

A woman with blonde hair is shown from the chest up, seated at a piano. She is looking down at the keys with a focused expression. The background is dark, and the lighting is soft, highlighting her hair and the piano's keys.

# INGRID FLITER

SCHUMANN  
PIANO CONCERTO

MENDELSSOHN  
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
ANTONIO MÉNDEZ CONDUCTOR

# INGRID FLITER

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
ANTONIO MÉNDEZ CONDUCTOR



## ROBERT SCHUMANN

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54

1. Allegro affettuoso ..... 14:14
2. Intermezzo – ..... 5:21
3. Allegro vivace ..... 10:49

## FELIX MENDELSSOHN

4. The Fair Melusina: Overture, Op. 32  
(1835 version) ..... 10:44

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25

5. Molto allegro con fuoco – ..... 7:25
6. Andante – ..... 5:43
7. Presto – Molto allegro e vivace ..... 6:39

TOTAL RUNNING TIME: 61 MINUTES



#### RECORDED AT

RSNO Centre,  
Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow, UK  
3–6 December 2015

#### PRODUCED BY

John Fraser

#### RECORDED BY

Philip Hobbs and Robert Cammidge

#### POST-PRODUCTION BY

Julia Thomas

#### COVER IMAGE BY

Robin Piñeda Gould, courtesy of Youth  
Orchestra of the Americas

#### DESIGN BY

gmtoucari.com

This recording was made possible with support from the SCO Sir Charles Mackerras Fund.

Felix Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* is available as a free download from  
<http://www.linnrecords.com/recording-schumann-mendelssohn-piano-concertos.aspx>

# SCHUMANN & MENDELSSOHN

## PIANO CONCERTOS

Robert Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn came from very different backgrounds. Mendelssohn's family had overcome the disadvantages of Jewish birth to achieve riches and, through his grandfather Moses, intellectual eminence; he thus enjoyed an excellent general and musical education as well as ample opportunity to develop his precocious genius. Schumann, from a much more modest middle-class background, had a steeper and slower climb to achieve his musical expertise and aims. Their characters, too, were diametrically opposed. Mendelssohn had a personality that charmed and fascinated his contemporaries; Schumann was eloquent in his published writing about music, but his introversion often made personal communication difficult. Their artistic convictions and aims, however, were close, and during the time when they were both active in Leipzig during the late 1830s and 1840s they enjoyed a cordial, if not entirely untroubled, relationship.

By the age of 18, Mendelssohn had already developed a personal and distinctive musical style. He had created acknowledged masterpieces of chamber and orchestral music as well as writing several operas, the last of which had been publicly staged. These works reveal not only consummate technical skill, but also an extraordinary ability to go beyond the conventional practices of the day. Among his finest achievements was a group of four programmatic concert overtures that look forward to the symphonic poems of the later nineteenth century.

The *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, written when he was 17, was followed in 1828 by *Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt* ('Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage'), which was based on two poems by Goethe. Mendelssohn's next two overtures are also connected with the sea. Conceived during a visit to Scotland in 1829, *Die Hebriden* ('The Hebrides') was directly inspired by the grandeur of nature, as Mendelssohn experienced it during a boat trip to Fingal's Cave on the dramatic island setting of Staffa. *Märchen von der schönen Melusine* ('Fairy-tale of the fair Melusina') had its origin in the tale of Melusina, daughter of a mortal father and water-sprite mother, who is cursed to assume mermaid form every seventh day; when she marries it is on condition she must have absolute privacy on that day, but the condition is inevitably broken, and she is thereafter doomed to remain a mermaid forever. On 7 April 1834 Mendelssohn informed his sister Fanny:

I composed this overture for an opera of Conradin Kreutzer's [*Melusine* (1831)], which I saw this time last year at the Königstädter Theatre. The overture (I mean Kreutzer's) was encored, and I disliked it thoroughly, and the whole opera just as much; but not Fräulein Hähnel, who was very fascinating, especially in one scene, where she appeared as a mermaid combing her hair; this inspired me with the wish to write an overture which the people might not encore, but which would have more inner substance; so I selected the aspect of the subject that pleased me (exactly corresponding with the legend), and, in short, the overture came into the world, and this is its family history.

Orchestras initially had difficulty achieving Mendelssohn's delicate pianissimo effects, as is shown in his correspondence with Ignaz Moscheles, who conducted the coolly received London premiere. But the overture soon gained admirers, and by the time Mendelssohn took up the conductorship of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra two years later, it had become a favourite concert piece. The Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* noted in May 1836

that 'by request it has been frequently performed and every time enjoyed very lively audience appreciation.' Mendelssohn disliked the reviewers' suggesting a specific programme for the music, however, and complained to Fanny: 'as to the fabulous nonsense of the musical papers, about red coral and green sea monsters, and magic palaces, and deep seas, this is stupid stuff, and fills me with amazement.' By this time Mendelssohn's overtures were widely regarded as representing a peak of contemporary instrumental music, so that in a German encyclopedia of 1836 they were described as 'perhaps the most beautiful overtures that, so far, the Germans possess'.

The vivid imagination and innovative approach to form displayed in Mendelssohn's overtures also characterize the Piano Concerto in G minor. Like *The Hebrides*, it was conceived during his grand tour of 1829–31, which took him as far north as Oban and as far south as Naples. In Munich in June 1830, on his outward journey to Italy, he was deeply impressed artistically, and probably romantically, by the 16-year-old daughter of one of the city's leading families, Delphine von Schauroth, who had already proved herself a talented pianist and composer. Before leaving for Italy he presented her with his newly completed *Rondo capriccioso*, Op. 14; then, in Venice, he sketched the 'Venetianisches Gondellied', Op. 19b No. 6, for her; and at the same time, the G minor Piano Concerto was taking shape in his mind. In September and October 1831, while he was back in Munich, he rapidly wrote down the concerto, and dedicated it to Delphine. During those weeks their relationship seems to have deepened, which evidently gave rise to gossip. The affair even reached the ears of the king, for Mendelssohn reported in a letter to his father on 18 October 1831: 'The main thing that the king said to me was that I should marry Fräulein von Schauroth, that would be an excellent match, and why didn't I do it? That, from a king, annoyed me, and somewhat piqued, I was going to answer him, when he, not even waiting for

my answer, jumped to something else and then to a third thing.’ This occurred just after Mendelssohn had premiered the concerto at a concert of his own works that created a furore of interest. A local reviewer hailed him not only as a composer, but also as ‘a hero in the art of performance; great, master of all difficulties, fiery and yet comprehensible. His concert pieces in the first half, his improvised fantasia at the end reveal the skilled master of his instrument.’

The unusual form of the G minor Piano Concerto was undoubtedly inspired by Weber’s *Konzertstück* in F minor, Op. 79, which Mendelssohn had often played, but the work is in no way derivative. In his handling of form, as well as the style of writing for the piano, the composer challenged the established conventions of the classical concerto. At the same time, however, he affirmed his reverence for classical principles, creating a work that, while confounding his listeners’ expectations, excited and delighted them.

During 1832 and 1833, Mendelssohn performed the G minor Concerto at every suitable opportunity, always with great success. His own advocacy of it as soloist seems to have made it irresistible. After a London Philharmonic Society concert on 28 May 1832, the *Harmonicon* observed:

The great novelty and high treat of the evening was M. Mendelssohn’s concerto, never before performed in public. He is a composer who spurns at [sic] imitation, for he is original almost to overflowing, and to the very last note of the piece is inexhaustible in new effects. The first movement of this is in G minor, and glides, without any break, into an adagio in E major, a composition of surpassing beauty, in which the violoncellos are more than vocal: they sing better than most of those to whom vocal powers are said to be given. The finale in G major is all gaiety; the composer seems to have been hardly able to keep his spirits within moderate bounds; they flow over, and half intoxicate his hearers, till the close arrives, which is all calmness – a pianissimo! Such an ending is without example, and exceedingly delightful it was admitted to be by universal consent.

In January 1833 the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* described the concerto as being 'in a completely new form; the usual three movements connected naturally, and also in the alternation of the powerful orchestral tutti with the piano solo sections completely free of conventionality, following its own path'. Other pianists were rather slow to take up the work, but it soon became one of the most frequently performed piano concertos of the nineteenth century. Berlioz even fantasized in his *Soirées de l'orchestre* (No. 18) that after a Paris Conservatoire examination, for which Mendelssohn's concerto was the test piece, the piano began to play it of its own accord.

Although Schumann's path to greatness was much more gradual than Mendelssohn's, he aspired to write in a broad range of genres from an early age, and made many ambitious attempts to compose large-scale works. None of these came to fruition, but his brilliant and original piano music already revealed a composer of genius. Engagement to Clara Wieck and their marriage, which finally took place after acrimonious legal proceedings with her father in September 1840, marked a decisive stage in his development, and his progress towards mastery in the major genres of composition during the next few years was rapid. In the year of his marriage he devoted himself almost exclusively to song writing, and composed well over a hundred Lieder. Then in 1841, strongly encouraged by Clara, Schumann turned to orchestral music: between 23 and 26 January he completed a continuity sketch of the 'Spring' Symphony, Op. 38, which was premiered by Mendelssohn at the Gewandhaus that March; in April and May he again wrestled with symphonic ideas, the eventual result the Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52; and in May, even before that work was finished, he composed a *Phantasie* in A minor for piano and orchestra that would become the first movement of the concerto. Schumann could not interest a publisher in the



*Phantasie*, however, and like several other major works from that time it was laid aside for several years. During that period he focused instead on chamber music (1842–3) and then oratorio (1843). A break in composing occurred at the beginning of 1844, when he accompanied Clara on a four-month concert tour to Russia. During the tour he primarily played the role of the husband of a more famous wife, and the consequent sense of dependence brought on severe attacks of melancholia with concomitant physical symptoms. Those symptoms persisted after their return, and for substantial periods he felt unable to compose.

In 1845, however, after the couple had moved from Leipzig to Dresden, Schumann's condition gradually improved; returning to the *Phantasie*, he transformed it into a piano concerto with the addition of an intermezzo and finale. On 27 June Clara confided to her diary: 'Robert has composed a beautiful last movement for his *Phantasie*...so that it is now a concerto, and I shall play it next winter. I am very glad about it for I have always wanted a large bravura piece from him.' On 4 December she gave a private performance of the completed work with the Dresden Court Orchestra, conducted by Ferdinand Hiller; then at the 1846 New Year's Day concert in the Leipzig Gewandhaus she performed it publicly with great success. An enthusiastic reviewer noted the 'loud signs of joy' and 'stormy applause' that greeted Frau Schumann on her appearance at the piano. He continued with a glowing account of the work itself, which shows that he had quickly grasped its essential innovative characteristics: it was 'a beautifully conceived, deeply thought-out and spirited work, which gives gratifying evidence that Robert Schumann's exceptional talent is also equal to the composition of brilliant solo pieces.' But he was keen not to give the impression that he thought the concerto simply a brilliant showpiece, and summed it up in terms that retain their point and insight today:

It is not, like traditional concertos, divided into solo and tutti sections; in a symphonic manner it creates a tone picture, in which the piano plays the leading role. This shifting of colours, this conception and at the same time transformation of the relationship between orchestra and piano gives the piece a particular charm and makes it into a beautiful, rounded whole. And it appears 'brilliant' to us only through the genuinely artistic treatment of the piano, through the effective inclusion of noble bravura, through the character of the individual parts, which is sometimes passionate, sometimes soft and direct, sometimes mischievous and sportive, and through rare adroitness in form and development of ideas, not through the employment of fashionable virtuoso tricks.

The work was published later that year by Breitkopf & Härtel. Clara continued performing it regularly until her death in 1896, and it was soon taken up by other pianists. In time it would come to be seen as the iconic mid-Romantic piano concerto.

© Clive Brown, 2016





# INGRID FLITER PIANO

‘Fliter plays with such grace and heartfelt sincerity...by whatever magical means, [she] touches the heart.’ *Gramophone*

Born in Buenos Aires, Ingrid Fliter began her piano studies in Argentina with Elizabeth Westerkamp and, after moving to Europe, continued them in Freiburg at the Musikhochschule with Vitaly Margulis, in Rome with Carlo Bruno, and in Imola, at the Academy ‘Incontri col Maestro’, with Franco Scala and Boris Petrushansky. She has also worked with and been mentored by Zoltán Kocsis, Louis Lortie, Alexander Lonquich and Alfred Brendel. A graceful and charismatic performer, Fliter is well known for her thoughtful and sensitive music-making and effortless technique. Her enthusiasm on stage is always infectious, and every performance is deeply personal and full of charm and poetry.

Fliter has established a reputation as a pre-eminent interpreter of Chopin: her 2014 album of the Preludes was named among the top 10 Chopin recordings by *Gramophone*. In addition, her recording, also for Linn, of the two piano concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Jun Märkl attracted extensive critical acclaim. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote: ‘Fliter was born to play Chopin...she gives truly wondrous performances of the two piano concertos...Fliter has a natural, utterly compelling feel and flair for this music, its suppleness of pulse, its glow, its sparkle, its touching fragility and its forceful impetus.’ Her two preceding all-Chopin albums on EMI Classics received five-star reviews and were named ‘Editor’s Choice’ in both *Gramophone* and *Classic FM* magazines.

Winner of the Silver Medal in the 2000 International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, Fliter was awarded the 2006 Gilmore Artist Award; she is one of only a handful of pianists to have received this honour.

# ANTONIO MÉNDEZ CONDUCTOR

The Spanish conductor Antonio Méndez is becoming one of the most exciting conductors of his generation. Despite his youth, Méndez has already had great success with such orchestras as the Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Wiener Symphoniker. In 2013 Méndez made his North American debut at the invitation of Lorin Maazel when he conducted acclaimed performances of *La Voix humaine* by Poulenc at the Castleton Festival; he made his US symphonic debut conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2013.

Méndez was born in 1984 in Palma de Mallorca and began his musical studies at the Conservatori Professional de Música de Mallorca in piano and violin. He also attended the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid to study composition and conducting. Since 2007 he has lived in Germany, where he completed his conducting training at the Universität der Künste Berlin with Professor Lutz Köhler, as a member of the Dirigentenforum (Conductor's Forum) of the German Music Council, and at the Hochschule für Musik 'Franz Liszt' Weimar with Professor Nicolás Pasquet. Méndez first attracted international attention as a prizewinner in the prestigious Malko Competition in Copenhagen in 2012 and as a finalist in the 2013 Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award.



# SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



The world-renowned Scottish Chamber Orchestra is made up of the finest Scottish and international musicians, and brings music to the people of Scotland and beyond.

As well as playing across the length and breadth of Scotland, they take their music around the world and are proud to be ambassadors for Scottish cultural excellence. In recent years, the orchestra has toured throughout Europe, the Far East, India and the USA.

The SCO has made a significant contribution to Scottish life, not just in what it provides culturally, but in what it gives back to the community. Outside the concert hall, SCO players inspire people of all ages in schools, universities, hospitals, care homes, places of work and other community settings through the work of SCO Connect, the SCO's creative learning team.

With its Principal Conductor Robin Ticciati, the orchestra has released five recordings: Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* (2012), Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* and *La mort de Cléopâtre* (2013), Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* (2014), Schumann's Symphonies (2014) and Haydn's Symphonies Nos. 31, 70 & 101 (2015), all on Linn.



The orchestra's long-standing relationship with its former Conductor Laureate, the late Sir Charles Mackerras, resulted in many exceptional performances and recordings, including two multi-award-winning albums for Linn of Mozart's late symphonies.

SCO Associate Artists include conductor-keyboardist Richard Egarr, director-violinist Alexander Janiczek and mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill. All perform regularly with the orchestra during the concert season, in the recording studio, on tour and in festival appearances. The SCO has strong relationships with many eminent guest conductors, including its Principal Guest Conductor Emmanuel Krivine and Conductor Emeritus Joseph Swensen, Olari Elts, John Storgårds and Oliver Knussen; regular soloist-directors include Christian Zacharias and Piotr Anderszewski.

The orchestra enjoys close relationships with many leading composers and has commissioned more than 100 new works, including pieces by its Composer Laureate Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Karin Rehnqvist, Hafliði Hallgrímsson, Lyell Cresswell, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Einojuhani Rautavaara, John McLeod, Rolf Martinsson, Toshio Hosokawa and Martin Suckling, who is SCO Associate Composer.

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra receives funding from the Scottish Government as one of Scotland's five National Performing Arts Companies.



# SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

## Scottish Chamber Orchestra

4 Royal Terrace,  
Edinburgh, EH7 5AB, UK

T: +44 (0)131 557 6800

E: [info@sco.org.uk](mailto:info@sco.org.uk)

[www.sco.org.uk](http://www.sco.org.uk)

## Principal Conductor

Robin Ticciati

## Principal Guest Conductor

Emmanuel Krivine

## Conductor Emeritus

Joseph Swensen

## Chief Executive

Roy McEwan OBE

## Violin I

David Adams

Ruth Crouch

Emily Dellit Imbert

Sijie Chen

Lorna McLaren

Amira Bedrush-McDonald

Sarah Bevan-Baker

Carole Howat

## Violin II

Alice Evans

Gordon Bragg

Laura Comini

Robert McFall

Niamh Lyons

Rachel Smith

## Viola

Jane Atkins  
Felix Tanner  
Brian Schiele  
Steve King

## Cello

Philip Higham  
Su-a Lee  
Donald Gillan  
Eric de Wit

## Double Bass

Nikita Naumov  
Adrian Bornet

## Flute

Alison Mitchell  
Joanna Shaw

## Oboe

Robin Williams  
Rosie Staniforth

## Clarinet

Maximiliano Martín  
William Stafford

## Bassoon

Peter Whelan  
Alison Green

## Natural Horn

Jocelyn Lightfoot  
Harry Johnstone

## Natural Trumpet

Peter Franks  
Shaun Harrold

## Timpani

David Corkhill



## ALSO AVAILABLE ON LINN



**Ingrid Fliter**  
Chopin: Preludes



**Ingrid Fliter,  
Jun Märkl & Scottish  
Chamber Orchestra**  
Chopin: Piano Concertos



**Robin Ticciati  
& Scottish Chamber  
Orchestra**  
Schumann:  
The Symphonies



**Joseph Swensen  
& Scottish Chamber  
Orchestra**  
Mendelssohn:  
Violin Concerto  
& 'Scottish' Symphony



**Artur Pizarro,  
Sir Charles Mackerras  
& Scottish Chamber  
Orchestra**  
Beethoven: Piano  
Concertos 3, 4 & 5



**Gottlieb Wallisch  
& Piatti Quartet**  
Mozart: Piano Concertos  
Nos. 12, 13, & 14



**George-Emmanuel  
Lazaridis**  
Liszt: Sonata  
and Etudes



**Artur Pizarro**  
Albéniz Iberia and  
Granados Goyescas

For even more great music visit [linnrecords.com](http://linnrecords.com)



LINN

*Just listen*

Glasgow Road, Waterfoot, Eaglesham, Glasgow, G76 0EQ  
T: +44 (0)141 303 5027 | E: [info@linnrecords.co.uk](mailto:info@linnrecords.co.uk)