

## BRITTEN

Elegy - Three Suites, Op. 72, 80 & 87 for Solo Viola

Simone Libralon

01. Elegy: <i>Poco lento</i>	04:47	12. II Fuga: <i>Andante</i>	02:49
<b>First Suite Op. 72</b>		13. III Scherzo: <i>Allegro molto</i>	01:56
02. Canto Primo: <i>Sostenuto e largamente</i>	01:38	14. IV: <i>Andante lento</i>	04:46
03. I Fuga: <i>Andante moderato</i>	03:16	15. V Ciaccona: <i>Allegro</i>	06:35
04. II Lamento: <i>Lento rubato</i>	02:11	<b>Third Suite Op. 87</b>	
05. Canto Secondo: <i>Sostenuto</i>	00:44	16. I Introduzione: <i>Lento</i>	01:38
06. III Serenata: <i>Allegretto (pizzicato)</i>	01:54	17. II Marcia: <i>Allegro</i>	01:37
07. IV Marcia: <i>Alla marcia moderato</i>	02:40	18. III Canto: <i>Con moto</i>	00:55
08. Canto Terzo: <i>Sostenuto</i>	01:26	19. IV Barcarola: <i>Lento</i>	01:12
09. V Bordone: <i>Moderato quasi recitativo</i>	03:07	20. V Dialogo: <i>Allegretto</i>	01:33
10. VI Moto Perpetuo e Canto Quarto: <i>Presto</i>	03:35	21. VI Fuga: <i>Andante espressivo</i>	02:10
<b>Second Suite Op. 80</b>		22. VII Recitativo: <i>Fantastico</i>	01:11
11. I Declamato: <i>Largo</i>	02:22	23. VIII Moto perpetuo: <i>Presto</i>	01:03
		24. IX Passacaglia: <i>Lento solenne</i>	06:51

First World Recording of the complete Three Suites Op. 72, 80 & 87 for Solo Viola.

Total Time: 62:00

Recorded 19-23 July 2021 Chiesa di Santa Maria Nascente di Bodio Lomnago, Varese (Italia)

Sound Engineer **Paolo Guerini**, ClassicaDalVivo.it | Album Notes **Simone Libralon**

**Simone Libralon** plays a Thomas Aillerie viola and a C. H-K Schmidt "Saxonia" bow.

Producer manager **Rosella Clementi** | Publishing Supervisor **Romano Di Bari**

Artwork **Chiara Gimmelli** | Cover art Aldeburgh, Suffolk, UK. January 3rd 2022. Sunrise at the Scallop sculpture on Aldeburgh Beach



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First World Recording

### Benjamin Britten

Benjamin Britten was certainly one of the most important composers of vocal music of the 20th century. His production is characterized by the continuous lookout for new sound possibilities and inclined to emphasize the contrasts that can be obtained from differences in timbre and rhythm. He declined almost all of his musical production with an idea of sound strongly tied to the singing and to the expressive-communicative potential of the human voice. **Elegy** - August 1st 1930 is the date on the manuscript of this piece. Written in pencil on an untitled sheet of scattered stave, it dates from the day after the composer left Gresham's School at the age of 16. He wrote in his diary that he did not think he should be sorry to leave, but the music, written for himself, clearly expresses the innermost nature of his feelings. The first public performance was given five years after the composer's death, on 22 June 1984, at The Maltings, Snape, as part of the 37th edition of the Aldeburgh Festival, founded by Britten himself. The performer was the famous violist Nobuko Imai. Faber Music published the work in 1985 with **Elegy** as title. **Three Suites for cello** - The three suites for solo cello are dedicated to 'Slava' Rostropovich who worked closely with Britten in achieving the final edition of the work. The reference to the work of J. S. Bach is clear, especially in the use of implicit polyphony, in which notes belonging to different registers suggest the presence of distinct musical lines even if there is only one voice. Bach's dances, here revisited in a modern version, referred the idea of a strong humanity declined, depending on the case, in emotionality or spirituality. Through time many violists have asked Faber Music for a viola version of the Three Suites for Cello. The transcription was made by Nobuko Imai because of her strong connection with Britten's music. The resulting work follows the original, with only few minor adjustments due to technical and instrumental matters. It is interesting to note that Britten was able to play the viola skilfully, having started studying it at the age of nine: although the piano was his first instrument, he kept a deep connection with the viola throughout his life. This was probably also due to Britten's affection for the violist and composer Frank Bridge, his composition teacher, friend and confidant, who donated him his own instrument before the composer's trip to the United States. **Suite Op. 72** - Completed between November and December 1964, it is divided into nine movements. The recurrence of the Canto, an element that is varied in colours and sound atmospheres in each of its three appearances, constitutes the central theme of the work; all the other movements gravitate around it and it represents a clear sign of how Britten's thought is directed towards a vocal idea of sound.

### a Bianca



Courtesy Living is Life  
Photographer Guido Nicora

**Simone Libralon** is presently a member of the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano but also a solo recitalist who has built unique performances around the history of his instrument. As well as regularly performing the traditional repertoire, he has made several transcriptions and worked with artists, architects and writers to create cross-cultural events that highlight contrasts and affinities between different languages.

The Suite is thus divided into three sections, each consisting of a Canto and two movements of contrasting character. **Suite Op. 80** - Completed on 17 August 1967, it consists of five movements. The Declamato opens the work with a quotation from Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, while the Fuga, in the second movement, is characterized by the presence of pauses in the subject. The fourth movement has no title, but the indication is *Andante Lento*. The last movement, Ciaccona, presents several embellishments and, together with the whole suite, is a homage to J. S. Bach's Partita II for solo violin BWV 1004. **Suite Op. 87** - Composed between February the 23rd and March the 3rd 1971 it is divided, as the first suite, into nine movements. As done for Nocturnal after John Dowland, Britten uses the form of the theme with variations with the theme at the end of the piece and the variations preceding it. Four themes are used: three taken from Tchaikovsky's volume of folksongs and the last one from the English hymn collection entitled Kontaktion. The folk songs are Mourful Song (Under the little apple tree), Autumn and Street Song (The grey eagle). The anthem is Hymn for the Departed, that Britten named Grant repose together with the saints. After the Passacaglia, in the last movement, the four themes are presented in sequence. The presence of themes linked to both the Russian and English traditions represents the deep bond of friendship between Britten and Rostropovich.