

## Myleene's Hot Property



# Jamie Walton

The dedicated British cellist continues to follow his star and delight the critics

I know even before I've met him that cellist Jamie Walton is the real deal – a sheaf of his superlative-tastic reviews spells it out in black and white. Still, that doesn't quite prepare me for a young man who seems propelled by an inner drive. 'I saw a cello being played at school when I was seven, and decided then that I would be a cello soloist,' he professes. 'I can't explain it, I just knew. I went and told the teacher so.' And her reaction? 'She just said, "Riiight..."'

But there's more to Jamie than just a single-minded focus on his performing. He arrives at the Royal Festival Hall brimming with dinner party plans and vehicular clutch-replacement woes, carrying an intriguingly titled tome in his hand – *The World of Sound: Music and the Language of Consciousness*. Hmm. And it isn't long before he reveals his star sign: 'I'm a Capricorn, so I'm really earthy – I like organising things.'

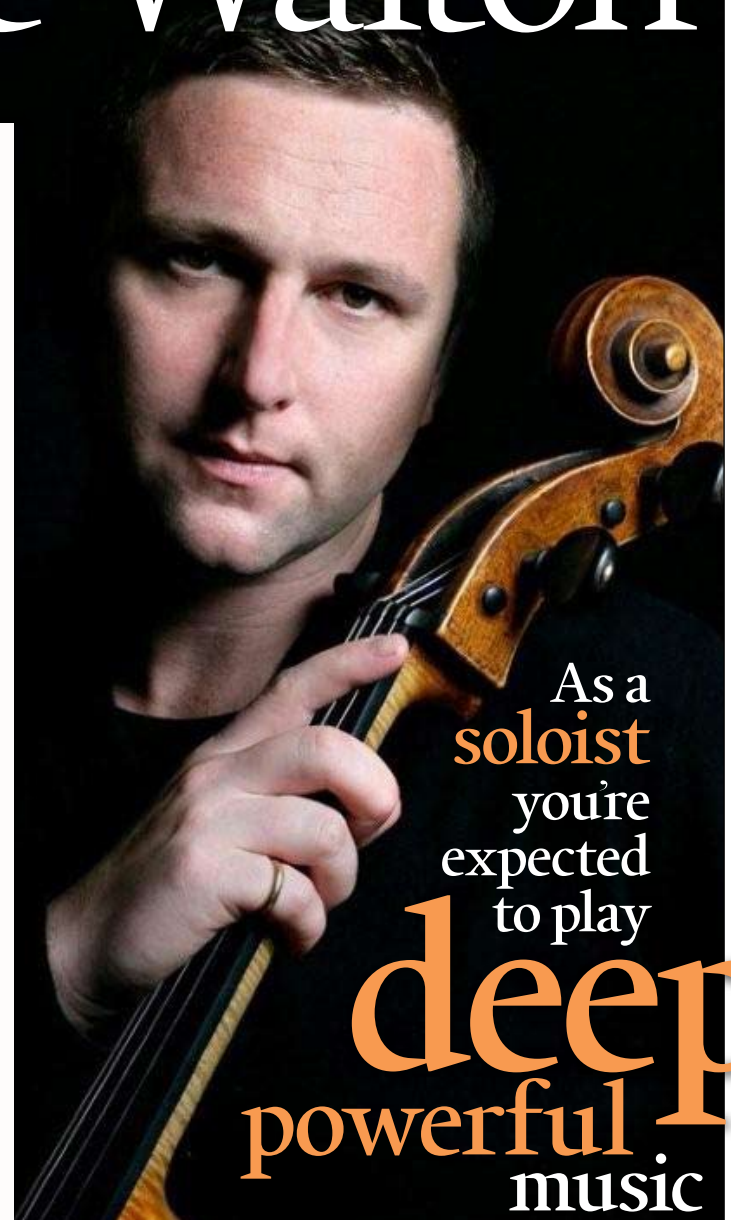
Whether he read it in the stars or not, it turns out Jamie was right about his career (and about his organisational skills – he's establishing a new festival in North Yorkshire next summer). He debuted with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra to great acclaim, while his performances of the Elgar Cello Concerto have, for some critics, set new standards.

But as determined as Jamie is, the road to self-fulfilment hasn't been easy for him. After a series of personal crises, including the death of his father during his first year at music college, he stopped playing altogether. 'In order to really gain strength and

get over all the things I was experiencing, I stopped playing and took time out,' he explains. 'I think it was the best thing to do. As a soloist, you're often expected to play deep, powerful music, and as a youngster, you're often not ready – physically or emotionally.'

It took a lot of self-exploration, but eventually Jamie returned to the cello. As success came, he treated the classical recording business with caution: 'The industry can be quite wicked,' he observes. But in Signum Records, Jamie seems to have found a true ally. The label is releasing his recording of the Britten and Shostakovich (No.2) concertos next month, and it's clear there was only one person behind the choice of works, and that was Jamie himself. 'The music is quite apocalyptic,' he explains, 'but the relationship between the two works is fascinating. I think Shostakovich's Second Cello Concerto is even greater than the First.'

He's sure to put his all into both pieces, but don't expect melodrama. Jamie's interpretations aren't nearly as flamboyant as he appears in person, but rather measured and considered – first and foremost at the service of the composer, and often all the more moving just for that. As we talk about the release of the CD, Jamie seems genuinely delighted at how the critics seem to have taken to him. 'I've been really touched,' he says, and has said as much on his fascinating website. There are also some rather kind words about Classic FM up there – so he's not a bad critic himself either! ■



As a soloist you're expected to play **deep powerful music**

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**Born** 13 January 1974

**Training** Wells Cathedral School; Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester with Margaret Moncreiff; privately with William Pleeth

**Big break** Appeared with Krystian Zimerman at Birmingham's Chopin Festival


**Killer fact** Bought a 1712 Guarneri cello previously belonging to Robert Cohen by persuading investors to take a financial stake in the instrument

## NEW DISC



**Britten Cello Concerto; Shostakovich Cello Concerto No.2**

Jamie's disc couples two giants of 20th-century music who shared a great respect for one another. Out on 27 October. Signum SIGCD137

 Myleene Klass presents the **More Music Breakfast Show**, every Saturday and Sunday morning, 7am-9am