

Now let's see



THE ALKAN SOCIETY

(Registered Charity number 276199)

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BULLETIN No.83 February 2011

NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of The Alkan Society will be held on 17 April 2011 at Messrs. Schott Music Ltd., 48, Great Marlborough Street, London W1F 7BB, commencing at 18.40hrs.

THE ALKAN SOCIETY

RECITAL at SCHOTT'S, 48, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET
on 17 March 2011 commencing at 7 o'clock.

MARK VINER

Marche funèbre, Op.26 (Alkan)

Trois Minuets, Op.51 (Alkan)

Fantasia in C minor, K.475 (Mozart)

INTERVAL

Fantasia in F minor, Op.49 (Chopin)

Sonatine, Op.61 (Alkan)

Mark Viner, 21, began playing at the age of 11. At the age of 13 he was granted a scholarship at The Purcell School of Music where he studied with Tessa Nicholson. In 2007, a further scholarship took him to study with Niel Immelman at The Royal College of Music. He has performed at many festivals and venues such as the Cheltenham Festival, the Wigmore Hall, St. John's Smith Square and the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, as well as in Italy, Germany and his home town, Oxford. His playing has been noted for its musical integrity and tonal allure executed by an arrestingly effortless technical command. Current projects include a literary work: a comprehensive examination of the music of Alkan for publication at the time of the bicentenary of the composer's birth.

*There is no charge for this concert,
but donations towards the costs will be welcomed.*

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CHARLES VALENTIN ALKAN: Complete* Piano Duos and Duets

Anthony Goldstone, Caroline Clemmow - pianos

Toccata Classics TOCC 0070 (70:36)

1 *Benedictus* Op.54** (8:15)

2-5 *Impromptu sur le Choral de Luther 'Un fort rempart est Notre Dieu'* Op.69**

6 *Saltarelle* Op.47 for piano duet (6:54)

7 - 14 *Fantaisie a quatre mains sur Don Juan* Op.26 (12:52)

15-17: *Trois Marches* Op.40 for piano duet (20:32)

18 : *Bombardo-Carillon* for piano duet (5:45)

19: *Finale* Op.17 for piano duet (2:59)

*except for Alkan's arrangement of the Overture to Meyerbeer's opera *Le Prophète*

**transcribed for two pianos by Roger Smalley

Ronald Smith wrote (in 1987) that "the effect of the Impromptu, in this arrangement, is overwhelming". This appears to be its first recording; so 24 years later, I am finally in a position to agree with him completely. Turn up the volume and follow the amazing Alkanian journey of this old tune, firstly in its guise as a bass-line for passacaglia-variations including some typical ungainly and dissonant fun, (track 2), next as a gigue in a reverse homage to Chopin's 3rd scherzo (track 3), followed by a chromatically distorted sicilienne which acquires a wonderfully slithery bass motif (track 4). With the main theme-and-variations now ended, the ears are pinned back by a brusque heralding, and a terrific fugue ensues (track 5) with crackling energy, as the accelerated chorale melody and its motifs continually chase each other until, at 3:05, a pressure-cooker build-up of proto- Tchaikovskian tension begins, climaxing 35 seconds later in nail-biting aposeopsis. Then wave after wave of roaring and tumbling octaves hurl themselves against the immovable *fort rempart* of 8-note chords.

I won't spoil the ending by saying any more. What I do say is that I'd get this disc for this piece alone. The playing of Goldstone and Clemmow is fearless, thrilling, stylish, sensitive, synchronous, powerful and virtuosic. Chapeau bas! And also, to Roger Smalley for his superb transcription both of Op.69, and of Op.64, which starts the disc.

To quote Alkan Society Member, John Lewis, "this is the sort of Alkan that Alkan remembered to write", so very characteristic is it in its low and quirky-rhythmed opening motif accompanying the doleful, falling tune. Equally typical is the unprepared switch to a guileless bel canto melody. A repetition of this procedure gives way to chord-based music (4:08) reminiscent of Quasi Faust and at 5:43 a new strong and stately Brahmsian melody issues forth. Exciting canonic passages culminate in a rising inversion of the opening melody for a 5-bar coda of Wagnerian radiance. Once again, great playing.

These two pieces were written for the pedal piano. Certain phrasing articulations in the pedaller score border on the impossible, especially towards the end of Op.69's fugue. Alkan knew what he wanted, whether practicable or not, but it needed the 4-hand redistribution to make it audible.

I did not miss the presence of the 'cello in the *Saltarelle* (track 6), so natural does the duet format sound. *Prestissimo* is an extreme tempo which I feel is not quite reached in this performance, with its crucial loss of momentum from 3:05, though excitement returns for the last minute, in time for the rush to the hysterically trilled end.

Peak pianism and imagination ensure that Alkan's characteristic contrasts are vividly etched, whether in the two-part introduction (track 7) to the Don Juan *Fantaisie* or in the following alternation of virtuoso sparks of variations 1 and 4, with Mahlerian funeral march in variation 5. There's a feeling of early Romantic pot-pourri about these variations, contrasting with the integrity of overall direction found in Op.69 or in *Le Festin d'Ésope*.

The confines of the 'march and trio' format give us the no-holds-barred imagination of Alkan in his maturity. These three marvellous pieces range from the octave roudades of Chopin's A-flat polonaise in Op.40 No.1, to the toe-tapping daftness of No.2, and the almost Tchaikovskian opening of No.3, (tracks 15-17). Pinpoint precision is what we get from the players, with their intrepid and totally confident response to Alkan's audacious ideas.

Bombardo-Carillon(!) - crazy name, crazy piece. Cuddly, funny, teddy-bear music - or an evocation of ox-drawn artillery pieces? Take your pick. Whichever, it's a 'look-no-hands' work written for four feet at the *pedalier*. The mournful phrases of the opening recitative promise minor, but deliver major. With all the music falling below middle C, humour is the spirit of the main melody 0:44. Puzzlement comes next at 1:48, with the bass-part's choked-off 3-note riff, leading to modal phrases repeated with almost childish insistence at 2:32. The main tune returns at 3:25, and at 3:45 distorted repeats and interruptions lead to a very loud statement of the melody at 4:10, after which a gentle episode glides to the close. A marvellous performance of an extraordinary piece.

Finale (track 19) is a minor-key *pas redoublé* of the sort that Alkan was to write for wind-band, and it fills the function of a fresh, fast, and bouncy encore, which this duo play with great panache.

A couple of observations: on my copy, there is a click at 0:52 on track 19, and at 3:27 on track 2 an editing slip has shaved a semi quaver off the end of the bar. Otherwise, this is a disc that deserves the widest dissemination, both for the terrific playing throughout, and especially for its portrait of Alkan at his most genial and unbuttoned. The *Impromptu* is a masterpiece!

Richard Murphy

Recital by Tomasz Kamieniak at Schott's Music Shop, 30 April 2010

Writing for the Bulletin after a long gap gives me a chance at last to apologise for my previous contribution, which was a rather mean-minded review of Marc-André Hamelin's then new recording of Alkan's Concerto for solo piano (Hyperion CDA 67569). I had just enjoyed his performance of the work at the Cheltenham Festival along with several other members, including the current Editor of the Bulletin, David Conway, and the late William Waterhouse and his wife. The CD was on sale and David asked me to write a review of it if he covered the concert.

I had a very short time to write the review before going away, and that was the main reason why I tended to be distracted by some of the small details. When I review concerts I always prefer to let the initial impressions settle for a few days, so that only the important things stay in the mind, while other details which may have seemed significant at the time fade away. There was no time for that process to take place, and the piece in the Bulletin, which was savagely criticised by our French colleague for its "petitesses", was the result. Nicholas King also alluded obliquely, in his later review of Stephanie McCallum's Op.39 recording, to "nit-picking" which formed no part of his article, and with some justification.

I have since apologised to Mr Hamelin in person for the review of what is a very fine performance, often staggering in its virtuosity and with many insights into the music gained from years of live performance. He was not an honorary member while I was Secretary, and would not have known that some of the Bulletins I wrote were more about his concerts than strictly Alkanian matters, purely because I had to fill the space and had no contact with primary sources of news and current research, having no Internet access at the time. I do remain a huge admirer of Ronald Smith's recordings and their strict-tempo "orchestral" approach, but a large work like the Concerto will perhaps never have a single "definitive" recording, and I was looking for the impossible.

Having cleared that matter out of the way, I move on to the recital given by the Polish pianist Tomasz Kamieniak. It had been arranged by Jonathan Powell, another performer of Alkan and many other rarities, as part of a series held under Schott's music shop in London. The week of grounded airlines caused by the Icelandic volcano had fortunately come to an end just in time for Mr Kamieniak to fly over from Poland and play the programme as planned. The small room was well filled with members of the Alkan Society, which was supporting the concert, and several others who gave an enthusiastic reception to all the pieces.

He opened with an impressive performance of Thalberg's *Grande caprice sur des motifs de La Sonnambula*, Op.46. This is one of the more ambitious of Thalberg's operatic fantasies and had all his usual technical tricks, including the famous "3-hand" effect, where a melody is surrounded by figurations above and below, which he claimed to have invented and which earned him the nickname of "Old Arpeggio". The flurries of "blind octaves" between alternating hands were done with panache, and the climax with those apparent three hands came off well. He

did have a tendency to rush occasionally and distort the length of bars, a habit which we were to hear later in the recital to more serious effect.

The next work was his own Sonata, completed in 2007, said in the programme note to be inspired by the poetry of Edgar Allen Poe, Liszt's B minor sonata and the works of Alkan. While I am in no way resistant to new music, I have to admit that, not knowing I had to review the performance later, I was left only with a vague impression of this extended one-movement work. I remember that it started with a rather long passage of random-sounding isolated notes. For the rest, I must resort to the programme, which mentions an *Agitato* first section with several ideas forming the "Demon" theme, a cadenza followed by a "more consolatory" second group, and the usual development and recapitulation following the classical model. The ending carries a quotation from the Coptic Gospel of St Thomas: "That which you have will save you, if you bring it forth from yourselves. That which you do not have within you will slay you." I apologise to Mr Kamieniak for being unable to make more of a considered judgement of the piece as a whole, apart from an impression that it was quite long. Perhaps someone better qualified can add a comment.

After the interval we heard Alkan's longest work, the Concerto for solo piano from the Op.39 Études in all the minor keys. It was already clear that Mr Kamieniak had the necessary technique to play Alkan's hardest passages – a good start. However, this is a huge work and the half-hour first movement seemed to be imperfectly memorised. The result was an impression of a more episodic structure than it really has. Several passages were rushed, the occasional bar or short passage was missing, and some bars lost the odd beat because of his haste. Like some other performers, he tends to play faster if a section is slightly easier and that spoils the flow of the "orchestral" style which I mentioned above. One has to give high marks for effort but fewer for achievement.

The second and third movements are shorter, and suffered less from the problems encountered in the first. The slow movement had some highly expressive moments which worked well, although the small piano was not quite man enough for the thunderous volume he sometimes demanded of it. The *Allegretto alla barbaresca* finale is a piece for only the bravest to tackle, and he certainly did not play safe with the tempo. Most of it came off reasonably well, triple-sharps included, and the black-note glissando at the end (not specified by Alkan, but favoured by some pianists including Hamelin) was done in grand style and left the audience satisfied, provided they could overlook the earlier problems. In time there should be a good interpretation of the work, but he needs to be absolutely sure of all the notes if he is to play it without the score. He must also overcome that tendency to rush and not do justice to Alkan's *style sévère* that Raymond Lewenthal described so well, and which he and Ronald Smith demonstrated in their classic performances.

Peter Grove

CD news

I recently asked my record shop to obtain a 2-disc compilation of recordings by Ronald Smith which I had been noticing on the shelves for some time, but it had disappeared. Most of the pieces had appeared on CD, in particular the minor-key Études in the edition produced by APR, but some had only ever appeared on LP and I thought it was time to have a back-up. I was told that EMI had deleted the discs from their catalogue. There were in fact two such 2-disc compilations:

The one from 2003 (5 85484 2) has a picture on the booklet of a man wearing a hat and stretched out on some chairs, with the pastel drawing of Alkan on the back. This contains the Symphonie, Concerto and Overture from Op.39 and the 3 Petites Fantaisies Op.41, recorded in 1977, all of which are on the APR discs. There are also some tracks from the album of short pieces recorded in 1984 (the LP had the number EG 27 0187 1 and it was also available on cassette), including 8 Esquisses and 5 Preludes, Petit conte, Nocturne No. 1, Gigue Op.24, Marche Op.37 No. 1, Le tambour bat aux champs and Toccata. That LP had been digitally recorded, but if the asterisk is to be believed, the Preludes have been remastered, as have of course all the analogue recordings from 1977. Although this is officially out of the EMI catalogue now, it can still be found on the Amazon website for £8.99. Other sources can probably be tracked down.

The compilation from 2002, released under the EMI label “double forte” (sic) has two pictures, possibly of Paris, in quadrants on the booklet cover. It contains the remaining four Études from Op.39 (Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 12), Chanson de la folle and Allegro barbaro (which are all on the APR release), as well as the Grande Sonate and Sonatine, which were released on two different LPs, and the 3 Grandes Études Op.76 and the 3 Études de Bravoure (Scherzi) Op.16, which came out on a single CD in 1988. So again there are some recycled digital recordings and some remastered from analogue LPs. At the time of writing, a used copy of these in “very good” condition is on its way from one of Amazon’s agents, on which I had to add p & p to the price of £9.99. Sadly, on looking at the website today, I can only see 2 new copies “from” £39.99 (namely £39.99 and £56.95[!]), 2 used “from” £29.59 (the second is £29.99), both in “very good” condition, and 1 “collectible” at £29.95.

It looks very much as if these recordings are getting very scarce, and members who are keen to obtain them would be advised to start looking at all possible outlets as soon as possible.

Incidentally, the APR recording of solo works (Opp.39 and 41 etc.) to which I referred does not currently appear in their catalogue – only the set of the chamber works and some solos which the Society helped to finance. It is to be hoped that it comes back in. There is currently only one copy available from Amazon: a used copy in “very good” condition at £49.71 which is being sold by a supplier in the USA.

On a more positive note, I have tried the Brilliant Classics 2-CD collection played by the American pianist Alan Weiss and sold at their usual ridiculously low price (£6.99 from Amazon). The first CD is familiar, being the same recording previously released in 1989 with the main works of the Grande Sonate and Festin

d'Ésope, together with Nocturne No.1, 7 Esquisses, one Prelude, Toccata and "Fa" from the Chants. The second CD is a new recording from 2007, and like the first, recorded in the Netherlands. The main work is the Symphonie from Op.39. There are also two movements from Les mois, the second Petite Fantaisie, Petit conte, Le tambour., and three Chants from the first book, Op.38 (Nos. 1, 5 and 6). My general impression is that Mr Weiss is at his best in the shorter pieces. The Symphonie suffers from a too-variable tempo in the fast movements – the finale is particularly slow at times for a *Presto* movement marked at 96 bars per minute – although it is expressively played. He does also have a bad habit of adding notes to chords which should be bare octaves. Alkan wrote enough thick chords of his own and when he specifies something different, his wishes should be respected. There is a well-written 16-page booklet with some interesting observations from the pianist himself. While this collection may not appeal to "completists" who prefer to have all the pieces in a set, it is a good miscellany which could appeal to listeners who are looking for a more general introduction to Alkan's music.

Scores

It is always best to buy a properly printed and bound edition of music. It is fairer to the publishers and much easier to use than photocopies. However, certain pieces of Alkan have been out-of-print for a very long time and show no sign of becoming available. In such cases, members might like to know that the *Wikipedia* article on Alkan contains a useful link to IMSLP, the International Music Score Library Project, from which PDF files of scores can be downloaded.

Peter Grove

ALKAN IN PRINT

Brian Doyle

A large proportion of Alkan's music is now in print in the Billaudot Edition. Finding any of it in the various music outlets is a different story. Foyles used to have two drawers full of Alkan's music, now there are none. Even the drawer marked 'A' does not usually contain any Alkan. Chappell's have a decent stock. The price to poor, hard up music students must seem prohibitive. The two books of Op.39 cost around £72.

A much cheaper option is a selection of Alkan's works entitled 'Le Festin d'Ésope and Other Works for Solo Piano' published by Dover. The other works are the Symphony and Concerto Op.39, Saltarelle Op.23, Barcarolle Op.65 and Toccata Op.75. There is a short introduction by Marc-André Hamelin.

It is heartening to see that some of Alkan's works are now appearing in various piano anthologies. The following is a list of some of them:

Short Romantic pieces for Piano - ed. Lionel Salter (pub. ABRSM)

Book I (Grades 1-2) – Les cloches Op.63 No.4

Book II (Grades 3-4) – Rigaudon Op.63 No.27

Book III (Grade 5) – Un petit rien Op.31 No.11

Book IV (Grade 6) – La Vision Op.63 No.1

Book V (Grade 7) – Prélude in B Op.31 No.23

More Romantic pieces for Piano – ed. Lionel Salter (pub. ABRSM)

Book III (Grade 5) – L'homme aux sabots Op.63 No. 23

Book IV (Grade 6) – Le premier billet-doux Op.63 No.46

Book V (Grade 7) – La voix de l'instrument Op.70 No.4

The Joy of Romantic Piano – ed. Denes Agay (pub. Yorktown Music Press)

Book I – Rigaudon Op.63 No.27

Book II (intermediate) – Le premier billet-doux Op.63 No.46

Romantic Piano Repertoire – ed. Stephen Coombs (Faber)

Level 1 (Grades 4-6) – La vision Op.63 No.1

The World's Great Classic Piano Preludes

– ed. Timothy Schorr (pub. Hal Leonard)

(Intermediate to Advanced) – Prelude in B Op.31 No.23

Piano Music for One Hand – ed. Raymond Lewenthal (Schirmer)

Op.76 No.1 – for the left hand.

Adagio Chillout – Piano Solo ed. Richard Harley (Faber)

La Vision Op.63 No.1

Easy Piano Classics – ed. Ronald Herder (Dover)

(Early and Intermediate) – Le Mourant Op.74 No.11

Adagios for Organ – ed. Rollin Smith (Dover)

Prière Op.64 No.5

The Romantic Pianist – ed. Johnson (pub. Peters Edition)

Volume II – La voix de l'instrument Op.70 No.4

Romantic Piano Anthology – ed. Nils Franke (pub. Schott Music)

Volume IV (grade 7 – 8) – Barcarolle Op.65 No.6 (with CD)

Simply Romantic Piano – the Steinway Library of Music (pub. Alfred)

Prelude Op.31 No.4 – Prière du soir (evening prayer)

World Renowned Piano Pieces compiled by David Willison (pub. Lengnick)

Book II (medium to advanced) – Barcarolle Op.65 No.6

Cadenzas to Beethoven's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.3 (Schott Music)

11 different composers' cadenzas spanning 200 years, including Alkan, Liszt, Clara Schumann, Smetana and Fauré (ed. Michael Rische)

Concert Repertoire for Flute and Piano – Sally Adams and Nigel Morley

(pub. Faber)

Les Regrets de la Nonnette

ALKAN RECORDINGS

Brian Doyle

Performances and broadcasts of Alkan's music may be few and far between, but it is not so with recordings. The recent Hyperion CD recording of the Cello Sonata Op.47 (CDA 67624) played by Alban Gerhardt and Steven Osborne, has received very favourable reviews. It was the recording of the week in the Telegraph. Classics Today declared the Sonata as "a magnificent work. Alkan was a real master of form". It was one of their recordings of the year.

Two new recordings also feature the coupling of the Alkan and Chopin Cello Sonatas. The Russian cellist Tatjana Vassiljeva took first prize in the 2001 Rostropovich Cello Competition. Her instrument is a 1725 Stradivarius. In a recent interview she was asked how she came to record the Alkan Sonata – "when it was decided that I record the Chopin Cello Sonata for the anniversary year in 2010, it was suggested to have it coupled with the Alkan Sonata. I must admit that this was an amazing discovery for me as Alkan is not so well known in Russia or Germany [where she resides]. I searched everywhere to find the music. The first time I played it through I could not believe that it had been hidden from me for so long. I knew we had to record them together". She was asked if she thought there was any musical connection between the Chopin and Alkan works as they were both dedicated to the French cellist, Franchomme. "It is clear that he must have been an exceptional cellist. Alkan is famous for writing virtuosic piano music, but his cello writing is not for beginners either. Like the Chopin, it is on a huge scale. It requires a lot of stamina to get to the end in one piece". Asked if she agreed that the Alkan Sonata was the most ambitious for its instrumental combination in the romantic repertoire, she replied "it is certainly a huge work and very ambitious in its scale and harmony. It was written about 8 years before Brahms wrote his E minor Sonata, but it seems to be more exploratory in terms of unexpected harmonies, progressions and some unusual rhythmic passages that sound very modern in the context of the pieces romantic and very lyrical melodies. I think it shows more of a free spirit, whereas the Brahms shows more of a sense of classical balance and structural perfection. I do not know what sort of person Alkan was but from the music I can guess that he was quite adventurous and free spirited. Also he seems to have a good sense of humour judging from the final 'Saltarella' movement. She was asked if she regretted that Alkan only wrote one work for cello – "Of course! Too few composers of this time composed for the cello. When we have such an innovative and exciting piece like this, which is a 'one off', it is impossible not to be disappointed that he did not continue, especially when he went on to live such a long life". She is partnered on her recording by Jean-Frédéric Neuburger on Mirare (MIR 107).

The other new recording of the Alkan/Chopin Sonatas has the distinction of being the only one performed on period instruments. The cellist is Job ter Haar, and the pianist is Vaughan Schlepp who performs on an 1846 Erard. Haar plays with gut

strings and uses a French period bow. In an article on the recording the writer, whilst praising the performances, warns that - “the Erard piano poses few problems for the modern ear. Some listeners might find the gut strings and vibrato-less playing a little difficult to get used to, but the playing is so ardent and infectious that the ear quickly adjusts”. The recording is on Quintone (Q 08003).

Two other recordings also both feature the Alkan Cello Sonata Op.47 and are re-issues. The recording of the Cello Sonata Op.47 by Emmanuelle Bertrand and Pascal Amoyel, released in 2001 on Harmonia Mundi (HMC 901758), has been re-issued at mid-price (HMG 501758). The recording of all three of Alkan’s Chamber Works played by Dong-Suk Kang, Yvan Chiffolleau and Olivier Gardon was issued in 1992 on the Timpani label (IC 1013). It has been re-issued at mid-price on Timpani IC 1139.

The super budget label Brilliant Classics has released a 3 CD set of Alkan works. The first two CDs feature the American pianist Alan Weiss who has been a resident in Belgium for a number of years. The first CD is a re-issue of his 1989 recording on Fidelio (8839). The works on this CD are the Nocturne No.1 Op.22, 7 of the Esquisses Op.63, Prelude Op.31 No.12, Le Festin d’Ésope Op.39 No.12, ‘Fa’ Op.38b No.2, Toccata Op.75 and the Grande Sonate Op.33. The second CD is a completely new recording (2007) and includes the Symphonie Op.39 and a few rarities - Les Mois Op.74 – Promenade sur l’eau No.6 and Gros temps No.10, Petite fantaisie Op.41 No.2, Petit conte, Le tambour bat aux champs Op.50 No.2 and the Chants Book 1 Op.38 No.1 (assez vivement), No. 5 (agitatissimo) & No. 6 Barcarolle. It makes a nice change to have a recording of one of the other Barcarolles rather than the ubiquitous Barcarolle from Op.65. This Barcarolle from Op.38 is a rather haunting, melancholy piece, which was described by Ronald Smith as “an independent minor masterpiece of disturbing originality”. The third CD is a re-issue of performances of Alkan miniatures by the Dutch fortepianist, Stanley Hoogland, on an 1858 Pleyel piano. This was originally on Brilliant Classics 92109 (2002). He performs a selection from the Preludes Op.31, Les Mois Op.74, the Chants Op.65 and 67 and the Esquisses Op.63. It is a pity that Brilliant Classics did not couple the Hoogland recording with Ronald Smith’s recording of Alkan works played on two instruments from the Colt Clavier Collection, an 1855 Erard and an 1851 Schneider (Oryx 18013), which has not appeared on CD. The 3 CD set is on Brilliant Classics 94037. A real bargain at under £10.

Material for the Annual report by the Chairman and Secretary of the Society

(Please feel free to add, rearrange or indeed to subtract from these notes.)

It is most pleasant to report the following considerable number of events involving music of Alkan in the year 2010.

- 19.01.10 Karl Lutchmayer, Sam Liu, Aleks Szram & Douglas Finch-
Trinity College of Music, London Grande sonate:Les Quatre âges
- 07.02.10 Jonathon Powell-L'Archipel, Paris Programme included Symphonie
- 09.02.10 Huseyin Sermet-QEH Programme included Trois petites fantaisie
- 12.02.10 Mark Viner-St. Barnabas Church, Ealing Programme included
Douze études dans les tons majeurs, Nos. 10, 11 and 12
- 20.02.10 Annual Scholarship Competition, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge
Winner: Helena Dukic; Adjudicator's Prize: Lliam Paterson
Recital by Thomas Wakefield included works by Alkan
- 01.01.10 Mark Latimer-Hong Kong City Hall Programme included Concerto
Concert cancelled
- 25.03.10 Leslie Howard-St. Peter's, Eaton Square No Alkan
- 30.04.10 Tomasz Kamieniak-Schott's Programme included Concerto for Piano
- 24.06.10 Mark Viner-Blüthner's Programme, includes Marche funèbre,
Trois menuets and Symphonie
- 26.06.10 AGM-2009
Richard Murphy-2nd Colloquium on the Esquisses
- 22.09.10 Leslie Howard-Steinway's Joint Meeting with the Liszt Society
Christopher Smith plays encore "The Fire in the neighbouring village"

- 31.10.10 Karl Lutchmayer-The Red Hedgehog
Programme included Etude Op. 76 No. 1 for the left hand alone
- 21.11.10 Annual Scholarship Competition, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge
Recital by Lloyd Buck included works by Alkan
- 04.12.10 Richard Murphy-3rd Colloquium on the Esquisses

In recognition of the benefits they have brought to the Society, the Committee invited Fr. Dunstan Keauffling and Mr. John White to become Honorary Members. Both graciously accepted.

Averil Kovacs has been the Society's Treasurer and Membership Secretary for many years. For some considerable time she has expressed the wish to resign, but she valiantly continued until a replacement was found. The Society is deeply grateful for all the time and effort she has contributed. The Committee accepted her resignation, but immediately invited her to return as a co-opted Member of the Committee. She accepted this invitation and was welcomed back.

Julian Haxby has accepted an invitation to become the Society's Treasurer and Membership Secretary and has been co-opted on to the Committee.

Richard Murphy has likewise accepted an invitation to join the Committee by co-option.

In accordance with the Society's constitution, the above three co-opted Members are standing for election to the Committee at the AGM.

Since the last AGM your Committee has made very considerable progress in exploring possibilities for celebrating the bi-centenary of the birth of Alkan, which falls towards the end of 2013, in an appropriate manner. The committee feels that it would be premature to discuss details before things have been finalised, but the membership will be given full details at the earliest possible moment.

The Alkan Competition at the Fitzwilliam College attracted 4 or 5 entries and an audience of about 30. "The standard was pretty high." [Lloyd Buck] in his recital that evening Lloyd Buck included Trois andantes romantiques Op.13, 'Quasi Caccia' Caprice Op.53, Bourrée d'Auvergne Op.29 & Palpitemento.

Piano Recital by Leslie Howard, Wigmore Hall, January 14, 2011

Variations on Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen (Bach-Liszt)

Sarabande & Chaconne on Themes from Almira (Handel-Liszt))

Großes Konzertsolo (Liszt)

Christus (Liszt)-I Einleitung und II Pastorale*

Christus (Liszt)-IX Das Wunder*

Romancero espagnol (Liszt)*

* World Première

Last night Leslie Howard, our President, was heard in a programme of music by Liszt and of arrangements by Liszt. The latter category included arrangements of works of others and arrangements from a work of his own.

The first part of the programme provided an opportunity for hearing seldom heard works; whilst the last three pieces were receiving their world premières.

Now, there is a danger that seldom heard or unheard works may be deservedly seldom heard or unheard and there is a further danger that fine advocacy of such works may convince an audience that they are unjustly neglected works. One can only say that in this instance the reactions of the audience made plain that these were received as great performances of fine music.

This was a demanding programme, the playing was throughout at the highest level, Leslie Howard's brilliant technique being used not for its own sake, but at the service of the music played.

Pythagoras

The Secretary, Nicholas King, gave a lecture-recital at St. Mary's Church, Chesham to Buckinghamshire County Organists' Association on 19th February 2011 on the organ music of Alkan, and included the first movement of the Symphonie, Op.39, in a piano recital at St. Mary's Church, Hemel Hempstead on 8th October 2010. Both occasions were received well.

The ALKAN SOCIETY & The LISZT SOCIETY

RECITAL by CHRISTOPHER SMITH

at STEINWAY'S, 44, Marylebone Lane, London W1U 2DB

on June 6th 2011 commencing at 18.45hrs.

Alkan: Trois Études de Bravoure (Improvisations), Op.12

I. Prestissimo

II. Allegretto

III. Allegro marziale

La Chanson de la folle au bord de la mer, Op.31 No.8

Douze Études dans les ton majeurs Op.35

No.3 in G Major

No.5 in F Major, "Allegro Barbaro"

No.7 in E flat Major, "L'Incendie au village du voisin"

Liszt: En Rêve

Dem Andenken Petofis

Première Ballade, S.170

Deuxième Ballade S.171

REFRESHMENTS (after concert)

(Total running time c.70 minutes)

Pianist Christopher Smith, 25, has lived in Guisborough, North Yorkshire all his life. He started receiving piano lessons in 1995 at the age of nine and he is currently studying at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama for the B. Mus. (Hons.) Performance - Pianoforte. Over the last five years, Christopher has had many successes in piano competitions around the country. He is currently under the tutelage of the highly acclaimed concert pianist, Leslie Howard and the respected tutor, Michael Young. Under their guidance and his determination, he hopes that he will be able improve as a pianist and establish himself further afield in the coming years as he continues and completes his studies.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY: To accord with Local Regulations tickets may not be sold for this event. However, donations may be made at the concert (to be shared equally between the two Societies). Your Committees feel that a donation of £10 would be appropriate.