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# The Lenthall Concerts

Season 2008-2009

## The Bochmann Quartet

**Wednesday, March 11th, 2009**

## The Lenthall Concerts

**Artistic Director: Michael Bochmann**

Committee:  
Christopher Yapp (Chairman)  
Cathie Malcolm (Secretary)  
David Woolley (Treasurer)  
Jan Campbell  
Rory Darling  
Brian Swales  
Liz Welch  
Caroline Yapp

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 2009 Annual General meeting will be held at the School at 7.30 pm on Wednesday August 12th. All members are warmly urged to attend.

## WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, March 13th 7.30pm

Wood Green School, Witney

### Iuventus String Quartet

Quartet op.76 no.4 in B flat ("Sunrise") Haydn

Quartet no.1 op.49 in C Shostakovich

Quartet no.2 op.51 in A minor Brahms

A welcome return by the fine String Quartet. Earlier this year they performed in Jakarta, Indonesia and Bangkok, Thailand and went on to give workshops to Burmese orphans in the refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border

Tickets £9/£7.50 (Children/WOC students £1)  
from Music Stand, High Street;  
Greenway Antiques, Corn Street; or at the door

## THE BURFORD FESTIVAL 2009

*Three Dates for your Diary.*

Friday 10 July: Vivaldi's Women.

The all-female choir and orchestra inspired by the music and history of the Venetian Ospedale della Pieta, where Vivaldi taught and composed. The programme will involve a selection of Pieta repertoire to include Vivaldi's Gloria, and a talk by Pieta researcher Micky White.

Sunday 12 July: Odyssey of Love.

Following the success of 'Beloved Clara' at the 2007 Festival, pianist Lucy Parham will take us on 'A journey to the heart of Franz Liszt', with readings by Joanna David and Martin Jarvis.

Wednesday 15 July: Michael Bochmann.

A concert for two violins and two harps based on the event recently staged in Chelsea. The programme includes pieces by Bach, Massenet, Paganini, Spohr, Watkins and Wieniawski, as well as three folk songs.

All three events will be held in Burford Parish Church.

Tickets £15 (Odyssey of Love) £12 (Vivaldi's Women and Michael Bochmann) from:  
Red Lion Bookshop, High Street, Burford.  
Booking opens 15 May.

## The Burford Singers

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**G F Handel**

**Palm Sunday 5th April 2009 7.30pm**  
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Ben Johnson *tenor* Derek Welton *bass*  
with Sir Philip Ledger (*harpsichord*) and

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**Conductor: Brian Kay**

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**1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2009**

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# The Bochmann Quartet

**Michael Bochmann - violin**  
**Mark Messenger - violin**

**Helen Roberts - viola**  
**Peter Adams - cello**

Brought up in Turkey and England, **Michael Bochmann** comes from a family of professional musicians. At 16, he entered the Royal Academy of Music on a scholarship to study the violin with Frederick Grinke. While still a student, he was the winner of the British Prize in the 1972 Carl Flesch International Violin Competition and a year later, prizewinner in the Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris. He received lessons at this time also from Sandor Vegh and Henryk Szeryng. Shortly after he made his first solo broadcasts for the BBC. He was appointed concertmaster of the English String and Symphony Orchestras in 1988. Two years later he partnered Yehudi Menuhin in Bach's Double Violin Concerto in a tour of eighteen concerts in the USA and Britain. He frequently visits Germany to perform and teach and in other spare moments promotes 10 chamber music series through his new enterprise "Opus 2000". He holds courses for young professional ensembles and soloists at his home in Gloucestershire.



At the age of sixteen, **Mark Messenger** was awarded a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music under David Martin and Sidney Griller. Two years later he was appointed violin professor at Goldsmith's College in London, and at the age of nineteen made his Wigmore Hall debut. He has since played as soloist and chamber musician in all of London's major concert halls and throughout the world. 1990 saw the launch of his immediately popular jazz/rock group, Mercury Jazz. For four years he was director of Chamber Music at the Aberystwyth International Summer Music Festival and was influential in the development of educational policies for orchestras through his work with the English Symphony Orchestra. For eight years he was a member of the Bingham String Quartet which championed the cause of contemporary music through its adventurous commissioning and performance programme. Currently in addition to his work with the Bochmann Quartet, he is Head of Strings at the Royal College of Music

**Helen Roberts** was born in Newport, Gwent and studied the viola with Walter Gerhardt. At the age of seventeen she joined the BBC Training Orchestra and two years later the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. She was then appointed principal viola with the BBC Midland Radio Orchestra and in 1980 became principal of the English String Orchestra, with whom she has made many recordings and solo appearances. In 1990 she became violist with the Bochmann String Quartet and has performed and recorded a wide repertoire to critical acclaim. Helen is also a regular guest principal with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Welsh National Opera Orchestra and frequently appears with the CBSO.

**Peter Adams** 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 Zimpler. 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. He plays a 'cello by G.B.Rogeri dated 1697.

## Programme

Quartet in E flat op.33 no.2  
("The Joke")

**Franz Joseph Haydn**  
(1732-1809)

*Allegro moderato*  
*Scherzo—Allegro*  
*Largo e sostenuto*  
*Presto*

Haydn's tenure at the Palace of Esterhazy, first as Assistant Kapellmeister and then Kapellmeister, lasted from 1761 to 1790, during which time he was required to compose on a scale which, from this distance, seems amazing. Prince Paul-Anton and his brother Nicolaus, who succeeded him, certainly wanted their ducat's-worth, in terms of symphonies, chamber works—especially baryton trios (Prince Nicolaus was an accomplished baryton player), sonatas, masses, operas—you name it. And, of course, string quartets; but by 1781 the emphasis at the court was on vocal rather than instrumental music, and Haydn was allowed to compose for the outside world, where his work was known but respect for his copyright rather casual. Thus liberated, he could take a firmer grasp of his intellectual property. He set to with vigorous marketing effort, and in 1781 wrote to ten or more noble music lovers to tell them:

*Since I know that in Zürich and Winterthur there are many gentlemen amateurs and great connoisseurs and patrons of music, I cannot conceal from you the fact that I am issuing a work consisting of 6 Quartets for two violins, viola and violoncello concertante, by subscription for the price of six ducats; they are of a new and entirely special kind, for I haven't written any for ten years ... Subscribers who live abroad will receive them before I issue the works here ...*



Haydn in 1782

His publisher Artaria caused a bit of a ruckus by selling the quartets at very much less than six ducats, but it seems to have ended happily, with Haydn writing to Artaria "next time we shall be more prudent"

What Haydn meant by "a new and entirely special kind" is open to conjecture, but the six quartets were unmistakably aimed to delight. They were groundbreaking in that all boasted a scherzo instead of a minuet, and a light-hearted mood predominates. Number two starts with a dancing theme of Mozartean delicacy, and although the development section has its pensive moments the atmosphere is unfailingly cheerful. The *scherzo* is a minuet in all but name, and encapsulates a trio which sends the first violin into its upper reaches. Even the *largo e sostenuto* of the slow movement has some rumbustious declamations to dispel the sombre mood. The last movement is a short, athletic rondo, very much a toe-tapper.

And the joke? One does not give jokes away to those who don't know what's coming. Hint: it's in the last movement.

Quartet No.7 in F sharp minor op.108

**Dmitri Shostakovich**  
(1906-1975)

*Allegretto*  
*Lento*  
*Allegro—Allegretto*

Shostakovich wrote fifteen string quartets: the first in 1944 and the last thirty years later. They all fall outside the two stormy periods when the composer was discredited by the Russian musical establishment, and had painfully to rebuild his reputation in his homeland by conforming to the cultural edicts of the time. No.7 was written in 1960, at which time Shostakovich was toeing the government line and opposing the avant garde. He even joined the Communist party in response to Krushchev's attempts to woo the intelligentsia, the reputation of Stalin having now been thoroughly discredited, and in the following year was to dedicate the 12th Symphony to the memory of Lenin. Nevertheless some of his finest music was written in this period: the first Cello Concerto, and the two quartets, Nos.7 and 8. The seventh is a highly personal work, dedicated to his late first wife Nina, whom he had married in 1932 and who died of cancer in 1954. The quartet was written in 1960 to commemorate what would have been her fiftieth birthday.



*Dmitri and Nina*

It is never wise to read too much programmatically into a piece of music without the composer's say-so, but it is generally accepted that the first movement is a portrait of Nina. If so, a picture of an energetic woman with a sense of humour emerges from the bustling rhythms. The slow movement is a complete contrast: a gentle threnody in which the sad melodic line is shared mainly between first violin and cello over softly shifting accompaniment. The finale is dramatic: a desperate rush in response to some urgent call, perhaps, followed by a postlude of exquisite peace. The suffering, one feels, is over.

*INTERVAL*

Quartet in E minor op.59 no.2  
(Razumovsky)

**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770-1827)

*Allegro*  
*Molto Adagio*  
*Allegretto*  
*Finale: Presto*

Andrey Kyrylovich, Count Razumovsky (1752-1836) was the Russian Ambassador to the Austrian Court from 1792 until 1807, and for his services he was created a prince

by the Tsar. He had personally known both Haydn and Mozart, and as a keen amateur musician he surrounded himself with musicians in his palace. But his name resounds to this day for the patronage he gave to Beethoven, and his close association with the composer's development. He it was who gave a life-long contract to four musicians, forming the Razumovsky Quartet, the first and only example of its kind in Austria. The quartet was placed at Beethoven's complete disposal, and became famous throughout Europe. In 1806 the Count commissioned the three string quartets that bear his name. They are linked by Russian folksongs — according to Czerny "Beethoven pledged himself to weave a Russian melody into every quartet".

The leader of the Razumovsky Quartet, Schuppanzigh, had been a close friend of Beethoven's for many years, and had been involved in the preparation and performance of the op.18 quartets, Beethoven's first works in the genre, some six to eight years earlier. Beethoven's music had matured in the intervening years — with the Eroica symphony by now behind him — and nearly everyone who heard the new quartets found them odd, to say the least. Felice Radicati, a violinist and himself a quartet composer, who compiled the fingering of the quartets at Beethoven's request, said to him that surely he did not consider these works to be music? Beethoven replied "Oh, they are not for you but for a later age".

The first movement of the second quartet starts with some rousing chords, and the mood of urgency is sustained for its 11plus minutes. *Sturm und Drang* are left behind in the second movement, which was inspired, Beethoven told the violinist Carl Holz, by his "contemplating the harmony of the spheres". The *allegretto* movement is a busy *scherzo* into which is embedded the obligatory Russian folk theme, so elaborated that its origins are buried in an torrent of Beethovenian invention; unusually, the trio is reprised after the customary repeat of the *scherzo*. The final movement is a gleeful gallop.

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