
siderable latitude doubtless is at the soloist's discretion regarding when or when not to play. The concerto calls for a relatively large orchestra, an unusual feature given the viola's "limited powers of projection," especially on the lower two strings.

The first of the three movements with 345 measures is the longest by far and will require in excess of eleven to twelve minutes of performing time. The solo viola is featured in both exposition statements, which are followed by extended development and recapitulation sections. Arpeggios, rapid scalar passages, and a few double stops at high range mark some virtuosic challenges for the performer in this movement.

The second movement at 90 measures and probably six minutes of performing time anticipates somewhat the Romantic approach to melody, and perceptible drama competes with lyricism throughout. Levin likens it to an accompanied recitative with the solo passages performed with relative freedom. In one of his later alterations of the original concerto, Schubert concluded the second movement with a cadenza in the solo part, terminating on a dominant seventh chord and leading *attacca* into the final movement. This was not a standard feature of concerti from the time and represents another "forward-looking" quality of the work.

The third movement, 289 measures and eight to nine minutes of performing time, is a large rondo in ABACADA–Coda form with the sections clearly delineated. It features an extended virtuoso passage of diatonic scales, scales in broken thirds, arpeggios, rapid crossings over two and three strings, and bariolage. The melodies, like those in the first two movements, are at once compelling and challenging.

The technical skills required for a convincing reading of this concerto are simple mastery of the basics: scales in various configurations, arpeggios, and firm bow control. Performing such passages on the C and G strings in what Primrose called the "muddy" tessitura of the viola will also be a challenge, but well worth the effort, as will be adding Schubert's Concerto in E-flat to one's repertoire. Though this work is later and arguably more challenging, I would

group it with the Hoffmeister and Zelter viola concerti, possibly some by Rolla, and a personal favorite from this period, Lillian Fuchs's transcription of the Mozart K. 216 for viola and piano.

Notes

¹ Andrew Levin, "Viola Concerto in E-flat Major by Joseph Schubert: A New Addition to the Late 18th-Century Repertoire," *Journal of the American Viola Society* 16, no. 3 (2000): 19–30.

² Andrew Levin, preface to *Concerto in E-flat Major*, by Joseph Schubert, ed. Andrew Levin, *Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, 89 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2013), vii.

Selected Works for Viola and Piano by William Alwyn (1905–1985)

Edited by John White

Huntingdon, UK: William Alwyn Foundation

ISBN: 9790708087021

Sonatina No. 1 (1941)

Two Preludes (1922)

Three Negro Spirituals (1935)

Two Pieces: Solitude and Dance (1923)

Sonatina No. 2 (1944)

Reviewed by Andrew Braddock

William Alwyn was Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) in London for nearly thirty years. During his time at RAM, Alwyn got to know the pre-eminent Scottish violist Watson Forbes. He would go on to write several viola works for Forbes, including the sonatinas presented in this volume and the previously published *Ballade*. While Alwyn's viola music is somewhat less well-known in this country, his works have enjoyed popularity in the United Kingdom. Recently, the renowned violist Lawrence Power performed Alwyn's *Pastoral Fantasia* for viola and strings while on tour. This album is the first publication of each of the five works included here, and it completes the publication of all of Alwyn's viola pieces.

Alwyn's two sonatinas are easily the most substantial and compositionally refined works in the volume.

Each of these four-movement works is around nine minutes long, and Alwyn reused the two middle movements from the first work as the two middle movements in the second, reversing their order (they are essentially identical, with the exception of a few notes here and there). The outer movements, however, differ markedly: No. 1 contains serious and well-wrought sections, while No. 2 embraces a tuneful quality with folk-like melodies. The first sonatina begins with a rhapsodic and almost through-composed introductory movement that is probably the most harmonically advanced in the collection. This movement takes brief and refreshing chromatic excursions before returning to a D-minor tonality. The fourth movement opens with a broad and sweeping flourish and is the most technically demanding work in this volume. Yet, the sixteenth-note runs and double-stop passages all fit the hand very comfortably, making this work easily accessible to the typical college violist.

Alwyn's talent shines most clearly in his lyrical and songlike pieces. The slow middle movement, *Andante piacevole*, from each of his sonatinas and *Solitude*, the first of his *Two Pieces*, display his gift for sentimental melodic writing. The former work consists of a murmuring chordal accompaniment and a rhythmically varied viola line that moves calmly through the instrument's entire range. In *Solitude*, Alwyn harmonizes his meandering melody with some great parallel fourths and fifths passages, briefly giving the work an impressionistic quality reminiscent of Debussy's early piano works. These movements allow ample opportunities for *rubato* and personal expression, and I find them to be the most musically satisfying pieces in the collection.

Both the *Two Pieces* and *Two Preludes* were written before the composer turned eighteen. They are early examples of his superb lyrical writing, but they also display a derivative style typical of young composers. The first prelude—*Andante (Poco adagio)*—features a flowing melody that sounds similar in both mood and shape to the opening of Hindemith's Sonata, op. 11, no. 4. The second prelude—*Andante rubato*—displays a greater amount of metrical creativity than the first. Alwyn divides the 3/4 meter into a sara-

bande-like quarter and half note pulse. Upon this framework, he writes a halting and tentative melody, typified by tenuto eighths and large leaps. This work's tender and hesitant mood calls to mind the theme of Elgar's "Enigma" Variations and is a hauntingly charming—if somewhat unrefined—artistic statement.

Viewed from a pedagogical perspective, the *Three Negro Spirituals* is a valuable and much-needed contribution to the advanced intermediate student's repertoire. Alwyn's inventive arrangement of *I'll Hear the Trumpet Sound* offers the opportunity to develop a crisp *spiccato* stroke and allows the student to utilize first-position double stops. The third work, *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?* features a propulsive rhythm and rich countermelodies that showcase the viola's lowest register. My favorite of the three is a tender arrangement of *I'm Trav'ling to the Grave*. Along with a simple chordal harmonization of the melody, Alwyn successfully exploits the viola's plaintive and yearning sonorities with carefully controlled double stops and a brief passage in higher positions on the A string. This E-flat major setting reminds me of Primrose's arrangement of Schubert's *Litany for All Souls' Day*, and it could serve perfectly as an elegant and understated encore piece.

This publication was edited by the scholarly violist John White and is another of his valuable contributions to the rich body of British viola music. It includes an informative biography of Alwyn, a brief essay by White titled "William Alwyn and the Viola," and a listing of recordings of Alwyn's viola works. It is very clearly printed and organized, with easy page turns, and is thankfully devoid of unnecessary fingerings and bowings.

Despite remaining unpublished until now, these works are not altogether unknown. In addition to Watson Forbes's recording of the *Spirituals* for Decca in 1942, Sarah Jane Bradley recorded Sonata No. 1 for Naxos in 2010, and Martin Outram included Sonata No. 2 on his 2012 album *The Scottish Viola: A Tribute to Watson Forbes*, released by the Nimbus Alliance label. The publication of this handsome collection makes these five

works an immediately accessible and welcome addition to any violist's repertoire.

Sonata No. 2 in A Minor for Viola and Piano
by John Ireland (1879–1962); arranged by
Lionel Tertis

Edited by John White

London: Boosey & Hawkes

ISBN: 9790060124501

Price: £25.99

Reviewed by Hartmut Lindemann

Once asked if he was a great composer, John Ireland answered, "No, not a great composer, but a good composer." Could anyone have answered such a provocative question more eloquently? Ireland was born in Bowdon near Altrincham, Manchester, on August 13, 1879, and died on June 12, 1962, at Rock Mill, Washington, Sussex (he had retired there in 1953 to live in a converted windmill). From his composition teacher Charles Villiers Stanford, John Ireland inherited a thorough knowledge of the music of Brahms and other German nineteenth-century composers. He also appreciated the music of Ravel and Debussy, which is later reflected in his own impressionistic style.

John Ireland's Second Violin Sonata was written during the First World War. It is a dramatic and tuneful work that deserves, in this highly successful Tertis arrangement, to be part of the violist's repertoire. By the end of the twentieth century, the sonatas of Arnold Bax and Rebecca Clarke were well established. I consider the Ireland sonata to be of similar appeal and hope it will also achieve worldwide recognition. For those who need initial aural persuasion, there is a recent commercial recording of the viola version of this work available, played excellently by Roger Chase (Dutton CDLX 7250, 2010). It was recorded on Tertis's own Montagnana viola. In the interesting program notes by Richard Masters, it is described as "a triptych of the war experience: war, remembrance, homecoming."

Ireland began the composition of his Sonata in A Minor in 1916 and finished it in January of 1917.

The premiere, by Albert Sammons and William Murdoch, took place at the Aeolian Hall in London on March 6, 1917. The work attracted their mutual friend, the great violist Lionel Tertis, who was always on the lookout for new repertoire. Tertis, who perhaps attended the premiere, did not waste any time and quickly persuaded the composer that his sonata would lie equally well on the viola. In this assumption he was correct.

Tertis and Ireland performed the viola version at Wigmore Hall in March 1918. A quote from a *Daily Telegraph* review of a later performance reads: "After Lionel Tertis' magnificent performance of his transcription for viola of John Ireland's second violin sonata last night . . . a violinist in the audience who played the work in its original form, declared the transcription to transcend the original." I had exactly the same impression of the transcription when I listened to the Sammons/Ireland recording, while following the music from the Tertis edition of the viola part. The violin tessitura lies so high that it is often possible, even advisable, to transpose long passages down an octave. Tertis does this in places either where it is practicable or in order to underline the solemn mood of a particular passage. He frequently uses double-stopped octaves to increase the dramatic impact.

As is customary with John White's editions, the piano part shows the original Tertis fingerings. The study of these fingerings is most rewarding and constitutes a free viola lesson from the master himself. Tertis always chose the most appropriate finger to achieve strength in climaxes or for special color effects. He worked on the basis of the weakness and strength of each individual finger and made musical and instrumental use of it.

Primrose in *Playing the Viola* commented on Tertis's fingerings: although he found them "bewildering at first," on closer scrutiny they made sense to him. They are especially fascinating, because Tertis was self-taught as a violist. His choice of fingerings shows a very individual approach, one which is quite different from any other player's.