



R E F L

SARAH KAPUSTIN VIOLIN

E C T I

ROELAND JAGERS VIOLA

O N S



DES PREZ  
DI LASSO  
BACH  
MOZART  
TOCH  
MARTINŮ  
ROUKENS



## SARAH KAPUSTIN

Sarah Kapustin's musical activities have taken her across North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Born in Milwaukee, WI, she has performed as soloist with such orchestras as the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Juilliard Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, Vogtland Philharmonie and the Pro Arte Orchestra of Hong Kong. Sarah has received numerous prizes and honors, including 1st prize of the International Instrumental Competition in Markneukirchen. She has appeared in such prestigious concert venues as Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Cité de la Musique in Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Mexico City's Sala Nezahualcoyotl, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, and Capella State Hall in St. Petersburg.

A devoted and passionate chamber musician, Sarah has appeared at various international festivals, notably the Kuhmo Festival (Finland), Musique de Chambre à Giverny (France), Sitka Festival (AK), El Paso ProMusica (TX), Peter de Grote Festival (Netherlands) and the Marlboro Music Festival (VT) where she has performed with such distinguished artists as Claude Frank, Joseph Silverstein, David Soyer, and Kim Kashkashian. She shows great interest in contemporary music, and has worked with several composers on their own compositions, including Henri Dutilleux, Krzysztof Penderecki, Jörg Widmann, Ned Rorem and Joey Roukens. Sarah's recordings of the Beethoven sonata cycle (with Jeannette Koekkoek) and solo works by Bartók, Bach and Fulmer, among others, have received international acclaim. Sarah was the first violinist of the renowned *Rubens Quartet* from 2008 until the group's final season in 2016.

Sarah received a Masters degree in violin performance at The Juilliard School with Robert Mann in 2005. She previously received a Bachelor of Music and an Artist Diploma from Indiana University as a pupil of Mauricio Fuks, and formerly studied with Mimi Zweig and James Przygocki at the String Academy of Wisconsin. She has participated in masterclasses with Joshua Bell, Midori, Leonidas Kavakos, Mihaela Martin and Ruggiero Ricci, among others. After receiving a Fulbright Scholarship, Sarah spent 2006 to 2008 in Paris as a student at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique, studying chamber

music with Michel Strauss and Vladimir Mendelssohn.

Currently Sarah resides in Zwolle, the Netherlands, where she is active as a chamber musician, soloist and concertmaster. She also performs and tours regularly with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Amsterdam Sinfonietta and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. Increasingly sought after as a teacher, she is professor of violin at the ArtEZ Conservatorium (Zwolle), professor of chamber music at the Prins Claus Conservatorium (Groningen), and in 2017 she joined the faculty of the Sweelinck Academie (preparatory division of the Amsterdam Conservatory). She has given masterclasses in the US, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Spain, Brazil, Columbia and Hong Kong, and is a faculty member of the Indiana University Summer String Academy.

Sarah plays on the 'Nico Richter and Hetta Rester' G.B. Rogeri, Brescia, ca. 1690, on loan to her from the *Nationaal Muziek-instrumentenfonds* in Amsterdam.

## ROELAND JAGERS

Violist Roeland Jagers is a passionate chamber musician and was a founding member of the *Rubens Quartet*, laureate of several international competitions including in Eindhoven (Tromp 2004), Prague (Spring Competition 2005) and Graz (Schubert Competition 2006). The quartet enjoyed an active international career for 16 seasons in Europe, the United States and Israel. Currently Roeland is active as a member of the *Rubens Consort*, a flexible chamber music ensemble which has come into existence as a follow-up to the quartet. He is also a member of *Metamorphoses*, a trio made up of international chamber musicians (clarinetist Jean Johnson and pianist Ilona Timchenko), which recently released a highly acclaimed debut album.

Roeland performs regularly in venues such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Tonhalle Zürich, the Konzerthaus in Vienna and the Philharmonie in Berlin. He also appears as a guest in international festivals such as Mecklenburg Vorpommern and Schleswig Holstein (Germany), Larzac (France), Kuhmo (Finland), El Paso Pro Musica, Sitka Music Festival and Indiana University Festival of the Arts (US).

As a soloist Roeland has appeared with



several ensembles. In past seasons he performed the Solo Sonata by György Ligeti throughout Europe and the US with great success; this sonata is one of the highlights of the viola repertoire, and yet is considered by many to be unplayable. Between 2013 and 2017, Roeland was principal violist of Sinfonia Rotterdam. He plays regularly with Amsterdam Sinfonietta and with the Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, and recently joined the North Netherlands Orchestra as principal violist.

Roeland is a viola and chamber music teacher at the prestigious *Indiana University Summer String Academy* (Bloomington, US). He has extensive teaching experience, working regularly with all levels from amateurs and students to aspiring professionals. In 2014 he wrote a chamber music method specifically meant for amateur musicians, in which subjects such as score study, leadership and rehearsal techniques are addressed.

Roeland studied viola with Gisella Bergman and Ferdinand Erblach. In 2001 he received his Bachelor of Music diploma with honours, and continued on to receive a Master of Music in 2004 with Vladimir Mendelssohn, also with honours, at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. In addition to his activities as a violist, Roeland also studied piano at the Brabant Conservatory, where he received his Bachelor of Music diploma in 2003. As a member of the Rubens Quartet, Roeland studied for four years at the Dutch String Quartet Academy in Amsterdam, where he had the honour of working intensely with members of the Amadeus, Hagen, Juilliard and Borodin quartets, followed by two years at the Hochschule für Musik *Hanns Eisler* in Berlin with Prof. Eberhard Feltz, one of the world's most renowned specialists in the art of string quartet playing.

Roeland plays a Giovanni Pistucci viola, on loan to him from the *Nationaal Muziek-instrumenten Fonds* in Amsterdam.



## REFLECTIONS SARAH KAPUSTIN (VIOLIN), ROELAND JAGERS (VIOLA) IN CONVERSATION WITH DOMINY CLEMENTS

*Chamber music has been an important part of your lives for many years, including your time together with the renowned Rubens Quartet. The combination of violin and viola creates a surprisingly rich variety of sonorities and colours and you clearly relish playing in this formation. How did you come to the decision to take this duo to the highest level?*

S: Over the last twelve years we have enjoyed acquainting ourselves with the small yet wonderful repertoire for our two instruments, always inserting a duo or two into our concert programs whenever possible. The COVID-19 pandemic has made us even more appreciative of our collaboration, and it sparked the wish to record some of our favourite pieces for posterity.

*You both play valuable instruments made available by the Dutch National Instrument Foundation. Can you tell us a little about them and their special qualities?*

S: I play on a violin built around 1690 by G.B. Rogeri from Brescia (Italy). It has a very rich and warm sound and over the years it has really become my 'voice', my means of expressing myself through music.

R: Although my viola is labeled an ancient Gagliano, it was actually made by Giovanni Pistucci in Naples around 1910. I have been lucky enough to play it for fifteen years now, and enjoy its warm yet clear sound every day.

*This programme has been part of your concert repertoire for some time prior to this recording. Was it conceived in one go, or built up organically over time?*

S: During the lockdown we started brainstorming about which pieces would fit together well, and came up with this collection of works which all feature the idea of canons and imitation and how those techniques have evolved over the past six centuries.

*Your choice of repertoire is quite unusual; you have chosen to play Martinů's Duo No. 2 rather than the more famous Three Madrigals, and Ernst Toch's Divertimento Op. 37 No. 2 is best known in its violin-cello version as recorded by Jascha Heifetz and Gregor Piatigorsky. Do you feel these pieces are unjustly neglected?*

S: Absolutely!

R: We've always been drawn to interesting repertoire that is not on your average concert programme. None of the pieces on this recording are really mainstream repertoire, yet we have included masterpieces by first-rate composers in a wide range of musical styles. The Divertimento by Toch was actually written for half a string quartet, similar to what Sarah and I used to be. The composer wrote a different Divertimento for the other violinist and the cellist. Funnily enough, the interpretation by Heifetz and Piatigorsky exists only because of a misunderstanding on the cellist's part – Piatigorsky prepared the violin/cello Divertimento for the recording, and when he discovered he had learned the wrong piece he made his own cello version of the viola part of the correct Divertimento!

**Josquin des Prez (c. 1450-1521)**  
**4 Canons**

**Orlando di Lasso (c. 1532-1594)**  
**2 Cantiones**

*At once enigmatic and playful, these are originally vocal works which work beautifully on string instruments. How do you feel that the evolution of ancient music has illuminated the endless stylistic idioms of recent decades? Does the quality of a sung score affect the way you play, and do the texts for these pieces colour your interpretations?*



R: As string players, our goal in any style is to speak and sing through our instruments. In these early pieces we have been especially interested in bringing out a natural, vocal phrasing and articulation to best imitate how a singer breathes. Performing and recording these Canons has been a wonderfully refreshing journey into unfamiliar musical territories, a path we couldn't have followed without the invaluable advice of our friend and singer Harry van Berne. It's amazing to realise that the later composers on our album have more in common with Josquin and Orlando than one might think.

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**  
**Canon all'Ottava and Canon Alla Decima (Nos. 15 and 16 from *The Art of Fugue* BWV 1080, arr. Watson Forbes)**

*J.S. Bach's music sounds superb played by virtually any instrument, and in fact he did not even specify which instruments should play The Art of Fugue. The combination of violin and viola is ideal for this sort of counterpoint, and these arrangements by violist Watson Forbes breathe with a natural transparency. None of this music 'plays itself'; the emotional weight of the notes needs to be felt without losing sight of the overall structure. How do you give a sense of communicative narrative and expression to such abstract material?*

R: It is hard to talk about Bach, possibly the greatest master of all. The quality of his music always surpasses the choice of instruments, and as a musician, one never feels entirely worthy of playing it. Bach's music is the epitome of a perfect work of art: a sublime balance of structure and emotion, technique and craftsmanship.

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**  
**Duo for Violin and Viola, K.424 (1783)**

*This is the second of two duos that Mozart composed for violin and viola, completing a commission for his friend Michael Haydn who was taken ill and therefore unable to complete a set of six for Salzburg's Archbishop Colloredo. This is a masterpiece of harmonic excellence, skillful counterpoint and rhythmic variation, enriched with double-stops which often give the impression of there being more than two players at work. The Archbishop was apparently unable to "detect in them Mozart's obvious workmanship" in comparison to Haydn's, and yet these two duos by the ever popular Mozart are generally preferred over the works of Josef Haydn's younger brother. How do Haydn's duos compare to Mozart's in your opinion?*

R: Without discrediting Michael Haydn, Mozart was obviously a composer *hors catégorie*. One example of his genius is his ability to portray a myriad of operatic characters within a seemingly unassuming *Theme and variations*, which has virtually remained unsurpassed in music history. We always enjoy working on this wonderfully rich and inspired work of the great master.

**Ernst Toch (1887-1964)**  
**Divertimento Opus 37 No.2 (1925)**

*Ernst Toch was a native of Austria, and the Divertimento Op. 37 No. 2 comes from that fruitful inter-war period when he was based in Mannheim, receiving a Ph.D. degree in music from Heidelberg University in 1921 and teaching at the Mannheim Conservatory. Toch's development of new kinds of polyphony at this time is perfectly suited for the violin/viola setting, combining a classical three-movement sonata structure with a personal idiom of dramatic urgency, contrasting with that air of melancholy in the intimacy of the central Adagio. This piece is quite virtuosic and you manage to make the outer movements sound capricious and light. Would you agree with this?*

R: Yes.

**Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)**  
**Duo No. 2 (1950)**

*This remarkable piece was written not long after Martinů's near-fatal fall from a balcony at Searle's Castle in Massachusetts, and during a period in which he wrote all six of his symphonies. Martinů was a prolific composer with an instantly recognisable style, and the contrasts in this work between searingly expressive lyricism and energetic dance-like rhythms are highly representative. This duo is full of technical challenges, with wide leaps and pretty wild double-stop passages. Martinů himself was a violinist, and this certainly must have influenced how he composed for strings. Can you feel this composer's affinity for your instruments when playing this music, and does this make it especially rewarding to play?*

R: Martinů is definitely a "players' composer". His music is everything but contrived and academic, as if he wrote it with an instrument rather than a pencil in his hand. His style is inviting to musicians and listeners alike, and playful in the true sense of the word.

**Joey Roukens (b. 1982)**  
**Two Miniatures as gifts for Sarah and Roeland on their wedding (2012), and for the birth of their daughter (2017).**

*These are lovely little pieces: a lullaby for your daughter with the gentle sound of muted instruments, and a chorale with shimmering, Sibelius-like touches for your wedding. These pieces are of course unique to these occasions and for you personally, but time goes on and such dates recede into the past. Do you feel the significance and effect of this music changing for you as time continues?*

R: As members of the Rubens Quartet, we have worked closely with Joey Roukens since 2007. During his two seasons as our *composer-in-residence*, he dedicated three string quartets, several transcriptions and a wonderful piece for percussion and strings to us, which we were fortunate enough to learn under his guidance – a fruitful exchange of ideas. Joey's style is wonderfully diverse and timeless. His musical appetite has no limits: he's equally at home in almost every possible genre, resulting in an attractive and eclectic idiom. Performing these two little pieces he dedicated to us brings back fond memories of our past collaborations. Despite the brevity of these pieces and the limitation of only two instruments, the *Chorale* and the *Lullaby* unmistakably breathe Joey's colourful musical realm.





## REFLECTIONS

**SARAH KAPUSTIN** VIOLIN  
**ROELAND JAGERS** VIOLA

1-4 **Josquin des Prez** (1450/1455-1521)  
CANONS

**Bohuslav Martinů** (1890-1959)  
DUO NO. 2

- 5 *Allegro*
- 6 *Lento*
- 7 *Allegro (poco)*

**Johann Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750)  
arr. Watson Forbes  
From: DIE KUNST DER FUGE  
BWV 1080

- 8 *Canon alla Decima, No. 16*
- 9 *Canon all'Ottava, No. 15*

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791)  
DUO FOR VIOLIN AND VIOLA, KV 424

- 10 *Adagio*
- 11 *Andante cantabile*
- 12 *Andante grazioso*

13-14 **Orlando di Lasso** (1530/1532-1594)  
CANTIONES

**Ernst Toch** (1887-1964)  
DIVERTIMENTO OPUS 37 NO. 2

- 15 *Vivace molto*
- 16 *Adagio*
- 17 *Flott und lustig*

**Joey Roukens** (1982)  
CHORALE FOR SARAH AND ROELAND  
18 *Adagio sostenuto*

19 **Joey Roukens** (1982)  
A LITTLE BABY LULLABY

*Recording Producer and Editing*  
Daan van Aalst  
*Recording Venue and dates*  
August 2020, Westvest 90, Schiedam  
*Artwork*  
Ad van der Kouwe, Manifesta  
*Photography*  
Ferdi Çelik  
*Booklet text*  
Dominy Clements

*Special thanks to*  
Bart Rijckaert  
R. & v. T.  
Ruth & Edmund Cord  
Harry van Berne



De Lancey  
Foundation

performers  
**Sena**



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