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A WORD FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Since its birth 11 years ago, the International Spring Orchestra Festival (ISOFestival) has evolved from a simple concept into a very vibrant marriage of projects such as RitmiKA percussion workshops; the Rising Stars concert series, the Debutante's concert, the contemporary composers' symposium as well as master classes. As this year's edition is closing with Beethoven's 9th Symphony, I thought of centering this year's theme around the city of Vienna, with a programme going back in time hence "From Zappa to Beethoven", revisiting the works of the first Viennese School as well as those of the second, whose impact is still felt today, as well as collaborating with Viennese-based musicians. The International Spring Orchestra Festival is about musicians, composers and artists who come together here in Malta to create an incredible musical experience and share with its audience a spectacular musical journey. Year-in year-out the ISOFestival has gone from strength to strength in making music of the highest artistic quality. This vibrant and energetic venture contributes to the cultural and educational aspects of Maltese society, as well as highlighting the musical calendar of the season. I do hope you enjoy this year's choice of programme and artists as you did in the past editions.

Karl FIORINI

OPENING CONCERT SATURDAY 29 APRIL

Hop!Trio • Christian Bini • André Groen
Pierre Quiriny • RitmiKA Percussion Combo
PJAZZA TEATRU RJAL, VALLETTA, 8PM

LUCA MACCHI OPA!

OPA! is the Greek translation for HOP!. The word OPA! doesn't exist in Greek literature but is a typical popular stimulation, commonly used during dances at the village festivals. The piece is thought as a continuous whirlpool between the 3 percussionists. The musical energy initiated by the timbales or the drums is multiplied through the other instruments that, in turn, increase their intensity. OPA! was written specially for the HOP! trio in 2014.

CHICK COREA CHILDREN'S SONGS

Children's Songs mainly consists of short songs with simple themes. There is little development in the pieces, which capture a variety of melodies and moods. Corea began writing the first song in 1971. There are stylistic and structural parallels to the cycle Mikrokosmos, by Béla Bartók, who he cites as a major influence, throughout his career. Corea stated that he aimed "to convey simplicity as beauty, as represented in the Spirit of a child".

FRANK ZAPPA THE BLACK PAGE

The piece exists in three forms. Zappa first constructed the drum solo sometime in 1976. After drummer Terry Bozzio learned how to play The Black Page on the drum set, Zappa thought maybe it would be good for other instruments. So he wrote a melody that went along with the drum solo. And that turned into The Black Page part 1, the hard version. Then he said, well, what about the other people in the world, who might enjoy the melody of The Black Page, but couldn't really approach it's statistical density in its basic form. So, he went to work and constructed a 'little diddy' with a disco type vamp. This is The Black Page part 2, the New York version.

RITMI-KA

Ritmi-KA is a joint project between the International Spring Orchestra Festival and the Ministry for Education and Employment through Education+, an initiative to promote entrepreneurship through informal learning. Through Rittmi-KA, students from public middle schools, participated in three percussion workshops held by the musicians forming the HOP! Trio, the aim of which is to empower students through music to be creative and work in groups for a common aim, in the process acquiring self-knowledge and motivation to succeed in their aspirations.

HOP! Trio

When the HOP! Trio was born it immediately aroused the enthusiasm of composers: Pierre-Adrien Charpy (FR), Luca Macchi (IT), Karl Fiorini (MLT), François Narboni (FR) Jean-Luc Fafchamps (bE) and Martijn Padding (NL) who each wrote a new work for them. They were followed without much delay by Yangzhi Ma (CH) and Michel Lysight (BE). The percussionists of the HOP! Trio sensed a close musical complicity when they first met in 2011, at the first concert of European Contemporary Orchestra. Their common ideal and independent musical education, turning towards commissioning new composers, had appeared to each respective musician as a very evident trait. The respective paths of the three percussionist, all soloists in their own right (Ensemble Télémaque in France for Christian Bini, Ereprijs from The Netherlands for André Groen and Musiques Nouvelles in Belgium for Pierre Quiriny), explored the rich and eclectic musical styles: from traditional to Contemporary jazz and traditional music, to collaborations with dance, theater or the contemporary circus. All three musicians bring to the group experience, and the power of creativity. The HOP! Trio offers composers a light instrumental device that nevertheless offers a wide register for their writing. The melodic aspect represented by keyboards (marimba, vibraphone, glockenspiel) is complemented with various instruments plus non-European instruments (mainly Latin percussion based) and small accessories. The HOP! Trio favours a thorough and imaginative research on the timbre, rather than a work focused on the multiplicity of instruments, as usually encountered, leaving space for improvisation and sound-colour research.



SATURDAY 29 APRIL THE RUSSIAN VIRTUOSI OF EUROPE

OUR LADY OF VICTORY CHURCH, VALLETTA 6:30PM

ELGAR SERENADE FOR STRINGS

Although not formally published until 1892, the Serenade is believed to be a reworking of a suite Elgar had written some years earlier, before he had firmly set his sights on a career as a composer. Apart from the Wand of Youth suites, it is therefore probably the earliest of his compositions to survive into the standard repertoire. Certainly, it has a youthful charm while at the same time displaying indications of the skills Elgar developed as he progressed towards musical maturity. It is reportedly the first of his compositions with which he professed himself satisfied. The opening bars of the first movement will be familiar to most, particularly to listeners of a classical music station which uses it as introductory music. It is however the central Larghetto which is generally accepted as containing the finest and most mature writing. The work remains among the most frequently performed of all his music.

SCHOENBERG VERKLÄRTE NACHT

Verklärte Nacht ("Transfigured Night") was inspired by a mystical poem by Richard Dehmel. In cold, moonlit woods, a woman confesses to her lover that she carries the child of another man she never loved but to whom she yielded for fulfillment. After a long pause of brooding meditation, he resolves that their love will make the child their own. They embrace and walk on, the formerly barren night transformed by hope and devotion. Such cloying sentimentality is rather hard to take seriously nowadays, and indeed Schoenberg later called the poem "repulsive" and urged appreciation of his work as pure music, portraying nature and expressing human emotion rather than depicting the specific action of the text. Schoenberg wrote Verklärte Nacht as a sextet for two violins, two violas and two celli all of which he had mastered.

TCHAIKOVSKY SERENADE FOR STRINGS

Tchaikovsky's 'Serenade for Strings' dates from around the same time as his '1812 Overture'. Anton Rubinstein, the composer's former teacher, went as far as to refer to it as 'Tchaikovsky's best piece' when he conducted it in 1882. As he had done in the past Tchaikovsky recalled music from the prior century - that of Mozart in particular - in the first movement of the Serenade. As he wrote to his benefactress Nadezhda von Meck in 1883, "When I hear Mozart's music, it is as though I am doing a good deed....and the longer I live, the more I get to know him, the more I love him." Indeed, while the Serenade is an immediately likeable work, at no point does it grandstand or resort to facile compositional devices that sometimes mar Tchaikovsky's music but never mar Mozart's. The second movement is a genteel Waltz. whose rising theme is closely echoed in the theme that opens the refined, sensitive Elegia. The final movement is based on two Russian themes, one that furnishes material for the movement's slow introduction, and the other which forms the movement's main Allegro con spirito. At the movement's climax, Tchaikovsky brings back the rather imperious material heard at the very beginning of the Serenade, only to demonstrate that it shares a melodic contour with the second Russian theme.



RUSSIAN VIRTUOSI OF EUROPE

The Russian Virtuosi of Europe brings together wonderful musicians who have enviable lists of international awards and prizes in Paganini, Michael Hill, Brahms and Queen Elisabeth International Violin competitions. The RVoE artists also enjoy busy and successful careers as concert artists. teachers, chamber musicians, leaders and principals of outstanding chamber and symphony orchestras, such as the London Philharmonic, the Philharmonia and the Russian National Orchestra. The Russian Virtuosi gave their highly successful debut at the Wigmore Hall in June 2004 and have since enjoyed a series of concerts in Europe, several South American and Russian tours. They regularly appear at major venues across Europe and South America, including the Kings Place, St John's Smith Square and Cadogan Hall in London, as well as Salle Gaveau in Paris, Martinkirche in Basel. The Moscow Conservatoire Chamber Hall. The Moscow International House of Music. The Katz Auditorium in Novosibirsk, Teatro Coliseo in Buenos Aires and Teatro Solis in Montevideo among many others. Over the years the orchestra collaborated with renowned artists such as trumpeter Sergei Nakaryakov, harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani, "father" of Russian rock Boris Grebenshikov and the David Oistrakh string guartet. Their debut CD on the Orchid Classics label received rave reviews and was chosen an "orchestral CD of the month" in April 2016 by the BBC Music Magazine. The unique combination of the Russian School of instrumental playing and brilliant ensemble skills makes this group one of the most exciting and innovative ensembles on today's musical scana

SATURDAY 30 APRILGOTTLIEB WALLISCH PIANO RECITAL

AUBERGE DE CASTILLE. VALLETTA 6:45PM

J.S.BACH

Partita No.1 in B-flat major, BWV 825 Praeludium – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande -Menuet I – II - Gique

The six Partitas (BWW 825-830) are part of Bach's Clavier-Übung, but were published singly, beginning in 1726 with this B flat major effort. A new partita appeared each year thereafter until 1731, when the whole collection was issued. Each of the six is a suite containing allemandes, sarabandes, minuets, and various other dances and numbers. The B flat major Partita consists of seven short movements, the first being a praeludium, a moderately paced piece so typical of Bach's music in its stately confidence, serene joy, and deftly wrought contrapuntal writing. There follow an allemande, corrente [courante], sarabande, and gigue which comprise the standard sequence of dances that make up a partita. Actually, Bach inserted two brief minuets between the sarabande and gique.

The allemande is lively and brimming with thematic activity, contrapuntal elements abounding in subtle detail, the music racing by breathlessly under beams of sunshine. The corrente is a bit shorter than the two previous movements. It, too, is lively, but lighter in mood and more carefree than the allemande. The ensuing sarabande is gentle in its serenity, graceful in its slow pace, and ultimately mesmerizing in the near-transparency of its subtly crafted textures. At nearly four minutes, this is the longest of the seven movements. The two lively minuets that ensue are light and playful, the second following the first without pause. They are imaginatively wrought pieces and serve as a kind of interlude before the arrival of the gigue. Each lasts a bit under a minute. The gigue is rhythmic and fast-paced, breathless in its graceful drive and bouncy manner. It is an eventful minute-and-a-half and the perfect crown to this suite.

SEBASTIEN THEMESSL CRAG AND TAIL

"Crag and tail", a piece for piano solo, which was first performed in Jerevan in 2009, is written for Gottlieb Wallisch. Its title refers

to an originally geological formation which is frequently found in Scotland: a sharp hill (Crag) in combination with a "softer" slope and backside of the hill ("tail"), which was grinded off and eroded in ice-age by ice and time.

LISZT Schuberts Ungarische Melodien, S.425 Nr.1 Andante, Nr.2 Marcia. Andante con moto, Nr.3 Allegretto

During the summer of 1824 while staying at Zseliz, Hungary, Schubert was introduced to all kinds of Hungarian and gypsy music-making, and in one tiny work composed during the first week of September 1824 Schubert allows this colorful new musical idiom to inflect his own style. That work is the Hungarian Melody in B minor for solo piano, D. 817, unpublished and unknown to the public until a full century after the composer's death. Liszt considered Schubert the most poetic of all composers and his transcriptions form an eloquent tribute from one genius to another. Lying somewhere between free paraphrase and simple replica they remain uncannily faithful to the freshness and innocence of the originals whilst adding an extra dimension of idiosyncracy and sophistication. Rarely can fidelity and adventurousness, honesty and mischievousness have been more happily combined.

SCHUBERT Wanderer-Fantasie C Dur D.760

The popular name of the Fantasia, The Wanderer, is taken from the 1816 song of that name, a setting of words by Schmidt von Lubeck, the theme of which is varied in the slow movement of the Fantasia, a massive four-movement structure without breaks. The first movement of the Fantasia starts with a dactylic rhythmic figure, found so often in the music of Schubert. A subsidiary thematic element derived from this appears in the unexpected key of E major, with a further derivative in B flat, before still remoter keys are explored. The second section, Adagio, begins with a quotation from Schubert's song Der Wanderer, but echoes of the song's sad sentiments are soon dispelled by the decorative embellishments of the theme, which lead to furious eruptions and tremolando figures. The theme

is finally restated in the light hand, while left-hand figurations adumbrate the main theme of the following Scherzo. This section, marked Presto, is in Schubert's most exuberant dance style. There is a trio section, and in the final section, Allegro, left hand octaves state the theme again, answered in fugal style by the right hand, before the entries of a third and fourth voice, leading on to a dynamic climax and a brilliant and emphatic C major conclusion.

GOTTLIEB WALLISCH

Born to a Viennese family of musicians, Gottlieb Wallisch was admitted to the Vienna University for Music and Performing Arts at the age of six years, and later graduated with distinction from the class of Heinz Medjimorec. He has participated in master classes given by Oleg Maisenberg and Dmitrij Bashkirov, and studied with Pascal Devoyon in Berlin and with Jacques Rouvier in Paris. He is a prize winner of several international piano competitions, amongst which is the 1st Prize and the "Grand Prix Ivo Pogorelich" at The Stravinsky Awards (USA). He was also a finalist both at the 1999 Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels and at the XXI. Concours Clara Haskil in Vevey in 2005.

Gottlieb Wallisch has performed with leading orchestras including the Wiener Philharmoniker, the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the Camerata Salzburg, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra and the Festival Strings Lucerne, under conductors like Giuseppe Sinopoli, Dennis Russell Davies, Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Louis Langrée, Sir Neville Marriner, Christopher Hogwood, Philippe Entremont, Kirill Petrenko, Lawrence Foster, Martin Haselböck and Bruno Weil.

Numerous concert tours have taken him to the USA [Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra] Great Britain [Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall], Japan, Hong Kong, South America, the Middle East, Africa, and many European countries, including Spain, Germany and Switzerland. In the season of 2001/02 he participated in the international cycle "Rising Stars", and gave solo recitals in the largest European capitals as well as in the USA [Musikverein Vienna, Konserthus Stockholm, Societé Philharmonique in Brussels, the Athens Concert Hall "Megaron", Wigmore Hall, London and the Carneqie Hall, New York).



He has made appearances at renowned festivals and concert halls, for example the Lucerne Festival, Klavierfestival Ruhr, Beethovenfest Bonn, Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, Tonhalle Zürich, Festival de Wallonie, Singapore Arts Festival. In the summer of 2002. Gottlieb Wallisch gave his much-acclaimed debut at the Salzburg Festival, Recent seasons have seen him performing at the Musikhalle Hamburg, the Kölner Philharmonie, the Budapest Spring Festival, the December Nights in Moscow, in Japan with the Kobe City Chamber Orchestra and his China-debut with the Camerata Salzburg, In the Mozart anniversary year 2006 and the Haydn anniversary year 2009 he gave a cycle of concerts in the Musikverein Vienna dedicated to the works of these composers. As a respected artist of the Viennese piano tradition Gottlieb Wallisch records exclusively for the British label "LINN records". Three highly acclaimed albums dedicated to the music of Mozart have been issued since 2010, his latest release in 2014 featured Haydn's London Piano Sonatas. Besides his soloistic activities Gottlieb Wallisch is a passionate performer of chamber music and serves as professor for piano at the Universität der Künste Berlin. In 2013 he was visiting professor at the Franz Liszt Music Academy in Budapest. Furthermore he held master-classes at the University of Illinois, the Nagoya College of Music and the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He was named a "Steinway Artist" in early 2012.

MONDAY 1 MAY RISING STARS CONCERT SERIES #1

PALAZZO PEREIRA, VALLETTA 8PM

Lorenzo Meraviglia, violinist Andrea Carcano, pianist **Sigurd von Koch** Andante e Al

Sigurd von Koch Andante e Allegro in mi minore

 $\textbf{Wagner} \; \mathsf{Romanza} \; \text{``Albumblatt''}$

Beethoven Sonata op. 12 n.1 in D major

Allegro con brio - Tema con variazioni, Andante con moto - Rondo, Allegro

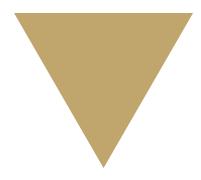
Amanda Röntgen-Maier Sonata in B minor Allegro – Andantino - Allegro molto vivace

LORENZO MERAVIGLIA

Lorenzo Meraviglia began his violin studies at the tender age of five and a was admitted to Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory of Music in Milan, just a few years later Pursuing his love for chamber music, during his studies, Lorenzo had the opportunity to play in a variety of performances such as: MiTo fringe festival, Milano remembers the Shoah, Madesimo Music Festival (Sony Classical) and the National Exhibition of Young String Players (ESTA-European String Teachers Association) held in Cremona. As a soloist he was chosen by "Radio Classica" channel to be a player during a live broadcast dedicated to young talents. He also opened the Chagall exhibition in Milan performing Bach's Allemande on Milan's foremost square, the Piazza del Duomo. He recently played Mozart's K219 Violin Concerto in A major in the Golden Hall of Società del Giardino, Milan, under the baton of M.I. Benaglia. He attended several Masterclasses held by Marco Rizzi, Pavel Berman, Daniele Gay, Marco Fornaciari and Francesco Manara. He is currently a member of the "Accademia Concertante d'Archi di Milano" (ACAM) chamber and symphony orchestra and recently co-founded the "StraDuo", a young violin & viola duo which has been recognized for "outsanding performance" in Dubai (E.A.U.), Turin, Milan, Messina, Como. In December 2016 Lorenzo was appointed concertmaster of ACAM chamber orchestra: his significant position as one of ACAM leading artists allows him to play Stradivari's best violins (such as Bazzini 1715, Greville 1726, Roi de France 1663 and Omobono Stradivari 1730). His musical activity is sponsored by "The Man of the Stradivari" music society based in Charleston, SC.

ANDREA CARCANO

Andrea Carcano is a Milan born classical concert pianist who has played in several important and prestigious Italian Institutions as well as having performed internationally in Switzerland, France. Austria, Czech Republic, Germany. He was invited at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice to perform the Beethoven Triple Concerto conducted by Mauro Ivano Benaglia together with violinist Matteo Fedeli and Rocco Filippini, cello. Together with the "Entr'Acte" ensemble they held a concert season at the Teatro Arcimboldi in Milan, as well as another four different seasons at La Scala in Milan. An accomplished soloist, Carcano has recorded solo performances of Bach's Goldberg Variations, and also delved in the music of lesser-known authors such as Alkan, Reger, Janacek, Godowsky, C.Nielsen, Medtner, Korngold. He has collaborated with groups such as "The soloists of La Scala". the "Trio of Italian reeds". "Entr'acte - musicians at La Scala". the first parts of the symphony orchestra of RTSI Lugano and the soloists of the orchestra Mozart in Bologna (founded and directed by Claudio Abbadol with whom he performed in 2006 the Suite, Op. 29 Schoenberg and Boulez's Derive 1. Carcano is a professor at the Music Conservatory "A. Vivaldi" in Alessandria.



OMOBONO STRADIVARI 1730

This precious violin was made in Cremona in 1730 by Antonio Stradivari and his son Omobono, expert restorer and carver as certified in the rich documentation accompanying this instrument

The violin is part of the very limited circle of those defined as "having a great voice" built in the Stradivari luthier workshop for a few years from 1730. Among its many features, is its excellent preservation state and the large quantity of the original goldorange-brown paint present, on the bottom of the violin. The scroll, in particular the volute, has an unmistakable stroke and painstaking finish, is the work of Omobono Stradivari. Very few samples of his work are still in existence, all catalogued and registered, and they have been – always – object of eager searches on the part of very well-to-do art collectors, but also of world renowned concert artists, due to its great and never matched phonic and timbric qualities.

One notable owner of an Omobono Stradivari dated 1730 was Ginette Neveu, winner of the competition "Wieniawski" in Warsaw in 1935 (according to the Russian David Oistrakh). For her tours she used both her precious Stradivarius and another violin by Guadagnini. The instruments were transported in a double case, made to measure and with special finish of great value. In addition there were two bows, one of which "Fleur-de-Lys" by the established British bow makers "W. E. Hill & Sons". In the moment of maximum glory however, the artistic career of Ginette Neveu was brusquely interrupted when, on the 28 October 1949, the Air France Constellation plane that was taking her to New York to conquer Carnegie Hall, crashed on Mount Redondo (island of São Miguel) in the Azores Archipelago . With her in that tragedy were her brother and inseparable pianist Jean, the famous boxer Marcel Cerdan (Edith Piaf's lover) and another 45 people.

TUESDAY 2 MAY RISING STARS CONCERT SERIES #2

PALAZZO PEREIRA, VALLETTA 8PM

Jean Marc Fab

Scriabin Preludes Op. 11: No 1 in C major & No. 17 in A flat major

Wagner/Kleinmichel Prelude to 'Tristan und Isolde'

Wagner/Liszt Isoldens Liebestod from 'Tristan und Isolde'

Antonella Rapa - Soprano

Francesca Buhagiar - Mezzo soprano

Julia Miller - Pianist

Mozart Vedrai Carino from Don Giovanni - Antonella Rapa

Pergolesi A Serpina penserete from La serva padrona - Antonella Rapa

Bellini Ma rendi pur contento - Francesca Buhagiar

Barber Must the Winter come so soon from Vanessa - Francesca Buhagiar

Mozart Via resti servita from Le Nozze di Figaro - Antonella Rapa and Francesca Buhagiar

Handel V'adoro pupille from Giulio Cesare - Antonella Rapa

Fauré Nell - Antonella Rapa

Ambroise Connais-tu le pays? from Mignon - Francesca Buhagiar

Mozart Voi che sapete from Le nozze di Figaro - Francesca Buhagiar

Offenbach Barcarolle from Les Contes d'Hoffmann - Antonella Rapa and Francesca Buhagiar

WEDNESDAY 3 MAYRISING STARS CONCERT SERIES #3

PALAZZO PEREIRA, VALLETTA 8PM

Bernard Curmi

Pianist: Elaine Mercieca

Kreisler Libesleid

Kreisler Preludium and Allegro

Daphne Delicata

J.S.Bach Sinfonia in C minor, BWV 788

Mozart Sonata in B flat major, K.570

Grieg Butterfly op.43, nr.1

Grieg To Spring op.43., nr.5

Bernard Curmi & Christabelle Scerri

Pianist: Flaine Mercieca

Bach Double Concerto in D minor

Vivace – Largo ma non tanto - Allegro

THURSDAY 4 MAY STRING QUARTETS FROM THE EU BALTIC NEOPOLIS QUARTET

PALA770 PERFIRA, VALLETTA 8PM

VERONIQUE VELLA (NO TIME TO) STAND AND STARE

(No time to) stand and stare was commissioned by Malta's national dance company, ZfinMalta Dance Ensemble, for a dance performance, '50, 000 thoughts', devised by established Maltese choreographer, Francesca Tranter. The piece was premiered at Pjazza Teatru Rjal during the Malta International Arts Festival 2016. The music used for this first performance combined a studio recording by the MPO string quartet combined with electronics and the use of male voices - the latter belonging to the dancers themselves. The current version for string quartet only is an adaptation of the original score. The title is a quote from the very famous poem by W. H. Davies entitled 'Leisure', published in 1911. The premise for the dance choreography is the dubious theory that human beings entertain around 50,000 thoughts per day, though the exact figure is debatable. These thoughts range from the most mundane to perhaps the deepest philosophical ones. So even when we are 'staring', our brain is relentlessly active. The music oscillates between periods of frenetic activity as reflected in the busier passages with sporadic instances of calm recollection in the guise of drones.

DIMITRI SCARLATO OLD WORLD CITIES

Old World Cities is a collection of miniatures inspired by cities such as Venice, London, St. Petersburg, where the audience is led through this imaginary journey in these cities. Old World refers to how has been once defined Europe (and the Russian closest part to Europe) by former U.S. president G.W. Bush. Although there is no political reference, I liked the idea of imagining this cities as part of an "old world", the world between the 19th and the 20th century with its beauty, rage and decadence.

CHRISTOPHER MUSCAT EPITAPHIUM

Epitaphium is the result of the composer's disturbed emotions following the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The following

day, while the world was still in shock and disbelief, the composer embarked on this emotionally-charged quartet which he dedicated to the victims of this historic tragedy. This quartet is arguably one of the composer's most daring works with prolonged passages of dissonance (making use of quarter-tones practically throughout the work) and extremely slow tempi that contrast starkly against the fragmented aleatoric sections. Nevertheless of the technique employed, this work still contains the composer's typical touch of contemplative spirituality; that inner path that he follows in search of the ultimate, immaterial, metaphysical truth.

NICKOLAI BÜCHER LIKE AN INDIAN IN A TAILCOAT

"The string quartet "Like an Indian in a tailcoat" by Nikolai Brücher was composed in Hamburg between October 2016 and January 2017 to mark the 130th birthday of Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959), one of the most important South American composers of the 20th century. The three main sections of the work refer to different phases of the composer's life. The beginning is full of energy, rhythmic and impetuous just as the character of a young artist might be. The middle section is more calm and lyrical and refers to the composer's important pedagogical and administrative work while working in the Brazilian Ministry of culture. The livelier final section looks back on his vast body of compositions and, by incorporating several minor quotes, becomes a tribute to the great Brazilian Maestro."

CHRISTOPH RENHART EPITAPH FOR OVID NASO

The five movements of my first string quartet «Epitaph for Ovid Naso» blend natural sceneries, the rhythms of archaic rites, the scent of Roman vine and a recurring nostalgy together, unfolding a tale of yesteryear and empires that have long ago decayed. The figures that appear bear the melancholy which sinks over the simple life like a waft of mist. Furrowed by the raw verses of a stinted daily grind, at single points artless rhythms are hammered unisono into the unformed deserted landscape. Time and time

again voices singing out of yellowed memories can be perceived, while the sound of the billows, emitted by Poseidon's abyss, covers the weald. We witness a barbaric ritual in the «Evening on Taurica» that fades out into a carousal. At the end we find ourselves back «in this time», a place which seems to be plunged into a ubiquitous hustle and bustle. Thus we yearningly throw a closing glance back at Vienna, where the world will ever fall a little later. The string quartet was written between 2010 and 2011. It was revised in 2014.

ALBERT GARZIA SELECTION FROM BAHR

As the title suggests, Selection from BAHR is not a string quartet form but a collection of themes from a work by the same composer arranged for the string quartet formation. BAHR is an orchestral work intended to be accompanied by dance and was commissioned for the opening concert of the Malta EU Presidency regarding the theme of Mediterranean migration. BAHR's music material is a combination of new music and tunes taken from an 1807 anthology called Maltese Melodies; or National airs and dances by Edward Jones. Selection from BAHR does not include any of the Edward Jones melodies but of three new themes representing 'waves', 'influx' and 'love' respectively.

BALTIC NEOPOLIS QUARTET

Baltic Neopolis Quartet was founded in 2008 by the leaders of Baltic Neopolis Orchestra who are graduates of Berlin, London. Wrocław and Szczecin music academies. The Quartet's main repertoire is classical music of the 20th and 21st century. The Quartet plays regularly in important concert halls both in Poland and abroad and played in festivals, such as: the International Organ Festival in Szczecin (2009), the International Festival Sacrum non profanum in Trzesacz (2012), International Festival of Contemporary Music Poznań Music Spring (2013), the Lutoslawski Celebration Year in Prague (2013), Wojciech Kilar Festival of Contemporary Music in Gorzów Wielkopolski (2013), Usedomer Musikfestival (2014), Oldenburg Promenade (2015/16), Gaia International Music Festival and Montserrat Music Festival (2016). The quartet is also active in the recording studio and has recorded a number of Quartet albums, music for theatre and even with pop music bands. BNQ is the dedicatee of two quartets by Piotr Klimek and String Quartet No. 2 Orestes by Michał Dobrzyński. The variety of personalities of their players gives a perspective on modern performance and interpretation trends, which they effectively apply in the quartet medium. The results are exceptional concerts that combine artistic uniqueness with extraordinary professionalism.



FRIDAY 5 MAY VIOLIN AND PIANO RECITAL EDWARD ZIENKOWSKI, VIOLIN • CHARLENE FARRUGIA, PIANO

EDWARD ZIENKOWSKI, VIOLIN • CHARLENE FARRUGIA, PIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY, VALLETTA 8PM

MOZART SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO IN G MAJOR, K. 301

Having resigned his post in Salzburg, Mozart, accompanied by his mother, set out in search of new employment. His journey, which started in September 1777 and lasted until January 1779, took him to Mannheim, Paris and Munich. During this time, he composed six sonatas for piano and violin that were later published in Paris in 1778. The first of the set, the Sonata in G major, K. 301, consists of only two movements an Allegro con spirito sonata movement and an Allegro finale. In fact, only the last sonata of the set, K, 306, has more than two movements. Chief among Mozart's aims in composing these sonatas was achieving a greater balance between the two instruments by making the solo violin more independent. The violin opens the work with a blithe melody in G major with a characteristic appoggiatura figure lending it a particular tenderness. The following second theme in the key of the dominant is livelier with its syncopated rhythm. Remarkably, both thematic sections are guite lengthy compared to the rest of the movement—the exposition itself extends to nearly half the movement and both themes occupy almost the same number of measures. The finale begins simply with an arching melody the rises up through triadic motion and then descends through the scale of the tonic key. During the central episode in G minor, the violin achieves its greatest independence from the piano. While the piano provides a delicate accompaniment of broken chords, the violin exclusively carries the melody throughout the section. The opening G major section then returns to round out the ternary structure of the movement. An energetic coda, with sweeping scales and arpeggios, brings the first of these violin sonatas to an exciting close.

DEBUSSY SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO IN G MINOR

The Sonata for violin and piano is Debussy's last work. It was written in 1917 and performed in Paris for the first time

in May of the same year. Despite the emphasis on French traditions in Debussy's late works, there are influences from other cultures and nations, mostly from Spanish and Asian music. Parts of the Sonata for violin and piano are most definitely colored by gypsy music. Nonetheless, the Sonata is a long way from bowing to salon music or even café-house music. Debussy uses single idioms of the violin technique, for example, the dragging of a tone upwards or downwards in order to give the piece the rhapsodic character which is in striking contrast to the formal severity of the sonata form. The second movement, "Intermède, Fantasque et léger" is a strong reminder of the corresponding section in the cello sonata. Here, as well as in the cello sonata, are many ironic echoes, the musical phrasing appears torn and unstable. After a short reemergence of the first movement's initial theme, the finale continues into a virtuoso and vibrant rondo theme which Debussy described as follows: "Don't trust any piece that appears to hover in flight from heaven - it could have been brooded in the dark depths of a sick man's brain! For instance, the finale of my sonata: the simple play on a thought that twists itself like a snake biting its own tail..."

FRANCK SONATA FOR PIANO & VIOLIN

Composed in 1886, the Violin Sonata in A major is one of the finest examples of Franck's use of cyclic form, a technique he had adapted from his friend Franz Liszt, in which themes from one movement are transformed and used over subsequent movements. Franck wrote this sonata for his fellow Belgian, the great violinist Eugene Ysaye, who gave the premiere in Brussels in November 1886. The piano's quiet fragmented chords at the beginning of the Allegretto ben moderato suggest a theme-shape that the violin takes over as it enters: this will be the thematic cell of the entire sonata. The piano has a more animated second subject, but the gently-rocking violin figure from the opening dominates this movement,

and Franck reminds the performers constantly to play molto dolce, sempre dolce, dolcissimo. The mood changes completely at the fiery second movement, marked passionato. and some critics have gone so far as to claim that this Allegro is the true first movement and that the opening Allegretto should be regarded as an introduction to this movement. The Recitativo-Fantasia is the most original movement in the sonata. The piano's quiet introduction seems at first a revisiting of the germinal theme, though it is - ingeniously - a variant of the passionato opening of the second movement. The violin makes its entrance with an improvisation-like passage (this is the fantasia of the title), and the entire movement is quite free in both structure and expression. After the expressive freedom of the third movement, the finale restores order with pristine clarity; it is a canon in octaves. with one voice following the other at the interval of a measure. The stately canon theme, marked dolce cantabile, is a direct descendant of the sonata's opening theme, and as this movement proceeds it recalls thematic material from earlier movements. Gradually, the music takes on unexpected power and drives to a massive coda and a thunderous close.

EDWARD ZIENKOWSKI

Edward Zienkowski made his Violin studies with Oskar Ruppel, Stefan Herman, Andre Gertler (Lublin, Gdansk, Hannover, Brussels) who were students of famous virtuosos such as Eugene Ysaye, Bronislaw Huberman and Jeno Hubay. Zienkowski won numerous international competitions like the Wieniawski- Paganini- Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and Szigeti-Competitions. From 1979 - 1982 Zienkowski was member of the Berlin Philharmonic and leader of the "Philharmonia Quartett Berlin". In 1990 he was appointed professor at the Academy of Music in Cologne. He has performed concerts all over Europe, the US, Japan and Korea with famous orchestras like Berliner Philharmoniker, Halle Symphony Orchestra Manchester, KBS Symphony Orchestra Seoul, Koelner Kammerorchester, Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, WDR Symphony Orchestra, National-Philharmonie Warsaw and the Tokyo Metropolitan Orchestra, Since 1992 Zienkowski is Professor of the concert violin class of the prestigious University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, as well as a jury member of numerous international competitions and president of the Henryk Wieniawski Music Society in Lublin,

Poland. Edward Zienkowski received numerous honors like the Austrian Ehrenkreuz for Science and Art, Merite Culturel and the "Ehrenkreuz of the Polish" Verdienstordens.



CHARLENE FARRUGIA

Charlene Farrugia is recognised as one of Malta's most versatile and imaginative musicians and among today's most engaging pianists. She has appeared on major international concert platforms in recitals and concerto performances and is also in great demand for a wide variety of chamber music groups, playing with some of the world's leading singers and instrumentalists. Charlene has developed an extensive and exceptionally varied repertoire.

Born in Malta, she studied locally under Dolores Amodio Chircop before moving to the Royal Academy of Music [London], and was a prize-winner in 10 national and international piano competitions. Her teachers included Diana Ketler, Kenneth Hamilton and Boris Petrushansky. Charlene has been performing as soloist with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra for many years, including a successful tour to China in 2014/2015. Of particular note is her recording for

Naxos 'Mediterranean' of the first piano concerto by Maltese composer Charles Camilleri. She has developed shared musical interests with an amazing array of performers and has always enjoyed collaborations with other musicians. With a vast repertoire, Charlene has maintained a keen interest in contemporary music; in particular, her close musical relationship with the composer Bashkim Shehu has led to many world premieres. Charlene has recently performed at the Cardiff University Concert Hall, Chopin Music Academy, Shanghai Oriental Arts Centre, Gnessin Academy Music Hall, Lincoln Hall, Chateau Saint-Anne and made a welcome return to the Metropolitana (Lisbon), Camerata Austriaca (Austria), Kaliningrad Philharmonic Orchestra (Russia). She has also toured China with accordionist Franko Bozac in 2016, and has performed for several heads of State, including members of the British Royal family. Charlene is an international ambassador for EMMA for Peace (Euro Mediterranean Music Academy) under the patronage of UNESCO and honorary president Riccardo Muti.



SATURDAY 6 MAY SCHWINGUNGEN PIANO TRIO VIENNA

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY, VALLETTA 8PM

GLINKA TRIO PATHETIQUE IN B MINOR

Trio Pathétique was written in 1832 (although some sources incorrectly say 18274) in Milan. The original instrumentation was clarinet, bassoon and piano; however, the work is often played with violin, cello and piano. Considering Glinka only had natural compositional skills and exemplary piano skills when writing the Trio Pathétique, it is an incredible work. One of the few works available for this instrumentation, it suits the lyrical bel canto qualities of the clarinet and bassoon while showcasing the technical virtuoso of the piano. The other works written around the time of the Trio are mainly for voice; the lyrical expressive singing qualities of the vocal works are prevalent in the wind parts in the Trio Pathétique. The solo winds seem to sing out a torrid love affair in the first movement. The third movement is extremely moving with a solo declaration of agony first from the clarinet and then the bassoon. This is in stark contrast with the playful Scherzo that precedes it. The finale is a rush to the finish and a sigh of relief at completion.

BEETHOVEN PIANO TRIO OP. 70 "GHOST"

The two piano trios of Ludwig van Beethoven's Opus 70 were both composed in 1808 during the composer's stay at the house of the Countess Marie von Erdödy; out of gratitude for her hospitality, he dedicated both works to her. The Op. 70 trios inaugurated a period during which Beethoven wrote a great deal of chamber music both dense and wonderfully intimate. The Piano Trio No. 5 in D major, Op. 70, No. 1, has three movements, an old-fashioned scheme that Beethoven endows with new concision. Because of its strangely scored and undeniably eerie–sounding slow movement it was dubbed the "Ghost" Trio. The name has stuck with the work ever since. The ghostly music may have had its roots in sketches

for a Macbeth opera that Beethoven was contemplating at the time. The harmonic scheme of the work as a whole is elaborate, with references and interconnections between movements. As much as any other work Beethoven ever wrote, the "Ghost" Trio invites and challenges listeners to appreciate it at a variety of levels.

ARENSKY PIANO TRIO NO 1 IN D MINOR OP. 32

Piano Trio No. 1 in d minor, Op.32 was dedicated to the memory of the legendary Russian cellist, Karl Davidoff, director of the Petersburg conservatory during Arensky's time there as a student. The opening, Allegro moderato, is a big movement built around three themes and opens with a very dramatic subject, clearly influenced by Tchaikovsky, featuring triplets in the piano to a singing melody in the violin, which immediately captivates the listener. It appears throughout the movement including in the coda at the end when it is played adagio as a valedictory. The second subject, presented first by the cello, has the quiet, yet effective elegance of a simple song and a mood of hope. In the second movement, Scherzo-Allegro molto, the strings are given a sparse, though telling, theme which is played against a fleet and running part in the piano. The contrasting trio features a superb waltz, slavonic in nature, and one of many which this composer wrote. It became known as a typical example of "The Arensky Waltz." The third movement, Elegia-Adagio reaches the heights of lyricism. The lovely sad opening melody is passed from the muted cello, to the muted violin and then to the piano and back again. It is a personal and intimate dialogue between the instruments, evocative of the composer's friendship with Davidoff. The explosive and dramatic finale, Allegro non troppo, makes brilliant use of themes from the preceding Elegia as well as those of the first movement.

SCHWINGUNGEN PIANO TRIO VIENNA

The Schwingungen Trio got its name from one of the greatest concert series, Schwingungen. These series are developed and organised by Verein für Internationale Musik- und Kulturförderung (IMK; International Society for the Promotion of Music and Culture). 10 years after the Schwingungen concert has made its debut, violinist Sanghee Cheong, pianist Charlene Farrugia and cellist Stefan Kropfitsch have enchanted people through their music.



SUNDAY 7 MAY QUATRE DE PIQUE CELLO QUARTET

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY, VALLETTA 8PM

CORELLI LA FOLLIA

One of the most revered musical motifs in music history. Originating as a simple Portuguese folk tune/dance with a designated chord progression, the theme became highly popular during the Renaissance and Baroque periods of music history. The theme gradually evolved from an "older" form to a "newer" form more familiar to today's early music listeners, and countless composers across Europe — ranging from Corelli to Vivaldi and Marais — used the theme in musical works in which they composed variations on it.

OFFENBACH SCHERZO-VALSE

This short piece is typical Offenbach and provides us with memories from other works such as the Barcarolle as well as the famous Overture from 'Tales of Hofmann'. The cello part is particularly intriguing here, with lots of whiffs and gentle nuances that provide a touchingly personal part to everything.

GRIEG MATROSENLIED OP.68 N°1 & EINSAMER WANDERER OP.43 N°2

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) is Norway's most famous composer, and he remains among the most popular of all the 19th-

Century Romantics. A virtuoso pianist, Grieg is perhaps best known for his Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 16 [1868], as well as for the incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's play Peer Gynt, Op. 23 [1876]. But Grieg was also a master of more intimate forms, and his originality is especially evident in his songs, many of which were composed for his wife, Nina Hagerup Grieg [1845-1935], and in the Lyriske stykker ("Lyric Pieces," 1867-1901) for piano solo, which earned him the nickname "Chopin of the North." Grieg's 170 songs likewise demonstrate his originality, and Grieg wrote that he considered song writing central to his work as composer.

BLOCH PRAYER

The Swiss born composer Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) was particularly drawn to the cello as the solo instrument that was arguably best suited to expressing the religious sentiments inherited from his Jewish background. In describing the source for his music, the composer said: 'It is neither my purpose nor my desire to attempt a reconstruction of Jewish music nor to base my works on more or less authentic melodies. I am not an archaeologist; for me the important thing is to write good and sincere music. What interests me is the Jewish soul, the enigmatic ardent turbulent soul that I feel vibrating throughout the Bible."

BEETHOVEN EQUALE -OPFERLIED - NEI CAMPI E NELLE SELVE - MARSCH

When Beethoven visited the director of music at the cathedral in Linz, Franz Xaver Glöggl, in autumn 1812, the latter asked his guest to "compose socalled Equali for 4 trombones for All Souls' Day [2 November]". Beethoven readily complied - and it was to be his own funeral music. Throughout his life. Beethoven was obsessed with Friedrich von Matthisson's [1761-1831] "Opferlied" (Song of Sacrifice). The poem first appeared in 1790, so Beethoven may have known the text while he lived in Bonn. Occasionally, he scribbled the last line, "Das Schöne zu dem Guten!" ("The beautiful to the good"), in his late manuscripts. Most indicative of Beethoven's admiration of the poem is the fact that he set the text of "Opferlied" four times: The first version, from 1794, exists only in manuscript. In 1801-2, Beethoven revised his seven-year-old setting; this version, known as WoO. 126, was published in 1808 by Simrock in Bonn as part of the III Deutsche Lieder, which included the first versions of "Neue Liebe, neues Leben," WoO, 127, and "Der freie Mann," WoO. 117. The third setting, for soprano, alto and tenor soloists with four-voice chorus, two clarinets, horn, viola and cello, dates from 1822 and was first performed on December 23 of that year in Bratislava (Pressburg). One of the more challenging segments of the recorded Beethoven is the Italian partsongs written 1801-1802 as part of the composer's studies with Antonio Salieri. The March from 'Nei Campi delle Selve' is guite intriguing with its energetic central section and boisterous conclusion.



BACRI MÉDITATION SUR UN THÈME DE BEETHOVEN

Born in November 1961, Nicolas Bacri is one of France's most frequently performed and recorded composers. After a period marked by highly polyphonic atonalism, his interest in the musical past is an earnest, and constantly renewed exploration of his own musical mind. Not a throwback, a recovery, or more explicitlely, a refoundation from pure twenty-century music to twenty-first, unashamed of its traditional based roots. His 'Meditation sur un theme de Beethoven' is more traditionalist in style however and delves deep into the psyche of this great composer.

BODIN DE BOISMORTIER SONATA IN A MINOR FOR 4 CELLOS

The music of eighteenth century French composer Joseph Bodin de Boismortier has been undergoing a revival as the old notion of classical music as a tempo of high culture recedes into the past; Boismortier had a bad reputation, from his own time nearly until ours, because he was one of the first composers to make a good living from commercial success, outside the system of noble patronage. He was extremely prolific, and much of his music, even in larger forms, falls into short little chunks that are easy on the ears. Another common feature of Boismortier's music, along with that of several of his French contemporaries, was that he often wrote music of indeterminate instrumentation, the better to sell it to players of different instruments when it was published. Boismortier's characteristic chamber music, most of it with titles like Sonata in four parts is guite innovative for its time. This sonata for four cellos is particularly intriguing for its unusual compositional style.

FAURÉ APRÈS UN RÊVE FOR 4 CELLOS

The bulk of Gabriel Fauré's music conveys the impression of a personal and private statement, an intimate conversation between the composer and his muse. Fauré composed Après un rêve in 1877 to a poem by French poet Romain Bussine, based on an anonymous Italian text in which a lover dreams of his beloved and, upon waking, wishes he could return to the lies brought to him by the night.

STRAUSS PIZZICATO-POLKA

Consisting of four melodies, the Pizzicato-Polka is arranged in ternary form. As the title suggests, the entirety of the piece is scored for plucked strings, although a glockenspiel appears for the first half of the central section. Possibly because of the limited instrumentation, Strauss seems to have attempted to provide as much contrast as possible in other ways, such as the rhythm and shape of melodies. After a brief introduction, the first eight-measure tune falls into two sections and outlines chords with alternating eighth and sixteenth note rhythms. The second melody is quite different, with its falling scales, constant eighth note pulse and occasional rests. A literal return of the first melody rounds out the A section. The central section features the glockenspiel in the first of its two melodies, which derives its identity more from color than from melodic shape. Broken chords played on all instruments open the contrasting tune, the second half of which consists of descending scales. Each melody of the B section is repeated. A full return of section A and a brief coda of descending scales closes the piece.

BIZET CARMEN FANTASY

The Carmen Fantasy is based on some of the most popular tunes from Georges Bizet's opera, Carmen. Sarasate took the themes almost verbatim, and then created variations that certainly no singer would or could ever attempt, and in fact only he and a very few of the most skilled violinists could perform. To this day, Sarasate's violin show pieces, Carmen Fantasy and the Gypsy Airs are two of his most popular works, and remain a fixture in today's violin repertoire.



QUATRE DE PIQUE

The cello quartet "Quatre de pique" (Four of Spades) was founded in 2015 by Veronique Marin, Diana Ligeti, Raphaël Perraud and Michael Tafforeau. Former students of the prestigious Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris, the four cellists have an international carreer as soloists, chamber players as well as orchestral musicians. After years of travelling and playing in various international venues, the four cellists met again in the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional of Rueil-Malmaison, near Paris, as professors in the cello département. The quartet has performed in various concerts and festivals in France such as the international encounters in Forcalquier or Thèmes Variés in Saint-Rémy l'Honoré. Their repertory goes from Bach to Bacri, incuding transcriptions as well as original works written for the cello quartet. The quartet enjoys to explore new musical territories and the experience of working with living composers such Nicolas Bacri and Gilles Schuehmacher amongst others.

MONDAY 8 MAY VOCAL AND PIANO RECITAL

KEN SCICLUNA, BARITONE • SARAH VELLA, PIANO ROBERT SAMMUT HALL, FLORIANA 8PM

MOZART SONATA NO.7 IN C MAJOR, K.309

Mozart's Piano Sonata No. 7 in C major, K. 284b (K. 309), was composed in Mannheim in October and November of 1777, while he and his mother were on a lengthy trip that would take them to Paris the next spring. Tragically and unexpectedly, Mozart's mother would die there on July 3, 1778. While Mozart was in Mannheim, he earned room, board, and cash by giving lessons to numerous students. One of these, Rosa Cannabich, was the daughter of Johann Christian Cannabich [1731-98], leader of the famous Mannheim court orchestra. For her, Mozart composed the Piano Sonata No. 7 in C major. Mozart later explained that he had "depicted" the girl in the Andante of the sonata -- the only known instance in which Mozart attempted to portray a real person in music.

MOZART DON GIOVANNI - MADAMINA IL CATALOGO E QUESTO & DEH VIENI ALLA FINESTRA

The original piece of this opera is the legend about "Don Juan" that is well-known in Europe. As legend goes, Don Juan had 1003 lovers in Spain. Don Juan is referred to as "Don Giovanni" in this opera. There are three women who have quite different backgrounds, a daughter of aristocracy, Donna Anna, a DG's former lover, Donna Elvira, and a village beauty. Zerlina. It is remarkable to see the interaction between Don Giovanni and the three women. Mozart's previous opera. "The Marriage of Figaro", was a great success in Prague. Enthusiastic funs of Mozart in Prague desire to see a new Mozart opera. The chief manager of the National Theater in Prague suggested to Mozart to create a new opera. From that background, Mozart composed this opera, "Don Giovanni." Mozart was concerned whether this new opera would gain currency among people in Prague. Fortunately for Mozart, Don Giovanni became successful. There are some serious scenes in this opera, for example, to fight a duel between Don

Giovanni and the Commendatore. The most dramatic scene is that Don Giovanni goes to hell. Mozart composed some very great dramatic music for this scene. It is one of the greatest scenes in all of Mozart's operas.

TCHAIKOVSKY NI SLOVA O DRUG MOY

This short romance translates to 'O speak not beloved' and is one of the best known songs from the Tchaikovsky canon. It is not as well known as 'None but the lonely heart' but still contains the typical melodies that one associates with this perennially romantic composer.

MENDELSSOHN ELIJAH - IS NOT HIS WORD LIKE A FIRE? IT IS ENOUGH

Mendelssohn's great oratorio Elijah was premiered in Birmingham in 1847. It was an unprecedented success. No less than four choruses and four arias were encored, and the applause evidently bordered on the hysterical. Mendelssohn recounted the experience in a letter to his brother. 'No work of mine went so admirably the first time of execution, or was received with such enthusiasm by both the musicians and the audience,' he wrote. The Times' music correspondent was even more effusive. 'The last note of Elijah was drowned in a long-continued unanimous volley of plaudits, vociferous, and deafening,' he reported, 'Mendelssohn..... descended from his position on the conductor's rostrum; but he was compelled to appear again, amidst renewed cheers and huzzas. Never was there a more complete triumph; never a more thorough and speedy recognition of a great work of art.' It was without doubt the crowning glory of Mendelssohn's spectacularly successful career, but tragically it was to prove his last major triumph. A lifetime of overwork now brought rapidly failing health, and when his beloved sister Fanny unexpectedly died, he never recovered from the shock. He died on 4thNovember 1847.

RACHMANINOV NYE POY KRASAVITSA ALEKO - VES TABOR SPIT

These two short arias are distinctly different yet remarkably similar in their construction. Nye Poy Krasavita talks about the travails of a man who is in search of a woman who has left him for someone else, hence the title, 'Do not sing of me fair maiden'. The one act opera 'Aleko' is probably Rcahmnainov's best work in this genre and the aria 'Ves Tabor Spit' is probably one of the better known parts of the work.

CHOPIN BALLADE NO. 1 IN G MINOR, OP. 23

From the very first notes of this Ballade, we are engulfed in a balladic aura. We sense that this music means to tell us something extraordinary and strange. The dissonant note e flat that closes the opening recitative does not augur a happy end. (Interestingly, in the German edition it was altered to the consonant note d.) At the same time, we sense that it will be a tale of domestic, rather than foreign, occurrences. The rubato of the opening bars is like an awakening from meditation, the extraction of something from one's memory. And the tale commences. Spun out in an exquisitely beautiful melody, melancholically nostalgic, rising and falling in a regularly undulating 6/4 metre (an inseparable component of the balladic tone), the tale slowly grows. A new theme (or rather motif) enters, and the situation takes on dramatic accents, as if what has passed has suddenly become present. And there ensues what must inevitably ensue in a musical balladic tale: a special theme appears (in E flat major), from this world or perhaps another world. Subtle at first... dreamlike, one might say. This theme also has its development, its shadow, its inseparable complement. What happens later unfolds like a sonata allegro. The exposition is followed by a development section, in which the two themes, transferred to another tonal sphere (A minor and A major),

undergo wholesale transformation and an episode with a new theme comes to the fore. Then comes a reprise, presenting the two themes in their proper keys, though in reverse order. And the whole thing is crowned with a dynamic, sparkling coda.

VERDI RIGOLETTO - CORTIGIANI VIL RAZZA DANNATA

The original of this opera's libretto is Victor Hugo's play "Le roi s'amuse (The King Amuses Himself)." Hugo's play depicts the King of France at the time, and the play is then banned from after only one performance. When Giuseppe Verdi composed this opera based on Hugo's play, he transformed the scene from France to Italy, and the character from the King to aristocracy. This opera "Rigoletto" succeeded, and gained popularity. That resulted in Verdi obtaining the status of a great opera composer.

VERDI MACBETH PIETA', RISPETTO, AMORE

One of this opera's characteristics is the dark world, for example, witch, negative prophecies, and murder. Verdi gives directions for maintaining utmost dark stage. And, the leading character, Macbeth, isn't sung by a tenor. In fact, there was not excellent tenor in the opera house in the world premiere of this opera. Verdi gives this title role to Briton. Briton can express deeply, and can convey his feelings to an audience. Macbeth sings the famous aria, "Pieta, rispetto, amore [Compassion, honour, love]."

KEN SCICLUNA

Ken Scicluna has been active in the visual and performing arts scene from an early age, being one of the youngest presenters of Classical and Opera radio programmes on local stations. Concurrently he frequently appeared in



productions on both stage and screen initially as an actor, later in singing roles, also scripting, producing and directing a number of them including three short films. Ken was the first ever Maltese singer to have studied at the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory in St. Petersburg, Russia after being accepted to join the class of legendary Kirov/Maarinsky tenor, Yuri Marusin. He also attended master-classes by Cheryl Studer, Sergei Leiferkus, Fabio Mastrangelo and Magda Mkrtchyan. Consequently he sang roles in Opera productions such as Verdi's Rigoletto (2009) and La Traviata (2010) at the Astra and Aurora Opera theatres in Gozo, Malta and alongside international casts, including Eva Marton and Nicola Martinucci in Puccini's Turandot, (Festival Gaulitana, 2002): Daniela Dessi, Fabio Armiliato and Carlo Guelfi in Madama Butterfly (Mediterranea Festival, 2012): and Bolshoi theatre tenor Badri Maisuradze in Verdi's Otello (Mediterranea Festival 2013), the last two staged by director and Italian radio personality Enrico Stinchelli. In 2008 Ken had premièred Mussorgsky's song-cycle Bes Solntsa in Malta, besides performing with various foreign guest musicians and singers in several other concerts after he had made his début as Don Giovanni in Mozart's opera in St. Petersburg, Russia (2009), and later as Posa in Verdi's Don Carlo in Lucca, Italy (2010-11). In 2010 he was the person behind the Camerata Summer Academy for Chamber Music held at Manoel Theatre, Valletta, Malta,

The following year he also launched a series of lunchtime recitals at St. Paul's Anglican pro-Cathedral, Valletta. performing in a number of recitals as a soloist, including arias from Verdi Operas for the bicentenary, selections from Mendelssohn's Elias, Russian Romances, classical, popular and film songs amongst others. Along the years he has also been invited as a guest singer in several productions in Europe, working amongst others with Helmut Rilling in Germany. Scicluna made his début at Malta's National Theatre in the role of the poeta in Malta's première of Salieri's Opera Prima la Musica poi le Parole in 2012. That same year he was invited by the friends of the of St. Paul's Anglican Pro-Cathedral, serving as the diocese of Anglicans of Malta and Gibraltar, to perform solely in their annual special concert. Last year he was invited again to for a special recital part of the Lunchtime Live Recital series, comprising of arias from Mendelssohn's Elijah, Haydn's The Creation and Handel's

Messiah for Maundy Thursday at St. Paul's Anglican Pro-Cathedral, In 2016, Ken has appeared in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in Isreal making his debut as the Conte in Mozart's Nozze di Figaro and also performed in a series of recitals at the Gerard Behar Theatre. Ken was also awarded the Special Jury Prize in the second edition of an International Voice Competition in Isreal. Later in 2016 he was also invited to the Opera Sostenibile Festival in Madrid where he performed several concerts alongside singers from around the globe in open air historical castle grounds. He recently appeared as Zuniga in Strada Stretta's adaptation of Bizet's Carmen under the artistic direction of Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci in collaboration with the Valletta18 Cultural Programme and is to appear again for various concerts including War Songs. Operatic arias and later Puccini's Turandot, Further on throughout the year Ken is engaged to perform Guglielmo in Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte and Marcello in Puccini's La Boheme, both in israel. and Mendelssohn's Elias in Germany. Scicluna has travelled extensively around the globe and is fluent in six languages.

SARAH VELLA

Sarah Vella started piano lessons at the age of 8 under Ms. Monica Chetcuti and is continuing her studies under the tutorship of Dr. Charlene Farrugia. She has passed all her grade exams with distinctions, and obtained prizes in Grade 6 and 8. Furthermore, she has obtained the ALCM and LLCM Diplomas, as well as her Dip. ABRSM and LRSM Diplomas. Sarah has participated in various concerts; amongst others one can mention lunchtime recitals at Sala Isouard (Manoel Theatre) and at St. James Cavalier during the last four editions of the International Spring Orchestra Festival, as well as other performances at the Russian Culture Centre (Valletta), St. Aloysius' College (Balzan), Villa Bologna (Attard), the Italian Embassy (Ta' Xbiex), St. Catherine's Church (Valletta), Villa Tempra (Mgarr), Palazzo De La Salle (Valletta).. In addition, Sarah was also awarded a scholarship by Malta's Arts Council to participate in last year's edition of the Gubbio Summer Festival in Italy, giving her the chance to widen her knowledge in both solo and chamber music. She is currently also a member of the Malta Youth Orchestra, Sarah has followed masterclasses by well-known pianists including Franco Fodera, Yuri Didenko, Roland Conil, Veronique Conil, Jean Dube, Vincenzo Balzani and Patrizia Gallo,

CLOSING CONCERT TUESDAY 9 MAY

MALTA 2017 FU PRESIDENCY CONCERT

Malta Philharmonic Orchestra
European Union Youth Orchestra
The Maltese EU Presidency Choir
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir
Nico Darmanin, Tenor
Elisabeth Teige, Soprano
Marvic Monreal, Mezzo Soprano
Thomas Mohr, Tenor
Franz Hawlata, Baritone
Riccardo Bianchi, Chorus Master
Brian Schembri, Conductor
MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE CENTRE, VALLETTA, 7:30PM



The work is inspired by Rudyard Kipling's poem, a fatherly advice to his son emphasizing human dignity and wisdom but more essentially what it undertakes to be a man of good character.

ΙF

If you can keep your head when all about you Are losing theirs and blaming it on you, If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, But make allowance for their doubting too; If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, Or being lied about, don't deal in lies, Or being hated, don't give way to hating, And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch, If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you, If all men count with you, but none too much; If you can fill the unforgiving minute With sixty seconds' worth of distance run, Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son.



BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO 9 IN D MINOR, OP. 125 ALLEGRO MA NON TROPPO, UN POCO MAESTOSO MOLTO VIVACE

ADAGIO MOLTO E CANTABILE
PRESTO (WITH FINAL CHORUS FROM SCHILLER'S "ODE TO JOY")

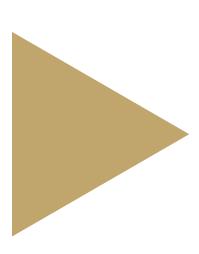
As might be expected of any work by Beethoven which fulfilled a cycle of development in a compositional category, the D minor Symphony is both an end and a beginning. It is the end – because it is the last – of what he could do, symphonically; but it is only the beginning of what he did, symphonically. The first refers to the end of his effort as an individual; the second takes in what his effort as an individual conferred on others to follow.

The reference to the D minor rather than to the Ninth is not a matter of paraphrase or semantics. Rather, it recognizes that "a"symphony in D minor was predestined to follow the Eighth in F. As early as 1812, jottings could be identified for a "third symphony" in a context of Nos Seven and Eight as its predecessors. Already the key of D minor had been assigned to it. As of a decade later, when he was much involved with the Missa Solemnis, Beethoven's mind was running to a pair of symphonies: one to conclude with an instrumental finale: the other, a German Symphony with a vocal finale in German. Ultimately, the two projects were merged. Towards the end of 1822, when the massive problems of the Missa were finally surmounted, Beethoven began to think of a symphony as his next commitment. Through his friend Ferdinand Ries, then living in London. Beethoven negotiated a commission for a symphony from the Philharmonic Society of London. The contract was signed in December 1822. All his thoughts were then directed to a project which would end with an

instrumental finale: in Beethoven's view, a score ending with a vocal finale in German would be inappropriate for a work commissioned by an English source.

Neither the firm impulse nor the best of good intentions prevailed. The method, as it had for years, provided a proving ground for materials Beethoven had been harbouring for a half dozen years. Indeed, a sketch for a fugue in D minor which is identical with the scherzo of the Ninth Symphony came to view as early 1815; and an imposing part of the fugal stretto in its finale can be heard any time the Konig Stephen Overture, first performed in Budapest in 1812, is programmed. Precisely when the two projects became joined is not known; but it is clear that, by the middle of 1823, the instrumental finale did not suit the three movements which were nearly complete – it was set aside, and eventually used as the finale of the A minor Quartet.

By this time an older, even deeper impulse was clamouring for attention. As early as 1793, the youthful Beethoven had found in Freidrich Schiller's "An Die Freunde", a subject which demanded musical fulfillment. For nearly twenty years, he periodically reminded himself of that intention, without finding either the occasion or the music appropriate to it. Now, in the context of what was at large, musically, in the D Minor Symphony coming to birth, the urge was more than regenerated: it became the impelling, uncontrollable aesthetic fulfillment of all that preceded it, the outcry to relieve the tensions of the first movement, the unrest and uncertainty of the scherzo, the prayerful yearning in the Adagio.



This was more than the answer to a need: it was the embodiment of everything for which Beethoven's dedication to a sonata principle rather than a sonata form had prepared him. Had a chorus and solo vocalists never before been accommodated in a symphony? Now they would, because that was the proper, the fitting culmination to everything this Symphony contained. Would it be inappropriate to finish a symphony written on a commission from English sponsors with a German text? One may assume that Beethoven, knowing very well what he had already brought into being in the Symphony's first three movements, now felt that his friends in England would deem him the best judge of what should follow. Only one problem remained: How does one prepare this unprecedented innovation?

In the manner to which he had long become accustomed, Beethoven acted and reacted, selected and rejected. In a pathbreaking innovation, the references to the prior movements were retained. But the wordless rejection of them was entrusted to the double-basses. As was always the case with Beethoven, the power of music prevailed over every alternative. Only after all argument has been silenced and a new solution proposed does the low male voice of the vocal quartet call for conciliation and rejoicing.

Many musical devices born in the evolution of his eight prior

symphonies are recalled, revalued and reshaped to the needs of his greatest concept. One may cite, at random, the florid embellishment of the violins in the Larghetto of the Second Symphony which Beethoven raises to new heights of eloquence in the Adagio of the Ninth: the "false" entrance of the horn from the first movement of the "Eroica" which imparts a mysterious aura in the scherzo of the D minor and the revolving scherzo and trio of the B flat made even more moving in the same scherzo; the ostinato of the Seventh's first movement and finale given a new functional part in the first movement of his last symphony.

It would be a gross error to leave the impression that the Ninth Symphony is but a composite, ideationally, of what had preceded it. Aside from its most conspicuous innovation in the finale, it achieved an equal, if much more inconspicuous innovation in the placement of the slow movement. After a generation (specifically that of Haydn and Mozart) in which the slow movement of a symphony was almost invariably second in the sequence, to be followed by an accelerated scherzo on the way to an even swifter finale, Beethoven dared, for the first time, to put the Adagio third in a symphony. If it disturbed the momentum, so be it. What it provided in return was a new point of rest from which the composer could achieve an even more dramatic conclusion in the finale.

NICO DARMANIN

Maltese Tenor Nico Darmanin is quickly making a name for himself in the Rossini and Bel Canto repertoires, having already made his debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He studied with soprano Gillian Zammit, before moving to London to study at the Royal College of Music with Rosa Mannion and finally at the National Opera Studio. Nico appeared in two productions at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Daniéli in Les Vêpres siciliennes (the Olivier-Award winning production directed by Stefan Herheim and conducted by Pappano) and as the Der Jüngling Die Frau ohne Schatten under Semyon Bychkov (in Claus Guth award winning production).

Nico also sang the Italian Tenor Der Rosenkavalier in Christoph Waltz's first opera production for De Vlaamse Opera, returning to Antwerp as Don Ottavio Don Giovanni, Don Ramiro in La Cenerentola for Scottish Opera and a critically acclaimed Almaviva Il barbiere di Siviglia at Opera Holland Park. Nico also studied on the Accademia Rossiniana in Pesaro with Maestro Zedda, after which he was invited to sing Belfiore in Il Viaggio a Reims at the Rossini Opera Festival.

The 2015/2016 season saw Nico make his debut for Wexford Festival Opera as Mérgy in Le pré aux clercs, as well as his house debut as Count Almaviva in the Barber of Seville for Welsh National Opera and a return to Opera Holland Park as Ramiro Cenerentola. In concert, Nico's repertoire includes Romantic song and operas by Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Tosti, Fauré and Debussy. He has recently recorded a world premiere of Massenet songs with Richard Bonynge and, also under his baton, the tenor in Sultivan's Shore and Sea for Victorian Opera. Further concert appearances include Handel's Messiah at the Royal Festival Hall and Beethoven's Symphony No.9 at the Barbican Hall.

Nico is a Samling Artist and he has participated in masterclasses with Juan Diego Florez (in Pesaro) and Joyce DiDonato (at the Royal Opera House). He has also worked with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Sir Thomas Allen on the Solti Accademia di Bel Canto and with Mirella Freni as part of the Cubec masterclasses in Modena. Engagements in 2016/2017 include Don Ottavio for Nederlandse Reisopera and a series of recitals in the US under the auspices of the Maltese Arts Council. Nico is a Royal Overseas League Competition Finalist, Overseas Prize Winner and most recently a BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Finalist 2015.



ELISABETH TEIGE

Elisabeth Teige has established herself as one of the most sought-after young dramatic sopranos in Scandinavia, known for her warm, beautiful timbre, intuitive musicality and compelling stage presence. Born and raised in Ålesund in Norway, Elisabeth took her first musical steps as a percussionist in the school marching band. In high school she played the drums and sang pop music and Norwegian folk songs, before discovering a more classical tone in her voice. After completing her studies at the Music Conservatory in Trondheim and the National Opera Academy in Oslo, she spent two seasons as a part of The Norwegian National Opera young artist program. In November 2015 she made her Wagner debut as Senta in Der fliegende Holländer at the Norwegian National Opera, a performance which was received with standing ovations. Future engagements include Senta in Der fliegende Holländer (Oper Frankfurt), and Leonore in Fidelio (Norwegian National Opera).



MARVIC MONREAL

London-based mezzo soprano Marvic Monreal hails from Malta. She started her opera and classical music training under the supervision of soprano Gillian Zammit. At the age of fifteen, she joined the University of Malta Junior College Orchestra; it was here where she was introduced to a classical and sacred repertoire and was given the opportunity to perform in various local concerts. Furthermore, this experience also gave her the chance to sing in concerts held at several cathedrals, halls and public events in Germany, Italy and France.

In 2014, Marvic enrolled in the postgraduate vocal studies programme at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), where she studies with Elizabeth Ritchie, James Baillieu and more recently with Ingrid Surgenor. Before starting her studies in London, she completed a degree in Tourism Studies at the University of Malta. At the RAM, she has performed several roles in opera scenes under the direction of Simon Iorio, Chris Cowell and Luke Gaspar and the musical direction of Gareth Hancock. She also took part in Royal Academy Opera's production of Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress as a member of the chorus.

Marvic sang the role of Marthe in Charles Gounod's Faust with Winterbourne Opera in Salisbury in July 2015. Later that same year she performed alongside the international Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja under the direction of Mro. Steven Mercurio, in his annual summer concert in Malta. She also performed the title role of Dido in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas at the Teatru Manoel in Valletta in collaboration with the Valletta 2018 Foundation in October 2015 as well as the Christmas Concert of the BOV Joseph Calleja Foundation.

In March 2016 she was in the chorus of the production May Night by Rimsky-Korsakov with the Royal Academy Opera were she also played the role of Raven. Later in 2016, Marvic joined The Glyndebourne Chorus at the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, where she took part in Wagner's Meistersinger, Mozart's Le Nozze di Figaro and Berlioz's Béatrice et Bénédict. She also covered the role of Dog in Janáček's The Cunning Little Vixen and Hippolyta in Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Now on the Royal Academy Opera course, Marvic has had the pleasure of performing the role of Bradamante in Handel's Alcina and Venus in Orphée aux enfers. Future engagments include, Mahler's 2nd Symphony which will be her debut at the Royal Festival Hall, with international conductor Semyon Bychkov and the Salzburg young artist programme in summer 2017. Marvic was awarded three prizes in her first two years at the Academy: the Edna Bradford Prize, the A M Parker Prize, and the Esther Hulbert Award, and recently she won the Isabel Jay Prize competition. She was a Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne Festival Opera 2016 and is a Drake Calleja scholar. Marvic Monreal would like to thank the Fordyce Scholarships, Malta Arts Scholarships and BOV Joseph Calleja Foundation for their continued support.



THOMAS MOHR

Thomas Mohr received his training at the musical academy of Lübeck, where he gained his diploma and passed his concert examination with distinction. While still a student he won first prizes at s'Hertogenbosch, at VDMK competition in Berlin and at the Walther Gruner competition in London. After Bremen and Mannheim he joined Bonn Opera and worked there with renowned directors and sang roles such as Silvio, Albert, di Luna, Lescaut and Germont père. Mohr also scored successes as Eisenstein, Peter the broom-maker, Count Almaviva and Papageno. He was seen on the concert platform in Orff's Carmina burana, Brahms' German Requiem and Britten's War Requiem. Since 1997 Thomas Mohr works freelance. His widespread activities have led him to many of the most important concert halls and famous opera houses worldwide, where he worked with renowned conductors.

A few years ago Thomas Mohr changed Fach, he switched from Baritone to Heldentenor. During the 2005/6 season he made highly successful appearances as Idomeneo and as Siegmund in Robert Carsen's Ring des Nibelungen and saw his much noted debut as Parsifal in Erfurt in April 2006. Afterwards he made his debut as Max in new Freischütz productions in Cologne and St. Gallen, as Officer in Hindemith's Cardillac at Dresden's Semperoper as well as Loge in Wagner's "Rheingold" at Leipzig Oper. This was followed by new productions of Walküre in "Ring Halle/Ludwigshafen", Parsifal at Malmö Opera and Poznan's Opera, Siegfried (Götterdämmerung) and Max at Leipzig Oper. Thomas Mohr will make his debut as Siegfried (Siegfried) in Minden in 2017.

His concert activites include Mahler's Lied von der Erde, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Elgar's The Dream of Gerontius, Schönberg's Gurrelieder, Pfitzner's Von deutscher Seele, Mendelssohn's Lobgesang and Bruchs's Loreley. Since 2002 he has been teaching singing at the Bremen Academy of Arts.

FRANZ HAWLATA

Franz Hawlata was born in 1963 in the Bayarian town of Eichstätt where he began his musical training. He completed his studies at the Musikhochschule in Munich under the guidance of Ernst Häfliger, Hans Hotter and Erik Werba and by the late 80s had won several competitions and made his professional debut at Munich's Gärtnerplatztheater. His international career began shortly thereafter with engagements in Lyon, San Francisco and Amsterdam. In the 1993/94 season Franz Hawlata sang Baron Ochs in Der Rosenkavalier with Welsh National Opera, a production which launched him onto the next stage of his career and a role which became one of his great calling cards of the next decade. Franz sang this role for his debut at the Metropolitan Opera (1994/95) as well as at the Vienna State Opera, l'Opera National de Paris, Covent Garden, the Salzburg Festival, Bayerische Staatsoper Munich, San Francisco Opera, and with both the Met and the Vienna State Opera in Japan.

Since the early 90s, Franz Hawlata has enjoyed a close relationship with the Staatsoper in Vienna where he has now sung over 200 performances including, in addition to Baron Ochs, Sarastro, Rocco, Jokanaan, Kaspar, Leporello, Figaro,

Wozzeck, Orest, Papageno and Daland. Franz Hawlata sang his first Hans Sachs (Die Meistersinger) with Zubin Mehta at the Maggio Musicale in Florence in the 2003/04 season. Over the past seasons, Franz Hawlata has made many major débuts: at the Paris Bastille (Mahagonny), Covent Garden (Leporello), Salzburg Festival (Osmin), Paris Chatelet (Rossignol), Liceu Barcelona (Wozzeck) and Lyric Opera of Chicago (Daland). Return productions followed: at the Met (Rigoletto), Bastille (Rusalka, Wozzeck, Capriccio), Covent Garden (Rusalka), Lyric Opera of Chicago (Der Rosenkavalier) and the Salzburg Festival (Cosi fan tutte, Don Giovanni). Recent engagements have included Rosenkavalier in Birmingham with Andris Nelsons and in Washington D.C. with Christoph Eschenbach, Wozzeck and Lohengrin in Madrid, Schweigsame Frau in Munich, Zauberflöte and Fidelio in Liège, Daland/Flying Dutchmann in Peking, Zaccaria/Nabucco at Tiroler Festival and Bartoks Bluebird in Straßburg. At the moment his projects are Verdi-Jerusalem in Bonn, Strauss-Capriccio in Paris, Rosenkavalier with Boston Symphony/ Andris Nelsons, Verdi-Atilla in Bonn, Puccini-Manon Lescaut at Berlin State Opera and Rimski-Korsakov-La fille du neige



BRIAN SCHEMBRI

One of the most brilliant musicians to emerge from Malta. Brian Schembri started his music studies with his father Carmelo Schembri. He later graduated in piano and conducting at the Kiev and Moscow "Tchaikovsky" Conservatories studying with A. Snegiriov, S. Dorensky, R. Kofman and G. Rozhdestvensky. While still very actively performing as a concert pianist, he started working as assistant conductor with Michel Plasson and Emmanuel Krivine. Eventually dedicating most of his time to conducting, he became Chief Conductor of the OPF Orchestra and the Orquestra Metropolitana de Lisboa and Music Director at Malta National Theatre "Teatru Manoel". He is currently Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Brian SCHEMBRI has been awarded the Malta Cultural Award and the Medal for Service to the Republic.

He has been guest conductor with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, l'Orquestra Ciutat Barcelona, l'Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, l'Orchestre Nationale de Radio France, the Lithuanian State Symphony, the Novosibirsk Philharmonic, London Mozart Players, l'Orchestre National de Lyon, London Philharmonic, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, the Svetlanov State Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Opera, Lubeck, Nancy and Rennes opera theatres. He has participated in the "Festival Massenet". "Octobre en Normandie", "Les Rencontres Musicales d'Evian", "Lisboa em Festa", "Kings Lynn Festival" and "Henley Festival". His CD recordings include a CD Piano Recital of sonatas by Beethoven, Schubert and Rachmaninov and other CDs of works by Charles Camilleri with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Divine Art Diversions DDV24126) as well as four Bach concertos with the European Union Chamber Orchestra (Divine Art DDA 25128) Receiving critical acclaim as an artist of high caliber for his strongly passionate and lyrical performances, he has forged a strong reputation for a moving profound musicality.

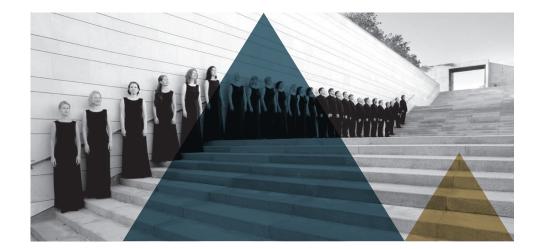


ESTONIAN PHILHARMONIC CHAMBER CHOIR

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (EPCC) is one of the best-known Estonian music ensembles in the world. The EPCC was founded in 1981 by Tōnu Kaljuste, who was the artistic director and chief conductor for twenty years. In the years 2001–2007, the English musician Paul Hillier took over and between the years 2008–2013 the artistic director and chief conductor was Daniel Reuss. Since 2014 Kaspars Putniņš has been the artistic director and chief conductor of the choir. The repertoire of the choir extends from Gregorian chant and baroque to the music of the 21st century, with a special focus on the work of Estonian composers. Each season the choir gives about 60–70 concerts both in Estonia and abroad.

The EPCC has cooperated with a number of outstanding conductors including Claudio Abbado, Helmuth Rilling, Sir Colin Davis and Gustavo Dudamel. The EPCC has also worked with the following world-class orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra, the Mahler Chamber

Orchestra, the Berlin Rundfunk Orchestra, the Philip Glass Ensemble, the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The EPCC has been a welcome guest at numerous music festivals and outstanding venues all over the world including the BBC Proms, the Mozartwoche, the Festival Aix-en-Provence, the Sydney Opera House, Wiener Konzerthaus, the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Versailles Opéra Royal, Palau de la Musica in Barcelona, the Kennedy Centre in Washington, the Lincoln Centre and Carnegie Hall in New York, the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles. Another important aspect in the choir's life is recording music- for ECM, Virgin Classics, Carus, Harmonia Mundi and Ondine, resulting in various award-winning CDs. The EPCC recordings have twice won a Grammy-Award for Best ChoralPerformance: All in all, the choir has 14 Grammy nominations. The EPCC recordings have also won the award Diapason d'or, Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, Danish Music Award, de Choc de l'Année Classica 2014, and more.



MALTA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Since its inception in 1968, the Orchestra has been under the direction of Malta's most prominent musicians as its resident and principal conductors, including Joseph Sammut, Joseph Vella and Michael Laus. In September 2014 internationally acclaimed conductor Brian Schembri, one of the most brilliant musicians to emerge from Malta, was appointed Principal Conductor and Artistic Director. Having worked with major international orchestras and conducted opera productions world-wide, Brian Schembri is bringing to the MPO a wealth of experience and musical vision that remains unparalleled in in its development to date. Michael Laus continues to be the MPO's resident conductor, while violinist Carmine Lauri, coleader of the London Symphony Orchestra, is the MPO's guest leader for the current season.

The orchestra's extensive calendar of events, places the MPO as Malta's leading cultural ambassador. Performing in more than 70 concerts a year, including regular symphonic concerts, annual opera productions in Malta and Gozo, community outreach programmes and many concerts of a lighter musical genre in venues around the islands. In recent years MPO has collaborated with several international artists and opera companies, and has performed in many leading concert halls around the world including; Milan, China, and Frankfurt. Further international performances are planned in Brussels, Rome and Vienna this season. The orchestra

has also produced a number of CDs including a project with international recording label Naxos featuring works by Charles Camilleri, and two CD series entitled Music of the 19th Century Jewish German Composers (Cameo Classics) and the British Composers Premiere Collections (Cameo Classics). We are also currently working on the production of a CD featuring the music of internationally renowned composer Alexandre Tansman with the CPO Label.

Over the years the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra has performed with a number of distinguished artists including Karl Jenkins, Joseph Calleja, Andrea Bocelli and Bryn Terfel, acclaimed conductors such as Jean-Marc Burfin, Peter Stark, Philip Walsh, and personalities from the pop world including Claudio Baglioni, Michael Bolton, Suzanne Vega and pop star Anastacia. The orchestra is a predominant exponent of Maltese composers and performers and is actively involved in delivering education programmes for children, involving them in workshops and bespoke performances. The MPO is also responsible for the orchestral training and professional development of young musicians, through the formation of the MPO Academy and the Malta Youth Orchestra. Under its new leadership, the MPO continues to pride itself on developing its vision of delivering music of the highest calibre on the Maltese islands while also promoting our musical heritage abroad.

