

Remarks by Ambassador HAYASHI Hajime
At the 12th Green Park Youth Concert
On Monday 25 April, 2022

Distinguished Guests,

I would like to welcome you to the Embassy of Japan for the 12th Green Park Youth Concert. This series of concerts has featured a number of young Japanese artists in the UK. This is the first concert we have been able to arrange in person since the pandemic struck. I am therefore delighted to be able to meet you all today.

Thanks to the generous support by KPMG, this concert is actually an opportunity for cultural exchange between Japan and the UK as it serves as a platform for talented Japanese musicians studying at renowned conservatoires in the UK. Today, we have with us Ms. HARADA Maho, a promising young Japanese violinist, together with Mr. Daniel King Smith as a pianist. Maho graduated with distinction from the Tokyo University of the Arts, the most prominent Japanese university specialising in arts and music. Now she is studying for her PhD at the Royal Academy of Music here in London.

This evening, Maho has prudently chosen a very interesting programme. She will start with three lovely pieces composed by Fritz Kreisler, a truly internationally renowned figure both as a violinist and a composer of violin music in the early 20th century. Then she will play two violin sonatas first by a female Japanese composer and later by a female British composer.

KODA Nobu was the first Japanese student overseas specialized in music and is known as a pioneer of modern classical music in Japan. She studied first in Boston and then moved to Vienna in the late 19th century for studying piano and violin as well as musical composition. As a professor of music at the Tokyo Conservatoire, today's Tokyo University of the Arts which is Maho's alma mater, she educated many talented students including such prominent figures as TAKI Rentaro, MIURA Tamaki and YAMADA Kosaku. Her first violin sonata composed in 1895, the year she finished her study in Vienna and returned back to Japan, is certainly the first instrumental music

work in the 19th century European style by a Japanese composer.

Meanwhile, Ethel Smyth is now regarded as one of the most accomplished female composers in the world during the similar period. Being a woman, however, she said that she had endured many difficulties and hardships during her career in music. In her early years, she escaped the UK and pursued her study of music in Leipzig and Vienna and met with a number of great composers at that time including Clara Schumann, who certainly provided her great encouragement to work as a female composer. Although her works extend from piano music to orchestra works, choral music and operas, we will listen to her only violin sonata composed in 1887 this evening. She is also well known as a dedicated activist for women's suffrage and her work "The March for Women" composed in 1911 became the anthem of the suffragette movement in the UK.

For me, today's concert will surely be a wonderful example of collaboration between Japan and the UK in the world of classical music. I can hardly wait to listen to the lovely pieces by Kreisler followed by the two violin sonatas by female composers, Japanese and British. So let me stop here and welcome the performers of this evening.

Thank you.