

This Week at Kings Place

Sun 29 Mar Beethoven Unwrapped: Week 5
Hall One **Beethoven's Violin Sonatas (3)**
11.30am

Hall One London Chamber Music Series
6.30pm **Robert Cohen and Heini Karkkainen**

Mon 30 Mar Words on Monday
Hall One **The Guardian Debate - Capitalism in Crisis, Part 3**
7pm **The Corrosion of Character**

Tue 31 Mar This Is Tuesday
Hall Two **SARGASSO: C**
8pm **Curated by the Sargasso Label**

Wed 1 April The NMC Songbook
Hall One **English Encouragement of Art**
7.30pm

Hall One The NMC Songbook
8.45pm **Music, thou Queen of Souls**

Thur 2 April The NMC Songbook
Hall One **A swallow, a rose, an admonition**
7.30pm

Hall One The NMC Songbook
8.45pm **Causes for Wonder**

Fri 3 April The NMC Songbook
Hall One **Love Songs**
7.30pm

Hall One The NMC Songbook
8.45pm **Fitful Alternations**

Exhibitions

Kings Place Gallery **Dale Atkinson: A Pocket of Air**

Pangolin London **Ralph Brown**

Next Sunday 5 April, 6.30 pm
Fibonacci Sequence
Haydn – Trio in G for flute, Cello & piano Hob XV/15
Frank Bridge – Quartet for piano & strings (1st public performance)
Martinu – Trio for flute, viola & piano
Ireland – Trio No 2 for violin, cello & piano
Mozart – Quartet in D major for flute & strings K285

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



The London Chamber Music Society is a registered charity No 1075787
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Please note: In order to raise funds for local outreach projects there will be a £1 charge for programmes as from 19 April 2009.

Our Cafe, 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

Sunday 29th March

London Chamber Music Series

**Robert Cohen (cello) &
Heini Kärkkäinen (piano)**

**Presented in partnership with the
London Chamber Music Society**

London Chamber Music Series
Robert Cohen (cello) & Heini Kärkkäinen (piano)
Hall One, 6.30pm

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
Sonata for cello & piano in D minor *Op 40* (1934)

Serge Prokofiev (1891-1953)
Sonata for cello & piano in C major *Op 119* (1949)

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)
Sonata for cello & piano in G minor *Op 19* (1901)

Robert Cohen

Following his Royal Festival Hall debut at the age of 12, Robert Cohen subsequently achieved international recognition whilst still a teenager with a recording of the Elgar Cello Concerto which earned a silver disc. He has gone on to consolidate an impressive discography ranging from solo Bach to a recent release of the H K Gruber Cello Concerto under the direction of the composer. The creative give-and-take of the concert hall remains his first love however. As a busy performing artist his career takes him to the USA, Europe, Scandinavia, Australia, Japan and the UK, performing with such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Mariss Jansons, Riccardo Mutti and Sir Simon Rattle and he retains a lively enthusiasm for chamber music. His passionate views on the art of learning, performing and communicating music have stimulated illuminating masterclasses. Since 1999 he has been a Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music and he is also Professor of Advanced Cello at the Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano. As a soloist, conductor and teacher Robert Cohen’s music-making takes him all over the world.

Heini Kärkkäinen

Heini Kärkkäinen’s career was launched by success in national piano competitions in the 1980s. She has performed in Scandinavia, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain., Spain, France and the USA as recitalist, soloist and chamber musician. She has played with various orchestras, including the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and at several chamber music festivals in Finland and abroad. Her extensive discography has won much acclaim.

Dmitri Shostakovich – Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor, Op. 40

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegro
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro

Shostakovich’s Cello Sonata was written just a few months after the original version of his controversial *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* had been produced in Leningrad. The reception of this ‘decadent’ opera – as the official line went – stung Shostakovich. Instrumental music would be his solace, and he gave the premiere of the sonata later that year with Viktor Kobatsky, also the work’s dedicatee. Typically, the music is full of jarring juxtapositions. The opening movement begins pensively, with a tender melody in the cello supported by closely related material in the piano. But the sonata is very much a duet, as the later reversal of these roles demonstrates. The second, more tranquil theme is heard after a climax of this material. A distinctive, repeated-note passage leads to a literal repeat of the exposition before the development section begins – signalled by the cello’s *pizzicato*. Where we would reasonably expect a recapitulation instead we hear a ‘walking bass’ in the piano, over which the cello echoes a stuttering version of the first theme by way of a coda. The *Allegro* is one of Shostakovich’s many examples of scherzos composed in a sardonic, sometimes bitter manner. Accompanied by the restless cello, the piano introduces a folk-inflected theme; the entertaining trio features virtuosic, varying passagework, including *glissandi* in the cello. By contrast, the slow movement is extremely intense, with a yearning, expressive theme that builds to a climax where the music comes full circle in forcefully restating the same theme. The instruments share in its continuation until the poignant coda. The *Allegro*, unusually for Shostakovich, is an unambiguous finale, and also the sonata’s most obvious parody of classical design. A lively theme in the piano is imitated by the cello and developed and repeated over the course of a modified rondo.

Sergei Prokofiev – Sonata for Cello and Piano in C major, Op. 119

- I. Andante grave. Moderato animato
- II. Moderato
- III. Allegro ma non troppo

The friendship between an aging composer and a young cellist studying at the Moscow Conservatory, Mstislav Rostropovich, inspired Prokofiev’s composition of this cello sonata. As with several of Prokofiev’s works in the last decade of his life (during which the composer’s health deteriorated), the sonata was written in collaboration with the performer – the two men spent part of summer together at Prokofiev’s *dacha* exploring ideas to include in the sonata. Rostropovich premiered the work in March 1950 with Richter. The cello introduces the opening *Andante grave* movement alone, with fleeting accompaniment from the piano. The cello’s languid, chromatic melody explores the full range of the instrument, interrupted only by an agitated passage featuring strummed pizzicato chords.

A second thematic section begins with more than a trace of the Baroque through its closely imitative semiquavers, but this quickly subsides to leave us with restrained, if unsettled, lyricism. The *Moderato* is quintessential Prokofiev and also the work’s satirical centrepiece, with contrasts in articulation and melody reminiscent of the early piano sonatas. Likewise, the later, more lyrical section, though less typical of the composer’s late style, is lighter and less subdued than the first movement. The final movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, has the same distinctive mix of lyrical and percussive elements – especially during the piano’s melodic interludes. The movement’s kaleidoscope of gestures belatedly gives way at the end of the work to the unambiguous realm of C major.

Sergei Rachmaninov – Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor, Op. 19

- I. Lento – Allegro moderato
- II. Allegro scherzando
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro mosso

It is hardly surprising that Rachmaninov, a composer famed for his works for piano, disliked the label ‘cello sonata’ since it honoured one instrument above the other. While the equality of his writing for each instrument here is debatable, the sonata’s success today is not: Op. 19 is one of the most important sonatas for cello and piano of the twentieth century, even though, historically, the premiere of the Second Piano Concerto in late 1901 would overshadow the work at first. The opening of the two-part first movement is brooding and immediately the meandering lyricism of both instruments puts them on a generally equal footing. The *Allegro moderato* soon takes over and brings the cello to the fore, though not without a typically virtuosic accompaniment. Indeed, a solo piano interlude quickly heralds an apparently folk-inflected second theme in the cello. A gradual *accelerando* at the end of the (repeated) exposition leads to more pastoral developmental section, in which the unbroken thematic writing gives way to flashes of melodic motifs. A further piano interlude, this time ferociously romantic and rich in texture, comes to underpin the varied return of the cello’s main melodic material. The waspish *Allegro scherzando* is full of articulative contrast. The sporadically lyrical cello reveals an episodic design, making it difficult to definitively characterise the movement. A recapitulation of the opening material, led again by the piano, offers some clarity, and the mood is more playful towards the very end. There is much less ambiguity in the well-known and moving *Andante*. Once again the piano takes the lead in the introduction, declaring a main theme characterised by its major-minor switches and its play on the interval of a fifth – the cello takes up the same material, which is developed over the course of the movement. The *Allegro mosso* finale is typically ambitious in its scope as the cello and piano battle for the spotlight. The movement’s restlessness is such that the instruments, while naturally accompanying one another, competitively dovetail with closely-related parts virtually throughout.