

Press release: 6 September 2017

THE VINTEUIL SONATA

**Proustian theme for
Borletti-Buitoni Trust
Fellowship winner
Maria Milstein and
sister Nathalia**

CD Release 27 October 2017
Mirare, MIR384



One of the most famous musical enigmas in literature, the fictional *Vinteuil Sonata* at the heart of Marcel Proust's magnum opus, *In Search of Lost Time* (*À la recherche du temps perdu*), is the inspiration for a new CD featuring sibling musicians **Maria** (violin) and **Nathalia Milstein** (piano).

Borletti-Buitoni Trust (BBT) Fellowship winner, Maria Milstein, held dear the idea of a recital based on the imaginary *Vinteuil Sonata* for some years and did not hesitate to make it a reality when awarded her BBT Fellowship in 2016. *The Vinteuil Sonata* is released on 13 October 2017 on the French Mirare label, supported by BBT.

There has been much speculation as to the origins of 'the little phrase' that bewitches Swann, the protagonist of the novel's first volume. Where did Proust hear it? Or was it an amalgam of musical phrases he might have heard in the works of composers such as Saint-Saëns, Fauré or Debussy, performed in the Parisian salons of the Belle Époque that he frequented? Proust's exquisite descriptions of the music and the elusive, ecstatic feelings it inspires continue to kindle the imaginations of performers to this day.

There is evidence that Proust once referred to **Saint-Saëns** as the composer behind the *Vinteuil Sonata*: a memorable '*petite phrase*' occurs in the first and last movements of his Sonata for violin and piano No 1 in D minor, Op 36, exactly as Swann describes it. But, the same citation could be made in **Gabriel Pierné's** sonata, a work that Proust may also have heard.

The additional works on this Proustian CD are also in keeping with the novel's literary contemplations of lost time. The spirit of **Debussy's** late sonata (the last major work he completed before he died) is very much that of a nostalgic reflection on a whole lifetime - the music, like words, searching for expression of intangible dreams, memories and desires. Finally, the two songs by Proust's intimate friend **Reynaldo Hahn**, complement the sense of the quest for expression of fleeting reminiscence without words (the voice is replaced in the transcription by the violin).

In conjunction with the CD, a two short films will be released online featuring the Milstein duo in this repertoire, filmed by UNIK ACCESS (sound: Franck Jaffrès, image: Bénédicte Banet). The CD will be launched at a recital on 22 September at the Via Aeterna Festival in Mont Saint-Michel, France and there are also discussions underway for a future theatrical staging of *The Vinteuil Sonata*.

THE VINTEUIL SONATA
Maria and Nathalia Milstein

Gabriel Pierné (1863 – 1937)
Sonata for violin and piano in D minor, Op 36

Reynaldo Hahn (1874 – 1947)
À Chloris

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)
Sonata for violin and piano in D minor, Op 75

Reynaldo Hahn (1874 – 1947)
L'Heure Exquise

Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918)
Sonata for violin and piano

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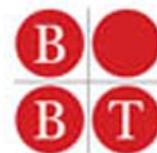
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NOTES TO EDITORS

MARIA MILSTEIN – BBT FELLOWSHIP WINNER 2016

- Born in Moscow into a family of musicians.
- Studied in Amsterdam with Ilya Grubert, in London with David Takeno and in Waterloo (Belgium) with Augustin Dumay.
- Founder member of the prize-winning Van Baerle Trio with Hannes Minnaar (piano) and Gideon den Herder (cello)
- Performs extensively in Europe at venues including Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, BOZAR in Brussels, Musikverein in Vienna, Philharmonie in Cologne and Cité de la Musique in Paris.
- Performed as soloist with orchestras including Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, National Orchestra of Belgium, The Hague Philharmonic and Brussels Philharmonic with conductors such as Vasily Petrenko, Giancarlo Guerrero, Michel Tabachnik and Reinbert de Leeuw.
- Debut CD, *Sounds of War*, with pianist Hanna Shybayeva for Cobra Records was highly acclaimed and won the Edison Klassiek Prize 2015 for Best Chamber Music Album.
- Plays a violin by Michelangelo Bergonzi (Cremona c. 1750) on loan from the Dutch Music Instruments Foundation
- Teaches at the Conservatory of Amsterdam.

<http://www.mariamilstein.com>

Maria's younger sister **Nathalia** studied piano from the age of four, first with her father Serguei Milstein and then with Nelson Goerner in Geneva. She has already won several prizes including the First Prize at the Dublin International Piano Competition in 2015 and, most recently, the Médias Francophones Publics Young Soloist Prize 2017. She has performed in prestigious venues worldwide including Carnegie Hall in New York, the National Concert Hall in Dublin, Wigmore Hall in London and the Gewandhaus in Leipzig . <http://nathaliamilstein.com>

