

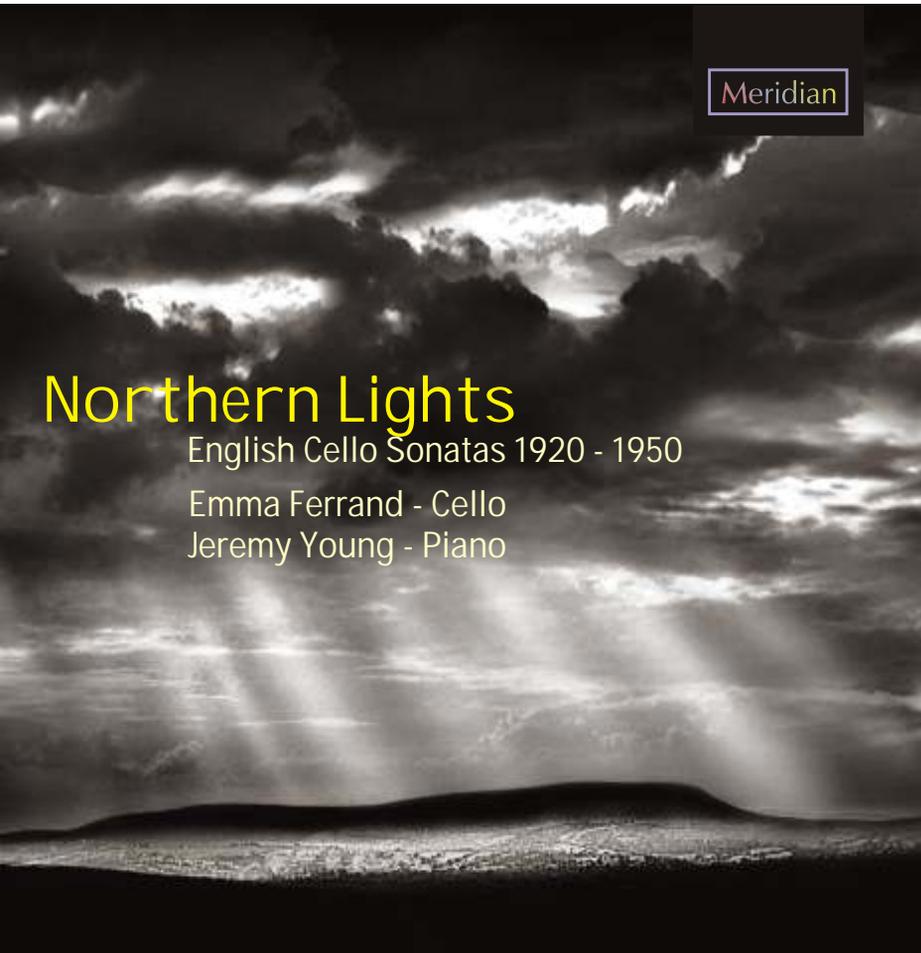
Meridian

# Northern Lights

English Cello Sonatas 1920 - 1950

Emma Ferrand - Cello

Jeremy Young - Piano



## Northern Lights

This CD was conceived when the unpublished score of Bainton's cello sonata came into my hands through the daughter of concert pianist Elsie Winstanley, who was Edgar Bainton's finest pupil from his Newcastle years. Further research led to fascinating links between these major "Composers of the North" and well known Manchester musicians of the early twentieth century.

What English cello music would Manchester audiences have heard in the years following the First World War?

In looking for clues one figure stands out, the distinguished German cellist, Carl Fuchs, pupil of Bernard Cossmann and the great Russian cellist Karl Davidoff, personal friend of the famous pianists Paderewski and Clara Schumann, and a cellist who played the Brahms symphonies in manuscript under the composer's baton.

As an artist he experienced the catastrophic disruption of cultural life in Europe caused by World War 1, and came to be a committed Anglophile.

Fuchs had come to England in 1887 in search of work, and in 1890 became the principal cellist of the Halle orchestra under Hans Richter.

In these pre-war years with the Hallé he gave the first Manchester performances of concertos by Dvorak, Lalo, Tchaikovsky's *Rococo* variations and Strauss's *Don Quixote*. He was also a founding member of the famous Brodsky quartet which, throughout the 30 years of its existence, provided Manchester with a rich feast of the great chamber works of the German/Austrian romantic school. This was particularly appreciated by the strong German community in Manchester, born of the many trade links with Germany. This community had its own cultural club, the Schiller-Anstalt, where many of Europe's greatest composer/musicians such as Strauss, Saint-Saens and Joachim were to be heard.

The outbreak of the 1914-18 War changed everything. For Carl Fuchs, on a family visit to Germany, it meant being interned in a concentration camp at Ruhleben. Here he found a number of British musicians thwarted in their desire to imbibe the latest musical developments and to make their "Wagner pilgrimage". These included Benjamin Dale and Edgar Bainton with whom Fuchs made a lasting friendship (Bainton took it upon himself to organise a comprehensive schedule of musical events throughout their internment).

Seemingly it was this friendship that sowed the seeds of Fuchs' interest in English music. On his return to England he took up his former position as Professor at the Royal Manchester College of Music and, with Edgar Bainton, formed the Wall piano trio. From this collaboration no doubt the cello sonata was born. Throughout the 20s and 30s Fuchs took an enthusiastic interest in British compositions, commissioning works such as Cyril Scott's *Ballade*, and premiering many works in Manchester. In particular, he brought John Ireland back to the north in 1925 to play his Cello sonata (the work that received such acclaim in London in 1924) at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester and at Leeds University.

He taught the cello to another Northern composer, Alan Rawsthorne; he brought cello works by Bridge and Bax to the attention of Manchester concert goers as well as being at the centre of the indigenous musical creativity which flowered after the war, in which those such as William Alwyn made their unique careers.

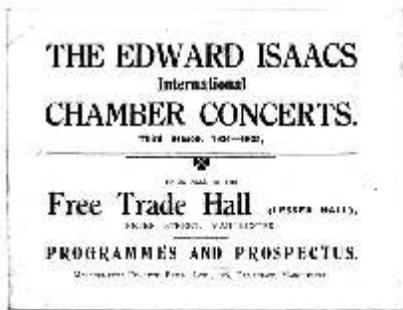
© Emma Ferrand

Carl Fuchs 1865 - 1951



Halle Concerts Society





**John Ireland (1879-1962)**  
**Sonata in G minor**  
*Moderato e sostenuto*  
*Poco largamente*  
*Con moto e marcato*

Anyone who knows only the John Ireland of the songs or the shorter piano pieces could well be taken aback by his *Cello Sonata* of 1923. This is a darkly powerful work, on the one hand richly Romantic yet on the other almost willfully uncompromising in its refusal anywhere to wear its heart on its sleeve. Whether Ireland acknowledged it, this is music coloured by the trauma of the Great War.

The *Sonata* dates from 1923 and was first performed, by Beatrice Harrison and Evelyn Howard-Jones, at the Aeolian Hall in April 1924. Carl Fuchs is known to have been an early advocate of the piece, since performances by him are documented as having taken place in 1925.

At once the ear is struck by its densely chromatic language; used not merely as surface colour *à la Delius*, but to give the music a nervous, unsettled quality that, in places, recalls Rachmaninov.

Yet for all its apparent self-indulgence in terms of colour and texture, the sonata reveals itself as a piece remarkably sparing in the use it makes of its material. Much of this material is heard in the opening pages, after which the pace quickens and Ireland embarks on an extended exploration of what he has offered us. As if this were not enough, the final movement takes up the argument, so that the two must be seen as alternative ways of treating what is really a mere handful of motives. Even the *Poco largamente* is touched by their spirit. It is in this elegiac movement that the *Sonata* comes closest to being at ease with itself, but its lyricism, too, is a troubled one.



**Edgar Bainton (1880-1956)**

**Sonata for 'cello and piano**

*Allegro moderato*

*Scherzo Allegretto*

*Lento*

*Allegro molto*

Although a Londoner by birth, Bainton spent much of his later career in Sydney where he was appointed Director of the New South Wales Conservatoire in 1933. Prior to that he had taught at and was latterly appointed Principal of the short-lived Newcastle Conservatory, which existed from 1897-1938. It was here that Bainton invited Carl Fuchs to be Visiting Professor of cello, and for whom he composed his 'cello sonata of 1924.

In common with many British composers of his generation, Bainton cultivated a musical language which looked back to the late Romantic period rather than to newer developments on the Continent. His 'cello sonata is thus a resolutely tonal work and its layout in four movements owes a debt to nineteenth-century precedent. The overall tenor of the music is, moreover, predominantly heroic at a time when the concept of heroism was looking a little tarnished. This is a work of bold gestures and rich melodic appeal, yet not without a more inward-looking side whose roots seem to belong to the English pastoral tradition.



Edgar Bainton Society

**Cyril Scott (1879-1970)**

**Ballade for 'cello and piano**

Scott is another composer with links to the north west, this time with Merseyside rather than the Manchester area. He was born in Oxton, a predominantly middle-class suburb of Birkenhead on the Wirral. Like many young British musicians of his generation, faced with a paucity of Conservatoire provision in their own country, Scott studied abroad. He became one of a group of British composers, among them Roger Quilter and Balfour Gardiner, who were contemporaries at the Frankfurt Conservatoire in the 1890s. Here his teachers included Humperdinck.

Scott was nothing if not an individual. He maintained, for example, an interest in Indian philosophy and alternative medicine which in a later generation would have marked him out as a dyed in the wool 'New Ager'. His musical style too is often opulently sensuous. The opening section of this *Ballade* evokes the bell-like sounds of the Balinese gamelan before ushering in a richly chromatic central section. The gamelan music returns at the end. It was written for the 'cellist Carl Fuchs and first published in 1935.

**Alan Rawsthorne (1905-1971)**

**Sonata for 'cello and piano**

*Adagio Allegro appassionato*

*Adagio*

*Allegro molto - Adagio*

Like John Ireland, Alan Rawsthorne was another English composer whose roots lay in the north west. Ireland was born in Bowdon, the Cheshire suburb south of Manchester whose residents included the conductor Hans Richter and the violinist Adolph Brodsky. Rawsthorne hailed from the Lancashire town of Haslingden and moved to Southport at an early age. After abortive attempts to study both architecture and dentistry at Liverpool University, he entered the Royal Manchester College of Music in the last years of Brodsky's tenure as Principal, studying piano with Franck Merrick and 'cello with Carl Fuchs, 'cellist of the Brodsky Quartet.

Rawsthorne was generous in his contribution to the chamber music repertoire. Among his chamber works are sonatas for violin, viola and 'cello, the last of which dates from 1948. He also completed a 'cello concerto in 1965. The *Sonata*, written for Anthony Pini, is characteristic of its composer in clearly belonging to a mid-twentieth century mainstream British approach which seeks a balance between the traditional and the more innovative. The harmonic language, for instance, has just a touch of Hindemith about it (and that, by the standards of the day, was pretty daring to most British ears), but the structures are largely inherited. Thus the first movement, after the *Adagio* introduction, is clearly in sonata form. Thereafter, however, Rawsthorne becomes more subtle. The material of the central movement is obviously indebted to both the preceding one and its introduction.

The finale appears to move in a new direction, but its energies eventually subside into a return to motives from that same introduction, thereby making the second and third movements appear as a single composite movement in which the main *Allegro molto* of the finale is merely an extended middle section.

**John Ireland**  
**The Holy Boy**

The numerous arrangements which exist of Ireland's *The holy boy* have tended somewhat to eclipse the original. Ireland composed in as a solo piano piece on Christmas day 1913, soon after incorporating it into the four *Preludes* for piano which he completed in 1915. There it stands like a very simple, songlike piece and the temptation to rework it as a song (to a text by Herbert Brown) was one to which the composer eventually succumbed. Less well known is his own transcription for 'cello and piano of 1919, a realisation of the vocal nature of the music predating the song version by a full nineteen years.

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Hanya Chalala

Winner of the NFMS Young Concert Artist Award, Emma Ferrand came to notice playing the Elgar concerto in Paul Tortelier's BBC2 masterclass series. She travels widely as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. She has broadcast frequently on BBC Radio 3, BBC2, and appeared frequently at London's Wigmore Hall, South Bank, and in festivals such as Bath and 3 Choirs Festival, Endellion, Alfriston and Manchester International Cello Festival. She has a long-standing association with Lake District Summer Music Festival and International Summer School.

Internationally, Emma performs in Canada, North & South America, and recently in Japan. She has been guest professor at Eastman School, NY, and at the Norwegian Academy, Oslo. She has also been an international jury member at the Unisa International String Competition, South Africa and Antonio Janigro International cello competitions

Her studies took place at the International Cello Centre and the Royal Academy of Music followed by an extensive period in Switzerland with the revered French cellist Pierre Fournier.

Emma has had a distinguished teaching career as Cello professor at Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester and her past students have made their careers in Britain's best known international string quartets and orchestras.

Recordings include Bach Six Suites for solo cello on the Exposure label, as well as premieres by English composers for Meridian records. She also likes to present new works, and in 2006 premiered Hywel Davies' suite for solo cello, an Arts Council England commission.

Emma Ferrand plays a cello made by Carlo Guiseppe Testore.

[www.emmaferrand.co.uk](http://www.emmaferrand.co.uk)

British pianist **Jeremy Young** performs throughout the world as a chamber musician and soloist.

Recent concerts include the Lincoln Center (New York), the Herbst Theater (San Francisco), Esplanade Concert Hall (Singapore), Jin Mao Concert Hall (Shanghai), National Concert Hall (Dublin), performances in Beijing, Macau, Hong Kong and Kazakhstan and recitals at the Mecklenberg Vopperrnen (Germany) and Graz (Austria) international music festivals.

In the UK he gives concerts at the Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall, South Bank Centre and appears in festivals including Lake District, Harrogate, Brighton, Petworth, Endellion, City of London and Dartington.

Jeremy has made broadcasts for BBC Radio 3, Classic FM, RTE Lyric FM, BBCTV, Channel 4, S4C, Hong Kong Radio 4 and radio in China, USA, Kazakhstan, Russia and much of Europe.

He has recorded for EMI Asia, Meridian, Signum, Decca and Somm.

A founder member of Ovid Ensemble and the Manchester Piano Trio, Jeremy has worked alongside such artists as cellists Li-Wei and Karine Georgian, violinists Mengla Huang and Mia Cooper as well as lieder work with Daniel Norman, Thomas Guthrie and Roderick Williams.

Jeremy studied as a scholar at the Purcell School of Music, the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music. His studied piano with Christopher Elton, Frank Wibaut and Vladimir Ovchinkov and chamber music with the Amadeus String Quartet, Andras Schiff, Menahem Pressler and Dr. Christopher Rowland.



Timothy Wells



He is a senior professor of piano at the Royal Northern College of Music and a visiting lecturer in piano at the University of Manchester.

In 2007 Jeremy was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM) and was appointed Deputy Director of Chamber Music at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Jeremy is the co-founder and artistic director of the Alfriston Summer Music Festival in Sussex, England.

The concert Steinway used in this recording was supplied and maintained by Steinway and Sons, London

[www.jeremyyoungpiano.com](http://www.jeremyyoungpiano.com)  
[www.alfristonsummermusic.co.uk](http://www.alfristonsummermusic.co.uk)



Tom Bangbata



Meridian

Northern Lights - English Cello Sonatas 1920 - 1950  
Ireland - Bainton - Scott - Rawsthorne • Ferrand/Young

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Recorded in St. Peter's Church  
Boughton Monchelsea 28-30.1.08  
Recorded by Richard Hughes  
Produced by Susanne Hughes  
Cover Photo "Pendle Hill" by Tom Bangbala  
Back cover:  
"Devil's Jumps" at Treyford Hill W. Sussex



This recording has been supported through  
research funding from the  
Royal Northern College of Music.

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## English Cello Sonatas 1920 - 1950

Includes premiere recordings \*

John Ireland (1879-1962)

Sonata in G minor

- |                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| [1] Moderato e sostenuto | 9'23 |
| [2] Poco largamente      | 6'49 |
| [3] Con moto e marcato   | 5'22 |

Edgar Bainton (1880-1956)\*

Sonata for 'cello and piano

- |                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| [4] Allegro moderato   | 6'10 |
| [5] Scherzo Allegretto | 3'08 |
| [6] Lento              | 5'11 |
| [7] Allegro molto      | 5'49 |

Cyril Scott (1879-1970)\*

- |                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| [8] Ballade for 'cello and piano | 15'18 |
|----------------------------------|-------|

Alan Rawsthorne (1905-1971)

Sonata for 'cello and piano

- |                                 |      |
|---------------------------------|------|
| [9] Adagio Allegro appassionato | 5'22 |
| [10] Adagio                     | 5'47 |
| [11] Allegro molto - Adagio     | 6'13 |

John Ireland (1879-1962)

- |                   |      |
|-------------------|------|
| [12] The holy boy | 3'35 |
|-------------------|------|

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Ireland - Bainton - Scott - Rawsthorne • Ferrand/Young

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