

SPECIAL FEATURE on FLORENCE HOOTON

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Born: 1912, 8th July (Scarborough)

Died: 1988, 14th May (Sheffield)

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Florence Hooton received her first cello classes from her father, also a professional cellist, who in turn had himself studied with the London String Quartet cellist Warwick Evans. She then entered, in 1927, the London Violoncello School receiving classes from Douglas Cameron, continuing (with a scholarship) from 1929 to 1934 at the Royal Academy of Music, London. She also studied with Emanuel Feuermann in Zurich, though her posterior professional activity was to a large extent restricted to appearances and activities within Britain. She gave her first Wigmore Hall recital in 1934. From then on, and into the 1940's she was active as a performer with a special dedication towards the British cello repertoire, premiering the cello concertos of Gordon Jacob, Alan Bush and Kenneth Leighton; and recital works by Bax (Legend Sonata) and Jacob (Divertimento). Also worth mentioning is her premiere of the Bridge Oration in 1936, after Felix Salmond rejected it on cause of its 'ungrateful' writing for the soloist.

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She made her Proms début in Beethoven's Triple Concerto with soloists Frederick Grinke and Dorothy Manley. She formed a regular duo partnership with pianist Kendall Taylor in 1936, and played in the Grinka Trio from 1933 to 1945. She married the violinist David Martin in 1938, and played many a year in the Loveridge-Nartin-Hooton Trio - from 1950 to 1976. She played a Rogerius cello dating from 1699.

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In the second half of her career she became firmly established as a prominent cello teacher. She became a professor at the Royal Academy of Music in 1964, and also taught in Suffolk and Sheffield. Her last public performances were in 1978. Gordon Jacob dedicated a Cello Octet to her in 1981 for her students at the Academy, and she became an O.B.E. in 1982. After her death, the Royal Academy of Music decided to mark her memory, together with husband David Martin, with holding of the annual David Martin/Florence Hooton Concerto Prize.

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The Academy's collection includes a striking portrait of her by Wilfred G. von Glehn RA, 1936 - REPRODUCED HERE! -

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