

The Lenthal Concerts

Season 2011-12

The English String Orchestra
conducted by David el Kabir

Michael Bochmann (violin)
Sarah Verney Caird (mezzo)
Daphne Clark (piano)

Tuesday, October 4th, 2011

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Friday, November 14th 7.30pm

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The Lenthall Concerts

Artistic Director: Michael Bochmann

Coming next:

Tuesday, November 1st 2011 7.30 pm

Trio Orion

Piano Trio op.1 no.3 in C minor *Beethoven*
Five short pieces for piano trio *Martini*
Piano trio in B op.8 *Brahms*

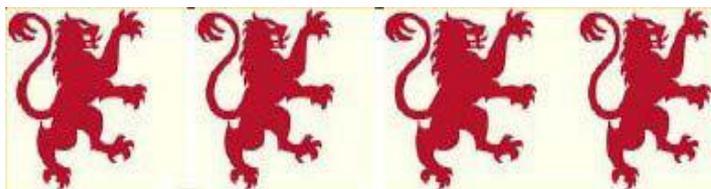
The Lenthall Concerts welcome this young piano trio from France, via the Royal College of Music.

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Programme

(Programme order is subject to change)

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba

Georg Friedrich Handel

(1685-1759)

The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba opens the third act of Handel's oratorio *Solomon*, which received its first performance at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in March 1749. It is one of those immediately appealing pieces that takes on a life of its own. It is dubbed "Sinfonia", a term which has changed its meaning over the centuries, but by the eighteenth century had come to mean much the same as "overture". The third act of *Solomon* describes a musical masque in which Solomon shows off to his visitor the artistic accomplishments of his kingdom. The sinfonia splendidly sets up the expectant mood. One might hope for something as jaunty for the London Olympics.



Handel by Thomas Hudson

Divertimento in B flat K137

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756-1791)

Allegro di molto

Andante

Allegro assai

Leopold Mozart brought his son and daughter back to Salzburg from Italy, at the end of their last European tour early in 1773. After ten years of tours — to England, France, Germany, the Low Countries and finally Italy, Wolfgang's days as a child prodigy were over. But by that time he had won the plaudits of audiences in most countries of Western Europe — nowhere more than in Italy, where his astonishing facility in composition gained him election to the Accademia Philharmonica, and his Italian-style operas were doted on. In his luggage for his last trip Mozart seems to have taken three divertimenti, written in Salzburg, including K137. They were originally written as string quartets.

All three movements of K137 have the transparency of the smaller form. Rather surprisingly, Mozart put the slow movement before the two faster ones, obviously confident that he could get his audiences' attention without any initial fizz. Tonight the order is changed, and we start with *Allegro di molto*: two-and-a-half minutes of dazzling high spirits. What is now the second movement starts with a wistful little theme, descending quietly to be picked up by something only a little more animated. This ear-caressing mood is sustained throughout the movement, which finishes in perfect Mozartean refinement. But there is nothing gentle about the finale, which is even shorter than the first movement, but full of sun and shade: dance-like and feather-light.

Violin Concerto in D K218

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

Andante cantabile

Rondeau: andante grazioso — allegro

As a child, Mozart's reputation as a prodigy was primarily due to his prowess at the keyboard, but he was obviously no mean fiddler, since at the age of 18 he was *Konzertmeister* in the service of the Archbishop of Salzburg. It's probable that he himself played the five violin concertos which he wrote at that time, although there is some evidence that he wrote them for his Salzburg friend Joachim Kolb, or for Antonio Brunetti, another violinist of the Archbishop's court orchestra. He never wrote another, as far as can be authenticated, although piano concertos continued to pour from him throughout his life.

Mozart himself was by his father's account, a player with potential to become "the finest violinist in Europe." Leopold Mozart was, as always, speaking with promotion and encouragement of his son in mind, but he was also a good judge: he had published an influential text on violin-playing several years earlier. While young Mozart was certainly capable, he seems to have viewed playing violin as a somewhat unpleasant chore, and he abandoned the violin in favor of the keyboard almost as soon as he moved out from under his father's wing.

Not that one can detect any detachment in the way Mozart writes for the instrument. These are youthful works, which still bear some traces of the old Baroque concerto in their formal outlines. However, they are also amazingly cosmopolitan in style. Mozart had spent most of his young life travelling across Europe as a child prodigy, performing on both violin and harpsichord. Though Leopold never realized his goal of finding a lucrative court post for Wolfgang, his son picked up something equally valuable along the way: musical styles from across the Continent. The violin concertos bear traces of all of the Austrian, German, Italian, and French courts he visited as a child.

Interval

The Town

David el Kabir

THE TOWN

You said " I'll go to another land, to other seaways wandering,
Some other town may be found better than this,
Where every effort of mine is a writ of guiltiness;
And my heart seems buried like a corpse. My mind-
How long is it to be in this decay confined?
Wherever I turn, whenever I lift my eyes,
The blackening ruins of my life arise,
Where I have spent so many years spoiling and squandering."

"You'll find no other places, no new seas in all your wanderings,
The town will follow you about. You'll range
In the same streets. In the same suburbs change
From youth to age; in this same house grow white.
No hope of another town; this is where you'll always alight."

Constantine Cavafy

Constantine Cavafy (1863-1933) was born in Alexandria to Greek parents. After his father died in 1870 the family moved to Liverpool but moved back six years later to Alexandria, where Cavafy spent most of the rest of his life, first as a journalist and later as a civil servant. He published his poetry initially for his circle of friends, but by the 1920s fellow poets had discovered and recognised him. Among English-speaking writers E M Forster, Arnold Toynbee and T S Eliot were among his earliest promoters.



C P Cavafy in 1900

"C. P. Cavafy is without doubt one of the greatest writers of our time. His poetry has immediacy and directness and is totally devoid of any form of sentimentality. He has been a seminal influence on my life and work for the past 60 years. 'The Town' is a characteristically wry commentary on human self-deception. His sober tone is not devoid of compassion."

DelK

Symphony no.29 in A K201

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro moderato

Andante

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegro con sprito

29 symphonies is quite an impressive score for a 18-year-old, but that is the number chalked up by Mozart with this work. It dates from 1774, when Mozart, along with his father Leopold, was in the employ of Archbishop Colloredo of Salzburg: employment which was to become increasingly frustrating as year followed year, until Wolfgang left, rather explosively, for Vienna and greater glory. The Salzburg years, though, were extremely productive, and it was during this time that Mozart's symphonic ideas became much richer than in the shorter pieces called symphonies that he had been composing since he was eight. It is a mark of the maturity of this work, and its contemporary symphonies, that when he was constructing programmes in Vienna he should have written to his father asking (with increasing urgency) for the scores.

Part of a transition in Mozart this symphony may be, but it has all the hallmarks of the mature composer. The first movement starts with a simple succession of falling octaves, climbing an aural ladder while interesting harmonic things are going on below. The second subject defies analysis, so full of meat as it is, and the development section introduces its own new material. Eventually the first subject returns, in a contrapuntal flurry involving all instruments. The second movement has muted violins and some courtly dotted rhythms in the first subject, and a polite outburst from the winds towards the end. The third and fourth movements obey the contemporary conventions in form: a dance for the third, and a "hunting" feel for the finale. The *menuetto* is rather surprisingly brisk, but contrasts nicely with its flowing trio, and the bustling finale gives the horns a thorough work-out.

Programme notes by Chistopher Yapp

David el Kabir

David El Kabir was born in Baghdad and studied music at the Conservatoire under the French composer and violinist Enyss Djemil. He came up to St Catharine's College, Cambridge to read Medicine. He was very active in the musical life of the University and conducted concert performances of operas by Lully and Rameau. After qualifying as a doctor, he took up a research post at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, moving to Oxford where he was elected Fellow and Tutor at St Peter's College.

He was charged by the DHSS to set up a medical centre for young homeless people in Great Chapel Street, Soho, in 1977. This was followed by the creation, in 1983, of Wytham Hall, a residential community of doctors, administrators and medical students dedicated to improving the quality of life of 25 homeless people who live under the same roof. Both institutions are flourishing. Over 33000 individuals have passed through Great Chapel Street and 2500 people have lived at Wytham Hall.



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The English String Orchestra

1st Violins: Michael Bochmann, George Ewart, Jeremy Sampson,
Lawrence Kempton
2nd violins: Angus Gibbon, Eleanor Cooke, Emily Adams
Violas: Cecily Howick, Jeremy Latham
Cello: Anna Joubert, Jo Jefferis
Double Bass: Stephen Warner

The English String Orchestra was formed in 1980 by William Boughton. It is well known for its recordings, which are often played on Radio 3 and Classic FM. From 1985 until 1999 Yehudi Menuhin was its principal guest conductor and with him the orchestra played all over Europe, USA and Canada.

Over the last few years it has been very active in its smaller group, as it appears tonight and it has on many occasions involved young players playing alongside in its performances. A high point in the orchestra's recent history was its Fantasia Concert in Gloucester Cathedral in Oct 2008 celebrating the 50th anniversary of Vaughan Williams' death in which 140 young string players and 290 young choir members took part with the ESO and filled the cathedral.

Sarah Verney Caird

As a Music Therapist Sarah was a clinician, tutor and supervisor for over 20 years at the Nordoff Robbins Centre in London and pioneered work there as personal music therapist to students in training. She has also run a private practice in Birmingham and Oxford for a mixed client group including adults suffering from life problems relating to stress, trauma and world-weariness. Sarah is currently working for the Guideposts Trust in Oxfordshire, bringing music to people suffering from Dementia, their carers and families.

As a Musician Sarah studied piano and flute at the Royal College of Music in London. She now enjoys performing regularly as a singer and pianist in events ranging from opera to light entertainment as well as improvisation. Recent projects have included a concerto of directed improvisation for music therapists by Gill Stevens, featuring Sarah as vocal soloist (2008) and the premiere of "On Garway Hill" a specially written solo piece for pre-recorded and solo voice with Oxford Improvisers. (Guastalla 2010)



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