

This Week at Kings Place

Mon 15 Feb Words on Monday
Hall One **Central Saint Martin's Presents:
The Painting of Modern Life**
7pm

Hall Two
8pm **OUT HEAR
Fitkin**

Wed 17 Feb Czech Mates - Dante Quartet
Hall One **Smetana and Dvorak**
7.30pm

Thu 18 Feb Czech Mates - Dante Quartet
Hall One **Tales of the Unexpected**
7.30pm

Hall Two
8pm **Off With Their Heads! - Comedy at Kings Place
Steve Williams, Chris Ramsey and
(Regular MC) Tom Deacon**

Fri 19 Feb Czech Mates - Dante Quartet
Hall One **Russian Connections 1 / 2 / 3**
6.30pm /
7.45pm / 9pm

Exhibitions

Kings Place Gallery **Ørnulf Opdahl: Mood Paintings of the North**

Sophie Benson: Vanishing Points

Pangolin London **Burnt Offerings: Jason Wason.
An exhibition of bronzes and ceramics**

**Next Sunday 21 February 2010
Hall One, 6.30pm
Primrose Piano Quartet
Beethoven Piano Quartet in E flat, Op. 16
Variations on a Burns Air (Beamish, Casken, Cohen, Cutler, Fribbins,
Goss, Hellawell, Ireland, Jacobson, MacMillan, Martlew, Pott)
Brahms Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25**



Sunday evening concerts promoted by the
London Chamber Music Society
President: Levon Chilingirian OBE
Artistic Director: Peter Fribbins

London
Chamber Music
Society

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Our Café, Restaurant and Bar opening hours are:

Green & Fortune Café	7.30am to 7.30pm	
Rotunda Restaurant	12pm to 11pm	
Rotunda Bar	11am to 11pm	
Concert Bar	6pm to end of interval	

Please remember to order your Interval drinks prior to the concert,
at the Concert Bar located in the Music Foyer.

Sunday 14 February

London Chamber Music Series

Chilingirian Quartet

Presented in partnership with the
London Chamber Music Society

London Chamber Music Series

Chilingirian Quartet Hall One, 6.30pm

Levon Chilingirian	violin
Ronald Birks	violin
Susie Mézáros	viola
Bernard Gregor-Smith	cello

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
String Quartet in D minor, K421 (c. 1783)

Hugh Wood (b. 1932)
String Quartet No. 5 (2001)

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
String Quartet in B flat major, Op. 130 (1825)
with original Grosse Fuge finale

The **Chilingirian Quartet** is one of the world’s most celebrated and widely travelled ensembles, renowned for its thrilling interpretations of the great quartets – and commanding performances of the contemporary repertoire. The Quartet is composed of four highly accomplished musicians who blend four distinct voices into a single extraordinary sound. It is a sound that critics around the world have heralded as ‘balanced’, ‘passionate’, ‘warm’, ‘subtle’ and ‘dynamic’.

London has always been a meeting-point for the world’s musicians, and it was in London in 1971 that four prize-winning musicians met and decided to dedicate themselves to chamber music. Word of the new quartet spread rapidly and within a short time the Chilingirian Quartet was claimed by critics to be an ensemble that would have a major impact on the world of the string quartet.

BBC and World Service broadcasts were soon followed by invitations to the Edinburgh, Aldeburgh and Bath festivals and to the most important cities throughout Europe. In 1976, a triumphant debut in New York made the Chilingirians a sought-after group throughout the United States. The Quartet has since made over 15 coast-to-coast tours of the USA and Canada. Extensive tours of Australia, New Zealand South America, Africa and the Far East make the Quartet equally well known around the world.

In 1988 the group became the first-ever Quartet-in-Residence at the Royal College of Music, where it continues to offer master classes to many of the world’s most promising young musicians.

The Quartet has built an extensive and critically-acclaimed discography of works by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Bartók, Dvořák and other major composers. It has also released groundbreaking recordings of masterworks by contemporary composers such as Michael Tippett, John Tavener, Hugh Wood and Michael Berkeley.

The Chilingirians have also appeared extensively on TV and radio programmes around the world, including an ongoing series of broadcasts for the BBC.

Now in its fourth decade, the Chilingirian Quartet continues to tour, record and teach, amassing one of the music world’s most impressive resumé’s.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – String Quartet in D minor, K421

I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Menuetto: (Allegretto)
IV. Allegro ma non troppo – Più allegro

Of the six quartets Mozart dedicated to Haydn and published in late 1785, half were not entirely new. Two of the most famous (‘Hunt’, K. 458 and the ‘Dissonance’ quartet, K. 465) derive from the later half of the set. The quartet heard this evening, completed in 1783, was the second to be written after K. 387. Together, their stylistic refinement and memorable melodic writing set benchmarks those that followed. The six works became known collectively as the “Haydn” quartets, an appropriate nickname since they came after a period in Mozart’s life in which he studied his elder composer’s music extensively. The reciprocal influence Mozart’s set had on Haydn’s later quartets makes this mutual admiration arguably the most celebrated in music history.

Mozart’s deliberate mixture of styles on the ‘surface’ of the music is apparent in this quartet’s opening *Allegro* movement, which opens *sotto voce* but soon dramatically extends its range and dynamics. This leads through industrious interplay between the instruments to a contrapuntally developed central section. The *Andante* movement is in F major and entrusts the melody to the first violin before a more elaborate central section unfolds. Next, the melancholy *Menuetto* is offset by a livelier D-major trio, with its playful rhythms and *pizzicato* (plucked) accompaniment. The final movement lilts with a similar rhythmic momentum and is cast after a principal melody in a series of four variations: the first is based on the arpeggio, the second is syncopated and dynamically contrasted, the third shines a light on the viola, and the fourth offers harmonic contrast by shifting to the major mode. These lead in turn to a final *Più allegro* in D minor—K. 421 was Mozart’s only quartet in a minor key—though the conclusion evades such a ‘tragic’ sensibility by returning to the major mode.

Hugh Wood – String Quartet No. 5

I Allegro energico
II Nocturne – Scherzo I
III Romanza
IV Nocturne – Scherzo II
V Con gran’energia

Despite a musical upbringing, it was only after graduating in History from Oxford that Hugh Wood decided to dedicate his energies to composition, moving to London in 1954 to study with William Lloyd Webber, Anthony Milner, Iain Hamilton and Mátyás Seiber. Sometimes violently expressionistic, sometimes poignantly lyrical, his music is powerfully communicative and intensely felt, though when creating lighter moods, such as in the jazzy Piano Concerto, his writing is equally eloquent. He typically prefers chamber music genres, though large-scale works such as his Symphony and Violin Concerto are among his most striking. Of his Fifth String Quartet, the composer writes: “The classical quartet repertoire has been a passion of mine for fifty years, and the early wish to write quartets sprang from that. This present quartet is really my sixth. (While studying with the late Iain Hamilton I wrote in 1956-57 a three-movement quartet in B flat, a quite serviceable student work in which my new-found enthusiasm for the music of Tippett, Bartók and Alan Bush contends with some dim proto-Schoenbergian aspirations.) I’ve always interpreted working in a tradition very cautiously, often adhering to the four movement archetypes—as in Quartet Nos. 1 and 4. The Lindsay Quartet first performed my Third Quartet in 1978 and, in 2000, were kind enough to ask me for a new quartet to celebrate the opening of the new arts studio in Sheffield called Persistence Works.

In this quartet I returned to my staid formal habits of writing discrete movements, but now there are five of them. Two differentiated scherzos flank a central slow movement. The obvious model of this planning is Bartók’s Fourth Quartet; its second scherzo also has all-pervasive *pizzicato* writing. In mine, however, this alternates with the use of harmonics and a brief passage of *col legno* at the end. Both these movements are called Nocturne-Scherzo: I’ve intended to create a spectral, fugitive, obscure and dark atmosphere in them. The slow movement is called Romanza to indicate that it is for once no deep adagio, but rather a brief, light and lyrical movement. Two larger-scale movements, both marked *energico* but differing in character, come first and last. The first fires off a fusillade of brusque and cantabile motifs which, after they have gone through some development, including a fugato, give way to more lyrical material, treated polyphonically, before a compressed return of the opening. The finale is a sort of rondo, in march-like character. Its recurring main theme is always preceded by scale passages rushing upwards. The first subsidiary theme can clearly be heard to be a lyrical treatment of the motif from the introduction and the main theme, but the second is more independently lyrical. A wholesale recapitulation of primary material is interrupted by a brief andante statement of the main theme on the cello, before the scales rush upwards for a final time.”

Ludwig van Beethoven – String Quartet in B flat major, Op. 130

I. Adagio ma non troppo – Allegro
II. Presto
III. Andante con moto, ma non troppo
IV. Alla danza tedesca (Allegro assai)
V. Cavatina (Adagio molto espressivo)
VI. Finale. Große Fuge: Overtura – Allegro – Fuga

After a thirteen-year hiatus, Beethoven returned to the string quartet medium to pen a remarkable series of works that have been revered ever since their composition in 1823-26. The first three quartets, Opp. 127, 130 and 132 (Op. 131 came later), were commissioned by Prince Nikolai Balitzin. After completing the Ninth Symphony in 1824, Beethoven completed these quartets the following year. The important exception to this chronology is that after completing his final quartet in 1826 (Op. 135), Beethoven was persuaded by his publisher, Matthias Artaria, to compose a new finale to Op. 130. A new *Allegro* ‘addendum’ replaced the radical, if unpopular, *Große Fuge* [*Great Fugue*], which was later published separately as Op. 133. Taken together, Beethoven’s Late Quartets push the sonata principle to new limits and transformed the way in which the string quartet as a genre was understood.

The opening of Op. 130 is typically elusive: its thematicism has a deliberate sense of dissociation, with slow introductory material contrasted by the rapid semiquavers of the *Allegro*. Against these, a rising figure is heard intermittently in counterpoint, leading to a second subject in G flat. The brief *Presto* follows in the manner of a scherzo, but in the tonic (B flat) minor. The lower strings lead the way in the third movement, ostensibly cast in sonata form in D flat with several harmonic shifts. The following movement is effectively a second scherzo, now styled as a triple-metre dance with two contrasting trios. The old-fashioned reference to the tedesca should be simply taken to indicate ‘the style of a *deutscher Tanz*’. Beethoven applied a similarly literal meaning to the cavatina (a songlike piece of instrumental music before its operatic appropriation) and took great pride in its anguished passage of recitative. The same might not be said of Beethoven’s ‘addendum’ finale, a souped-up, Haydnesque effort that pales in comparison with the *Große Fuge*. As it is, this evening’s performers take the rare (and punishing) decision to perform the latter. Its combination of forms—with a 24-bar overture, a highly dissonant double fugue, and ensuing sections in various tempi, rhythms and keys—make it, in the words of Igor Stravinsky, “an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever.”