LIN YI-HSUAN Violin Junior Recital Programme note

Max Bruch (1838–1920) *Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46*

Composed in 1879–1880, Max Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46*, is a richly expressive work for violin and orchestra that draws inspiration from traditional Scottish folk melodies. A German Romantic composer with a longstanding interest in folk music, Bruch had previously arranged twelve Scottish folk songs in 1864. Rather than simply reproducing these melodies, he transformed them through his distinctive Romantic musical language, combining lyrical expression, dramatic intensity, and virtuosic violin writing.

Although the *Scottish Fantasy* possesses the scale and brilliance of a violin concerto, its flexible structure reflects Bruch's conception of the work as a fantasy. The prominent harp part evokes the traditional association between the harp and Scottish musical storytelling, adding to the work's evocative atmosphere. Interestingly, Bruch had not visited Scotland when he composed the piece, drawing instead on published collections of Scottish folk music.

The work unfolds through an introduction and four contrasting movements, each incorporating a Scottish folk melody. The opening section, based on *Through the Wood, Laddie*, establishes a solemn and reflective atmosphere before developing into expansive, lyrical passages for the solo violin. The second movement introduces the lively dance tune *The Dusty Miller*, whose energetic rhythms evoke the character of Scottish folk dancing. In contrast, the third movement, based on *I'm A-Doun for Lack O'Johnnie*, presents a more intimate and melancholic character, allowing the violin's singing qualities to emerge. The finale draws on *Hey Tuttie Tatie*, a melody associated with Robert Burns's patriotic poem *Scots Wha Hae*. Marked *Allegro guerriero*, the movement combines rhythmic vitality, heroic gestures, and dazzling virtuosity. Briefly recalling earlier musical material, the work ultimately reaches a triumphant conclusion.

Through its imaginative transformation of Scottish folk melodies, Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* brings together the expressive richness of Romantic violin writing and the distinctive character of Scottish musical tradition.