening movement. In this finale, Brahms also makes use of his two Op 59 settings of the 'rain' poems by Klaus Groth: *Regenlied* and *Nachklang*. In its harmonies the coda again hints at the opening movement, neatly bringing all the material together.

## Artist Biographies

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### **Geneva Lewis** *violin*

New Zealand-born violinist Geneva Lewis has forged a reputation as a musician of consummate artistry whose performances speak from and to the heart and who has been lauded for the "remarkable mastery of her instrument" (CVNC) and hailed as "clearly one to watch" (Musical America).

Named a BBC New Generation Artist (2022-24), Geneva is also the recipient of a 2022 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant. She was also Grand Prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition, a Performance Today Young Artist in Residence and a YCAT Concordia Artist.

In August 2023, Geneva made her BBC Proms debut with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Jaime Martin; the 2023-24 season includes further performances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and debuts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Deeply passionate about chamber music, Geneva has had the pleasure of collaborating with prominent musicians such as Jonathan Biss, Sir András Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida; she has performed in venues and festivals such as London's Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam and the Marlboro Music Festival.

Geneva currently performs on a composite violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini, c. 1776 generously on loan from a Charitable Trust.

### **Llŷr Williams** *piano*

Welsh pianist Llŷr Williams is widely admired for his profound musical intelligence, and for the expressive and communicative nature of his interpretations. He has performed with all the major UK orchestras and he has a particularly longstanding relationship with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, with whom he has in recent seasons performed concertos ranging from Mozart and Beethoven to Bartók and Mathias.

Llŷr Williams has also performed as a chamber musician alongside artists including Bryn Terfel, Natalie Clein and Jamie Barton. In 2023-34, collaborations include projects with tenor Mark Padmore, violist Rosalind Ventris and baritone Andrei Kymach. His particular interest in song repertoire is reflected in his 20-year association as one of the two official pianists of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition.

Llŷr Williams was born in Pentrebychan, North Wales, and read music at The Queen's College, Oxford before taking up a postgraduate scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and in 2017 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Wales. He is also currently Artist-in-Association at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, a patron of the Gower Festival, and Associate Artist at the Cowbridge Festival.