

Charles Owen

Thursday May 23rd

7.30pm – 9.30pm

St Laurence's Church

Chopin	<i>Polonaise Fantasie in A flat, Op 61</i>
Chopin	<i>Berceuse in D flat, Op 57</i>
Fauré	<i>Nocturne in D flat, Op 63</i>
Chaminade	<i>Automne, Op 35 no 2</i>
Fauré	<i>Barcarolle in A flat, Op 44</i>
Fauré	<i>Barcarolle in F Sharp, Op 66</i>
Chopin	<i>Barcarolle, Op 60</i>
<i>Interval</i>	
Ravel	<i>Sonatine</i>
Prokofiev	<i>Sonata no 2 in D minor, Op 14</i>

Programme shown may be changed without notice



Charles Owen enjoys an extensive international career performing a wide-ranging repertoire to outstanding critical acclaim at venues such as Wigmore Hall, the Carnegie Hall in New York, Paris Musée d'Orsay, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and the Moscow Conservatoire.

He has made concerto appearances with the Philharmonia, Hallé, and London Philharmonic orchestras and has enjoyed collaborations with many leading conductors including Sir Mark Elder, Ryan Wigglesworth, Nicholas Collon and

Martyn Brabbins.

Charles has made solo recordings comprise discs of piano music by JS Bach, Brahms, Liszt, Janáček, Poulenc and Fauré. His chamber music recordings include the cello sonatas of Rachmaninov and Chopin (with Natalie Clein), the Stravinsky Piano Ballets and Rachmaninoff Suites (with Katya Apekisheva) and the world premiere of Jonathan Dove's Piano Quintet (with the Sacconi Quartet).

Charles Owen is a Professor of Piano at the Guildhall School, of Music & Drama, and Guest Professor at RWCMD, Cardiff and, with Katya Apekisheva, he is Co-Artistic Director of the London Piano Festival. He was appointed Steinway & Sons UK Ambassador in 2016 and is also an Ambassador for the Help Musicians Charity.

Programme notes

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

The *Polonaise Fantasie, Op 61* is one of Chopin's most complex and expressive works, combining elements of the polonaise, a Polish dance form, and the Fantasy, a free musical form.

Berceuse, Op 57. Berceuse means "lullaby" in French, and Chopin's Berceuse was thought to have been inspired by a small child, Louissette whose personality fascinated Chopin. It is also a distant echo of a song that his mother used to sing to him in his own childhood.

The *Barcarolle, Op. 60*, is inspired by the *barcarola*, a song of the Venetian gondoliers. The piece has a romantic mood, with rich harmonies. It is considered one of Chopin's most challenging works, and it showcases his mastery of the 'bel canto' style.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1942)

The *Nocturne No. 6 in D flat, Op. 63*, is one of the thirteen nocturnes that Fauré wrote and one of the most lyrical and expressive. Fauré composed thirteen barcarolles for piano. The fourth and fifth barcarolles are contrasting in mood and style. The *fourth barcarolle in A-flat major, Op. 44*, is lyrical and graceful, with a flowing melody and delicate accompaniment; the *fifth barcarolle in F-sharp minor, Op. 66*, is powerful, and dramatic.

Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)

A French composer and pianist, Chaminade was one of the most successful female musicians of the 19th century and was one of the first female composers to receive the Légion d'Honneur. One of her most popular works for solo piano is *Automne*, composed in 1893. Part of her first set of *Études de concert, Op.35* it is a beautiful example of Chaminade's Romantic style.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Although entitled *Sonatine* rather than *Sonata* the diminutive refers to the modest length of the piece, rather than any simplicity within it. The first movement was originally written for a magazine competition (which was subsequently cancelled) with the second and third movements added two years later.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

The *Sonata no 2 in D minor, Op 14* was dedicated to the memory of Maximilian Schmidthof, a dear friend of Prokofiev who committed suicide in 1913. Written within a year of his death, the piece is full of powerful but restrained emotion.