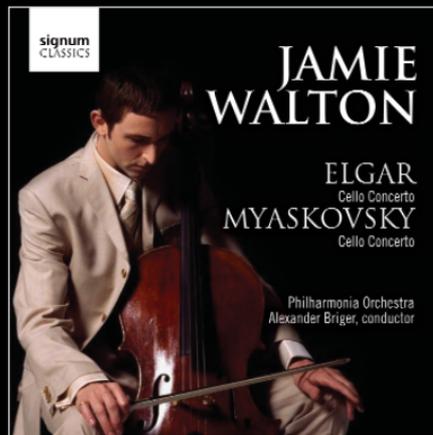


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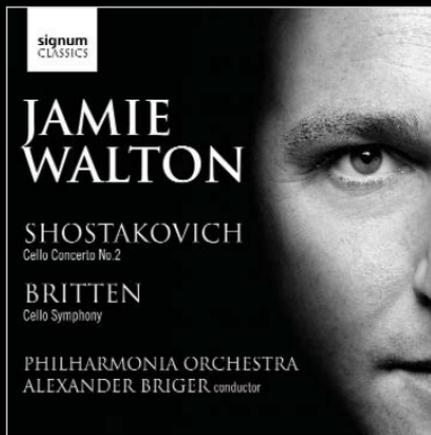
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Elgar: Cello Concerto
Myaskovsky: Cello Concerto
Jamie Walton
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A fascinating coupling of cello concertos from Edward Elgar and the Russian composer Nikolai Myaskovsky, performed by rising star cellist, Jamie Walton.

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Shostakovich: Cello Concerto No. 2
Britten: Cello Symphony
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RACHMANINOV: CELLO SONATA

GRIEG: CELLO SONATA

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873 - 1943)

Sonata for Piano and Cello in G minor, Op. 19

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| 1. Lento: Allegro moderato | [11.21] |
| 2. Allegro scherzando | [5.29] |
| 3. Andante | [4.52] |
| 4. Allegro mosso | [21.45] |

Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907)

Cello Sonata in A minor, Op. 36

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| 5. Allegro agitato | [8.48] |
| 6. Andante molto tranquillo | [5.17] |
| 7. Allegro molto e marcato | [11.30] |

Total Timings	[56.27]
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JAMIE WALTON CELLO
DANIEL GRIMWOOD PIANO

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PROGRAMME NOTE

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873 - 1943)

Sonata for Piano and Cello in G minor, Op. 19

1. *Lento*
2. *Allegro scherzando*
3. *Andante*
4. *Allegro mosso*

After graduating from the Moscow Conservatory with full marks in composition and collecting the rarely awarded Great Gold medal of the conservatory, the 19-year-old Rachmaninov set about making a career for himself. He was readily snapped up by the publishing house, Gutheil, which speedily published his medal-winning opera, *Aleko*, as well as the Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3 No. 2 - a titanic piano miniature which gained a quite extraordinary popularity in its day. Works were flowing freely from his pen and all seemed well with his world. But an absolutely disastrous premiere of his First Symphony brought everything to a standstill. Rachmaninov himself describes the effect the outright rejection of the symphony had on him:

There are serious illnesses and deadly blows from fate which entirely change a man's

character. This was the effect of my own symphony upon myself. When the indescribable torture of the performance had at last come to an end, I was a different man.

For the next three years, the composer was all but paralysed when it came to producing anything of significance. Plenty of attempts were made, but more often than not, Rachmaninov would sink back into his compositional torpor and thus little came to fruition. Through the good offices of his concerned friends, he was taken to meet a neurologist, Dr Nikolay Dahl, who spent the first four months of 1900 with the composer. Although Dahl was a specialist in hypnotherapy, there is scant reportage of what actually went on in his consultations. Nevertheless, whatever transpired during these meetings clearly had a positive effect as Rachmaninov was soon back at work with renewed vigour. The first result of this new-found confidence soon became his most popular orchestral composition, the Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18 - a work he gratefully dedicated to Dr Dahl. There was to be no repeat of the debacle over the First Symphony, as the Second Piano Concerto was a triumph at its premiere.

The very next opus number in Rachmaninov's catalogue is the **Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op.**

19 and the work displays similar musical attributes present in the Second Piano Concerto. Much like the concerto, the sonata is a large-scale, lyrical work with a bravura, ranging piano part which, at times, almost threatens to overpower the cello writing. The composer himself was keen that the two instruments act as equal partners in the musical argument rather than the piano being seen to be adopting its usual accompanying role - the thought being reflected in the order of the instruments in the work's title.

Written in 1901, the sonata is cast in four movements and dedicated to Anatoly Brandukov, the cellist who premiered the piece, with Rachmaninov at the keyboard, on 2 December 1901. The opening movement unfolds quietly before entering more passionate territory, with the wide-ranging and intense piano part surrounding the alternately song-like, soulful or soaring cello line. The *Scherzo's* menacing first theme has the most engaging of counter-weights in the succeeding song for the cello, the piano reprising delectable figurations from the Second Piano Concerto. The concerto also informs the slow movement which is shot through with much of the same long-phrased lyrical intensity. This is Rachmaninov at his heart-easing best, the rapt *Andante's* melody growing in intensity as the cello

soars and the piano part increases in richness. The *Finale* opens with an upbeat, busy figure, an appropriately dignified cello theme providing poetic ballast. The themes indulge in intricate interplay, the equal instruments integrated musically as the movement closes with a barnstorming coda.

Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907)
Cello Sonata in A minor, Op. 36

1. *Allegro agitato*
2. *Andante molto tranquillo*
3. *Allegro molto e marcato*

Grieg was scarcely more prolific even than Rachmaninov when it came to chamber music - each composer providing no more than a handful of published works for the genre. While the Russian naturally excelled at the big-boned, super-scale orchestral statement, Grieg rarely warmed to the medium. In total, the Norwegian's output of instrumental, chamber or orchestral music in the more extended classical forms numbers only eight successful compositions. The youthful Symphony in C minor, a single piano sonata and a brace of violin sonatas were followed by an 1877 string quartet and latterly by his Third Violin Sonata and the Cello Sonata. It might be

noted, though, that the most brilliantly wrought of the early works, the Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16 remains, alongside Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, right at the top of the general public's list of favourite works for piano and orchestra. Nonetheless, Grieg was significantly more successful, in musical, financial and popular terms, with the intimate and refined arts of the piano miniature and the accompanied solo song. His 10 volumes of *Lyric Pieces* together with his equally impressive output of songs were consistent best sellers. His most famous song, *Jeg elsker Dig (I Love You)* sold some 60,000 separate sheet music copies alone between 1883 and 1906. By the turn of the century, he was undeniably one of the most popular living composers, in private homes and concert halls, in the Western world.

With the exception of the superlative works of Beethoven and Brahms, the Romantic era was less kind to cellists than to pianists or violinists when the classical sonata is considered. Somehow the cello seemed not to have fired the imagination of too many of the top rank composers, perhaps because there was no galvanising cello equivalent of the devilish violin of Paganini or the demonic piano of Liszt. The more welcome, then, is Grieg's sole venture into the territory. His **Cello Sonata in A minor, Op. 36** was composed as part of a package

arranged through his Leipzig Publishers, Edition Peters, who offered some 3,000 Marks for works including a second piano concerto (which was never completed), the Cello Sonata and a second set of the *Lyric Pieces*. The Cello Sonata was the first of the bunch to be completed and was dedicated to the composer's cellist brother, John. The first performance took place in his publisher's home city of Leipzig, on 27 October 1883, with John Grieg's teacher, Julius Klengel on cello and the composer at the piano.

The opening of the sonata is a rather tense affair, exhibiting, for Grieg, an uncharacteristically intense first theme, introduced by the cello. The delectable second theme is more like Grieg as we know him from the songs and miniatures - warm and golden. The cello is unusually given a minor concerto-like cadenza and the coda echoes the opening of the composer's Piano Concerto, much as Rachmaninov's own Cello Sonata reprises parts of his Second Piano Concerto. The second movement, a soft *Andante*, takes its lead from Grieg's incidental music to the play *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, a storm scene interrupting the quietude before the main theme returns to reaffirm its serenity. The *Finale* is introduced by another short cello cadenza, whereupon we are led into a sometimes merry and occasionally darker-hued dance that is reminiscent

of Grieg's beloved *Lyric Pieces* in its folk-like nature, pathos, vigour and exuberance.

Martin Ross

BIOGRAPHIES

JAMIE WALTON

Jamie Walton is a rising international soloist with a distinctive voice of his own. Becoming renowned for his purity of tone and uncompromising nature, Jamie is now being compared by critics to some of the great cellists of the past. He has appeared in some of the world's most prestigious concert halls throughout much of Europe, the USA, the UK, New Zealand and Australia where he was the first solo cellist to a perform at the new Melbourne Recital Centre for ABC radio. Jamie has appeared in many international festivals including Montpellier, Lucerne, Brighton, Harrogate, Ansbach, Schwabach, Schloss-Elmau, Chichester, Cheltenham, Three Choirs, International Newbury Spring Festival, International Warwick Festival and the Manchester International Cello Festival. He has also given regular appearances and broadcasts in chamber music, concertos and recitals in Vienna.



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He and his pianist Daniel Grimwood perform regularly at London's Wigmore and Cadogan Halls as well as Symphony Hall, Birmingham where their debut was a recital of Chopin for the Chopin festival, sharing the evening with Krystian Zimerman. These led to concertos there with the English Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Welsh National Opera. They have also appeared in recital throughout much of Europe and at the Bridgewater Hall, Fairfield Hall and St John's Smith Square regularly. They were personally invited by Maestro Lorin Maazel to give a recital for his Chateauville Foundation, Virginia.

His CDs have regularly been selected into the Telegraph Top 10 of the year and CD of the week and his recording of the Saint-Saëns cello concertos was also voted onto Radio 3's listening booth going on to receive ecstatic reviews including Classic FM magazine who described it as "The finest around". Developing a strong rapport in both performance and recording with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Alexander Briger, future recordings include Shostakovich's Concerto No. 1 and Walton's Cello Concerto. February 4th 2008 saw the release of the Elgar and Myaskovsky concertos on Signum Classics to unanimous international acclaim comparing him to Rostropovich (International Record Review) and Tortelier.

In October 2008 Signum Classics released Shostakovich Concerto No. 2 and Britten's Cello Symphony with the same forces to unanimous praise; International Record Review described the Shostakovich as the finest ever recorded.

He studied at Wells Cathedral School and the RNCM with the late Margaret Moncrieff-Kelly before taking private tuition with William Pleeth who wrote of Jamie: "He is a cellist of outstanding performance ability. Combining warmth of tone with a technical command that reaches dazzling proportions, he leaves little doubt as the success that lies ahead of him—he is a musician of great integrity whose performance gives great pleasure."

As a member of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, he was recently elected into the Freedom of the City of London, having performed for HRH The Prince of Wales.

Jamie plays on a 1712 Guarneri. Passionate about chamber music Jamie recently launched his own North York Moors Chamber Music Festival - for more information please visit:

www.nymchambermusicfestival.org and
www.jamiewalton.com

DANIEL GRIMWOOD

With a repertoire, which ranges from Elizabethan Virginal music to composers of the modern day, Daniel Grimwood is carving a reputation as one of the most varied and insightful musicians of his generation. Although primarily a pianist, he is frequently to be found performing on harpsichord, organ, viola or composing at his desk. Felix Aprahamian once wrote of him: "Probably the finest all-round musician I have ever known."

He is a passionate champion of the early piano, and recently performed Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage* at the Wigmore hall on an 1851 Erard to rapturous critical acclaim. His recording of the same was CD of the week in the Telegraph, Editors Choice in Gramophone magazine, 5 stars in BBC Music magazine and has been unanimously praised in the press.

On being offered a scholarship to the Purcell School in 1987, he studied piano with Graham Fitch, violin/viola with Elspeth Illif and Sybil Copland and composition/counterpoint with Tim Stevenson. He later finished his pianistic training under the tutelage of Vladimir Ovchinnikov and Peter Feuchtwanger. He has subsequently enjoyed a solo career, which has taken him across the



globe, performing in many of the world's most prestigious venues and festivals. Although he has been the recipient of several awards, there is no glamorous list of competition wins, as he has always considered them harmful to the musical community.

A passionate Chamber musician, Grimwood's work has always been closely associated with 'cellist Jamie Walton and recordings include sonatas by Prokofiev, Myaskovsky and Kabalevsky. High points of their combined work have been a recital of Chopin at Symphony Hall, Birmingham where they shared the evening with Krystian Zimerman, an appearance at the Chateauville Foundation in Virginia, USA at the personal invitation of Maestro Lorin Maazel and numerous appearances at

London's Cadogan Hall and Wigmore Hall. They have also toured Europe, Estonia and the USA.

Future record releases include vol. 1 of the complete piano sonatas of Algernon Ashton on Toccata Classics, Mozart chamber music on period instruments, the complete violin/fortepiano works of Schubert with Madeleine Easton, Rachmaninov and Blumenfeld Sonatas and a series of Chopin and Schumann discs on an Erard piano for SFZ.





This recording is dedicated to the memory of my teacher and friend Margaret Moncrieff-Kelly

Recorded at Wyastone, Monmouthshire on 4 & 5 February 2009
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