

The Lenthall Concerts

Season 2013-14

Michael Bochmann (violin)

Peter Adams (cello)

Deniz Gelenbe (piano)

Wednesday, September 25th 2013

Burford School

Programme

Piano Trio No.39 in G Hob. XV/25

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Andante

Poco adagio. Cantabile

Rondo all'Ungarese. Presto

The success of Haydn's first visit to London, in 1791-2 was such that the city could hardly wait for him to return, and in 1794 he did so, to a similarly enthusiastic reception: from the public as well as the opinion-formers at their highest level. Queen Charlotte offered him rooms in Windsor to induce him to stay, but Haydn begged to be excused, citing as reasons his loyalty to his Austrian patron, Count Esterházy (who paid him a comparative pittance), his country and (somewhat disingenuously) his wife. He returned home a rich man, with the fondest possible memories of England. According to his friend and biographer, Georg von Griesinger, Haydn "*regarded his time in England as the happiest in his life*".

Not the least happy of his memories may have been that of Rebecca Schroeter, née Scott, who was the widow of a German composer and pianist, much less successful than Haydn. Although the daughter of a rich Scottish family, her marriage, strongly disapproved of, seems to have estranged her from them, for it was as a lowly music copyist that she met Haydn. Their relationship became more than professional, however, if her letters to him, diligently copied by him into his notebooks, are anything to go by. She became the dedicatee of the three piano trios Haydn wrote while in London, of which this is the best known by dint of its last movement, nicknamed the "gypsy rondo".



Rebecca Schroeter

Before the fireworks of that movement, though, come a delicate *andante* encompassing a set of variations, alternating between major and minor - a device of which Haydn was fond - and a dreamy *adagio*, started by the piano and followed by the violin in a tune so rapturous that the great cellist Pablo Casals used to appropriate it and repeat it on his own instrument in mid-movement.

The finale is not the only instance of Haydn using Hungarian melodies in his works. Esterháza is after all in Hungary and he was naturally exposed to the music of gypsy musicians, which coloured more than one of his works. The movement allegedly includes, inter alia, one used by Austrian officials to attract peasants to recruiting posts.

Piano Trio op.1 no.3 in C minor

Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770-1827)

Allegro con brio

Andante cantabile con variazioni

Menuetto. Quasi allegro

Finale. Prestissimo

'Op.1' suggests juvenilia, but Beethoven was probably in his mid-twenties when he composed this trio, and had left his birthplace Bonn to study with Haydn in Vienna. A tricky master-pupil relationship, but



Prince Lichnowski

Beethoven's compositions and piano-playing were soon finding favour with Viennese listeners. And patrons among the aristocracy: Beethoven was given rooms in the house of Prince Lichnowski, who was the dedicatee of the three trios that make up Beethoven's op.1. The first performances of all three were given at the Prince's soir e, and attended by Haydn, who praised the first two, but advised Beethoven not to publish this one. This not surprisingly led to a certain coolth in the relationship with his pupil, who felt that this was the best of the three, but the composer nevertheless carried out some revisions.

The piano trio form was changing at this time - or at least, Beethoven was changing it - away from the piano-plus-string- ornamentation that had characterised it in the eighteenth century. The strings were asserting themselves more, and although the cello was still called upon to reinforce the relatively weak bass of contemporary pianos - the iron-framed Broadwood was still some years away - it was certainly not confined to its old *basso continuo* role. So from the outset the three instruments are on an equal standing, and the combination of a minor key and Beethoven's dramatic intensity takes one by the collar. The second movement is a set of variations on a simple theme, the sort of thing Beethoven, whose reputation as an improviser was already well established, would have revelled in as a solo performer. The minuet is full of teasing little stops and starts, each instrument seeming continually to nudge the others, and the finale is as sunny as the first movement was stormy, fading to a delicious *pp* at its end.

Interval

Piano Trio no.4 in E minor op.90 ("Dumky")

Antonin Dvorak
(1841-1904)

- *Lento Maestoso*
- *Poco Adagio*
- *Andante*
- *Andante Moderato (Quasi Tempo di Marcia)*
- *Allegro*
- *Lento Maestoso*

By 1891, when this trio was first performed (by Dvorak himself on piano, with the violinist Ferdinand Lachner and cellist Hanuš Wihan) the composer was well established and, indeed, was to be presented with an honorary doctorate from Prague University on the same evening. His fame by now had spread to America, and he was being courted by the wealthy Mrs Jeanette M Thurber, the wife of a rich grocer in New York, to direct her music school there. Soon after the premiere, Dvorak gave in to her blandishments, and after a concert tour of Bohemia and Moravia with Lachner and Wihan, during which the new trio was prominently featured, he left for the New World with his family.



Dvorak and (extended) family

Dumky is the plural form of *dumka*, the rather mournful Ukrainian style much adopted in the nineteenth century by Bohemian composers, especially Dvorak, although he tended to leaven the form by interspersing the sad bits with cheerier passages. He used it in several works, and here are six examples of the form, each displaying alternations of sombre introspection and zesty animation. The first three movements were written to be played without a pause and are in related keys, giving the impression of an extended single movement. Each of the three later movements stands more on its own. The tempo markings of the movements, of course, give no indication of the continual and rapid changes of speed throughout each: the *lento maestoso* musings of violin and cello with which the work starts last about 32 bars before the *allegro* fun starts, and the last movement ends with eight bars of rousing *vivace*. In between there are more changes of weather than one can keep track of, and Dvorak's genius for melody and instrumental colouration is well in evidence.

The Performers

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.



Peter Adams (cello) was born in London in 1963 and began his musical studies whilst still at school, learning piano and later 'cello with Dennis Nesbitt and Maurice Zimbler. At the age of sixteen he joined the orchestra of London Festival Ballet and in 1984 he was made principal 'cellist with the London String Orchestra and London City Ballet. At an early stage Peter became interested in the viola da gamba and this led to the forming of the early music group Musicos da Camera and his appointment in 1984 as the youngest ever professor at the Royal Academy of Music, teaching viol and baroque 'cello. In 1991 Peter became director of the Elizabethan Consort of Viols, and for five years he was senior lecturer at the London Guildhall University. He joined the Bochmann Quartet in 1996, and a year later he was appointed to the Principal Chair of the English String and Symphony Orchestras, a position he also holds in the Brighton Philharmonic and the Oxford Philomusica. He plays a 'cello by G.B. Rogeri dated 1697.



Deniz Gelenbe (piano) trained at the Juilliard Academy in New York. The Turkish-born pianist, described as "one of the best chamber musicians of our time" (Paris-Normandie) and a "romantic pianist" (Washington Times) has performed as soloist with orchestras worldwide including the Japan Philharmonic, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Slovak Chamber Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony and in numerous recitals including at the Salles Gaveau (Paris), Tonhalle (Zurich), Wigmore Hall (London), and The National Gallery of Art (Washington DC). She has recorded for Hungaroton, Albany and Arcobaleno.



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