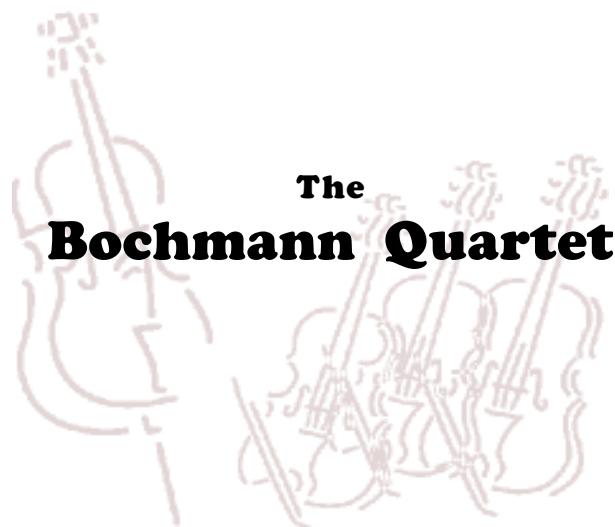


THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 2000-2001



The
Bochmann Quartet

Burford School

Wednesday, February 14th, 2001

Sponsored by Maggie White Knitwear Ltd

Maggie White

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday March 9th 7.30pm

MARTIN STACY

(organ)

Martin was an organ scholar at Queen's College Taunton, and went on to the Royal College of Music where he studied with Nicholas Danby. In 1998/99 he received support from the Countess of Munster Trust to continue private tuition with Nicolas Kynaston and Dame Gillian Weir.

High Street Methodist Church,
Witney

Tickets £7.50 (concessions £5.50,
schoolchildren £1).

Lenthall Members receive a further
concession of £1.00.

THEATRE CHIPPING NORTON

Friady 16th February 8pm

Yoshiko Endo
(piano)

Saint-Saens: Suite op.90
Poulenc: Novelette & 5 Improvisations
Raymond Head: 'The Fires of Prometheus' (World Premiere)
Debussy: Suite Bergamasque
Chopin: Impromptu & Waltz

Tickets £9, concs. £8,
schools tickets £2

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Chipping Norton Choral Society

BACH

St Matthew Passion

conducted by

Peter Hunt

Soloists include

James Gilchrist

as The Evangelist

Cotswold Baroque Players,
leader Alison Bury

Saturday February 24th 7pm
St Mary's Church,
Chipping Norton

Tickets £10, £7, £5 (restricted view)
from Chris Rycroft (01608 643701)

PROGRAMME

Quartet in E flat, K 428/421b

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756-1791)

Allegro non troppo

Andante con moto

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegro vivace

The six 'Haydn' quartets, so named after their dedicatee, were written in Mozart's golden period in Vienna, and published in 1785 by Artania, Mozart's most important contact. They were announced in the Wiener Zeitung on 17th September 1785, which may have prompted Arcania's rival, Torricella, to insert a small ad. in the same paper, a few days later, announcing that 'Mozart's (sic) six quartets for two violins, viola and violoncello are to be had at a very cheap price in my art shop in the Kohlmarkt next to the Milano (a coffee-house)'. What Torricella omitted to point out was that these were six of Mozart's much earlier quartets, and some rather heated corrigenda from the composer and his publisher followed.



The edition carried Mozart's long and to our eyes rather fulsome dedication to his friend and colleague, who certainly admired them. That they extended the form into new territory is reflected in their rather mixed reception: generally warm, but with one or two dissenters. A review in Cramer's Magazin der Musik found them a little indigestible: 'it is only a pity that in the artful and really beautiful writing, by searching for novelty, he reaches too high, which means that sensibility and heart gain but little...his new quartets . . . are really too highly seasoned — and which palate can withstand that for long? Forgive the metaphor from the cookbook When Artania sent them to Italy they were returned forthwith, Mozart's innovations being interpreted as printers' errors.'

What was new about these quartets, and those of Haydn which inspired them, was the integration of the four parts, rather than solos placed against harmonised accompaniments; and the development of many tiny phrases and rhythm patterns in ways unheard until then. The Quartet in E flat, the third in the set, was written in a key which Mozart often used for his most serene and warm music, and the statement of the subject, stated in unison, is very much

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in this vein, until a more lively dialogue breaks out. The second movement, in A flat and richly harmonised, has a gently musing quality, with a passage that presages the opening of *Tristan and Isolde*, to some ears. Back in E flat, the minuet has a straight-ahead forthrightness, and the trio some elegant shifting of melody from one part to another. The finale is in rondo form and as merry as a grig.

String Quartet no.1 in D op.25

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

Andante sostenuto — Allegro vivo

Allegretto con slancio

Andante calmo

Molto vivace

Britten's String Quartet no.1 is not the first quartet that he wrote, but the first to be published. In 1931, eleven years prior to the date of this work, he had composed another, also in D, and he edited this, and allowed it to be published, in 1974. It survives, numberless, in the canon.

Britten and Peter Pears had followed W.H.Auden, Britten's colleague in the GPO Film Unit, to the USA in 1939, where Britten and Auden collaborated on the opera *Paul Bunyan*. Shortly thereafter Britten was commissioned by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, one of America's most beneficent musical patrons, to write a string quartet. This received its first performance, by the Coolidge Quartet, in The Occidental College, Los Angeles, and won for Britten that year's Medal of the Library of Congress for services to chamber music. The first British performance took place after Britten had returned to England, in 1943, when the Griller Quartet played it at the Wigmore Hall. It seems to have been received by British critics rather as Mozart's quartets were: The Times noted that Britten 'has begun to advance from his easy accomplishment into a new phase of development' but was worried by the quartet's 'sharply contrasted elements'; and the Musical Times regretted that Britten 'should be satisfied with the narrow range and outlook of this work... Even Britten's slow movement bears the same stamp of restlessness and uneasiness as the others'. Perhaps they resented being offered goods at home after they had been sampled in the States.

Or perhaps Britten, then still a young man, and with the triumph of *Peter Grimes* (just ahead of him, was still thought of as a little too clever for his own good. The quartet is full of surprises: the first movement, with its alternations between high tessitura strings over a pizzicato cello, and vigorous tutti; the short second movement, a Shostakovich march marked *con slancio* (with dash); the passionate slow movement presaging much of the feeling of parts of *Peter Grimes*; and the total contrast of the last movement, full of hearty humour.

INTERVAL

String Quartet in E minor, op.31

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

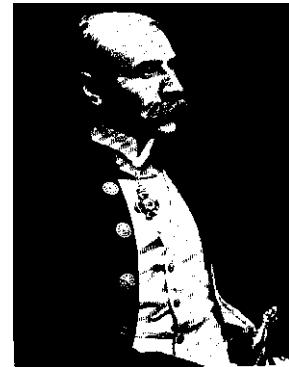
Allegro moderato

Piacevole (poco andante)

Allegro molto

Elgar's early attempts at writing string quartets were all aborted, and it was not until he was in his sixties that his three most famous chamber works, the Quartet, the Piano Quintet and the Violin Sonata, were written, together with the Cello Concerto. Deeply depressed by the war, Elgar had retreated to Brinkwells, the Sussex cottage at Fittleworth, near Petworth, where his spirits revived; although it was at the Elgar's house in Hampstead, three days after returning from hospital after a tonsillectomy (a serious operation for a man of his age in those days) that he began the quartet. It received its first performance, with the Piano Quintet, at the Wigmore Hall on 21st May 1919, and later in the year the cello concerto received its premiere. With these works Elgar's composing career was virtually over, although he lived for another fifteen years, and was persuaded in his last days to start work on his third symphony, which took over sixty years and another composer to bring to fruition.

Nobody could claim for the quartet that it was ground-breaking stuff. Elgar was not one much moved by what was happening to music around him in the twentieth century, and was supremely comfortable in his own established idiom. The first movement, he wrote, 'starts in a rather phantom-like way', but we are soon into very characteristic Elgarian territory, with the yearning sound of descending fourths, and this feeling of restlessness continues throughout the movement. The second movement, marked *piacevole* (pleasant), as was the start of the *Serenade for Strings*, was a favourite of Elgar's wife, Alice: she called it 'captured sunshine' and it was played at her funeral service. The final movement is full of bustling energy, with some calmer moments of great tenderness.



Elgar in the insignia of the Order of Merit, 1911

The Bochmann String Quartet

Michael Bochmann - violin
Mark Messenger - violin

Helen Roberts - viola
Peter Adams - cello

Originally founded in 1977 and reformed in 1990, the Quartet is active throughout the country, both playing within the established music society circuit and starting new concert series, such as the Lenthall Concerts. Alongside the classic chamber repertoire they have introduced new pieces, amongst them *Dreams 42*, specially written for them by John Dankworth; *Divertimento* by Francis Routh; and Stephen Robert's *Pantomime Suite*, commissioned by The Theatre, Chipping Norton. In 1997 *Dreams 42* was specially written for them by John Dankworth and first performed at the opening of Kidderminster Library.

Their recent recordings include two of British music for Redcliffe: one of Bridge's *3rd Quartet*, Bush's *Dialectic* and Wesley's *Quartet in E Flat*, and a second of quartets by Elgar, Routh and Rawsthorne. Their recording of Dvorak quartets will come out on the Disque d'Or Collection.

The Quartet has a committed involvement in music education, particularly for young people. This has led to a residency for several years at the Higher Education College in Worcester, the instigation of public masterclasses and workshops in various venues and intensive courses for postgraduate students and young professionals.

The Bochmann Quartet has a reputation for championing British music as well as being fine exponents of the traditional repertoire. In 1995 they commissioned George Nicholson to write his *3rd String Quartet*, funded by the Arts Council, with performances in the Universities of Keele, Sheffield and Nottingham. In the autumn of 1996 it was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and later recorded on CD for the Metier label.

They play the Elgar piano quintet, with Martin Jones, later in the Lenthall season, on April 4th.

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS

Artistic Director: Michael Bochmann

The Lenthall Concert Society was formally constituted in 1997. Annual membership entitles one to entry to all concerts in the season, plus the opportunity to have a say in the running of the Society.

The concerts are hosted by Burford School and Community College, as they have been from their outset, and the Society is most grateful for the provision of this venue. Financial support for the 2000-2001 season is being given by The Burford Garden Company, Maggie White Knitwear and the Oxfordshire Youth Music Trust. In addition, some members have donated sums over and above their subscriptions. To all of these donors and sponsors the Society extends its thanks.

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS 2000-1

The remaining concerts in the season are:

Wednesday, March 14th

7.30 pm

Timothy Wells (cello) & **Dominique Wong-Min** (piano)

Charlotte Bradburn (saxophone) & **Adam Caird** (piano)

Programme to be announced

Young professionals of the highest quality selected at the final auditions for the 1999 Thames Valley Young Musician's Platform.

Wednesday, April 4th

7.30 pm

Bochmann Quartet

Martin Jones (piano)

Quartet in D K575

Mozart

Quartet in G op.161

Schubert

Piano Quintet

Elgar

One of Mozart's "Prussian" quartets, a Schubert masterpiece, and a grand finale to the English season: Elgar's Piano Quintet, in which the Bochmanns are joined by the prolific recording artist, Martin Jones.

The Piano Appeal

At present a piano has to be hired when needed for recitals, at considerable expense, while the school's own instrument lies idle. We have been told by the experts that it is basically an excellent piano and that, despite its age, it could be restored to a high standard. The start of the new Millennium seems a very appropriate time to restore this valuable instrument.

The District Council, the School Foundation's Governors and the Bartlett Taylor Trust have awarded us generous grants towards the restoration. Many Lenthall members have also made donations and we are well over halfway to our target. If you would like to help by making a contribution please contact a steward. Alternatively, send your donation to:

The Lenthall Concerts, Kencot Lodge, Kencot, Lechlade, Glos, GL7 3QX
marking your envelope "Piano Appeal". Please make cheques payable to "The Lenthall Concerts".

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