

## London Chamber Music Series

### Fine Arts Quartet Hall One, 6.30pm

<b>Ralph Evans</b>	violin
<b>Efim Boico</b>	violin
<b>Nicolò Eugelmi</b>	viola
<b>Wolfgang Laufer</b>	cello

**Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809)  
**String Quartet in G major, Op. 77 No. 1 [Hob III:81] *Lobkowitz*** (1799)

**George Antheil** (1900-1959)  
**String Quartet No. 3** (1948)

**INTERVAL** (20 minutes)

**César Franck** (1822-1890)  
**String Quartet in D major, M. 9** (1889-90)

The **Fine Arts Quartet** is one of the most distinguished ensembles in chamber music today, with an illustrious history of performing success and an extensive recording legacy. Founded in Chicago in 1946, and based at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee since 1963, the Quartet is one of the elite few to have recorded and toured internationally for over half a century. Three of the Quartet's current artists have now been performing together for over 25 years. Violist Nicolò Eugelmi joined them in 2009. Each season, the Fine Arts Quartet tours worldwide, with concerts in New York, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Madrid, Moscow, Tokyo, Beijing, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Mexico City and Toronto.

The Quartet has recorded over 200 works. Its latest releases on Naxos include three Beethoven String Quintets, the Franck String Quartet and Piano Quintet, complete Mendelssohn String Quintets and 'Four American Quartets' by Antheil, Herrmann, Glass and Evans among others. Releases planned for 2010 include the two Saint-Saëns Quartets on Naxos, and three Shostakovich Quartets on Lyrinx. The Quartet's recent recordings have received many distinctions.

The Quartet members have helped form and nurture many of today's top international young ensembles. They have been guest professors at the national music conservatories of Paris and Lyon, as well as at the summer music schools of Yale University and Indiana University. They also appear regularly as jury members of major competitions such as Evian, Shostakovich, and Bordeaux. Documentaries on the Fine Arts Quartet have appeared on both French and American Public Television.

### Joseph Haydn - String Quartet in G major, Op. 77 No. 1 [Hob III:81] *Lobkowitz*

I. Allegro moderato  
II. Adagio  
III. Menuetto: Presto  
IV. Finale: Presto

If the six quartets Mozart dedicated to Haydn in 1782-85 exhibited all the elements of Classical quartet style as it has since been understood, then the reciprocal influence they had on Haydn's late quartets is no less important. The more serious tone of Haydn's earlier quartets, broadly speaking, was reconciled later on with a more popular touch. Haydn retained his technical interest in equal-voice textures and upheld the cyclic integration of his quartets, i.e. with cross-references between movements—but his counterpoint now became more extended, his writing more soloistic and harmonically varied. Haydn was perhaps less subtle in style but, at the same time, he adhered to significant, new standards. For example, the minuet would almost always appear as the third movement, while the slow movements, in ternary, variation or double variation form, became more innovatively structured and melodious.

Given this picture of success, it is doubly curious that Haydn failed to fulfil Prince Lobkowitz's commission for what became his Op. 77 quartets. Besides its pair of works, four others were supposed to have been written. The succession of a new generation of composers, led by Haydn's erstwhile pupil Beethoven, may explain why. Haydn's last complete set of quartets, Op. 76, was completed by 1797, yet Op. 77 surfaced belatedly in 1802. Meanwhile, Beethoven's seminal Op. 18 set of quartets, also commissioned by Prince Lobkowitz, had been published a year earlier. The G major quartet from Op. 77 pair begins vibrantly, with its monorhythmic, crotchet accompaniment of the first subject. This textural clarity persists as the second violin announces another theme, buoyed by triplets from the viola—a rhythm that characterises the rest of the exposition and recurs in the development and, of course, the recapitulation. The *Adagio* is in the flattened submediant (E flat major), though the opening motif toys with its relationship to its relative minor (C minor). There is less harmonic ambiguity after it, when various transformations of this defining motif are spread across the texture. The gypsy rhetoric of the minuet is dispelled to an extent by its *Presto* tempo; the contrasting trio returns us to E flat major. The finale, also marked *Presto*, is another movement in which Haydn's ingenious use of a few introductory notes—from which both themes are derived—propels the music.

### George Antheil - String Quartet No. 3

I. Allegretto  
II. Largo  
III. Quasi presto (scherzo)  
IV. Allegro giocoso

The self-styled *Bad Boy of Music* (to quote his autobiography), George Antheil revelled as an outsider. Born Georg Carl Johann, he was raised in New Jersey, his parents having emigrated from Germany. His Eurocentric streak was important musically. He travelled widely in the 1920s, trading

on the notoriety of his style to establish himself as a composer-performer, especially in Paris. This musical style included a harmonic modernity and rhythmic energy that characterised most of his works—including, most famously, *Ballet mécanique* (1924) for percussion ensemble. As a later work, the mellower Third String Quartet reveals the influence of Antheil's employment in the film industry (especially in the nostalgic slow movement) as well as a newfound grasp of American musical traditions. The *Allegretto* opens in a populist vein: various melodic fragments slide about different tonalities as they are developed, but the folk-tinged hue is never lost. The lyrical *Largo* is equally evocative, if more melodious, its most effective passages menacing and delicate by turn. The quartet is billed as a large work by Antheil's standards, though it is only twenty minutes long and the third movement lasts just two. Marked *Quasi presto*, this fleeting scherzo exhibits further shades of Prokofiev through its harmonies and, thanks to its balletic whimsies, its irony, too. The concluding *Allegro giocoso* returns us to Antheil's more typical 'mechanistic' soundworld while also rekindling the folk-derived ambience of the opening.

### César Franck - String Quartet in D major, M. 9

I. Poco lento – Allegro  
II. Scherzo: Vivace  
III. Larghetto  
IV. Finale: Allegro molto

César Franck was a Belgian-born French musician who first established himself as an organist. Only from the 1870s did he devote himself to composition, inspired, allegedly, by Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Thereafter he became something of a figurehead for younger composers, most notably Vincent d'Indy, who became his greater supporter. Stylistically, Franck was renowned for his innovative structures, though he enjoyed more widespread success only in his final years. One of the most celebrated examples is his String Quartet, a late work completed the year he died. Franck conceived the work cyclically, in that thematic connections between the movements are clear throughout.

The process duly begins in the two-part opening movement, with an elaborate introduction whose *fortissimo* theme is a periodic influence not just here, but throughout the quartet. The *Allegro* relocates to the tonic minor (D minor) and its sonata form includes an unusual fugal development that traverses various keys. The repetition of the *Poco lento* returns us, symmetrically, to D major. The *Vivace* adopts a more motivic approach, with its melodies broken up and shared across muted strings in its outermost sections. These scherzo passages frame a contrasting trio, which, less typically, is faintly recalled at the movement's conclusion. Another shift in key (to B major) and another soaring first violin melody characterise Franck's wide-ranging *Larghetto* and set the scene for the remarkable finale. Memories of *every* other movement recur at various points, first recalling the scherzo, then the quartet's embryonic introduction, as though to settle the thematic arguments made before.

## This Week at Kings Place

**Mon 26 Apr** Words on Monday  
Hall One **You Are Here - A Poetry Show**  
7pm

Hall Two OUT HEAR  
8pm **Max de Wardener, Dave Price and Nick Ramm**

**Thu 29 Apr** London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
St Pancras Rm **Meet London Sinfonietta**  
6.30pm

Hall One London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
7.30pm **American Experiments**

Hall Two Off With Their Heads! - Comedy at Kings Place  
8pm **Pappy's, Gareth Richards and Tom Deacon (Regular MC)**

**Fri 30 Apr** London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
St Pancras Rm **Meet the Composers and Players**  
6.30pm

Hall One London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
7.30pm **British Experiments**

**Sat 1 May** London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
St Pancras Rm **Vexations**  
7am-Midnight

Hall Two London Sinfonietta's *Experiment!*  
11.30am **London Sinfonietta Open Rehearsal**

## Exhibitions

Kings Place Gallery **Stephen Chambers: The Four Corners**  
[FIRST DAY: Sat 1 May]

**Next Sunday 2 May**  
Hall One 6.30 pm  
**Mozart Piano Quartet**  
Bridge Phantasy for Piano Quartet  
Schumann Piano Quartet in E flat, Op. 47  
Beethoven Symphony No. 3 *Eroica* (arr. Ferdinand Ries)

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

London  
**Chamber Music**  
Society

The London Chamber Music Society is a registered charity No 1075787  
For information please contact:  
Neil Johnson, Hon. Chairman  
55 Beardsley Way  
London W3 7YQ

neil@londonchambermusic.org.uk  
www.londonchambermusic.org.uk

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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

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

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## Sunday 25 April

### London Chamber Music Series

### Fine Arts Quartet

Presented in partnership with the  
London Chamber Music Society