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BMCCD295

JENNA SHERRY | DÁNIEL LŐWENBERG

SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO



Johannes Brahms:

Sonata in F minor, Op. 120 No. 1 (1895)

Sonata in E flat major, Op. 120 No. 2 (1895)

Ernő Dohnányi:

Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 21 (1912)

Jenna Sherry
violin

Dániel Lőwenberg
piano (1898 Steinway & Sons Model B)

This recording by Jenna Sherry and Dániel Lőwenberg features the still little-known (and rarely played) violin versions of Brahms' two *Op. 120 Sonatas* alongside a similarly rare recording of Ernő Dohnányi's mercurial *Op. 21 Violin Sonata*.

The sixty-one-year-old Brahms lavished great care on his *Op. 120 Sonatas* and their prospects. He wrote to his publisher in 1895, "I say at once that immediately after the first issue I intend to make an edition for violin, for which some things would have to be changed – thus an independent edition." Though performed frequently by Joseph Joachim, who otherwise shunned transcriptions, the composer's violin "transcription" remained out of print for over a century until 2016. In the very same year (1895) as these sonatas were composed, eighteen-year-old Ernő Dohnányi had his first significant break in Vienna, at Brahms' recommendation. Dohnányi's *Violin Sonata*, written seventeen years later, extends Brahms' late style into his own distinctively slippery harmonic language. These three sonatas, heard side-by-side, bid farewell to musical late Romanticism at the turn of the 20th century, and the nostalgic glow of the last years of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, a period now known in Hungary as "blissful peacetime".

In this recording, two musicians of pioneering spirit, American violinist Jenna Sherry and Hungarian pianist Dániel Lőwenberg, dare to explore the fragile and poetic beauty of these works. The performers relish the ambiguity that performing Brahms' *Op. 120 Sonatas* on violin entails: Are these "violin sonatas"? Or transcriptions of clarinet sonatas? The challenge to the performers is that of navigating between the instrumental identities of the violin, viola and (vibrato-less) clarinet embedded in the writing.

You will find more details about the album
on bmcrecords.hu in October

Recorded at BMC Studio, Budapest on 30-31 January, 2018 (8-10) and 3-5 January, 2020 (1-7)

Recording producer: **Péter Aczél** / Sound engineer: **Viktor Szabó**

Artwork: **László Huszár** / Greenroom / Produced by **László Gőz** / Label manager: **Tamás Bognár**

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DÁNIEL LŐWENBERG, JENNA SHERRY

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Sherry and Lőwenberg first met and started playing together at the International Musicians Seminar Prussia Cove, the chamber music festival that Sándor Végh founded in Cornwall, England. This recording was made on an 1898 Steinway model B.

Violinist **Jenna Sherry** is from New Orleans, and her roots in that bohemian city inspire her approach to music making. She now lives in London. A versatile chamber musician who feels at home in both historical performance and contemporary music, she performs in celebrated halls and festivals around the world. She is a member of the Freiburg-based EnsembleExperimental, John Eliot Gardiner's Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, and artistic director and founder of the "rule-bending" Birdfoot Festival, an international chamber music festival. She earned her Master's degree in 2008 from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama under the direction of David Takeno. Other formative musical influences include Ferenc Rados, Mark Kaplan, and Valerie Poullette. Since 2017, she is a faculty member at the Royal Conservatory The Hague School for Young Talent.

Pianist **Dániel Lőwenberg** was born in Budapest, and as a soloist and chamber musician, he has performed in many countries around the world. He is often invited to international festivals, including the Budapest Spring Festival (Hungary), Christchurch Arts Festival (New Zealand), and IMS Prussia Cove – Open Chamber Music (UK). His repertoire encompasses all periods of piano and chamber music literature. He earned his Master's Degree under Imre Rohmann at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. He currently teaches chamber music at the Bartók Béla Conservatory in Budapest. In 2012 he published a biography of the Hungarian violinist and conductor Sándor Végh, which to this day is the only monograph on this world-famous musician.

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