

This Week at Kings Place

Mon 12 Apr Talking Art
St Pancras Rm **The Miner in Art**
6.30pm

Hall One Words on Monday
7pm **Fatima Bhutto - Songs of Blood and Sword**
In conversation with Henry Porter

Hall Two OUT HEAR
8pm **Exploring Sound and Time**
curated by Ensemble Plus-Minus

Wed 14 Apr Guardian Review Book Club
Hall One **Lorrie Moore**
7pm

Thu 15 Apr Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment:
Hall One Beethoven with Guts -
6.45pm **Beethoven Chamber Music: Flute & Strings**

Hall Two Off With Their Heads! - Comedy at Kings Place
8pm **Jim Tavare, Nick Helm and Tom Deacon (Regular MC)**

St Pancras Rm Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment:
8pm Beethoven with Guts - **'Who did Beethoven think he was?' Beethoven and Art**

Hall One Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment:
8.45pm Beethoven with Guts -
Beethoven Chamber Music: Wind Octets
with FREE post-concert performance

Exhibitions

Kings Place Gallery **Norman Cornish: A Shot Against Time, The Pit Road and Other Paintings**

Pangolin London **William Tucker: Sculpture & Drawing**

Next Sunday 18 April
Hall One 6.30 pm
The Greenwich Trio
Beethoven Piano Trio in B flat, Op. 97 *Archduke*
Mozart Piano Trio in G, K564
Shostakovich Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor, Op. 67

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

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

GREEN & FORTUNE

ROTUNDA
BAR • RESTAURANT • PRIVATE DINING

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

Sunday 11 April

London Chamber Music Series

**Graffin Quartet and
Denis Pascal (piano)**

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

London Chamber Music Series

Pre-concert Talk St Pancras Room, 5.20pm

Dr Peter Fribbins discusses the links between Elgar and Fritz Kreisler.

Graffin Quartet and Denis Pascal (piano) Hall One, 6.30pm

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Philippe Graffin | violin |
| Sonja van Beck | violin |
| Roger Chase | viola |
| Floris Mijnders | cello |

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
String Quartet in D major, Op. 20 No. 4 [Hob III:34]
(from the *Sun Quartets*) (1772)

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)
String Quartet in A minor (1922)

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)
Piano Quintet in A minor, Op. 84 (1918-19)

The newly named **Graffin Quartet** was formed at Philippe Graffin’s Consonances festival in France in 2009. It is constituted of long time chamber music partners with the goal of exploring, over the next few years, both the gems of the quartet repertoire as well as rarer, less often heard works. Tonight it is giving its first London performance.

Philippe Graffin writes: “The four of us have known each other for many years and have often performed together in various combinations. We felt that the quartet repertoire was an essential part of our individual development and we wanted to include it in our musical lives. Tonight’s performance of Kreisler’s beautiful quartet is in a way our first dream come true”.

Denis Pascal was born in Albi, where he started to learn the piano at the age of eleven. He is a Laureate of several international competitions. He has given many solo and chamber music performances in Europe, USA and Asia and is praised throughout the world by audiences and reviewers. As a soloist, he has appeared extensively in France, Japan and the USA. He is much sought after by various artists and groups and has received several awards for his recordings of Liszt’s 19 Hungarian Rhapsodies.

He is also very interested in rare music repertoire and had a great success with the world première of Joseph Marx’s piano music. A number of composers have written for him, such as Régis Campo, Jean-Philippe Bec and Guillaume Connesson. His individual style of playing the great repertoire (the piano concertos of Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Ravel etc.) and his defence of composers rarely played in concert halls, such as Cyril Scott, Joseph Marx, York Bowen, Ernest Chausson and Florent Schmidt place him among the finest French pianists of his generation.

Joseph Haydn – **String Quartet in D major, Op. 20 No. 4 [Hob III:34]**
(from the *Sun Quartets*)

I. Allegro di molto
II. Un poco adagio affetuoso
III. Menuetto: Allegretto alla zingarese
IV. Presto scherzando

Various south German, Bohemian and Austrian composers cultivated the string quartet in the mid eighteenth century—Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf, Johann Vanhal, Franz Asplmayr and Christian Cannabich, to name but a few—but Joseph Haydn did most to define it as an independent musical genre. The genre grew from the divertimento, a title used to signify solo instrumental music genre but as comparatively insignificant as its name implies and compatible with various styles and scoring. Only as this meaning gradually changed was the string quartet born. Haydn’s first quartets were composed over three distinct periods: ten early works for Baron Fürnberg (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 while refining the so-called sonata style, as it was then known—as distinct from the ‘theatrical’ or ‘orchestral’ styles. The middle group, to which this evening’s quartet belongs, established a four-movement form that would soon become familiar: two fast movements framing a slow movement and a minuet, albeit 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 greater emotional expression in the arts is represented most famously in music by Haydn’s vocabulary of syncopations, leaps and articulated passages. 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 while, unusually, three of the six quartets that make up the Op. 20 set have fugal finales.

Haydn’s greater emotional range and mature Viennese style are evident virtually throughout this D-major quartet, the fourth of the ‘Sun’ quartets—nicknamed on account of the rising sun emblem that featured on the early editions. Its opening *Allegro di molto* is vivid in effect and characterised by an introductory rhythmic figure. Its instruments’ virtuosic interplay is almost constant; the false hope of recapitulation Haydn gives in the development is also striking. The popular D-minor second movement comprises a theme and four variations. Haydn’s remarkable *concertante* writing, with each instrument variously taking centre stage, looks back to an earlier era, but his poignant theme and its elaboration are daringly new. The gypsy rhetoric (*alla zingarese*) of the third movement informs its minuet and trio: the cross-rhythms willfully confuse the triple-metre minuet; a cello solo characterises the trio. Speckled with chromatic inflections, Haydn’s brilliantly inventive *Presto scherzando* finale typifies his new string quartet style.

Fritz Kreisler – String Quartet in A minor

I. Fantasia: Moderato – Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo: Allegro vivo con spirito
III. Einleitung und Romanze: Allegretto – Andante con moto
IV. Finale: Allegro molto moderato

Violinists still revere Fritz Kreisler. His intense, generous ‘French’ vibrato set him apart from other violinists of the time, as did the idiosyncratic arrangements and pastiches he scored for violin, among them the much-loved *Tambourin chinois*, *Schön Rosmarin* and *Caprice viennois*. Despite the apparently effortless successes he enjoyed both as a child and a teenage prodigy, his early adult career stalled. Only in 1899, after his debut with

the Berlin Philharmonic, did his international reputation grow with any significance. Elgar later composed his famous Violin Concerto for him in 1910, though having served briefly with the Austrian army, Kreisler was forced from the stage when he moved with his wife to her native country, the United States, in the mid 1910s. He was belatedly granted American citizenship in 1943.

Kreisler’s recordings, pastiches and arrangements have, on the whole, outlasted his original compositions. (I do not include in the latter category the many works he wrote in the ‘olden style’ and which he mischievously ascribed to various eighteenth-century composers. Kreisler’s admission in 1935 that these works were ‘hoaxes’ divided critics of the time.) His sole String Quartet is inscribed as a ‘tribute to Vienna’ but sounds nothing like these charming miniatures. Dramatic to begin with, the Fantasia proceeds in its main *Allegro moderato* section towards a more ghostly realm. The vibrant Scherzo, marked *Allegro vivo con spirito*, lilts along with rather ragged rhythms and harmonies that evoke a more Romantic past; the ensuing trio is especially languid by comparison. The slow movement is also given a snazzier main title, *Einleitung und Romanze (Introduction and Romance)*; its emotionalism again shows Kreisler’s ‘unmodern’ approach in a positive light. The witty finale continues the theme by invoking, and seemingly parodying, a Viennese dance style. The music reaches a dramatic zenith that recalls the cello’s dramatic introduction to the quartet—first merely in temperament, then through its actual repetition—before ending quietly, with muted strings.

Edward Elgar – Piano Quintet in A minor, Op. 84

I. Moderato – Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Andante – Allegro

The Piano Quintet comes from a famous group of works which Elgar wrote in the immediate post-war era. Together with the String Quartet, the Violin Sonata and the Cello Concerto (significantly, all in E minor), the Piano Quintet was written after Elgar had retreated to West Sussex. Indeed, Alice Elgar revealed a programmatic element inspired by lightning striking woodland above Elgar’s cottage and concealed beneath the quintet’s abstract veneer. (A tale spun by the composer’s friend Algernon Blackwell portrayed the trees as the dead forms of a settlement of Spanish monks!). Elgar’s own description of the first movement as ‘ghostly stuff’ supports the theory and explains the various Spanish references that pervade the quintet. The *Moderato* introduction contrasts a piano line that is plainsong-like in design with ethereal utterances from the strings. The following *Allegro* has an unyielding triple-time motif until, after a pause, the “Spanish” second subject is heard on the violins (the accompanying *pizzicato* chords in the manner of a guitar is a giveaway). The radiant *Adagio* begins with a seamless, longing melody for viola, and the cyclical nature of the work continues through the last movement, which begins with a direct reference to the first movement’s introduction. Another *Allegro* follows, with unison strings a recurrent feature, before an A-major conclusion with (potentially) jazz-inspired flourishes provides a resolute finale.