



**Bedford Music Club and  
Kensington and Chelsea Music Society  
Virtual Concert Series, 2021**

**SIMONE ALESSANDRO TAVONI** piano

**Thursday 11th February 2021, 6pm  
1901 Arts Club, London**

*or watch for up to a month later*

Free to watch, donations gratefully received

<https://www.1901artsclub.com/11-feb-2021-simone-alessandro-tavoni-piano.html>

**Programme:**

**Muzio Clementi (1752-1832)**

Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op.25, No.5

- i Più tosto allegro con espressione
- ii Lento e patetico
- iii Presto

**Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

Kinderszenen, Op.15

- i Von fremden Ländern und Menschen (Of Foreign Lands and Peoples)
- ii Kuriose Geschichte (A Curious Story)
- iii Hasche-Mann (Blind Man's Buff)
- iv Bittendes Kind (Pleading Child)
- v Glückes genug (Happy Enough)
- vi Wichtige Begebenheit (An Important Event)
- vii Träumerei (Dreaming)
- viii Am Kamin (At The Fireside)

- ix Ritter vom Steckenpfer (Knight Of The Hobbyhorse)
- x Fast zu ernst (Almost Too Serious)
- xi Fürchtenmachen (Frightening)
- xii Kind im Einschlummern (Child Falling Asleep)
- xiii Der Dichter spricht (The Poet Speaks)

### **Claude Debussy (1862-1918)**

Images oubliées

- i Lent (mélancolique et doux)
- ii Souvenir du Louvre
- iii Quelques aspects de Nous n'irons plus au bois parce qu'il fait un temps insupportable

### **Franz Liszt (1811-1886)**

Grande fantasia sur des motifs de La serenata e L'orgia des Soirées musicales, S.422

### **Biography:**

The Italian pianist **Simone Alessandro Tavoni** has given recitals internationally, including in the United States, United Kingdom, Denmark, Hungary, France, Spain, Malta, Estonia, Greece and across Italy. He has been awarded a place on the BBC Pathway scheme during the 2015/2016 academic year and through this, he has had the opportunity to rehearse and perform as an orchestral pianist with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and some of these performances have been played by BBC Radio 3.

In 2019 Simone has been selected as a Parklane Group Artist, as Keyboard Charitable Trust Artist and received the Luciano and Giancarla Berti full-ride scholarship to attend the Aspen Music Festival and School studying with renowned Professor Fabio Bidini.

He has featured as a soloist with the East London symphony orchestra, the Kensington Chamber Orchestra, the Ashod Symphony Orchestra, the Alion Baltic symphony orchestra and the Luigi Cherubini Symphony Orchestra. Performance venues have included the Liszt House (Budapest, Hungary), the Florence Conservatory Concert Hall (Florence, Italy), the Royal Festival Hall, the Wigmore Hall, the Brunel University, St Martin in the Fields, the Victoria

& Albert Museum, Regent Hall, St. James' Piccadilly (London. U.K.) The Winchester Cathedral (U.K.), Petit Palau in Barcelona ( Spain),The Talliin Philharmonia and Glehn Castle (Tallin, Estonia) the Hausmusik of Aarhus and the Italian institute of culture in Copenhagen (Denmark). He is also a regular guest artist at the En Blanc Et Noir Piano Festival in Lagrasse, (France) and of the Aegean international art festival in Heraklion ( Crete). During a recent recital in Spain his recording has been broadcasted by the Canal du sur (Almeria, Spain).

After graduating from the Giacomo Puccini Conservatoire in La Spezia, Liguria (Italy) when he was 18, where he studied the piano under Marco Podestà, he then moved to Florence to study at the Luigi Cherubini Conservatoire, continuing piano studies with Giuseppe Fricelli, and studying composition with Rosario Mirigliano.

Winner also of numerous national competitions in Italy, he had also the opportunity to participate in an exchange programme in Budapest on a full scholarship at the Franz Liszt Academy studying with Professors Kesckes Balazs and Rita Wagner.

In 2014, he moved to London to study on the Master of Performance programme at the Royal College of Music with Professor Andrew Ball. After winning a second exchange bursary in Autumn 2015, he pursued his studies for one term at the State University of Music and Performing Arts in Stuttgart, Germany with Dr. Peter Nagy. He has received also masterclasses by Dmitri Bashkirov, Fabio Bidini, Aldo Ciccolini, Zoltan Kocsis, Antonio Pompa Baldi and Malcolm Bilson.

Simone has been generously supported by the Talent Unlimited organization and by the Henry Wood Trust at Royal college of Music.

During the 2018/2019 academic year he obtained an Advanced Diploma course at Trinity Laban Conservatoire with professors Deniz Gelenbe and Peter Tuite majorly supported by a scholarship and selected as a Alfred Kitchin and Trinity College London Scholar.

Simone is currently performing, closely assisted and supported by Prince Dr. Donatus Von Hohenzollern.

## **Programme notes:**

### **Muzio Clementi: Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op.25, No.5**

The F sharp minor Sonata—usually identified as Op 26 No 2 but in fact published originally by Dale of London as the fifth of 'Six Sonatas for the Piano Forte; dedicated to Mrs Meyrick ... Opera 25' (entered Stationers' Hall, 8 June 1790)—is an example of what Shedlock in 1895 defined as that class of Clementi work where 'his heart and soul were engaged' to the full. The tenor of its first movement is a mixture of dolce expression, capricious finger-work, off-beat sforzando accents, teasing articulation (the slurs and dots tell in an orchestral way), and tonal surprise (not least the polarity of the exposition which closes in the dominant minor, C sharp, rather than the expected relative major, A, of Classical routine). The reprise—expanded and developmental—is irregular: alternately bleak and brilliant in figuration and character, what it does in particular with the opening idea (imitatively, registrally, harmonically) is wittily provocative.

The middle slow movement is in B minor, a poignantly felt song, potently textured and voiced, dramatic in its contrasts of soft and loud, of minorial pathos and sweet maggiore release, of dark diminished-seventh tension, of poetically meaningful ornamentation. Structurally its shape is elegant and balanced, combining breadth of phrasing with economy of expression. The 3/8 Presto finale is an imaginatively inventive cameo of Scarlattian brilliance and Mendelssohnian fleetness, of glittering thirds and equally elfin and stormy octaves. Historically, such music is Classical. Temperamentally, it is Romantic.

### **Robert Schumann: Kinderszenen, Op. 15**

The 13 pieces that constitute Robert Schumann's Kinderszenen for piano (Scenes from Childhood), Op. 15 (1838) showcase their creator's musical imagination at the peak of its poetic clarity. As a result, the Kinderszenen have long been staples of the repertoire as utterly charming yet substantial miniatures, the sort of compact keyboard essays in which's Schumann genius found full expression. Kinderszenen was one of the projects Schumann worked on during the spring of 1838 to get through a difficult period of separation from his fiancée, Clara Wieck, who was on tour as a pianist and whose father objected to the idea of her marriage to the composer. In March

of that year, Schumann wrote to Clara, "I have been waiting for your letter and have in the meantime filled several books with pieces.... You once said to me that I often seemed like a child, and I suddenly got inspired and knocked off around 30 quaint little pieces.... I selected several and titled them Kinderszenen. You will enjoy them, though you will need to forget that you are a virtuoso when you play them." The Kinderszenen are a touching tribute to the eternal, universal memories and feelings of childhood from a nostalgic adult perspective; unlike a number of Schumann's collections of piano character pieces (e.g. Album for the Young, Op. 68), the Kinderszenen are not intended to be played by children. Schumann claimed that the picturesque titles attached to the pieces were added as an afterthought in order to provide subtle suggestions to the player, a model Debussy followed decades later in his Preludes. Almost all of the Kinderszenen are miniature ternary (ABA) forms. Scene No. 1, "Von fremden Ländern und Menschen" (Of Foreign Lands and People), opens with a lovely melody whose basic motivic substance, by appearing in several vague guises throughout many of the other pieces, serves as a general unifying element. The seventh Scene, "Träumerei" (Reverie), is easily the most famous piece in the set; its charming melody and quieting power have recommended it to generations of concert pianists who wish to calm audiences after a long series of rousing encores. The Kinderszenen contain many delicate musical touches; Scene No. 4, "Bittendes Kind" (Pleading Child), for example, is harmonically resolved only when an unseen force (a parent?) gives in and grant the child's wish at the beginning of No. 5, "Glückes genug" (Quite Happy). In the final piece, "Der Dichter spricht" (The Poet Speaks), Schumann removes himself just a bit from the indulgent reverie to formulate a narrator's omniscient view of the child. Quietly, gently, the many moods and feelings that Schumann touched upon over the course of this remarkable 20-minute work are lovingly recalled, and the composition concludes, contentedly, in the same key of G major in which it began.

### **Claude Debussy: Images Oubliées**

Debussy's piano Images of 1894 survive in a manuscript Debussy dedicated to Yvonne, the adolescent daughter of his painter friend Henry Lerolle. (This same young lady was respectively photographed and painted at the piano by Degas and Renoir.) Dating from the same time as the Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune and the first draft of Pelléas et Mélisande, the three pieces

reveal Debussy already confidently mature at the piano. Early in 1896 the central piece was printed in a newspaper, with the promise that all three Images were about to be published; for reasons unknown this never happened. Not until 1977 was the complete suite published, as Images (oubliées), a title devised to prevent confusion with the two official sets of piano Images published in 1905 and 1907.

In an elegantly affectionate preface Debussy describes the pieces as "not for brilliantly lit salons ... but rather conversations between the piano and oneself." This customised commentary for the young Yvonne Lerolle continues above the second Image: "In saraband tempo, that is, solemn and slow, even a bit like an old portrait, souvenir of the Louvre, etc..." In turn the third piece is headed, "Some aspects of the song 'Nous n'irons plus au bois', because the weather is dreadful". Above the piece's central avalanche of arpeggios Debussy continues the badinage: "Here the harps imitate to perfection peacocks spreading their tails - or the peacocks imitate harps (as you like it!) and the sky cheers up again in summer clothing."

For sheer expressive beauty the untitled opening piece is almost unsurpassed in Debussy's output, and its closing cadence echoes the end of Act 1 Scene 1 of *Pelléas et Mélisande* (as well as foreshadowing the end of "La soirée dans Grenade"). After it comes an early and somewhat lush version of the "Sarabande" that reappeared in 1901 in the suite *Pour le piano*; the differences between the two versions are well summed up by the different modal colours and richer textures in the first eight bars of the 1894 version. Émile Vuillermoz has described how Debussy played this Sarabande "with the easy simplicity of a good dancer from the sixteenth century", and Debussy's stepdaughter recalled how he used to emphasise the characteristic sarabande "lift" in the piece's second bar.

The final Image shares its mood, its toccata texture and its use of the French nursery song "Nous n'irons plus au bois" with Debussy's later Estampe "Jardins sous la pluie"; otherwise, though, the earlier piece is quite different, for its opening theme relates it to Debussy's String Quartet of 1893, and its last pages imitate a clanging bell with harmonic oppositions that suggest Debussy's lifelong enthusiasm for Mussorgsky. Above this passage Debussy completed his commentary for Yvonne Lerolle by writing

"A bell that keeps no beat" (not entirely true in musical terms), followed by the gruff remark above the closing bars, "Enough of the bell!"

### **Franz Liszt: Grande Fantasia sur des motifs de La Serenata et l'Orgia des Soirée Musicales by Rossini, S.422**

The Grand Fantasia sur des motifs des Soirée Musicales is a piano solo composition written between the 1835-1836. This is another composition example of the Liszt's passion for Italian operatic music and culture. The themes are being introduced and rearranged magnificently using and adapting every register of the piano in the most richness and engaging way in order to express the elegant and full of glee Rossini ideas, originally conceived for an operatic and orchestral stage.

The first section is characterised by an andante and rhapsodic pace, full of very lyrical moments but has also very virtuoso and flourishing passages. These aspects in somewhat remind of the very typical slow movement of the Hungarian Rhapsodies although the thematic ideas are settled in a very different harmonical territory. Furthermore, it is very noticeable the use of counterpoint and imitation between the parts and the very dramatic use of complex harmonies and the sustained pedal in the low register, which reminds his later works resolutions in the Second Ballade or the Sonata.

The second section is a brilliant and joyful dance. The lyricism and the meditative drama are replaced by effusive melodies, arpeggios and semiquavers notes that move up and the down the registers of the piano. Often octaves are used to enforce the texture of the piece but in general the character is give a sense of a light and settle structure, completely undisturbed by any tentative and upset feelings.

### **Note of thanks:**

*Deep and heartfelt thanks to all the supporters of Bedford Music Club and Kensington and Chelsea Music Society, the sponsors of the latter, Killik & Co. and Corridy Property Management, and the 1901 Arts Club for all its support and assistance.*