

Raphael Wallfisch performs the Elgar Cello Concerto at
the Royal Festival Hall with the London Philharmonic
Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä



26 October 2016, 7.30pm
Darkness and Light: Royal Festival Hall
Elgar *Cello Concerto in E minor*
Sibelius *Symphony No. 4 in A minor*
Sibelius *Symphony No. 5 in E flat*

Raphael Wallfisch, *cello*
Osmo Vänskä *conductor*
London Philharmonic Orchestra

Cellist Raphael Wallfisch is to perform a concert of Sibelius and Elgar with Osmo Vänskä and the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall on 26 October. Firmly positioned at the forefront of championing British composers of the last century, Wallfisch has performed numerous works by British composers including Elgar and Finzi. This concert titled 'Darkness and Light' sees Wallfisch perform Elgar's music again. This is the third of a series of four concerts where Vänskä conducts all of Sibelius's symphonies.

Raphael Wallfisch's contribution to the recording of British music has been celebrated previously in the release of a box set of cello concertos recorded by Chandos. This compilation CD along with a concert performance of Gerald Finzi's *Cello Concerto in A minor* firmly puts Wallfisch as a promoter of British composers.

As Wallfisch explains: "*I have had the opportunity during the course of my career, to explore and rediscover real gems of our repertoire by over 40 British composers.*"

Raphael Wallfisch has previously recorded Elgar's *Cello Concerto in E minor* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Richard Dickins in 2006 alongside other concertos by Holst and Bridge. This concert sees Raphael perform Elgar's milestone work as part of the London Philharmonic Orchestra's 2016/17 season.

The Strad's review of Raphael Wallfisch's 2006 Elgar recording: "*This is a fine open-hearted performance by Raphael Wallfisch, soulful in all the right places and*

elsewhere fizzing with energy and purpose: this is a reading that always knows where it's going."

The premiere of Elgar's *Cello Concerto in E minor* took place on October 27th 1919 – almost exactly 98 years ago. Wallfisch's wife's grandfather, the internationally renowned conductor Albert Coates, conducted the programme besides Elgar's concerto, which he conducted himself. It is written in Alice Elgar's diary that Coates took up most of the allotted rehearsal time, leaving Elgar with less than 30 minutes to run his concerto.

Edward Elgar's *Cello Concerto in E minor* was composed in the aftermath of the First World War. However the work did not gain worldwide popularity until Jacqueline du Pre recorded it in the 1960s; it consequently became an instant classical best seller. As his last notable work, Elgar's *Cello Concerto*, is now an integral part of the solo cello repertoire. Over a period of twelve months from August 1918 Elgar poured his feelings into four works that rank among the finest he ever composed. The first three were chamber works and the fourth work was the *Cello Concerto*, Elgar's lament for a lost world.

Raphael Wallfisch

Raphael Wallfisch is one of the most celebrated cellists performing on the international stage. He was born in London into a family of distinguished musicians, his mother the cellist Anita Lasker-Wallfisch and his father the pianist Peter Wallfisch.

At an early age, Raphael was greatly inspired by hearing Zara Nelsova play, and, guided by a succession of fine teachers including Amaryllis Fleming, Amadeo Baldovino and Derek Simpson, it became apparent that the cello was to be his life's work. While studying with the great Russian cellist Gregor Piatigorsky in California, he was chosen to perform chamber music with Jascha Heifetz in the informal recitals that Piatigorsky held at his home.

At the age of twenty-four he won the Gaspar Cassadó International Cello Competition in Florence. Since then he has enjoyed a world-wide career playing with such orchestras as the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, BBC Symphony, English Chamber Orchestra, Hallé, City of Birmingham Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Berlin Symphony, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Indianapolis Symphony, Warsaw Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic and many others.

He is regularly invited to play at major festivals such as the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Aldeburgh, Spoleto, Prades, Oslo and Schleswig Holstein.

Teaching is one of Raphael's passions. He is in demand as a teacher all over the world and holds the position of professor of cello in Switzerland at the Zürich Hochschule der Kunst.

Raphael has recorded nearly every major work for his instrument. His extensive discography on EMI, Chandos, Black Box, ASV, Naxos and Nimbus explores both the mainstream concerto repertoire and countless lesser-known works by Dohnanyi, Respighi, Barber, Hindemith and Martinu, as well as Richard Strauss, Dvorak, Kabalevsky and Khachaturian. He has recorded a wide range of British cello concertos, including works by MacMillan, Finzi, Delius, Bax, Bliss, Britten, Moeran and Kenneth Leighton. For the Chandos Walton Edition he was privileged to record the composer's *Cello Concerto*, originally written for his master, Piatigorsky.

Britain's leading composers have worked closely with Raphael, many having written works especially for him. These include Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Kenneth Leighton, James MacMillan, John Metcalf, Paul Patterson, Robert Simpson, Robert Saxton, Roger Smalley, Giles Swayne, John Tavener and Adrian Williams.

Raphael plays a 1760 Gennaro Gagliano, the 1733 Montagnana "Ex-Romberg" and an exquisite modern cello built for Raphael by Patrick Robin.

<http://www.raphaelwallfisch.com>

For more information please contact:

Nicky Thomas Media

www.nickythomasmedia.com | info@nickythomasmedia.com

+44(0)20 725 80909 | +44(0)20 3714 7594