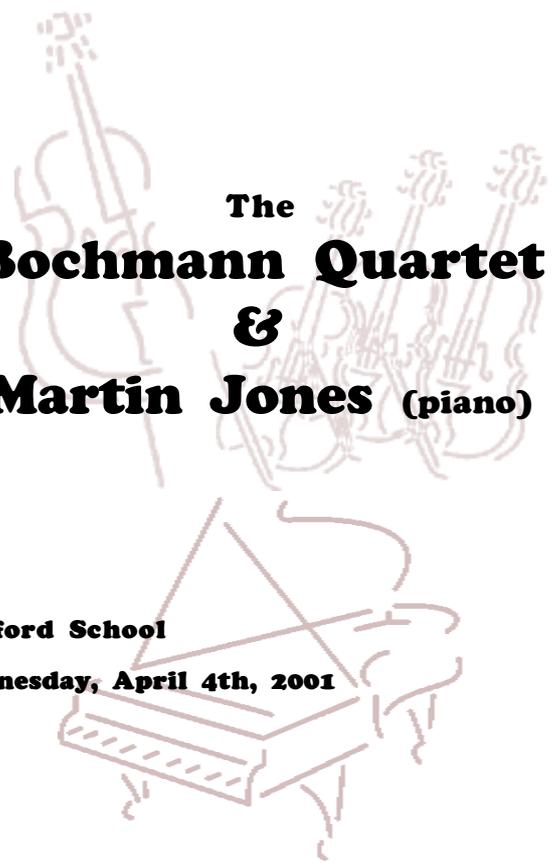


THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 2000-2001



The
Bochmann Quartet
&
Martin Jones (piano)

Burford School

Wednesday, April 4th, 2001

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Ave verum corpus - Mawby
Hymn to the Creator of Light -
Rutter

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PROGRAMME

Quartet in D, K 575

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756-1791)

Allegretto

Andante

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegretto

In 1789 Mozart was up to his ears in debt: unable to raise enough in commissions and by performance to support himself and his family through periods of sickness he had borrowed repeatedly from his friends. One of these, Michael Puchberg, a brother Mason, was generous to a fault but carefully kept all the correspondence relating to the loans; and these letters have come down to us to give a graphic picture of Mozart's plight. "Great God!" one letter starts, "I would not wish my worst enemy to be in my present position."



Mozart in 1789

So he was prepared to look elsewhere than Vienna for work, and went with his friend and pupil Prince Karl Lichnowski to Berlin, where the Count had offered to introduce him to Frederick William II, King of Prussia. As a result he was given the commission of writing six string quartets, which he started immediately on his return to Vienna. It seems he found them difficult to write, and when a more lucrative commission to write *Così fan tutte* came along the project was abandoned with only three quartets completed. They were published a few weeks after Mozart's death, without any dedication, and presumably no payment accrued.

The Quartet in D, K575, was the first of three to be written. Frederick William was an enthusiastic cellist, and Mozart wrote with his royal customer in mind.

Passages throughout the work give prominence to the cello, taking it up to the top of its range while the other strings accompany it. Unlike earlier quartets, where the opening movement carries much of the meat of musical development, this has a light and melodious opening movement. Mozart marked the opening *sotto voce*, and some passages *dolce*, and both these directions are repeated in the *andante*. In the finale the cello announces the principal theme, which dominates proceedings for much of the movement, with many and varied decorations around it. Not for the first time did Mozart transcend a not-much-relished task to produce music of sublime happiness.

String Quartet in G op.161

Allegro molto moderato
Andante un poco moto
Scherzo - Allegro vivace
Allegro assai

Schubert wrote fifteen string quartets, distributed throughout his short life. Fragments exist of quartets written when he was fourteen, written to be played in the school holidays by the composer on viola, with his brothers Ignaz and Ferdinand on violins, and his father playing the cello. It is likely that much of his quartet writing from his youthful period that has survived (and even more that has not) was written for domestic consumption, played by the composer and his friends for their own pleasure.

In his twenties Schubert returned to the string quartet and showed a new and far deeper command of the genre. 1824 saw the production of two Quartets: one in A minor and one, in D minor, known as *Death and the Maiden*. Two years later came Schubert's last quartet, in G: a work written in only ten days. This work pointed the way away from the classical model and into that of the romantic. Although the design is in the traditional four-movement form, the style is more lyrical, derived partly from the incorporation of material from his songs (and with an output of songs so great this is not to be wondered at) and partly from the use of patterns of accompaniment that recall those to his lieder.

The first movement is notable for the evenness with which the themes are distributed around the four instruments, alternating major and minor. The second movement starts with a sunny theme from the cello, followed by some stormy ensemble writing. The third is like an interlude, with the cello once again given the theme, in the form of a *ländler*, in the trio. The last movement is extensive, with some galloping at the end in fine *Erlikönig* style.

INTERVAL

Piano Quintet

Moderato - Allegro
Adagio
Andante - Allegro

Of the three works in this evening's programme, Mozart and Schubert's quartets represent their creators' mastery of the medium just before their untimely deaths. Elgar's Piano Quintet is also something of a swan song, although the composer was to live for another sixteen years after he virtually laid down his pen, having written the String Quartet, the Violin Sonata, the Cello Concerto and this work.

In May 1918 Elgar and his wife Alice shut up their London home and moved to their country house in Sussex, Brinkwells, to assist in the composer's recovery from his tonsillectomy. Here he busied himself with woodwork and gardening, and music seemed to be set aside; but in August he 'electrified' his wife by demanding a piano for the studio,

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

and the Violin Sonata was completed by mid-September. Immediately thereafter Elgar began the Quintet.

The first movement was finished by October but the other two took a while coming. Alice had to have an operation in London and when they returned to Brinkwells it was finishing the Quartet that occupied Elgar. It was not until they had returned once more to London in the New Year that he began the *Adagio*. This and the finale were complete by March, and all three of the new chamber works were unveiled to the public at the Wigmore Hall in May. Their critical reception was restrained. Something had happened to music, as it had to Western civilisation, that had shaken the old verities, and there were aspersions of *déjà vu*. From our perspective it matters little whether Elgar was in the mainstream of musical development at this point or not, and we can enjoy the music for what it is: the expression of one of the most distinctive musical personalities this country has produced.

A favourite walk from Brinkwells was into Flexham Park, where there stood a group of dead beech trees, which might, as one visitor wrote "have been the Wolf's Glen in *Der Freischütz*". Their sinister appearance had inspired a legend of a colony of Spanish monks, struck dead for carrying out some impious rites, and Elgar, who had a penchant for supernatural stories, responded eagerly to this. "It's ghostly stuff" he wrote of the first movement to Ernest Newman. But the *allegro* which follows the introduction vigorously dispels the haunted mood, even if this returns in the coda. The second movement is wistful, full of questions, but the finale, in which the ghostly echoes of the first movement are swept away in the *allegro's* noble theme, *con dignita, cantabile*, is 100% proof Elgar. It's glorious coda was, Elgar wrote, "an apotheosis". And so it is: a marvellous distillation of his oeuvre.

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 VENUE FOR THE CONCERTS IS GENEROUSLY BY BURFORD SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AS THEY HAVE BEEN FROM THEIR OUTSET. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE 2000-2001 SEASON IS BEING GIVEN BY BURFORD TOWN COUNCIL, 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 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 Kiddeminster 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.



sonatas of Alun Hoddinott. The complete solo piano works of Stravinsky was released in July 1997, and he has recently completed a project to record several Spanish piano masters. The soundtrack of the film 'Howards End' features Martin Jones performing Grainger's Bridal Lullaby and Mock Morris.

Martin Jones has performed as concerto soloist with many of the leading British orchestras, as well as in the USA and Russia, and toured Canada as soloist with the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra. Recent performances include Shostakovich's Concerto No 1 in Central and South America with the London Festival Orchestra, a regional tour playing Rachmaninov's Paganini Rhapsody and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue with the Hallé Orchestra, the Britten Piano Concerto in St Petersburg, the Schoenberg Piano Concerto with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Scharwenka's Piano Concerto No 1 in Louisiana, and Brahms Concerto No 1 with the Oman Symphony Orchestra.



His performance repertoire, as well as encompassing most of the standard works for piano, also includes unusual concertos such as the Busoni Concerto, which he performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Norman Del Mar. He has also championed the music of British composers and gave the first performance of the revised version of Alun Hoddinott's Third Concerto at the 1974 BBC Promenade Concerts, and recorded Hoddinott's Second Concerto with Andrew Davis and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for Decca.

In Los Angeles he gave a recital as part of the 1994 UK/LA Celebration of British Arts, which was broadcast live on KUSC Radio. In 1996 he became the first major British artist to give a solo recital in Ekaterinburg, Russia. Recent recitals include a performance at the Adelaide Festival, a programme of Percy Grainger at the Eifeler Musiktage in Germany, and the complete Iberia of Albéniz at London's South Bank Centre.

Martin Jones

Martin Jones has been one of Britain's most highly regarded solo pianists since first coming to international attention in 1968 when he received the Dame Myra Hess Award. The same year he made his London debut at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and his New York debut at Carnegie Hall, and ever since has been in demand for recitals and concerto performances on both sides of the Atlantic.

He is a prolific recording artist and his many discs for Nimbus Records include the complete solo piano works of Mendelssohn, Brahms, Debussy, Grainger, Szymanowski (voted Best Instrumental Recording of 1996 by the Spanish magazine 'CD Compact') and the

THE LENTHALL CONCERT SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE AGM WILL BE HELD IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8TH AT 7.30. ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND.

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