

Cellist Raphael Wallfisch releases disc in new series of cello concertos by exiled Jewish composers on CPO label  
*Voices in the wilderness*



**Voices in the wilderness**  
**Cello concertos by exiled Jewish composers**  
**CPO 555 074-2**

**OUT NOW**

**Hans Gál:** *Cello Concerto Op. 67 in B minor*  
**Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco:** *Cello Concerto in F major* (world premiere recording)

**Raphael Wallfisch** *cello*  
**Nicholas Milton** *conductor*  
**Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra**

Raphael Wallfisch releases a new album *Voices in the wilderness* as part of an ongoing series featuring cello concertos by exiled Jewish composers with Classic Produktion Osnabrück (CPO). With this series, Wallfisch embarks on a personal journey to rediscover the forgotten cello music of exiled Jewish composers who escaped Fascism and the Third Reich. The first disc includes cello concertos by Hans Gál and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, the latter of which is a world premiere recording. Later discs will include pieces by Goldschmidt, Ben Haim, Korngold, Bloch and Weinberg. Many of the selected composers had a connection either to Wallfisch's own parents, themselves émigrés, or to his teacher Piatigorsky. With conductor Nicholas Milton, Wallfisch has joined forces with the Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra and Deutschland Radio to record the series.

*"This recording project in Berlin is extremely personal to me, coming from a Jewish background, as we shed light on some of the exiled Jewish composers and record their works. We've uncovered works by Karl Weigl and Castelnuovo-Tedesco who both wrote pieces dedicated to my teacher - Piatigorsky - which I am hugely excited about recording. Four of the pieces we are releasing have never been recorded before. The whole journey has a lot of connotations and significance - it almost feels like we are completing the plans of the exiled composers by recording their music in Berlin, to allow their music to live on."*



The first disc in the series features the works of Hans Gál and Castelnuovo Tedesco. Austrian-British composer Hans Gál had a productive career as director of Mainz Conservatory, following the support of important musicians such as Wilhelm Furtwängler, Fritz Busch and Richard Strauss. With the rise of Nazism, his career came to an abrupt end when he was dismissed from his post in Mainz due to his Jewish ancestry. Returning to Vienna, he was unable to find work. After the Anschluss in 1938, he fled to London and found some work in Edinburgh with the

help of Donald Tovey. Following the outbreak of war, he was interned as an enemy alien in Huyton Camp near Liverpool and then on the Isle of Man.

He wrote his cello concerto in 1944 after a particularly difficult period, following the loss of his mother, and the suicides of his sister, son and aunt. Gál completed the piece in Edinburgh, where he took up a teaching position at the University in 1945 and co-founded the Edinburgh International Festival in 1947. In the mid 1980s Raphael Wallfisch met Hans Gál in Edinburgh. Wallfisch has done several performances of the Gál this year. Musicologist Michael Haas suggests that Gál's cello concerto is *"the only time in Gál's entire output where he suggests his Jewish identity"*.

The Italian composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco migrated to the USA in 1939 following the Italian Racial Laws, which banned his music from radio and live performances. Castelnuovo-Tedesco thrived in the US, becoming a prominent film composer and using his Jewish heritage for inspiration. Piatigorsky, who later became Wallfisch's teacher, premiered Castelnuovo-Tedesco's concerto in New York, 1935, conducted by Toscanini. In addition to his cello concerto, Castelnuovo-Tedesco also established a career as a pianist in New York (with help from Jascha Heifetz and Arturo Toscanini) and premiered his second Piano Concerto under John Barbirolli in 1939. Following this, he moved to Hollywood in 1940 and became a film composer, which he openly said was just a means to make money. Michael Haas explains that *"[Castelnuovo-Tedesco]'s culture was Tuscan, but following the barbarity of Hitler, his identity became progressively more Jewish"*.

The next disc to be released will be in Spring 2018 featuring concerti by Franz Reizenstein and Bertholdt Goldschmidt followed by the complete cello works by Karl Weigl in Autumn 2018. 2019 sees the release of two further discs in the series including music by Weinberg, Ben Haim, Bloch and Korngold.

## 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>**

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