

## Giorgi Gigashvili - BBC New Generation Artist

Pittville Pump Rooms

Tuesday 8 July

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<b>Fanny Mendelssohn</b>	Four Songs Without Words, Op. 8
<b>Felix Mendelssohn</b>	Selection from Songs Without Words, Op. 19
<b>Clara Schumann</b>	Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann, Op. 20
<b>Robert Schumann</b>	Sonata No. 1 in F# minor, Op. 11
Interval	
<b>Sergei Prokofiev</b>	Piano Sonata No. 8 in Bb Major, Op. 84

### About the Programme

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<b>Fanny Mendelssohn</b>	Four Songs Without Words, Op. 8		
i. Allegro moderato	ii. Andante con espressione	iii. Larghetto	iv. <i>Wanderlied</i> . Presto

For a long time she was mostly famous as Felix Mendelssohn's sister and the as the composer of a few beautiful songs that were published under her brother's name – but in recent years, as the full extent of her enormous compositional body of work has begun to be realized, she has started to take her place as the major figure she is. Fanny Mendelssohn's *Four Songs without Words, Op. 8* is a collection of four piano pieces published posthumously in 1850 and illustrates her creative skill of writing for the piano in imitation of the voice.

<b>Felix Mendelssohn</b>	Selection from Songs Without Words, Op. 19
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Amongst those many works for piano which for more than a century have endeared themselves to the hearts and minds of countless music-lovers Mendelssohn's Songs without Words must surely take pride of place. For their charm, individual character and melodic beauty they have been cherished by generations of pianists – and listeners. Indeed, in Mendelssohn's own day they contributed in no small way to his popularity.

There are 48 in all, composed at various times during his lifetime, some of them being published after his death. Whilst it has to be said that their wide variety of mood nowhere approached the intensity of a Chopin or Schumann their unassuming style, effective keyboard writing and abundant invention have inspired a genuine sincerity of affection. They have easily survived the stumbling of inexperienced fingers and stood the test of time.

<b>Clara Schumann</b>	Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann, Op. 20	The piece
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consists of the theme followed by seven variations, each exploring different musical ideas and moods. *Variations* are considered to be one of Clara Schumann's finest works and is seen as a testament to her compositional skill and her deep connection to her husband, Robert's music. The variations showcase a range of textures and techniques, including runs, canons and chordal statements with one variation highlighting her musical dialogue with her husband in her own compositional voice. It is music which moves from solemn mystery to quiet melancholy to fiery virtuosity. The dreamy final bars contain echoes of the previous variations and fade into wistful serenity. . .

## Robert Schumann

Sonata No. 1 in F# minor, Op. 11

- i. Introduzione : Un poco Adagio      ii. Allegro vivace      iii. Aria      iv. Scherzo : Allegrissimo

The introduction sets up the theme which returns at the centre of the ensuing Allegro. A gentle melody unfolds. The *Allegro* follows and is dominated by what Schumann called his 'fantango' idea with its dotted rhythms and falling 5th motif. The third movement is based on a song and as such is full of passion and is expressed with fullness and calm, and whilst the final Scherzo does not have the dramatic sweep of the opening, it carries the listener through the music's inventiveness through to its triumphant conclusion.

## Sergei Prokofiev

Piano Sonata No. 8 in Bb Major, Op. 84

- i. Andante dolce      ii. Andante sognando      iii. Vivace

The expansive first movement is constructed on classical lines and opens with a gentle, but typically Prokofievian melody with wide spaced intervals and chromatic twists. It becomes slightly more animated, but when a new idea emerges it too is still within the gentle mood. Its repeated notes hold the music in suspense until rapid finger work launches the movement in a new dramatic direction becoming more and more assertive and climaxing in crashing weighty chords before the opening gentleness returns. There is a briefer return of the fiery middle section as a coda and unison scales seem to presage a stormy end, but the movement suddenly ends quietly. The *Andante Sognando* ('dreamy') is a wistful waltz of great charm that provides a moment of calm in the centre of the sonata. The last movement sets off with great energy in playful mood, with rapid finger work, spiky melodies and percussive rhythms. Its energy becomes even fiercer when set against repeated notes, but runs out of steam to shift to a recall of the gentle melodies of the first movement, until playful energy returns to sweep the movement along in ever exuberant virtuosity to a definite, and perhaps defiant, close.

## Artist Biography

### Giorgi Gigashvili piano

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Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 2000, Giorgi studied the piano without ever thinking about a professional career as a pianist. He is passionate about the folksongs of his country, which he likes to arrange and sing. He even participated in the Georgian 'The Voice' and won the competition at the age of thirteen! However, he continued his musical training at the Paliashvili Central Music School for Gifted Children and entered the Tbilisi State Conservatory in the class of Revaz Tavadze.

In April 2019 he won First Prize at the Vigo International Piano Competition, with Martha Argerich as president of the jury. In 2021, he received the Hortense Anda-Bührlé Special Prize at the Fifteenth Géza Anda Competition in Zurich; this enabled the Géza Anda Foundation to recommend him for participation in the KlavierOlymp in Bad Kissingen, where he won First Prize and the Audience Prize. In March 2023, Giorgi celebrated another great success: He won the 2nd Prize at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition and was also awarded the Junior Jury Prize, the Prize for the best chamber music and 5 out of 6 audience prizes. In spring 2024, he received the Terrence Judd-Hallé Award; in autumn 2024, he was awarded the Musikpreis of the German Economy.

His debut album "Meeting my Shadow" was released in April 2023 with Alpha Classics. The album has been highly acclaimed since its release: It reveals his full palette of colours; featuring Scarlatti, Beethoven, Scriabin and Messiaen.

In the season 2024/2025, Giorgi will perform with the Brandenburgisches Staatsorchester, the Munich Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra as well as with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin (amongst others). Chamber music highlights of the season include recitals at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, the Konzerthaus in Vienna and at the Wigmore Hall in London.

Giorgi is combining his career as a classical pianist with his passion for electronic and experimental music: "Georgian on my mind" is a program featuring singer Nini Nutsbidze and is connecting Georgian folk songs with classical pieces by e.g. Chopin or Bartók. "Serious Music" featuring Nikala is a one-of-a-kind stage experiment where classics meet modernity, a synthesis of academic and electronic music. Both projects, as well as the world premiere of Giorgi's self-composed work for orchestra, piano and electronics can be heard as part of his fellowship at the Beethovenfest Bonn in September 2024.