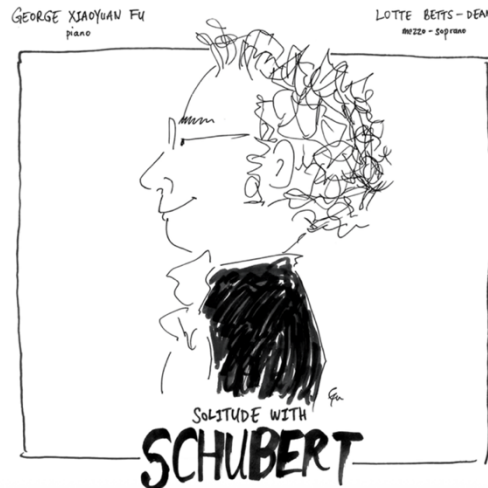


**George Xiaoyuan Fu releases new Schubert album
Solitude with Schubert on 10 July 2026
with a launch on 13 July after his Wigmore Hall recital**



Album released on 10 July
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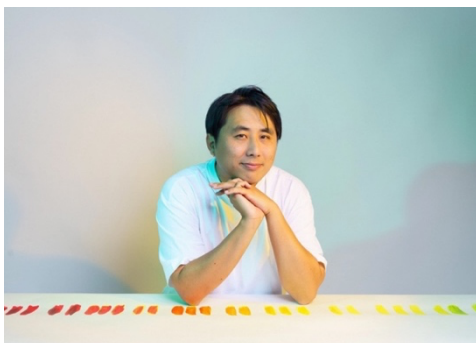
Schubert's *Allegretto in C minor*, D. 915, Piano Sonata No. 19 in C Minor, D.958
Songs from *Schwanengesang*, D.957, *Einsamkeit*, D. 620 with Lotte Betts-Dean

Single releases:

Schubert's *Hungarian Melody in B minor*, D. 817 – **15 May**
Schubert's *Die Taubenpost* with Lotte Betts-Dean – **12 June**

Wigmore Hall
Monday 13 July, 7.30pm

Olivier Messiaen Catalogue d'oiseaux: Le loriot
Fryderyk Chopin Scherzo No. 4 in E major Op. 54
Ludwig van Beethoven Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major Op. 109
George Xiaoyuan Fu *The Cat and His Music Master* (world premiere)
Robert Schumann Fantasie in C major Op. 17



Award-winning American pianist George Xiaoyuan Fu launches his new album *Solitude with Schubert* at his Wigmore Hall recital on 13 July. The album features Schubert's late sonata D.958 along with selected songs with Lotte Betts-Dean, including the lesser-known *Einsamkeit*. The album originates from a short film project of the same name which debuted at Aldeburgh Festival and was nominated for a RPS Storytelling Award.

The development of *Solitude with Schubert* began during the COVID-19 lockdown, following the death of Fu's father. Alongside piloting an online concert series, drawing a series of Instagram cartoons and becoming a "devoted parent to a sourdough starter named Bredna", Fu became drawn to Schubert's late works,

written while the composer was confronting terminal illness and emotional despair in his final year. Supported by the Curtis Institute of Music, the Kirckman Concert Society and Platoon, Fu created a short film to document his journey with a bereavement group at St Elizabeth Hospice in Aldeburgh. Fu joined a community walking group, the volunteer-led service 'Walk On' for whom he gave a recital. The link to the documentary trailer can be found [here](#).

As George Xiaoyuan Fu explains,

"Grief is a phenomenon that's difficult to understand. We don't live in a culture in which people are readily open to converse about grief even though losing a loved one is one of the most universal human experiences. I found a place for these intense experiences in Schubert's music: because I didn't have to put these complex feelings into words, they were allowed to exist without the limitations of language. I simply choose to sitle up to Schubert's piano in the evening, reading the page before me with the same faithfulness and tenderness that I might feel toward a dear friend.

Schubert's music is often described as a smile with a frown inside. Many passages consist of a single beautiful melody wandering through cycles of keys, often seesawing on a pivot between major and minor modes. As a result, there is bleakness and despair, which is bewilderingly followed by sunniness and hope. This juxtaposition of light and dark is strangely affecting; and amidst the intense isolation in the pandemic, I found a completely new perspective to his work.

Shelley wrote in *Prometheus Unbound* – "And hark! their sweet sad voices! 't is despair Mingled with love and then dissolved in sound."

Fu's album includes some of the last works Schubert composed before his death in November 1828 at the age of 31. Schubert spent his final year in an extraordinary state of productivity. Though he had been marred by ill-health for some years but given how prolific and active he was in his final month, Fu suggests that this final burst of creativity should not only be defined by a sense of impending death. He notes that title of *Schwanengesang* ('Swan Song') was given by Schubert's publisher posthumously when the collection of songs was published in 1829, a few months after Schubert's death.

Fu's upcoming Wigmore Hall concert features a world premiere performance of *The Cat and His Music Master*, commissioned by Wigmore Hall. The work draws upon the tales of Hoffmann and his depiction of a tomcat called Murr. The concert additionally features Beethoven's late *Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major*, Op. 109, alongside Schumann's iconic *Fantasie* and Chopin's *Scherzo No.4*.

Fu's upcoming busy concert schedule also includes several concerts with Trio Zimbalist in Germany and the US.

George Xiaoyuan Fu

"Fu makes Debussy's *Études* sound as if they had just been written, his playing wonderfully clean and crisp, never overstated but often marvelous." (BBC Music Magazine)

American pianist George Xiaoyuan Fu is one of the most exciting pianists of his generation. He has garnered international acclaim as a fearless, illuminating, and virtuosic interpreter of a wide array of music. Fu made his first concerto debut with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Centre at the age of 17. He went on to study



Economics at Harvard before studying at the Curtis Institute of Music and the Royal Academy of Music.

He has performed at many leading international performance spaces such as Konzerthaus Berlin, Kennedy Centre, Carnegie Hall, St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Southbank Centre, King's Place, and Tanglewood. His performances and interviews have been featured in broadcasts around the world, ranging from BBC Radio 3 and National Public Radio to appearances on PBS/American Public Television and On Stage at Curtis in Philadelphia.

As an emerging composer, Fu's growing catalogue of original works and arrangements exhibits fresh imagination and virtuosity, all the while drawing from a lifetime of studying a vast range of repertoire spanning several centuries. His *Passacaglia on a Theme by Radiohead* was recently featured on NPR's All Songs Considered and hailed as "kind of mind-blowing" by Robin Hilton; while his arrangements of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* Suite No. 2 and Smetana's *Dance of the Comedians* have seen successful debuts internationally. This year Trio Zimbalist, which includes violinist Josef Špaček and cellist Timotheos Petrin, will debut his first Piano Trio throughout concerts in the US.

Fu's second studio album, *Colouring Book*, was released with Platoon Classical in March 2025 to international acclaim. It received a Gramophone Award in the Concept Album category after the publication hailed it as one of the best classical releases of the year: "Fu plays his own music with tremendous authority and colouristic resources, as he also does with the Cruttwell-Reade and Aucoin selections... As for the Debussy Études, Fu's recordings contain some of the most enchantingly characterised interpretations I've heard since those of Ju-Ying Song, Florent Boffard, Mitsuko Uchida and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet. Yes, they're that good!" (Jed Distler). His first solo album, *MIRRORS* (Platoon), was a globally successful debut release and won BBC Music Magazine's 2024 Newcomer Award.

<https://www.georgefupiano.com/>

Lotte Betts-Dean

Described by The Guardian as "a singer of rich and fearless versatility", Australian mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean is passionate about curation and programming, with a broad repertoire that encompasses contemporary, chamber, and early music, as well as art song, opera, oratorio and non-classical collaborations.



Lotte has premiered numerous works and recorded several composer portrait albums, including acclaimed releases of Stuart MacRae and Arthur Keegan for Delphian Records, as well as albums celebrating Michael Finnissy (*Divine Art / Métier*), Catherine Lamb (*Another Timbre*) and Ian Wilson (*Farpoint*). She has also recorded for BIS (Brett Dean), Ensemble Q (Berio), Naxos (Philippos Tsalaouris) and Salmon Universe (Luke Abbott), and has released two recital albums for Delphian Records (everything you've ever lived with guitarist Dimitris Soukaras, and KIN with pianist Joseph Havlat).

Operatic engagements include Bayerische Staatsoper (Brett Dean *Of One Blood*, Weinberg *Die Passagierin*), Grand Théâtre de Genève (Matthew Shlomowitz *Electric Dreams*), Aldeburgh Festival (Colin Matthews *A Visit to Friends*), State Opera of South Australia (Brett Dean *Hamlet*) and Opera North/Shadwell Opera (Isabella Gellis *The Devil's Den*). She is a regular at festivals and venues across the UK, Europe and Australia, including Oxford Song, West Cork Chamber Music, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Kings Place and the Wigmore Hall.

Lotte has collaborated with chamber groups and orchestras including Explore Ensemble, London Sinfonietta, Ficino Ensemble, Ensemble Musikfabrik, Manchester Collective, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Armida Quartett, Philharmonia Orchestra, CBSO, Colin Currie Group and the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, and has worked with conductors including Vladimir Jurowski, Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, Omer Meir Wellber and Susanna Mälkki.

In 2024, Lotte won the Young Artist Award at the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards, with the citation praising her as "a visionary performer, initiating one bold collaboration after another". She is a past winner of the ROSL Music Competition (2020), Oxford Lieder Young Artist Platform (2019), the inaugural Musicians' Company New Elizabethan Award (2018) and the 2017 Peter Hulsen Orchestral Song Prize. Lotte is a Young Artist alumnus of Britten Pears Arts (2022), City Music Foundation (2019) and Oxford Lieder (2020). She studied at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and the Royal Academy of Music and was subsequently nominated as an Associate of the Academy in 2022 for her services to music.

Lotte is an Ambassador for Donne, a collective of artists supporting women in music, and also regularly records soundtracks for film and TV with London Voices. She is represented worldwide by Megan Steller at Askonas Holt.

<https://www.lottebettsdean.com/overview>

For more information on any of the above, please contact:

Nicky Thomas Media

11 St Chad's St, 3rd Floor, London WC1H 8BG

+44 20 3714 7594 +44 7768 566 530

info@nickythomasmedia.com

www.nickythomasmedia.com