

Programme
Russian Music Here and Now!
Saturday 27 May 2017

Maacha Deubner and Daniela Bechly

Soprano

Alissa Firsova Piano

Natasha Holmes Cello

Alexander Borodin	3 Folksong arrangement
Sergei Rachmaninov	Elegie Op. 3 No. 1 for solo piano
Dmitri Smirnov	Mandelstam Sketches Op. 169 3 Songs for Voice and piano
Peter Tchaikovsky	Dumka Op.59 for solo piano
Elena Firsova	3 Mandelstam Poems Op. 23 for soprano and piano
Balakirev/Glinka	The Skylark for solo piano
Rachmaninov	4 Songs

Alissa Firsova is a British-Russian pianist, composer and conductor. As a pianist she gave her Wigmore Hall and Proms debuts in 2009, has performed for numerous prominent venues and festivals since, and released her debut CD, *Russian Émigrés*, in 2015. She has enjoyed collaborations with distinguished artists such as Stephen Kovacevich, Stephen Isserlis, Roman Simovic, Tim Hugh, Andrew Marriner and the Dante Quartet. Since winning the BBC Proms/Guardian Young Composer competition in 2001, she has received two world premieres at the Proms, both conducted by Andrew Litton: her Bach Allegro was performed by the RPO in 2010 and her Bergen's Bonfire Op. 31 featured in the Bergen Philharmonic's 250th Anniversary Prom in 2015. Her music has also been performed by Imogen Cooper, Henning Kraggerud, Dante Quartet, Netherlands Blazer Ensemble, Seattle Chamber Players and the Britten Sinfonia, among others. Alissa was recently invited to Verbier, Asiago and Conques Festivals as pianist/composer-in-residence. Her music is available on disc by The Sixteen on the Coro label and Henning Kraggerud on the Simax label.

Maacha Deubner was born in Freiburg, Germany. She studied singing in Hamburg with Judith Beckmann and attended masterclasses with Ralph Gothoni, Dalton Baldwin, Kurt Widmer and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.

Since then she is concertizing extensively all over Europe and in the USA (including guest performances in Philadelphia and at the Carnegie Hall in New York, together with Gidon Kremer in the world premiere of Giya Kancheli 's "Lament" for violin, soprano and orchestra).

She has been invited to numerous festivals such as the Göttingen Handel-Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Lucerne Festival, the Lockenhaus Chamber Music Festival in Austria, Wien Modern, David-Oistrach Music festival in Pärnu, Estonia, West Cork Chamber Music Festival (Ireland), as well as the Berlin Festwochen.

Collaboration with conductors such as Vladimir Jurowski, V. Ashkenazy, Kurt Masur, Michael Gielen and Valery Gergiev in guest appearances with leading european orchestras.

Recent opera engagements include the Konstanze in Mozart's "Abduction from the Seraglio" in Berlin with director George Tabori, Wanhilt in Siegfried Wagner's "The smith of Marienburg" in Gdansk, Poland, the title role in Rudolf Kelterborn's opera "Julia", Donna Anna, and various others.

Together with the Radio Symphony Orchestra of Berlin she recorded "Sardakai" , opera of Ernst Krenek, which was awarded the Echo Classical Award in 2007.

Her widely spread [repertoire](#) also underlines her specific interest for contemporary music and chamber music, documented on various CD-recordings on ECM New Series label, RCA Red Seal/Sony BMG Classics, Capriccio, Naxos (Marco Polo), edel classics and others (see [discography](#)).

Natasha Holmes

Natasha Holmes was a prize winning student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She is an experienced chamber musician and has toured as a cello/piano duo around Norway: played with Sinfonia 21 ensemble, The Nelson string trio, The Iceni ensemble and London Music Projects.

Natasha has played at the Southbank and the majoe concert halls of Britain, Europe and Russia with Sinfonia 21, The English Chamber Orchestra, The City of London Sinfonia and The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

She has taken a keen interest in music education and community work which have included projects in Siberia and working with Jewish elders and Bangladeshi children in East London. In England she worked for ten years for Glyndebourne Education and played for Glyndebourne Youth Opera.

Natasha plays the Baroque cello and works regularly with Suffolk Refugee Support.