

The image shows a concert hall with a Steinway & Sons grand piano in the foreground. The piano is dark wood with a light-colored keyboard. The background features rows of grey seats and a wooden wall with vertical panels. The text "kings place" is overlaid in the top right corner.

kings place

**Sunday 11 January**

London Chamber Music Series

Allegri Quartet

Presented in Partnership with  
the London Chamber Music Society

## London Chamber Music Series

Hall One, 6.30pm

**Allegri Quartet with Colin Carr (Cello)**

<b>Ofer Falk</b>	violin
<b>Rafael Todes</b>	violin
<b>Dorotea Vogel</b>	viola
<b>Katherine Jenkinson</b>	cello

**Joseph Haydn** (1732-1809)

**String Quartet in F Minor Op 20 No 5** (c.1770)

**Matthew Taylor** (born 1964)

**String Quartet No 6** London Premiere

**INTERVAL** (20 minutes)

**Franz Schubert** (1797-1828)

**String Quintet in C Major D976** (1828)

**The Allegri Quartet** is one of the oldest British chamber ensembles in existence, going back to its foundation in 1953 by Eli Goren, James Barton, Patrick Ireland and William Pleeth. With a packed schedule for the 2008/9 season, including tonight's London premiere of Matthew Taylor's 6th Quartet, the Allegris been invited to Turkey and Canada and later in the season will participate in a Coffee Concert at Wigmore Hall. The Quartet has recently released the Mozart Quintets in G Minor and C Major with ex-Allegri Violist, Prenella Pacey and is awaiting the imminent release of Peter Fribbins's Clarinet Quintet with James Campbell and two works by Michael Stimpson. These recordings of new works reflect an ongoing commitment to contemporary music that has led the Quartet to premiere more than 60 works since 1964. The Allegri Quartet enjoys collaborating with other artists and has worked with outstanding concert performers including Jack Brymer, Clifford Curzon, John Ogden and Gervase de Peyer at international festivals including Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, Berlin and Hong Kong. The members of the Allegri Quartet are increasingly in demand for their teaching with residencies at the universities of Durham, Middlesex, Nottingham, Bangor, East Anglia and Oxford, thanks to the generous support of the Radcliffe Trust. The Quartet also has an interesting association with the Newark School of Violin Making, giving feedback to young luthiers on their work and performing on a selection of the finest instruments produced each year.

**Colin Carr** has appeared throughout the world as soloist, chamber musician, recording artist and teacher. He has played with major orchestras, has been a regular guest at the BBC Proms and has twice toured Australia. As a member of the Golub-Kaplan-Carr Trio he recorded and toured extensively for twenty years. He recently formed the new group Sequenza, and has appeared often as a guest with the Guarneri and Emerson String Quartets. Colin plays on a Matteo Gofriller cello made in Venice in 1730.

## **Franz Joseph Haydn - String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 20, NO. 5 [Hob. III: 35]**

- I. Moderato
- II. Menuet
- III. Adagio
- IV. Finale: Fuga a due soggetti

Of all composers, Haydn did most to define the string quartet as an independent genre - indeed the Op. 20 quartets were his first to bear that name. His early quartets were composed during three distinct periods: ten early works for Baron Fiirnberg (c. late 1750s), Opp. 9,17 and 20 (c.1770) and Op. 33 (1781). Their cumulative effect was to drastically expand the string quartet's dimensions and, as a consequence, to characterise a recognisable quartet style in terms of its resourcefulness and various technical and aesthetic aspects. The c.1770 group, for example, to which this evening's work belongs, established a four-movement form that would soon become familiar, with two fast movements framing a slow movement and a minuet (albeit, as in Op. 20, No. 5, not yet always in this order). It is no coincidence that the same group is also an important example of Haydn's *Sturm und Drang* manner, a phrase conventionally translated as Storm and Stress. This late eighteenth-century movement towards more emotional expression in the arts is most famously represented in music by Haydn's vocabulary of syncopations, leaps and articulated passages (in much the same way as in slightly earlier musical depictions of furies in Viennese stage works). New dramatic contrasts of key, texture, dynamics and range also became common - four of the Opp. 9,17 and 20 quartets are in minor keys, and, unusually, three of the six quartets that make up the Op. 20 set have fugal finales.

Haydn's greater emotional range is evident virtually throughout the F-minor quartet. The opening 'Moderato' is vivid in its poetic effect, with interplay between the instruments clearest in its more transitory passages. In other words, the movement does not divide interest between the parts as equally as the following movements, such as the strident 'Minuet' in which the lower strings are more active. This movement's development appears to meander at times but in fact frames a contrasting F-major trio, proceeding without a pause. The gentleness of the 'Adagio' is an exception to the rule in one sense, yet its theme's development by the violin, with increasing embellishment, continues Haydn's striving towards his enigmatic goal. This is revealed in splendour by the final movement, (mis)described by its title as a fugue with two subjects. A characteristic opening subject is actually first shared around the ensemble before the end of the movement sees it transformed into a canon between the first violin and cello. Such inventiveness of texture, resources and form fittingly encapsulates Haydn's new quartet style.

## **Matthew Taylor - String Quartet No. 6, Op. 36 (London premiere)**

- I. Giubiloso
- II. Romanza: Andante moderato -
- III. Andante moderato -
- IV. Finale: Bacchanle: Con spirito e riotoso

Matthew Taylor studied composition with Robin Holloway (Cambridge) and Edward Gregson (Royal Academy of Music) and conducting with Leonard Bernstein and Vilem Tausky. His premiere recording of Robert Simpson's Eleventh Symphony with the City of London Sinfonia was highlighted as a Gramophone Record of the Year in 2000, and in October this year he will launch the Padstow Festival. He teaches at the Royal Academy of Music, directs the Tunbridge Wells Festival (which he founded), travels as an

international music examiner, and performs as a pianist. The success of Taylor's First Symphony (1985) led to a number of important commissions. To date he has written three symphonies, concertos for piano, horn, double bass and clarinet, seven string quartets, a piano trio and other chamber music and songs. On this evening's new quartet the composer writes: "The work was commissioned by the Little Missenden Festival with funds provided by the Friends of the Festival and the R V W Trust. It is dedicated to my wife Juliet. The Quartet reflects my fascination in developing new structures from the older classical masters, for though the work adopts the customary four-movement pattern there are many unusual features. For instance, the only break comes between the first and second movements, and the themes of the last two movements relate closely to the Romanza, so it might be better to regard the work as an introduction (first movement) to a large span of music (movements 2, 3 and 4) which falls into three connected parts.

The opening Giubiloso (Jubilant) is like a terse, compact Scherzo. Two ideas are introduced: the first an exuberant, leaping idea, perhaps suggestive of circus music. The second idea, still at a brisk tempo, is more gentle and lightly scored. Both themes are developed and modified. There is no reprise; instead there is a coda where the music disappears mischievously. The Romanza is an elaboration of a piece composed for Juliet for our wedding in August 2006. This is very much the heart of the work and attempts to give the impression of a Song Without Words. It is followed by another slow movement which transforms the cello melody heard at the end of the Romanza into a long, melodic line interspersed with occasional flowerings of harmony. The tune ascends from the lowest depths of the cello, continuing with viola and then second violin eventually reaching high harmonics on the first violin. The Finale is like a very free variation of the Romanza. The mood here is rough, bucolic and riotous, though always good humoured and sanguine. The energy seldom lets up. At the climax the opening tune of the first movement is restated as if we have travelled full circle. String Quartet N0.6 was begun in September 2007 and completed the following May."

### **Franz Schubert - String Quintet in C Major, D. 956**

- I.** Allegro ma non troppo
- II.** Adagio
- III.** Scherzo: Presto
- IV.** Allegretto

Schubert was already frail when, in what would be his final year, it was fatally recommended to him that he lodge with his brother Ferdinand in the Viennese suburb of Wieden. The new but damp-ridden building aggravated Schubert's giddiness and headaches, but even these symptoms did not prevent his completion of several bold and ambitious works. These included the songs posthumously published as *Schwanengesang* (D. 957), the final three piano sonatas (D. 958-60), and the work heard this evening, the String Quintet in C Major (D. 956). This would be the second and last of Schubert's chamber works scored for an unusual configuration of instruments. (The famous Octet in F (D. 803), for string quartet plus double bass, clarinet, horn and bassoon, was the first). The Quintet required a second cello rather than the second viola Mozart had preferred. This is not to say Schubert's template was unprecedented - Boccherini's quintets also used two cellos - but the relentlessly equal prominence of the instruments across the quintet, together with their epic deployment, would have a much greater historic resonance.

The work's proportions are clear from the outset as the struggle between the minor and major modes steers the large-scale structure. With the greatest care for musical continuity and cogency, an apparently slow introduction gradually and seamlessly gives way to the movement's basic 'Allegro' tempo. A beautiful cello duet forms the intermediate stage of a three-keyed exposition. The expressive affect of the music that follows is intentionally and, on one level, simply derived from the harmonic areas in which Schubert's material is placed. More subtle, denser variations of texture, however, soon come to dominate the discourse which unfolds, with the instruments often grouped originally into two pairs plus one single voice. The stunningly ethereal 'Adagio' provides a great contrast, but the same major-minor argument and Schubertian harmonic shifts - commonly prompted by the slightest change of pitch in just one or two instruments - underpin its beauty. Indeed, this has a large-scale structural consequence as the E-major 'A' section sandwiches the more imitative and anguished F-minor 'B' section. The energetic 'Scherzo' offers a further contrast in mood; a comparatively still D-flat trio continues the formal design of semitone relations described before. The 'Allegretto' finale takes inspiration from Viennese dance music the composer had known since his childhood. Nonetheless, Schubert's delicate textural touch is never far away and his high aesthetic pretensions soon also return, especially in the accelerated and ultimately disquieting ending - the very last D flat/C semitone leaves the question of mode niggling.