

The Lenthall Concerts

Season 2012-13

Bochmann String Trio

Grame Adams (oboe)

Wednesday, March 27th 2013

Burford School

Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Lenthall Concert Society will be held on Monday 1st July at 7.00 in the Library of Burford School (Use A361 entrance and park along the drive. The Library is on your right.)

All are welcome, whether members, potential members or curious bystanders. Come and enjoy a glass of wine and marvel at the details of the 2013-14 season.

The Lenthall Concerts

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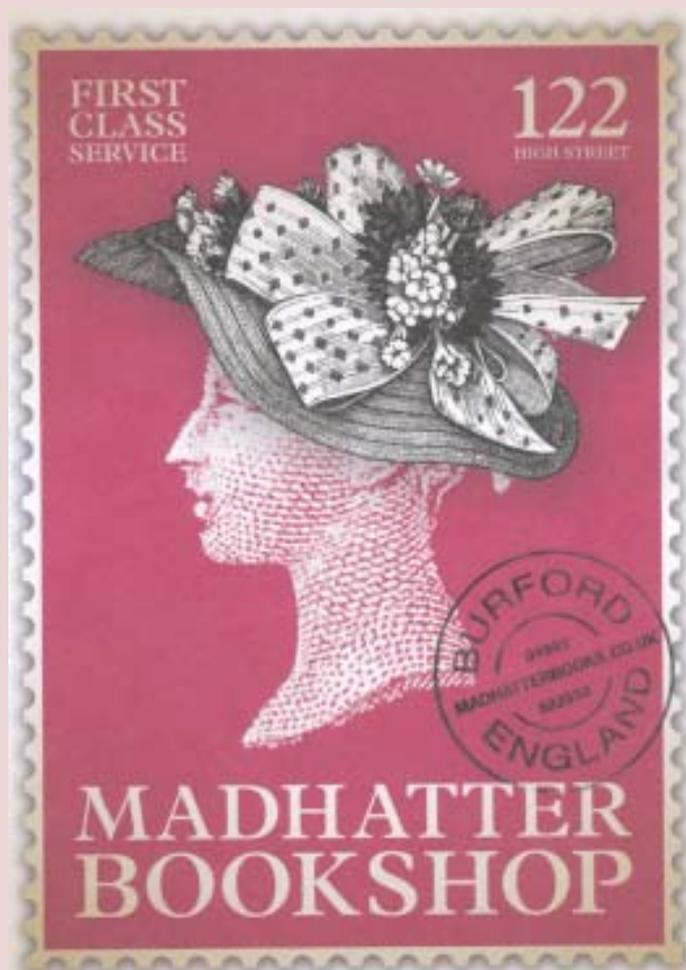
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Programme

Divertimento in E flat K563

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Adagio
Menuetto. Allegretto - Trio
Andante
Menuetto. Allegretto - Trio 1 - Trio 2
Allegro

This piece was written in 1788. Mozart was 32, living with his wife and small son in Vienna and, if his letters are to be believed (and they are not, by some scholars) desperately hard up. His address and the fact that he kept a horse and carriage suggest that he lived in some style, but apparently beyond his income, for over the next two or three years he wrote a series of increasingly intense begging letters to his friend Johann Michael von Puchberg, a textile merchant and fellow freemason.



Michael Puchberg

In June 1788 he wrote to von Puchberg asking for the loan of one or two thousand gulden for one or two years "at suitable interest" to put his affairs in order, and avoid the more pressing demands of his creditors. *"If you should be unable to spare so large a sum at such short notice, I beg you to lend me a few hundred gulden at least till tomorrow, as my landlord in the Landstrasse was so importunate that, in order to avoid trouble I was obliged to pay him on the spot, and this has put me to great embarrassment!"* The letter ends *"P.S. —When are we to have a little music at your house again? —I have written a new trio!—"*.

The new trio is arguably this one, although there is another contender in the Piano Trio K542, which we shall ignore in the interests of integrated programme note writing. This trio is certainly no throwaway piece, and would have made a substantial contribution to a Puchberg *soirée*. The first movement has all the gaiety of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, composed the previous year, although for weightier forces (quartet plus double bass): the lighter texture of the trio gives it even more sparkle. Indeed one would be hard put to find in any of Mozart's chamber music a more perfect distillation of his style: the *allegri* more spritely, the slower movements more wistful, the *minuet/trios* more elegantly balanced. Mozart gives us a generous double helping of everything; as Albert Einstein wrote, "it . . . grew to such large proportions only because it was intended to offer . . . something special in the way of art, invention, and good spirits."

Interval

Phantasy Quartet in F minor op.2

Benjamin Britten

(1913-1976)

Andante alla marcia - Andante - Piu agitato - Tempo primo

Benjamin Britten was not quite in the Mozart league when it came to precocity, but this remarkably mature work dates from 1932, when he was nineteen and studying at the Royal College of Music, without much enthusiasm. He thought, probably rightly, that the tuition available there was a bit elementary for one who had been composing, under the tutelage of Frank Bridge, since he was 14. Although he was studying under John Ireland at the RCM, that composer was not a great influence on Britten, who was still being coached by Bridge. "My musical education was perhaps more outside the college than in it," he wrote.

The term *Phantasy* or any of its variants in other languages (like *Fantasia*), does not define a musical form. In that respect it resembles *impromptu*: vaguely implying its roots in improvisation. Why it should have appealed to more than one English composer in the first half of the twentieth century seems to be mainly due to one man, the British businessman and amateur violinist Walter Willson Cobbett, who in 1905 established a competition for single-movement chamber works, a genre into which the *Phantasy* seemed to fit very naturally, even if the single-movement stricture required some glueing together of what might otherwise have been separate movements. Britten won the prize in 1932 with his *Phantasy String Quintet*, and the year after entered the contest again with his *Phantasy Quartet* for oboe and strings. It failed to win, but generated enough interest to be broadcast by the BBC, played by the distinguished oboist Leon Goossens and a trio described by young Britten in his diary as "intelligent players" but not "really first class instrumentalists". A little bumptious, perhaps, for a twenty-year-old, as the same players gave a much-praised concert performance later in the year, which boosted Britten's reputation, as did a festival performance in Florence in 1934.



Walter Willson Cobbett

The *alla marcia* with which the work opens leaves all the marching to the strings, while the oboe floats above like a distant bugle. This pattern eventually breaks up and the piece becomes faster and more complex. The *andante* leaves out the oboe altogether, but it returns for the *piu agitato*, in which the nervous energy intensifies until it becomes the march with which we began; this fades into the distance as the piece ends.

Oboe Quartet in F K370

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

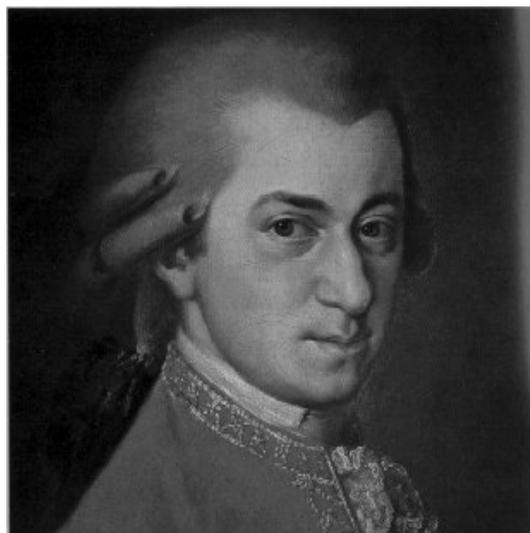
Allegro

Adagio

Rondeau: Allegro

In 1780 Mozart went to Munich at the invitation of the Elector, Karl Theodor, to prepare his first 'adult' opera *Idomeneo* for its premiere. While there he renewed his friendship with Friedrich Ramm (1714-1813), the virtuoso oboist in the Munich orchestra. Mozart had previously met Ramm in 1777, and had already composed a sinfonia concertante for him and his colleagues. He seems to have had a high regard for the oboist, mixed with a little awe ("a fine fellow but a libertine" he had noted in a letter to his father, when he first met Ramm).

Idomeneo was first performed in January 1781 and in the same year Mozart wrote this quartet for the oboist. The first movement has as its backbone a jaunty tune which exploits the oboe's innate ability to cut through the timbres of other instruments. This is no string quartet, with the oboe substituting for the lead violin, but almost a tiny concerto for the instrument. The strings set the scene for a sustained high-note entry for the oboe in the *adagio*, which remains in the stratosphere for most of this short movement, while the strings supply a more earthbound accompaniment. Another chirpy tune for the oboe comes in the rondeau-finale, and in between its recapitulations are some elegant pyrotechnics for the instrument.



Mozart circa 1780

Programme notes by Chris Yapp

The Bochmann Trio

Michael Bochmann (violin) was brought up in Turkey and England and has been well known in British musical life for several decades. He has performed in the USA, all over Europe and India. He was a prize-winner in the 1972 Carl Flesch International Violin Competition and in the Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris. For many years he was the leader of the Bochmann Quartet with whom he made many broadcasts and recordings. He was appointed concertmaster of the English String and Symphony Orchestras by William Boughton in 1988. Two years later he partnered Yehudi Menuhin in Bach's Double Concerto in a tour of 18 concerts in the USA and Britain. His recording of "The Lark Ascending" by Vaughan Williams with the ESO for Nimbus Records has been broadcast many times on Radio 3 and Classic FM. He frequently visits Germany to perform and teach.



Carol Allen (viola) received her musical training at the Royal Academy of Music, London. She studied with Sidney Griller, Gwynne Edwards and Max Rostal. After having played in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, she joined the Pfeifer String Quartet Stuttgart, with which she toured all over Europe. During a 18-month stay in Princeton, NJ (USA), she was a member of the Princeton Chamber Orchestra and the Chanterelle Quartet. Later she was a member of the Dehler String Quartet of the StaatskapelleWeimar, Germany. She received awards from the Royal Academy of Music, London and the String Quartet Competition Colmar (France), made numerous radio and tv recordings and recorded gramophone discs (Beethoven and Reger string quartets). Together with Ivan Sokolov she recorded a CD with works for viola and piano.

Nella Hunkins (cello) was born in New York and studied with Leonard Rose and Janos Starker. Associate principal cellist with the Cleveland Orchestra and member of the Casals Festival, she has performed solo, chamber and orchestral concerts throughout the world. Her 1980 appointment to the Music Hochschule in Berlin brought on tours and recordings with chamber groups such as Philharmonia Ensemble Berlin, Scharoun Ensemble and Kreuzberger String Quartet. She can be heard on Denon Records. She has joined the trio after living in Asia (2001-2009) where she taught and played solo cello with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. Career highlights include the Fulbright grant to Paris, twice performing on "Seven Seas" cruises, coaching for Jeunesse Musicale, and longer tours in Russia, China and Japan.

Graeme Adams

Graeme Adams studied the oboe with Janet Baldwin, Janet Craxton and Celia Nicklin. Since then he has pursued a busy freelance playing career and works with many orchestras and ensembles including BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Welsh National Opera, D'Oyly Carte Opera, Mid Wales Opera, English Touring Opera, English Symphony Orchestra and The Bristol Ensemble. Graeme has broadcast many times on radio and television and has toured extensively in this country and abroad. He is oboe tutor at Marlborough College, Cheltenham College, Dean Close School and Hereford Cathedral School. He has acted as woodwind coach for the National Youth Orchestra, National Youth Wind Orchestra, National Schools Symphony Orchestra and as Consultant to Boosey and Hawkes for their Woodwind Tutor method for the Oboe. When not searching for the perfect reed can often be found cheering on his local football team Cheltenham Town.



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