

Divine Art is to release a new album *Violin Muse* with Madeleine Mitchell featuring 7 world premiere recordings by UK composers



Violin Muse

Madeleine Mitchell

Release Date: 20 October 2017

Label: Divine Art

Review copies on request from late August

Album launch: 25 October

Royal College of Music

More information below

"One of the UK's liveliest musical forces, the indefatigably adventurous violinist Madeleine Mitchell" The Times

Divine Art is to release a new album, *Violin Muse* with **Madeleine Mitchell**, featuring 7 world premiere recordings by UK composers **Guto Puw, Michael Nyman, Sadie Harrison, Geoffrey Poole, David Matthews, Michael Berkeley and Judith Weir**. As an internationally renowned solo violinist with a critically acclaimed discography, Madeleine has been an inspiration to composers and painters alike over the years, including *The Madeleine Series* by painter Gerald Marks which were created between 1989-1991. Five of the works, by Puw, Nyman, Harrison, Poole and Matthews were written for and premiered by Mitchell.



GERALD MARKS

Paintings and Drawings 1989 - 1991
'The Madeleine Series'

Judith Weir writes:

"Madeleine Mitchell's central position as an advocate of new violin music makes her the ideal performer to undertake this survey of recent work by UK composers".

On 7 September, Madeleine Mitchell will perform the world premiere of Grace Williams' Violin Sonata (1938) with Konstantin Lapshin, in addition to the Weir and Harrison from *Violin Muse*, at Bangor University as part of the International Conference on Women's Work in Music.

On 25 October, 2-4pm, the Royal College of Music will host an album launch with a performance by Madeleine and Nigel Clayton and discussion with composer Guto Puw and RCM Head of Composition William Mival, followed by refreshments.

"The violin as a muse for painters, poets and composers has long fascinated me. I'm thrilled to have had some 30 pieces written for me over the past few decades in a range of styles and to have worked closely with the composers." Madeleine Mitchell

David Matthews' *Romanza* was recorded by Madeleine Mitchell and Nigel Clayton and released as a single in October 2016 on the Divine Art label. Mitchell commissioned and premiered the violin and orchestra version of the piece back in 2012 at the William Alwyn Festival and premiered the piano version with Clayton a month later. Mitchell and Clayton gave the London premiere at Kings Place in

March 2013 to mark the composer's 70th birthday. Listen to a taster of the single [here](#). As David Matthews explains: "*I first heard [Madeleine] play in a memorable performance of Messiaen's Quatuor pour la fin du temps at the Malvern Festival. Since then I have heard her many times; it's always good to be able to hear the person you are writing for playing your notes in your head while writing*"

In 2014 Madeleine joined forces with the Orchestra of the Swan to perform the premiere of Guto Puw's *Violin Concerto 'Soft Stillness'*, written for her and inspired by *The Merchant of Venice*. In January 2017, BBC Radio 3 broadcast her live recording of this concerto with BBC NOW, included on her new album.

2007 saw Mitchell perform the world premiere of Michael Nyman's *Taking it as Read* at the Wales Millennium Centre, which he wrote her as a gift for the opening of her [Red Violin festival](#) (Founder Patron Lord Menuhin). As with several of the works written for her, Mitchell has performed this many times since its premiere.



Madeleine Mitchell and Michael Nyman

Mitchell premiered the *Rhapsody* written for her as a gift by Geoffrey Poole, in both versions, with orchestra and with piano, in 2015. The same year, Madeleine and Geoffrey Poole premiered *Aurea Luce* (beauteous light) written for them by Sadie Harrison to mark her 50th birthday, in the composer's hometown of Shaftesbury. Harrison explains: "*the work is based on a plainsong melody sung as a hymn for the Feast of St. Peter's Chair in Rome, reflecting the dedication of the church in which the premiere took place*".

The disc also features the world premiere recording of Michael Berkeley's *Veilleuse (Night Watch)*, written in 1998, which is a reworking of the slow movement of Berkeley's 1979 Violin Sonata. Madeleine has performed *Veilleuse* several times in her unique programme 'Nocturne' with poetry.

Judith Weir's *Atlantic Drift* Duos for 2 Violins are performed by Madeleine Mitchell and Cerys Jones on the disc, which Weir says is "*one of my favourites out of my own compositions*". Jones is former second violinist of the Heath Quartet and post-graduate student of Mitchell's from the Royal College of Music, where pianist Nigel Clayton, who partners Mitchell on 5 works on the album, is also a professor.

Composers have been writing pieces for Madeleine Mitchell from very early on in her career, including the violin concerto *Quadruple Elegy in the Time of Freedom* by Piers Hellawell, works commissioned by Mitchell for solo violin and choir by Jonathan Harvey, Thierry Pecou and Roxanna Panufnik and for violin and percussion by Tarik O'Regan and Anne Dudley. Madeleine's previous album *In Sunlight: Pieces for Madeleine Mitchell*, released in 2005, featured nine new works written for and premiered by her, by James MacMillan, Michael Nyman, John Woolrich, Brian Elias, Anthony Powers, Stephen Montague, Nigel Osborne and Stuart Jones. *In Sunlight* was nominated for BBC Music CD of the year: "*It's difficult to know what to admire more: the dedicated, penetrating musicianship of Madeleine Mitchell or the sheer range of the pieces she has inspired...almost all of it exudes respect for the violin...there are even things which sound fun to play or that's the impression the magnificent Mitchell manages to convey*" (5* review by Stephen Johnson, BBC Music Magazine)

Robert Saxton will write a full-length violin sonata/suite for Madeleine Mitchell to premiere in 2018/19. Madeleine first met Robert, along with other composers, when she was the violinist/violist in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' seminal group *The Fires of London* at the start of her career. As a group formed to perform new works, including those by the late Maxwell Davies, this naturally formed relationships between Madeleine and many active composers.

The **Vaughan Williams Trust**, the **Arts Council of Wales** and a Crowdfunding campaign supported the album.

Full Album Information

Performers

Madeleine Mitchell *violin*

Nigel Clayton *piano*

BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Edwin Outwater *conductor*

Cerys Jones *violin*

Track listings

1. ***Geoffrey Poole** - *Rhapsody* 12'
- 2,3 ***Guto Puw** - *Violin Concerto 'Soft Stillness'* 20'
4. ***David Matthews** - *Romanza* 11'
5. ***Sadie Harrison** - *Aurea Luce 2015* 9'
- 6-11. **Judith Weir** - *Atlantic Drift for 2 violins* 10'
12. **Michael Berkeley** - *Veilleuse* 10'
- 13,14 ***Michael Nyman** - *Taking it as Read* 4'

*Written for and premiered by Madeleine Mitchell

All world premiere recordings: Violin Concerto, Violin Duos, 5 works violin/piano

Upcoming events

7 September | 11am-12 | Powis Hall, Bangor University

Recital and talk at the International Conference Women's Work in Music
*Weir and Harrison from new album plus **Premiere** Grace Williams Violin Sonata (1938),*
Rebecca Clarke Nocturne 2 violins & piano, Lili Boulanger Nocturne

10 October | 6:15pm | Middlesex University

Recital and Lecture with works from new album

23 October 2017 | The Garrick Club

Recital with Nyman from album, works by Garrick Club composers Walton & Elgar
Presentation coinciding with the 300th anniversary of David Garrick, of a unique 18C
manuscript depicting his rendition of Hamlet Soliloquy in pitches and rhythms
on which Roxanna Panufink based her piece for Madeleine Mitchell and Choir, 'Undiscover'd
Country'

25 October 2017 | 2-4pm | West Parry Room, Royal College of Music

Violin Muse: Madeleine Mitchell's Album Launch

4 Nov 2017 | 1.30-3pm | Canterbury Festival Stanford Weekend

Recital including Matthews from album, Stanford and his pupils Goossens (from Mitchell's
'British Treasures'), Bridge (from Mitchell's Violin Songs album), Howells

5-18 November 2017

USA tour including concerts with Weir Atlantic Drift from album, master classes at the
Juilliard School New York, universities etc.

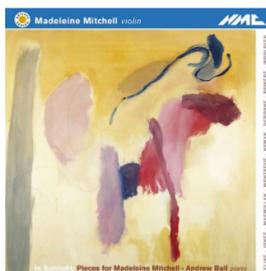
Previous recordings



"A CD full of small joys wonderfully played" The Strad

"Her tone is sweet and bright...unfailingly sensitive to the nuances and character of each piece" Gramophone

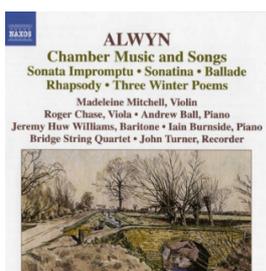
Classic FM CD of the Week



"Wonderfully accomplished, irreproachably sensitive performances" Gramophone

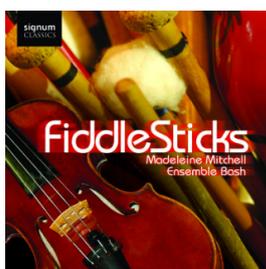
"A whole host of works written for this remarkable violinist" The Independent

BBC Radio 3 Listeners' Choice



"Lovingly performed by accomplished British artists" The Observer

"Madeleine Mitchell produces a sound of blemishless purity" The Strad



"My favourite contemporary CD of 2007... Brilliant stuff" BBC Music Magazine *****

"That always imaginative violinist Madeleine Mitchell" Gramophone



"A very successful disc" International Record Review

"The recording is excellent...most enjoyable" Gramophone

'Such stylish performances' Fanfare USA

Madeleine Mitchell

Madeleine Mitchell has been described by The Times as 'one of Britain's liveliest musical forces (and) foremost violinists'. She has performed in some 50 countries in a wide repertoire in major festivals and venues, frequently broadcast, including the BBC Proms, ABC, S4C, Bayerischer Rundfunk and Italian TV.



As concerto soloist she has performed with orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic, Polish and Czech Radio, St Petersburg Philharmonic and for the BBC. She has given recitals at Lincoln Center New York, Wigmore Hall and South Bank Centre London, Vienna, Moscow, Singapore, Seoul Centre for the Arts, Sydney Opera House and numerous festivals, frequently representing the UK and championing British music.

Mitchell's acclaimed discography for which she has been nominated for Grammy and BBC Music Awards, includes 'In Sunlight: Pieces for Madeleine Mitchell' by MacMillan, Nyman and other well known UK composers, 'FiddleSticks' - Lou Harrison Violin Concerto with Percussion Orchestra and new companion pieces (which she performed in Symphony Hall International Series); the popular 'Violin Songs' - Classic FM's featured CD, 'British Treasures' - early 20th century romantic violin sonatas, two albums for Naxos of music by Alwyn and Howard Blake (with the composer as pianist), Hummel violin sonatas, Bridge chamber music and the widely recommended Messiaen Quartet for the End of Time with Joanna MacGregor. Madeleine's Linn recording of MacMillan Motet with solo violin and choir was BBC Music Magazine's CD of the Month.

A highly creative artist, Madeleine Mitchell devised the Red Violin festival under Lord Menuhin's patronage, the first international eclectic celebration of the fiddle across the arts, for which she was short listed for European Women of Achievement and Creative Briton Awards. She has won awards for her original collaborations with both percussion and voices.

Madeleine is a professor of violin and performance science at the Royal College of Music, where as a Foundation Scholar she won the Tagore Gold Medal and the prestigious Fulbright/ITT Fellowship to the USA, where she frequently tours. She was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 2000. She plays on a 1839 Rocca from Turin.

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