

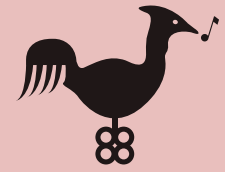


Hellens Manor
St Bartholomew's Church
The Walwyn Arms

HELLENS MUSIC

6 — 10 — May — 2026







Dear friends,

We, as Artistic Directors of Hellensmusic, extend the warmest of welcomes to you all, whether you are returning visitors to the festival, or discovering us for the first time. Our fantastic team strives as always to present you with the most joyful week of music-making possible.

Our original festival director and legendary pianist, Christian Blackshaw, is back, as well as our phenomenal colleagues, Bruno Delepelaire, Julien Quentin, Charlotte Scott and Xiaowen Shang. We are additionally pleased to bring the brilliant Adrien Boisseau and Michael Cox to our fold, and Alexander Jones and Jonathan Helm complete the picture on the final Sunday. However, perhaps what galvanises us most is performing with this year's group of tremendously gifted students, and we are also proud to highlight them in our new 'Spotlight' series.

As many of you will know, our festival founder and generous host Adam Munthe passed away last month. Without him we would not be here and the wonder that is Hellensmusic would not be happening. All that he had to offer, he gave to us all with love and open generosity. The energy and abandon with which he threw open Hellens' ancient door was the most warm and genuine invitation into a haven where creative energy could be set to cook and flourish. He talked to the young artists with an enthusiasm that left them inspired and hungry; he cajoled and gave confidence to already seasoned artists to embrace the passing on of their expertise and love for music to the new generation. Adam was a dynamo, supporting and egging on all musicians present to dream, understand and express more, to open our hearts and love music more, whilst at the same time as always demanding rebellion and misbehaviour. People over the years asked what drove him, what possessed him to make something as beautiful as Hellensmusic happen. Adam loved music, he loved Hellens and he absolutely adored sharing this with you, his baby blue eyes sparkling, his arms infinitely outstretched. Bless you Adam.

Matthew Hunt and Maya Iwabuchi,
Artistic Directors



concerts

Thursday 7 May

7.30pm | St. Bartholomew's Church

Modes of Travel: Walking with Bach, Across the Ocean with Dvořák, Into the Air with Vaughan Williams

Friday 8 May

6.30pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Golden Light to Dusk: Works by Schmitt, Bonis and Brahms

9.30pm | Walwyn Arms, Much Marcle

300 Years of the Greatest Hits at the Pub

Saturday 9 May

5pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Masters in their Prime: Fauré, Poulenc and Mendelssohn

8.30pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Eternal Lines: Late Works by Fauré and Schubert

Sunday 10 May

11am | Great Barn, Hellens

The Storm Before the Calm: Connesson and Schubert

3pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Concert for the Inner Child: Janáček, Saint-Saëns and Ridout



masterclasses

Wednesday 6 May

9.30am to 10.30am / Music Room VIOLIN

11.30am to 1.30pm / Great Barn PIANO

2.30pm to 4.30pm / Music room WINDS

4pm to 5pm / Haywain Barn VIOLIN

Thursday 7 May

9.30am to 10.30am / Music Room VIOLIN

11am to 1pm / Music Room VIOLA

3.30pm to 6.30pm / Great Barn PIANO

Friday 8 May

9.30am to 10.30am / St. Bartholomew's Church VIOLIN

11am to 1pm / Music Room CELLO

11am to 1pm / Haywain Barn WINDS

11am to 1pm / St. Bartholomew's Church PIANO

Saturday 9 May

3.30pm to 4.30pm / Music Room WINDS



Thursday 7 May

7.30pm | St. Bartholomew's Church

Modes of Travel: Walking with Bach, Across the Ocean with Dvořák, Into the Air with Vaughan Williams

C. Debussy *Syrinx* for Solo Flute L.129

I. Stravinsky *Suite Italienne* for Violin and Piano: Introduzione
Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet: No.3

F. Chopin Sonata in G minor for Cello and Piano, Op.65: Scherzo

M. Ravel Sonata for Violin and Piano No.2: *Blues*: Moderato

J.S. Bach Suite for Flute and Strings in B minor, BWV 1067: Polonaise,
Menuet, Badinerie

R. Vaughan Williams *The Lark Ascending*

Interval

D. Milhaud *Scaramouche*, Op.165b: *Brasileira*

H. Duparc *L'Invitation au Voyage*

H. Villa Lobos *The Jet Whistle* for Flute and Cello, W.493

W.A. Mozart Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major, K. 305: Allegro di molto

A. Glazunov *Reverie Orientale* for Clarinet and String Quartet

B. Howard *Fly Me to the Moon*

A. Dvořák String Quartet in F major, Op.96 ('American'): Finale

Hellensmusic Artists

Maya Iwabuchi violin

Charlotte Scott violin

Adrien Boisseau viola

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Michael Cox flute

Matthew Hunt clarinet

Julien Quentin piano

Xiaowen Shang piano

Masterclass Students

Cyrus Yuen violin

Emil Hartikainen violin

Eve Quigley viola

Isobel Neary Adams viola

Hotin Chan cello

Rugilė Juknevičiūtė cello

Bernát Buzzi clarinet

Alasdair Cottee oboe

Dylan Roberts bassoon

Jo Braun french horn



Friday 8 May
6.30pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Golden Light to Dusk: Works by Schmitt, Bonis and Brahms

Hellensmusic Young Artists Spotlight

F. Schmitt Sonatine en Trio, Op.85 for Flute, Clarinet and Piano

M. Bonis Suite en Trio, Op.59 for Flute, Violin and Piano

J. Brahms String Sextet No.2 in G Major, Op.36



Hellensmusic Artists

Charlotte Scott violin

Maya Iwabuchi violin

Adrien Boisseau viola

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Michael Cox flute

Matthew Hunt clarinet

Julien Quentin piano

Xiaowen Shang piano

Masterclass Students

Emil Hartikainen violin

Isobel Neary Adams viola

Hotin Chan cello

Evelyn Liang piano



F. Schmitt (1870-1958) | Sonatine en Trio, Op.85 for Flute, Clarinet and Piano

I. Assez animé; II. Assez vif; III. Très lent; IV. Animé

The music of the French composer Florent Schmitt defies categorisation. Notably, he was a member of 'Les Apaches', a group founded in 1903 which brought together prominent people in the arts – musicians, writers, and artists: Maurice Ravel was one of its members. His works, which are varied in style, show great originality and strength. French sensibility infuses much of his music and there are some roots in German Romanticism. But there are exotic influences, too. Schmitt's orchestral output includes three symphonies, and he composed duos, trios, and quartets for different combinations; vocal works, his setting of Psalm 47 being particularly renowned; ballet scores; and a number of piano pieces with descriptive titles.

The first movement of this compact Sonatine of 1934/5, transparent in texture, has a breezy opening on piano, increases in intricacy, and maintains its joyful spirit to the end. Fragments of scales open the more mysterious second movement, which is coloured by some dissonant harmony. The restful, slow-moving third movement offers a point of repose: here, the two wind instruments are entwined in an engaging duet, underpinned by the piano. Muscular chords usher in the bullish Finale, which rounds off this charming work in high spirits.

M. Bonis (1858-1937) | Suite en Trio, Op.59 for Flute, Violin and Piano

I. Sérénade: Allegretto; II. Pastorale: Andantino; III. Scherzo: Allegro con moto

The French composer Mélanie Hélène Bonis acts, in some ways, as a link between the Romantic era and the Impressionist movement. Living at a time when it was very difficult for talented female composers to receive the recognition they deserved, she wrote under the pseudonym 'Mel Bonis'. There are over 300 works to her name in a variety of genres – orchestral, choral, and chamber music, as well as songs and compositions for piano and organ. In her music, there are traces of her teacher César Franck, not least in its craftsmanship, and of her one-time fellow student Debussy.

Lyricism is to the fore, as is evident from the languid opening movement of this Suite of 1903, which unfolds like a gentle stream: there are sad undertones and the piano is in a supporting role. The slower central Pastorale paints an idyllic rural landscape, the melody line meandering over the drone notes in bass on piano (a feature of movements so titled). The Scherzo which, unusually, concludes the work, is playful with perhaps a sense of mischief: its eddying motion is irresistible.

J. Brahms (1833-1897) | String Sextet No.2 in G Major, Op.36

I. Allegro non troppo; II. Scherzo – Allegro non troppo – Presto giocoso; III. Poco Adagio; IV. Poco Allegro

Was there ever a composer who set for himself more exacting standards than Johannes Brahms? So much so that, living, as he always felt, in the shadow of Beethoven, he destroyed a huge number of his compositions, including at least twenty string quartets. Given the outstanding calibre of the chamber works that have survived – numbering around twenty-five, including a mere three string quartets – one can only wonder what posterity has lost. It is perhaps unsurprising, with Brahms being so daunted by the prospect of releasing string quartets to the public after the extraordinary achievements of Beethoven in this field, that his first two forays into chamber music for strings alone were for string sextet (pairs of violins, violas, and cellos), a medium that had been almost totally neglected since the days of Boccherini. He completed the first in 1860 and this second Sextet in 1864/5. It was clear that the possibilities presented by the deep sonorities of two violas and two cellos greatly appealed to Brahms with his love of weaving tapestries of sound. The first Sextet is genial in character; the second Sextet, though containing the most celestial writing, inhabits a very different emotional world. Despite its home key of G major, it is bittersweet and

has a twilight feel, an aura of resignation. There is a Brahmsian warmth to the expansive first movement, ingeniously built from two lyrical themes. It begins with a murmur, an ominous oscillating figure on the viola as a prelude to the first theme. This figure is pivotal, appearing in different guises and at different pitches throughout the movement, creating an obsessive presence. Although introduced as an accompanying figure, it moves constantly from background to foreground, creating wonderful harmonies around it. Based on a Gavotte, the minor-key Scherzo that follows has the feel of an Intermezzo (though it is not named as such). Elegance and haziness combine to create a gossamer texture: a boisterous central section, in effect, a peasant dance, and an animated ending provide marked contrast. The theme of the Poco Adagio is treated to a set of far-reaching variations: the writing is ethereal, the prevailing tone one of lament: sighing gestures characterise a movement which, at its close, moves from deep sadness to serenity. The scintillating sound at the outset of the Finale heralds an exuberant, upbeat movement which dispels the undercurrent of unrest, bringing this magnificent work to a jubilant conclusion.



Friday 8 May

9.30pm | Walwyn Arms, Much Marcle

300 Years of the Greatest Hits at the Pub

An eclectic celebration of music spanning three centuries. From classical masterpieces to rock anthems, pop favourites, and iconic film scores, this programme offers a vibrant and unexpected journey through time.



Maya Iwabuchi violin
Adrien Boisseau viola
Bruno Delepelaire cello

Michael Cox flute
Matthew Hunt clarinet
Julien Quentin piano



Saturday 9 May
5pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Masters in their Prime: Fauré, Poulenc and Mendelssohn

Hellensmusic Young Artists Spotlight

F. Poulenc Sextet for Piano and Winds, FP 100

G. Fauré Piano Quartet No.2 in G minor, Op.45

F. Mendelssohn String Quintet No.2 in B-Flat Major, Op.87



Hellensmusic Artists

Charlotte Scott violin
Maya Iwabuchi violin
Adrien Boisseau viola
Bruno Delepelaire cello
Michael Cox flute
Julien Quentin piano
Xiaowen Shang piano

Masterclass Students

Cyrus Yuen violin
Eve Quigley viola
Rugilė Juknevičiūtė cello
Bernát Buzzi clarinet
Alasdair Cottee oboe
Dylan Roberts bassoon
Jo Braun french horn



F. Poulenc (1899-1963) | Sextet for Piano and Winds, FP 100

I. Allegro vivace; II. Divertissement: Andantino; III. Finale: Prestissimo

Francis Poulenc was a prominent member of Les Six, a group of six French-based composers established in the 1920s who, reacting against the Romantic and Impressionist movements, sought a return to simplicity, lucidity and perhaps a closer connection to everyday life. Indeed, music heard at a circus and cabarets were inspirations for this light-hearted Sextet which the composer wrote in 1931/2. There is a palpable manic energy to the opening of the work, with its powerful rising scales introducing a largely percussive movement of complex rhythm and lively interchange. An affecting bassoon solo initiates a slower, soulful

central section, its calm spirit reinforced by the other instruments as they engage in the dialogue. It has been suggested that the slow movement is a parody on the divertimentos of the classical period. Its slow, somewhat nostalgic outer sections frame a perky middle section of greatly increased speed and energy. Ragtime influences the swashbuckling tongue-in-cheek Finale. Moments from the first two movements return in a movement which features rapid shifts in mood and wonderful interplay between the wind instruments. It ends with a serious, pensive coda – reminiscent of Ravel?

intensity at times, the Adagio is the heart of the Quartet. The slow-burning main theme eventually takes shape. The movement was inspired by the memory of bells Fauré had heard in his childhood in Foix in South-West France: the distant tolling can be detected in an intermittent repeated pattern on piano. This provides the backdrop for the plaintive voice of the viola. There are fragments of earlier

movements in the variegated Finale, which arrives with an explosive force. It is built on three themes and its forward momentum is inexorable, aided by the triplets which are such an essential feature of it. A delightful merging of various themes brings to a close one of the pinnacles of Fauré's chamber music writing.

Interval

G. Fauré (1845-1924) | Piano Quartet No.2 in G minor, Op.45

I. Allegro molto moderato; II. Allegro molto; III. Adagio non troppo; IV. Finale: Allegro molto

The chamber works of Gabriel Fauré have a secure place in the history of the genre: his two piano quintets, two piano quartets and sole piano trio particularly testify not only to his supreme craftsmanship but to music of very real beauty. Within a broadly classical structure and with a good deal of refinement, his compositions display a rare fluidity, innovative harmony, lovely tonal colours and an emotional intensity. All these elements are to be found in his second Piano Quartet, composed in 1885/6. The work opens in high drama (this being rather less characteristic of Fauré, whose music is

known for its restraint): unison strings announcing a passionate melody against agitated piano arpeggios. The viola introduces the poetic second theme, and this limpid writing – and a third theme introduced in the development – alternate with the declamatory opening. There is an edginess to the short, breathless 'moto perpetuo' second movement. Quirky and syncopated, it finds room to bring back two themes from the first movement, thus establishing the cyclical nature of the work. Over in a flash, the music evaporates at the end. Essentially tranquil, though with an underlying

F. Mendelssohn (1809-1847) | String Quintet No.2 in B-Flat Major, Op.87

I. Allegro vivace; II. Andante scherzando; III. Adagio e lento; IV. Allegro molto vivace

Mendelssohn made a huge contribution to chamber music in the first half of the 19th century. His remarkable String Octet – which he composed at the age of 16 – is regarded by many as the greatest classical work written by any composer at such a tender age. His seven string quartets, two piano trios and two cello sonatas are central to the repertoire as are his two string quintets, the first written in 1826, the second being a late work, composed in 1845. At the outset of this String Quintet there is a striking similarity to the beginning of the youthful Octet referred to: a soaring melody on first violin over, in this case, the tremolos of the other four instruments. This sets the tone for a movement of overt lyricism. Whirling triplets propel

it forward, punctuated by a soothing descending motif. The Andante, in which the chirpy main theme is answered by pizzicato playing, is a movement of sheer delight: it affords temporary relief, not least through its change of pace, to the intensity of the opening Allegro. There is an unmistakable sense of yearning and of foreboding to the Adagio. Mystery, too, pervades it. This is a most poignant, almost tragic movement in which the violas and cello provide darker hues. Its desolation is compounded by insistent repeated notes and trembling wild tremolos. In the Finale, a 'call to attention' chord signals a return to the spirit of the first movement. It bristles with energy, pausing to admit interludes of calm, and finishes in a blaze of glory.



Saturday 9 May
8.30pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Eternal Lines: Late Works by Fauré and Schubert

G. Fauré Piano Trio in D Minor, Op.120

F. Schubert Piano Sonata No.21 in B-flat Major, D.960



Hellensmusic Artists

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Matthew Hunt clarinet

Christian Blackshaw piano

Masterclass Student

Adrian Herpe piano



G. Fauré (1845-1924) | Piano Trio in D Minor, Op.120

I. Allegro ma non troppo; II. Andantino; III. Allegro vivo

Given Fauré's attachment to the piano and the four wonderful chamber works he had written for piano and strings – two piano quintets and two piano quartets – it is perhaps surprising that he did not compose a piano trio until the very end of his life: for this Piano Trio was his penultimate composition, completed in 1923, the year before his death. It was, in fact, originally conceived for clarinet, cello and piano. Though a vein of lyricism, a feature of his music, runs through it, the melodic expressiveness and harmonic colouration are not totally consistent with his earlier works and reflect, to a degree, his long-held interest in Gregorian chant and modal harmonies. The opening of the Piano Trio is memorable: a rather melancholic, yet crystalline cello melody unfolds against a rippling

piano accompaniment. A second theme, equally eloquent, is introduced on the piano. In this Allegro, long lines evolve seamlessly from small motifs. In the Andantino, gentle repeated piano chords are the prelude to, and also the backbone of, the most graceful and wistful dialogue between violin and cello. New ideas are introduced, the piano takes on an increasing role and the mood intensifies in a movement of glorious harmony and clarity of texture. There are mini-climaxes and moments of reflection before the movement comes to a peaceful close. The Finale is a panoply of drama, vibrant energy, colour and conversation. It is full of contrasts with changes in tone and interjections and, driven by the sweeping ascending scales on piano, ends in joyous celebration.

F. Schubert (1797-1828) | Piano Sonata No.21 in B-flat Major, D.960

I. Molto moderato; II. Andante sostenuto; III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace con delicatezza; IV. Allegro ma non troppo

Just as Beethoven composed arguably his greatest masterpieces in the last few years of his life, so too did Schubert and, in the latter's case, many of them within his last year, including the final three piano sonatas, which are often seen as a triptych. Today they are rightly regarded as a cornerstone of the piano repertoire, yet these works languished in comparative obscurity for 100 years after the composer's death. A turning point was the championing of them by pianist Artur Schnabel in 1928 during the course of the Schubert centennial. The three sonatas (D958, D959 and D960) complement one another perfectly, though they are markedly different in character. So idiosyncratic, so intimate and so utterly profound, they all display striking originality, especially in their harmonic freedom. They have an extraordinary sense of spaciousness and true nobility. That they were written when Schubert was in deep suffering and despair makes this all the more astonishing.

Now universally regarded as one of the greatest of all piano works, this final Sonata transports by its sheer beauty. It is magnificent in structure but introspective in mood. Painted on a vast canvas, the first movement, punctuated by low mysterious trills and pauses, unfolds so naturally from its heavenly

opening theme to reveal a plethora of ideas with dark undertones. Striking, often unexpected, key changes add to the drama. Behind its stream of lyricism there is an air of troubled resignation. The desolate other-worldly slow movement is one of Schubert's most remarkable creations. The theme is offset by a rocking accompaniment, creating an almost hypnotic effect. A change of texture is provided by the hymnal central section, with its rich chordal writing. In this slow movement, Schubert employs the whole compass of the keyboard, interjections in different registers flashing across the melody. Between the deeply contemplative slow movement and the Finale lies a brief, quicksilver Scherzo. This affords great relief and the use of the higher register gives the music an angelic feel. Schubert makes it clear in the movement title that it is to be played 'delicately': the brief, more serious Trio is enlivened by its off-beat accents. The flow of melodic invention is nowhere more apparent than in the ostensibly cheerful concluding Rondo. However, the insistent dotted rhythms and continued changes in key betray an undercurrent of agitation as do the recurrence of short, repeated phrases. A remarkable coda brings this magnificent Sonata to a most glorious conclusion.



Sunday 10 May
11am | Great Barn, Hellens

The Storm Before the Calm: Connesson and Schubert

Hellensmusic Young Artists Spotlight

G. Connesson *Techno-Parade* for Flute, Clarinet and Piano

F. Schubert Piano Quintet in A Major, D.667 ('The Trout')

Hellensmusic Artists

Maya Iwabuchi violin

Adrien Boisseau viola

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Alexander Jones double bass

Michael Cox flute

Matthew Hunt clarinet

Christian Blackshaw piano

Julien Quentin piano

Xiaowen Shang piano



G. Connesson (1970-) | *Techno-Parade* for Flute, Clarinet and Piano

In the music of the contemporary French composer Guillaume Connesson, one can trace influences of a good number of his past compatriots, including Debussy, Ravel, and Messiaen, and of many other composers too, including Wagner and Richard Strauss. Orchestral, concertante and vocal works feature prominently in his output but he also wrote stage music, film scores and much chamber music, including the well-known *Techno-Parade*,

written in 2002, and commissioned for the 10th Anniversary of the Festival de l'Empéri. The stated aim of the work was to capture the relentless, mechanical drive and energy of techno music. To achieve such an objective, this short, high tempo, single-movement trio employs two compelling motifs, repetition, insistent rhythm, and percussive piano techniques, including paper and brushes on piano strings.

Interval

F. Schubert (1797-1828) | Piano Quintet in A Major, D.667 ('The Trout')

I. Allegro vivace; II. Andante; III. Scherzo: Presto; IV. Theme and Variations: Andantino-Allegretto; V. Finale: Allegro giusto

Schubert's so-called 'Trout' Quintet, composed in 1819, is a work of such unbridled lyricism that it is surely simply the outpouring of a creative genius. Yet it was born of a commission from the arts patron Sylvester Paumgartner. The terms of that commission were that the composer should write a quintet for the combination of piano, violin, viola, cello, and double bass, following the model of the quintet by Hummel. The resulting composition is a work in five movements rather than the traditional four, the extra one being another slow movement, taking the form of a set of variations based on his already popular song *Die Forelle* ('The Trout'). The Quintet's first movement, its opening flourish setting the mood, bears testimony to the wealth of memorable melody and innovative harmonic language that characterise the whole work. This Allegro is effervescent, and the triplets with which it begins are a dominant feature of the movement. In contrast to the festive nature of the Allegro, the flowing Andante is serene and emanates from three principal themes, the central one being rather darker in a movement suffused with light. Its two sections are symmetrical, the second being, in essence, a transposition

of the first. The dance-like Scherzo announces itself in exhilarating fashion, its merriment only briefly checked by the stabilising Trio. In the Andantino that follows, the disarmingly simple theme (Schubert's song *Die Forelle*, relating the trout's ultimately vain attempt to evade the fisherman's hook) is treated to five variations in which melodic decoration is paramount and prominence is given, in turn, to individual instruments. The first variation is defined by tremolos in both the piano and violin writing; the second by the emergence of the strings from their supporting role; the third by its very fast passagework on the piano; the fourth by its repeated chords and impassioned cry; and the fifth by its melancholic mood. The movement is rounded off by a quickening of tempo and a re-emergence of the theme in the strings. Nothing more perfectly exemplifies the essence of the Quintet than its final Allegro, which is gypsy-like in character. Like the Andante, the second of its two sections is a repeat of the first in a new key. This joyful movement brings to an end one of Schubert's most enduring masterpieces, a work marked by its luminosity, sense of spontaneity, unique sonority and, perhaps above all, endless flow of golden melody.



Sunday 10 May
3pm | Great Barn, Hellens

Concert for the Inner Child: Janáček, Saint-Saëns and Ridout

Hellensmusic Young Artists Spotlight

A. Ridout *Ferdinand the Bull* for Speaker and Violin

L. Janáček *Mládí*

C. Saint-Saëns *Le Carnaval des Animaux: Grande fantaisie zoologique*

Hellensmusic Artists

Maya Iwabuchi violin

Charlotte Scott violin

Adrien Boisseau viola

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Alexander Jones double bass

Michael Cox flute

Matthew Hunt clarinet

Julien Quentin piano

Xiaowen Shang piano

Jonathan Helm percussion

Masterclass Students

Alasdair Cottee oboe

Bernát Buzzi clarinet

Dylan Roberts bassoon

Jo Braun French horn



A. Ridout (1934-1996) *Ferdinand the Bull* for Speaker and Violin

Many of the works of the late 20th century British composer Alan Ridout, which include church, orchestral, and chamber music, were intended for children. *Ferdinand the Bull*, which Ridout wrote in 1971, is a notable example. The story is taken from a classic children's book by the American author Munro Leaf, which was adapted into a Disney animated short film in 1938 and a more recent movie in 2017. The tale of a gentle, flower-loving little bull whose characteristics were

so alien to the norm is a most touching one. Realising that music can greatly enhance text, Ridout has ingeniously woven a solo violin part into the story line. The capacity of the violin to express the widest range of emotions is unquestioned and, sometimes with short phrases, at other times with more extended motifs, Ridout's musical score has most movingly reflected, and indeed enriched, the words of this famous tale.

L. Janáček (1854-1928) | *Mládí*

I. Allegro; II. Andante sostenuto; III. Vivace; IV. Allegro animato

Mládí ('Youth') is a woodwind sextet composed by Janáček in 1924 to mark his 70th birthday. The instrumentation is flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, and bass clarinet. In it, he looks back to his childhood days spent at the Old Brno Monastery in what is now Czechia. A playful composition, it exploits to the full the potentialities of this woodwind instrumental ensemble and employs a very specific technique, that of shaping individual phrases to follow the natural rhythm of the speaking voice. An oboe melody introduces the work, and the mostly jovial tone is set in the opening Allegro, which features insistent repeated patterns on various instruments and imitative textures. The Andante, which contains free variations on a theme, is

more solemn and contemplative as the composer remembers loneliness and dwells on less happy memories at the Monastery. Happiness returns in the Vivace, in which Janáček borrows a theme from one of his earlier compositions, 'March of the Blue Boys'. The movement is a scherzo of swirling sound which relates back to his time with the young choristers at the Monastery: two slower and gently undulating interludes are more relaxed. Alongside new material, the main theme of the opening movement is recalled in the buoyant Finale, which has ongoing and striking changes in tempo. More dreamy passages do not dampen the excitement, and the work ends with bravura.

Interval

C. Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Le Carnaval des animaux: Grande fantaisie zoologique

I. Introduction et marche royale du lion; II. Poules et coqs; III. Hémiones (animaux véloces); IV. Tortues; V. L'éléphant; VI. Kangourous; VII. Aquarium; VIII. Personnages à longues oreilles; IX. Le coucou au fond des bois; X. Volière; XI. Pianistes; XII. Fossiles; XIII. Le cygne; XIV. Finale

Saint-Saëns was a musical child prodigy and, across his long life, went on to write a profusion of music in virtually every field. However, for all the immediate lyrical appeal of these works, he is known above all for *Carnival of the Animals*, an amusing sequence of pieces he composed in 1886 that were, in fact, intended for private amusement rather than public performance. Indeed, the suite was not published until after his death. This captivating zoological fantasy, which is in 14 short movements, is the product of a rare musical imagination. Saint-Saëns, who always had a keen interest in animals, composed it in an Austrian village after a calamitous concert tour in Germany.

The arresting Introduction to the work, which opens with sparkling tremolos, leads into the magisterial Royal March of the Lion (Marche royale du lion) in which the strings respond with pride to the grandeur of the piano chords: the intermittent rumbling figure in the bass represents the lion's great roar. Hens and Roosters (Poules et coqs) captures perfectly the former darting here and there, pecking at grain, and, on clarinet, the rooster's crow. Lightning scales up and down the keyboard express the relentless, headlong gallop of Wild Donkeys (Hémiones).

The tongue-in-cheek Tortoises (Tortues) is a parody of the animals' lethargic pace, conveyed through a slow-motion version of Offenbach's famous Can-Can. Equally humorous is the use of the double bass to suggest the lumbering movements of The Elephant (L'éléphant) waltzing: this is offset by the lightness of the piano, enhancing the comic effect. Abrupt jumping chords and pauses depict

Kangaroos (Kangourous) hopping here and there at unpredictable moments. A serene underwater world is conjured up in Aquarium, the shimmering textures perhaps bringing to mind tropical fish swimming in a mysterious, dimly lit ambiance. Characters with Long Ears (Personnages à longues oreilles) are considered to be donkeys (though some are of the opinion that those referred to are music critics!): the alternation of very high and very low notes on violin is representative of the animals' braying hee-haw.

In The Cuckoo in the Depths of the Woods (Le coucou au fond des bois) quiet, resonant piano chords create the forest setting from which the bird can be clearly heard: the clarinet persistently mimics its characteristic two-note call, penetrating the silence of the forest. It is clear from the fluttering melodies and high-pitched trills on piano that flocks of tuneful birds inhabit Aviary (Volière): one, represented by the flute, is particularly melodious. Pianists, being primates, are satirically included, incessantly and tediously practising scales and exercises, and demonstrating their frustration at the results! In another satirical take, Fossils (Fossiles) (non-living animals) contains old but well-known tunes, these being seen as cultural fossils: one can detect, percussively, the clatter of ancient bones. Most famous of all, The Swan (Le cygne), by means of the cello, encapsulates the grace of the bird gliding effortlessly across the lake: the piano arpeggios beautifully support the cello's unbroken melodic line. In the rousing Finale, tunes and snippets from previous movements are recalled to create a frenzy of activity, a true carnival atmosphere.



Christian Blackshaw piano

A deeply passionate and sensitive pianist, Christian Blackshaw is celebrated for the incomparable musicianship of his performances. His playing combines tremendous emotional depth with great understanding. Born in Cheshire, England, he studied with Gordon Green at the Royal College Manchester and Royal Academy London, winning the gold medals at each. He then became the first British pianist to study at the Leningrad Conservatoire with Moisei Halpin and later worked closely with Sir Clifford Curzon in London.

He has performed worldwide and in festivals as recitalist and soloist with many renowned conductors, including Sir Simon Rattle, Gianandrea Noseda, Sir Donald Runnicles, Herbert Blomstedt, Trevor Pinnock, Neeme Järvi and Yannick Nézet-Séguin and is the founder director of the Hellensmusic Festival which was established in 2013.

His hugely acclaimed Wigmore Hall complete Mozart Piano Sonatas series was recorded for Wigmore Hall Live and released in four volumes. Critics have been unanimous in their praise, describing these “landmark” recordings as “captivating”, “magical” and “masterful”. Volume 4 was named as one of the Best Classical Recordings in the New York Times in addition to Gramophone Magazine’s Top 50 Greatest Mozart Recordings.

Recent notable performances include the Mozart cycle in Tokyo, Beijing, Shanghai, Montreal and Snape, his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra, in addition to performances in the Schwetzingen, Schubertiada Vilabertran, Lericci, Oxford, Aldeburgh and Edinburgh International Festivals. He was awarded an MBE for services to Music in the New Year 2019 Honours List.

Further appearances are Wigmore Hall London, Toradze Festival Tbilisi, Salle Bourgie Montreal, Palau de la Musica Barcelona, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées Paris, an extensive tour in China and Artist in Residence with Orchestre Métropolitain and Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

Adrien Boisseau viola

Adrien Boisseau entered the Paris Conservatory CNSM at the age of 14, becoming a student of Jean Sulem.

In 2009, at the age of 17, Adrien won the First Prize as well as the Audience Award at the International Max Rostal Competition in Berlin. Two years later, in 2011, he was invited to make his solo debut at the Berlin Philharmonic with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin conducted by Krzysztof Urbanski.

Since 2013 Adrien has perfected his music skills under the guidance of the teachers of the Kronberg Academy: András Schiff, Nobuko Imai, Steven Isserlis, Christoph Eschenbach, Ivry Gitlis. He has also taken part in master classes held in other renowned academies, including Prussia Cove in Cornwall and Verbier, Switzerland, two magical places where he developed his musical ideas and met the best young soloists of his generation.

In 2014, Adrien won the title of Young Artist of the Year of the International Classical Music Awards (ICMA). During the concert at Warsaw Philharmonic Hall, he played the Romance by Bruch with the Polish Iuventus Orchestra conducted by José Maria Florencio. The jury described his performance with the words: “At his young age, Adrien Boisseau is, quite apart from his technical skills and the beauty of his sound, a particularly mature and introspective musician”.

Adrien’s life completely changed in 2015 when he was invited to join the famous Quatuor Ebène, one of the best string quartets in the world. He performed with the quartet in the most prestigious halls (Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Carnegie Hall) and with the most renowned musicians (Mitsuko Uchida, Matthias Goerne, Anne Sofie von Otter, Nicholas Angelich, Martin Fröst).

After three very fruitful years with the Ébène Quartet, the artist decided to follow his own path. In the 2019/2020 season, he performed at the Schubertiade in Hohenems (Austria), at La Folle Journée in Nantes (France), at the Arts Center in Seoul (Korea), at the Arsenal in Metz (France), as well as at the festivals in Evian (France) and Bergen (Norway).

Adrien Boisseau performed as a soloist with many world-famous orchestras, such as: Orchestre de chambre d’Auvergne, Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Novaya Rossiya Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonieorchester Liechtenstein, Les Siècles, Orchestre National de Metz, Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse. He played under the baton of such conductors as: Tugan Sokhiev, Krzysztof Urbanski or François-Xavier Roth. Adrien Boisseau plays a magnificent viola made by Yair Hod Fainas in Paris.



Michael Cox flute

Immersion in the widest and richest variety of music activity has always fascinated and inspired flautist Michael Cox.

He has contrasted his tenures as solo flute of the London and BBC Symphony Orchestras with principal flute positions in chamber orchestras (Academy of St Martin in the Fields, London Mozart Players and Britten Sinfonia) and in chamber ensembles (the LSO chamber ensemble, Academy of St Martin's chamber ensemble and Haffner and Albion Wind ensembles). A keen interest in new music led to him working directly not only with such great composers as Dutilleux, Messiaen, Berio, Boulez, Stockhausen, Takemitsu, Adams, Reich, Ades, Tippett and Lutoslawski but also with many other leading composers of the younger generations. It furthermore led to him being invited to join the London Sinfonietta, Britain's leading avant garde music ensemble.

As a soloist, he has performed on all continents, recorded widely, and given many premieres of works written for and dedicated to him. Additionally, his professorship at the Royal Academy of Music in London, classes and courses around the world, orchestral training website "Principal Chairs" (designed to help young aspiring professionals) and books (which aim to provide the most all encompassing overview of flute playing yet attempted), bear testimony to his passion as musical educator. Other endeavours include performing on the traverso or baroque flute, featuring in film and gaming soundtracks, collaborating with pop and jazz musicians, and studying piano, voice, bansuri and the viola. Future priorities include learning the cornet.

Bruno Delepelaire cello

Bruno Delepelaire owes the fact that he became a cellist to his grandmother, an enthusiastic amateur cellist. As a five-year-old, he also wanted to learn the instrument. The cello lessons with his first cello teacher Erwan Fauré were formative experiences for him. Bruno Delepelaire later studied at the Paris Conservatoire under Philippe Muller.

In 2012 he went to Berlin to continue his training under Jens Peter Maintz at the University of the Arts and under Ludwig Quandt at the Orchestra Academy of the Berliner Philharmoniker, before getting the position of first solo cellist of the Berliner Philharmoniker in 2013.

Bruno Delepelaire gained orchestral experience with the Verbier Festival Orchestra, the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra, and as a student of the Orchestra Academy of the Berliner Philharmoniker.

As a soloist, he has performed with the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Bielefeld Philharmoniker, the Saarbrücken Rundfunkorchester, the Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie, the Berliner Barocksolisten, the Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen, the Münchner Rundfunkorchester, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre de l'opéra de Nice, the Aalborg Symfoniorkester, under conductors such as Semyon Bychkov, Reinhard Goebel, Alexander Kalajdzic, Matthias Pintscher, Michael Sanderling, Thomas Sondergard.

The cellist has won several awards, including the first prize at the "Karl Davidoff International Cello Competition" (2012) and the Markneukirchen International Instrumental Competition (2013).

Bruno Delepelaire plays a cello made by Matteo Goffriller, on loan from the Karolina Blaberg Foundation.



Jonathan Helm percussion

After graduating from the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Jonathan embarked on a freelance career as a percussionist and educator.

Jonathan has worked with many UK orchestras over the years, including BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Concert Orchestra, The Philharmonia, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Hallé Orchestra.

Recently, Jonathan has also performed with Bristol Ensemble and London Concertante. However, he has had a long connection with the Orchestra of Welsh National Opera as their Associate Principal Percussionist.

As well as a busy performing schedule, Jonathan has always been involved in music education with many music services, Cardiff University, Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, and recently, Malvern College. Away from music, Jonathan is a keen cook and baker, focussing on artisan sourdough, supplying some bread locally and working some shifts in a local bakery!

Matthew Hunt clarinet

One of Europe's leading clarinetists, Matthew Hunt is a distinctive musician, renowned for the vocal quality of his playing and his ability to communicate with audiences.

Matthew began his musical career as a chorister in Lichfield Cathedral, where he received the invaluable training of singing for at least two hours each day. Singing and singers have remained a goal and inspiration to him, so much so that he credits the recordings of Maria Callas as the best way to learn about phrasing, colour, and drama in music.

Since 2007, Matthew has been Solo Clarinetist of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Bremen, and in 2020 he was appointed Professor of Chamber Music at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany. He is also a member of the British ensemble 'Orsino'.

He enjoys invitations to festivals and concert halls around the globe. His recording of Mozart's Clarinet Quintet with the Elias Quartet was hailed by BBC Music Magazine as "the benchmark recording of this much-recorded work".



Maya Iwabuchi violin

Maya Iwabuchi began violin lessons at the age of two. Her main teachers were Ms. Alice Schoenfeld at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and Rodney Friend MBE at the Royal College of Music in London.

Maya Iwabuchi has enjoyed an international career as a solo violinist, chamber musician and orchestral leader since her first concert at age five. Her playing has been hailed by critics as 'simply brilliant' (Strad), 'gorgeous' (Times) and 'absolutely stunning' (HeraldScotland), and she continues to receive the highest praise from the press. Her performances have taken her to concert halls, such as London's Royal Festival and Wigmore Halls, Vienna's Musikverein, Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw, New York City's Lincoln Centre and Carnegie Hall, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall.

Solo highlights for Maya include appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Philharmonia and Royal Scottish National orchestras, and she has appeared in numerous renowned music festivals, including the BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, Bath, Chichester and Edinburgh festivals, and the International Musicians Seminar in Prussia Cove.

A sought-after chamber musician, Maya was a member of the award-winning Mobius Ensemble, and she has collaborated with artists such as the Vellinger Quartet, Boris Giltburg, Brett Dean and Karen Cargill. Much of her work is regularly broadcast by the BBC and Classic FM.

Maya served as Leader of the Philharmonia Orchestra from 1994 to 2012, leading for conductors such as Sir Andrew Davis, Christoph von Dohnányi, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Charles Mackerras, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Andris Nelsons, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Kurt Sanderling and Sir Andras Schiff. She has been regularly invited as concertmaster by most of the major UK orchestras, such as the BBC Symphony, London Symphony, and the John Wilson Orchestra.

Maya has resided in Scotland since 2010, where she devotes much of her time as Leader of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and as faculty member at Glasgow's Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. When not playing her Fabrizio Senta violin circa 1685, she relishes spending as much time as she can with her musical doctor husband and in the company of family and friends – usually a table groaning with good food and wine is close by.

Alexander Jones double bass

Manchester-born double bassist, Alexander Jones, enjoys a varied career of solo, chamber, orchestral, and historically-informed performance. He is Principal Double Bass with the English Concert, Assistant Principal of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and a member of the chamber collective, O/Modern.

Alex is in demand as a guest principal, and frequently appears with orchestras including the Philharmonia, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

As a soloist, he has performed at the Grafenegg Festival, recorded for Divine Art, and has premiered works by David Matthews, Robin Stevens and Robin Holloway. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with a number of musicians and ensembles, regularly performing at the Elbphilharmonie, Wigmore and Carnegie Halls, as well as at festivals such as the BBC Proms, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival.

Away from the double bass, Alexander is a keen composer and academic; his music has been performed at the BBC Proms by members of the Aurora and BBC Symphony orchestras and his research is held at the Arnold Schönberg Center (Vienna) and the Antonín Dvořák Museum (Prague).

He studied at the University of Cambridge and the Royal Academy of Music and he is immensely grateful to his teachers and mentors, including Gethin Griffith, Manola Hatfield, Ronan Dunne, Tom Goodman, Graham Mitchell, Chi-chi Nwanoku CBE, and Dominic Seldis.



Julien Quentin piano

French pianist Julien Quentin has established himself as a versatile and sensitive musician, exhibiting great maturity and poise. His remarkable depth of musicianship and distinct clarity of sound coupled with flawless technique, make him an artist in demand as both soloist and chamber musician.

Touring internationally in America, Australia, Japan, the Middle East and throughout Europe, he has appeared at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Wigmore Hall in London, the Louvre in Paris, the Baden-Baden Festspielhaus, the Berlin Philharmonie, the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, the Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, in Avery Fisher, Alice Tully and Carnegie Halls in New York. He has recorded for EMI, Channel Classics, Sony RCA, Hungaroton, Decca & Deutsche Grammophon.

Julien Quentin is a keen chamber musician and has collaborated with artists such as Nicolas Altstaedt, Emanuel Ax, Lisa Batiashvili, Gautier Capuçon, Corey Cerovsek, Martin Fröst, Sol Gabetta, David Garrett, Nelson Goerner, Ilya Gringolts, Gary Hoffman, Lawrence Power, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Sayaka Shoji, Kirill Troussov, and István Várdai.

Born in Paris, Julien Quentin started his studies at the Geneva Conservatory with Alexis Golovin. He completed his Artist Diploma under the tutelage of Emile Naoumoff at Indiana University, where he held a one-year teaching position as Assistant Instructor. He then received his Graduate Diploma from the Juilliard School, where he studied with György Sándor. He has also worked with Paul Badura-Skoda, Nikita Magaloff, György Sebök and Earl Wild.

Julien Quentin now lives in Berlin. With 'Musica Litoralis' at Piano Salon Christophori, he has managed to create an increasingly successful concert series reminiscent of the salons of the Roaring Twenties. With visual artists, he explores new artistic visions bringing various art forms together. He also pursues his interest in other genres of music through his collaboration with pianists Kelvin Sholar, Kaan Bulak and Francesco Tristano, or producers Adrien de Maublanc and Cesar Merveille in projects ranging from improvisation to producing electronic music, most notably within their new projects Midiminuit & Les Coeurs Brisés.

Charlotte Scott violin

As a highly sought after violinist, Charlotte enjoys a varied career as a soloist, director and chamber musician. Her critically acclaimed discography includes recordings for LINN Records, Decca, Apple Music, Classical Label and Champs Hill.

Passionate about directing, Charlotte regularly performs with many chamber orchestras worldwide, including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Musica Vitae, and Nederlands Chamber Orchestra, leading with dynamic programmes as a soloist, director or concertmaster. In recent seasons she has taken part in various live broadcasts from Wigmore Hall and the BBC Proms.

As a soloist and chamber player, recent highlights include frequent performances in venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw, Purcell Room, Sheldonian Theatre and The Festival Hall. Additionally, she is invited as part of an array of summer festivals including the North York Moors Chamber Music Festival, New Paths Chamber Festival, York Chamber Festival and Zermatt Festival.

Charlotte gives regular performance classes and masterclasses at the Royal Academy of Music in London and at Oxford University.

She is currently first violinist and co-founder of the Oculi Ensemble – a group created as the next iteration of the former Badke Quartet. The Oculi Ensemble, formed by a circle of world-class string quartet artists, is a flexible ensemble that received international acclaim globally for their release of *Metamorphosen- Strauss Chamber Works*.

From 2006 to 2013, Charlotte was the first violinist of the award winning Piatti Quartet, performing internationally and making regular appearances on BBC Radio 3, as well as live television and radio broadcasts. The Quartet won numerous international prizes and in 2012 was nominated for a prestigious Royal Philharmonic Award, with their discography receiving wide recognition.

Charlotte grew up in England, studying with Mateja Marinković at Wells Cathedral School and later at the Royal Academy of Music, where she won the Franstein Violin Prize. She continued her studies at the New England Conservatory in Boston with Eric Rosenblith, James Buswell and Donald Weilerstein.

She received a three-year scholarship to attend IMS Prussia Cove, studying with Ida Haendel, Ferenc Rados and Valeria Szervánszky. Further masterclasses include Mauricio Fuks, Thomas Brandis, Sylvia Rosenberg, and Zvi Zeitlin. As a quartet player, she studied with Günter Pichler at the Escuela de Musica Reina Sofia and with Rainer Schmidt at Pro Quartet in France.

Charlotte plays a violin by Antonio Stradivari, 1685 "Gagliano".



Xiaowen Shang piano

“Keyboard exuberance and invention of a harpsichordist”

The Observer Review

“Nothing was more delicious...”

The Times Review

Xiaowen Shang is a pianist, harpsichordist, and versatile musician with passion for early and contemporary music. Her repertoire spans from Renaissance composers such as Antonio de Cabezón and William Byrd to contemporary figures including Brett Dean and Roderik de Man.

Nominated as one of BBC Music Magazine’s Rising Stars 2024, Xiaowen Shang’s recent career highlights include winning First Prize of 2025 Prix Annelie de Man for contemporary harpsichord in Netherlands and coming back in 2027 as festival artist as well as the Young Artist in Association of Deal Festival 2026. In addition, her debut album with Linn Records, *Music of Silence*, as part of the Royal Academy of Music Bicentenary Series has been featured on seven Apple Music playlists and has received positive reviews from various broadcast channels, including BBC Radio 3, Scala Radio and Radio Kraków Kultura.

She has collaborated with prominent musicians such as Steven Isserlis, Joanna MacGregor, Rachel Podger, Dame Imogen Cooper, Lawrence Power, and Adrian Brendel. As an active performer, Xiaowen has played at prestigious venues and festivals including the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Xiaowen leads Museum performance tours in the Academy and Fenton House in London regularly.



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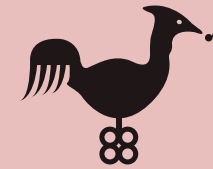
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Photos Kashfi Halford (cover), Andy Garbi, Dylan Elliot,
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