

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 2003-2004

**The Adderbury
Quartet**

Wednesday, September 17th 2003

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, October 10th 7.30pm
Witney High Street Methodist Church

Jill Morton (piano)

A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 1998, Jill's further studies have been supported by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and Sir James Caird's Travelling Scholarship Trust. She has performed extensively as concerto soloist, recitalist and as a chamber musician at venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Glasgow's Royal Concert hall and the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester.

Tickets £8/£6.50

(Children/WOC students £1)

Lenthall Members receive a further concession of £1.00.



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Programme

Quartet in E op.54 no.1

Allegro
Largo Cantabile
Menuetto: Allegretto
Finale: Presto

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

In 1761 Haydn entered the service of Prince Paul Anton Esterházy as *Kapellmeister*, a post he was to hold for 30 years. His contract required him to compose music as bidden by the prince, and forbade him to compose for others without special permission. There seems to have been little demand for string quartets at the court, and apart from a brief period, from 1769-72, which saw the composition of the three sets opp.9, 17 and 20, it was not until the 1780s that Haydn turned again to the quartet form. His renewed contract of 1779 allowed him to compose for patrons and publishers elsewhere, and the two series of 'Tost' quartets, of which op.54 is the first, were written in 1788-90.

They were dedicated, or perhaps sold, to the violinist Johann Tost, a man who led the second violins in the Esterháza orchestra, and who departed for Paris in 1788, taking some of Haydn's music, including the quartets, with him. Correspondence about that time suggests that some scandal attached to his treatment in Paris of the works in his possession. It seems that Tost's grasp of the concept of intellectual property was a little tenuous. Indeed, while at Esterháza he had proposed a gigantic illegal copying scheme, making copies of all the latest works which came into the Prince's domain with the fervour of a Hong Kong software pirate. "How he proposed to operate the 'firm' under the watchful eye of *Kapellmeister Haydn*", observes H Robbins Landon, "is a problem almost too fantastic to contemplate".

Op.54 no.3, unsurprisingly, gives much prominence to the first violin, but never sounds unbalanced. The first movement is purposeful but serene; the long slow movement has a seraphic calm; the minuet is brisk; and the finale is Haydn at his bubbliest.



Haydn in

The Oxford Lieder Festival

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all concerts below are in the Holywell Music Room

Monday 6th October 8pm Gerald Finley <i>baritone</i> Julius Drake <i>piano</i> <i>Beethoven</i> An die ferne Geliebte &c	Friday 10th October 8pm David Revels <i>tenor</i> Sholto Kynoch <i>piano</i> Svann Zelikoff <i>violin</i> John Reid <i>piano</i> <i>Schumann</i> Liederkreis op.24; Violin Sonata in A &c	Monday 13th October 8pm Susan Young <i>soprano</i> Lindy Tennent-Brown <i>piano</i> <i>Schumann</i> Frauenliebe & Leben <i>C Schumann</i> Sechs Lieder aus Jucunde
Tuesday 7th October 8pm Elena Lorimer <i>soprano</i> Guy Newbury <i>piano</i> <i>Schumann</i> Kerner Lieder &c	Saturday 11th October 8pm Jasia Julia Neilsen <i>mezzo</i> Sholto Kynoch <i>piano</i> Svann Zelikoff <i>violin</i> John Reid <i>piano</i> <i>Schumann</i> Liederkreis op.39; Violin Sonata in D minor &c	Tuesday 14th October 8pm Maciek O'Shea <i>baritone</i> Sholto Kynoch <i>piano</i> Johnston String Quartet <i>Schumann</i> Piano Quintet op.44 <i>Britten</i> String Quartet no.3
Thursday 9th October 8pm Malin Christensson <i>soprano</i> Damian Thantrey <i>baritone</i> Malcolm Martineau <i>piano</i> <i>Wolf</i> Italienisches Liederbuch		The season continues until Saturday 18th October. For full details pick up a leaflet.

Prices: (6th, 9th, 18th October) £15/£9 concessions; (all other concerts) £11/£7 concessions
Tickets from The Oxford Playhouse (01865 305305)

Quartet no.4 in E minor op.44 no.2

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Allegro assai appassionato
Scherzo: Allegro di molto
Andante - attacca
Presto agitato

The three quartets of Mendelssohn's op.44 were written between 1837 and 1838, and are generally considered to be his masterpieces in the quartet form. They were first performed at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, where Mendelssohn was from 1835 to 1845 the conductor of the orchestra, and in the early years the Musical Director of a staggering range of activities. As well as twenty subscription concerts in each winter season, there were chamber music evenings and performances of cantatas and oratorios. Mendelssohn frequently appeared as soloist as well as conductor, on the piano and organ. In the summers he composed, as well as conducting music festivals and travelling. One might wonder how much he saw of his wife and five children, but the marriage was apparently a very happy one.



Mendelssohn

The three quartets which make up op.44 are considered his masterpieces in the genre, and the second has claims to be the best. Mendelssohn was a great admirer of Beethoven, and studied his quartets avidly before attempting the form himself. The first movement has all of Beethoven's urgency and inventiveness, but the *scherzo* is pure Mendelssohn, looking forward to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture. The *andante* is a song without words, and in the finale the composer throws in the lot: passion, ingenuity, an extraordinary profusion of musical ideas. One wonders how it could have been that Mendelssohn's reputation should

have dwindled so quickly after his death. Possibly, as some say, it was due to over-sentimental performances of his music; but the sad fact is that it fell victim to the anti-semitic feelings which began in the latter part of the 19th century, and which culminated, in Mendelssohn's case, in the destruction of his memorial in Leipzig in 1936.

Interval

Quartet in F op.18 no.1

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Allegro con brio
Adagio affetuoso ed appassionato
Scherzo (Allegro molto) & Trio
Allegro

From the listings this would seem to be Beethoven's first string quartet, but the original manuscripts of the set of six in op.18 are lost, and there are only the composer's notebooks and other fragments of evidence by which to adduce the date of composition. It seems likely that Beethoven rearranged the order for publication, setting out his stall so that the finest were at the front; thus the F major quartet had pride of place when nos.1-3 were published in 1801. This was after it had been drastically rewritten, for Beethoven wrote to the violinist Carl Amenda, to whom he had sent the original version, "Don't let anyone see your quartet as I have greatly changed it, as only now do I know how to write quartets properly".

This mastery had come through the most laborious reworking. Sixteen of Beethoven's notebooks were devoted to the refining of the first subject, and when he entirely revised the quartet this theme came in for more rewriting. The result is a model of what we think of as Beethovenian composition: urgent, dramatic and muscular from the first bar, with the four parts fascinatingly interlocked as the movement progresses. When Beethoven played the *Adagio* to Amenda he asked him what image it conjured up. "The parting of two lovers" Amenda replied. "Good;" said Beethoven. "I was thinking of the burial vault scene in *Romeo and Juliet*". His letters around that time speak of "a dear fascinating girl who loves me and whom I love". She is never identified but amongst the suspects is one of his pupils, a seventeen-year-old of noble birth, called Giuletta Guicciardi, and the *Juliet/Giuletta* coincidence is too appealing to ignore.

The little *Scherzo* is a scamper which turns at times into a gallop, with some energetic octave leaps which presage some later, bigger works. The last movement is full of swirling exchanges between the first violin and the other players, and has a wonderful forward momentum which sends it triumphantly through the finishing tape.



Beethoven in 1803

The Adderbury Quartet

Simon Lewis
Chris Windass

Jane Atkins
Jane Fenton



The Adderbury Ensemble, of which the Quartet are members, was formed in 1986. The group has given numerous performances throughout England as well as running its own series in Adderbury and at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. They have been welcome visitors to the Lenthall Concerts, both as a quartet and in the form of larger ensembles.

Newspapers have said "living in Adderbury must be like living in Salzburg or Bayreuth" and described the Ensemble's performances as exceptional, thunderous and as having refinement mixed with gusto and panache.

The Ensemble has an increasingly busy schedule of concerts and recordings for CD and film. Their first recording, released in 1997, was of music for string orchestra by Elgar, Tchaikovsky and Grainger. Their latest recording for ASV is a disk of J S Bach concertos featuring Simon Lewis, Andrew Haveron, Jane Atkins, Jonathan Kelly and Julian Sperry

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