

International Spring Orchestra Festival
14th edition
Valletta 17-25 April 2020

MUSS ES SEIN? ES MUSS SEIN!
MUST IN BE? IT MUST BE!

Artistic Director
Karl Fiorini

This year the world honours the 250th anniversary of the birth of Western music's greatest heir and revolutionary - Ludwig van Beethoven. And so are we! For more than two centuries his music has travelled the four corners of the globe, accompanying mankind in his darkest hours and most crucial moments. He has inspired composers, musicians, artists, writers and commoners alike, shaping and influencing the course of modern civilisation.

I confess, if the International Spring Orchestra Festival had the means, I wouldn't have had second thoughts to programme all Beethoven's symphonies and concertos plus complete cycles of the piano, violin and cello sonatas and the string quartets. Alas, this being too ambitious an endeavour, I've had to be more realistic while still daring to dare. As in former festivals, I have tried to combine the new with the past – commissioning works for the Beethoven year as well as teaming up with the director, visual artist and academic Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci for an innovative street-theatre cabaret production of *Fidelio*.

Our hand-picked artists - from Gottlieb Wallisch and the Wiener Akademie Soloists to the renowned violinist Tasmin Little with the European Union Chamber Orchestra on the closing night - will take us through a vibrant spectrum of Beethoven's music, from chamber works and sonatas to opera, concerto and symphony. A celebration of Beethoven's legacy to the human race.

Not losing touch with the local community, the International Spring Orchestra Festival this year includes vocal Master Classes by the Maltese international soprano Claire Debono, as well as the popular Rising Stars platform featuring up-and-coming young Maltese students from home and abroad.

I warmly welcome you to our Festival.

Karl Fiorini, Paris, 2020

Cover Artwork

Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), Austrian symbolist

Detail from the central panel of *Beethoven Frieze*, narrative wall painting based on Wagner's interpretation of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Vienna 1901, for the fourteenth Secession Exhibition, dedicated to Beethoven, April-June 1902 (Secession Building, Vienna). Klimt's iconic statement stands seven feet high, spans more than one-hundred-and-twelve, and weighs four tons.

The taking of photographs or flash photography is not permitted.
Private audio-visual recording is forbidden unless by arrangement with the Festival management.
Please refrain from applauding until the end of a work or performance.
No smoking, including e-cigarettes.

BEETHOVEN 250

*From seeds and ideas tower the monuments of men.
From dust is born the making, the veiling, of within and beyond, the sky and the stars,
light and dark, silence and storms, the rhythm of time.*

'Beethoven's music sets in motion the machinery of awe, of fear, of terror, of pain.'

~ E T A Hoffmann ~

1810

'So rich an artistic life may, perhaps, best be compared to a splendidly landscaped garden
with paths which wind to often wonderful effect among
woodland, meadows, valleys and rocky gorges.'

~ *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* ~

1824

'Take a hundred century-old oaks, and write his name with them, in giant letters, on a plain. Or carve his
likeness in colossal proportions like Saint Borromaeus on Lake Maggiore, that he may gaze above the
mountains, as he did when living; and when the Rhine ships pass, and foreigners ask the name of that giant
form, every child may answer – It is Beethoven,
and they will think it is the name of a German Emperor.'

~ Robert Schumann ~

1836

'Degas, who, as is well known, liked to dabble in poetry, one day said to Mallarmé : "I cannot manage the
end of my sonnet, and it is not that I am wanting in ideas." Mallarmé, softly : "It is not
with ideas that one makes sonnets, but with words." So it is with Beethoven. It is in the quality of
his musical material and not in the nature of his ideas that his true greatness lies.'

~ Igor Stravinsky ~

1936

'Beethoven established a new dignity for the art of music, [lifting] it to a pedestal it had never before
occupied. Henceforth musical culture turned in a new direction'

~ Hugo Leichtentritt ~

1938

'Beethoven broke all the rules, and turned out pieces of breath-taking rightness. Rightness – that's the word!
When you get the feeling that whatever note succeeds the last is the only possible note that can rightly
happen at that instant, in that context ... Our boy has the real goods, the stuff from Heaven, the power to
make you feel at the finish: Something is right in the world ...
something we can trust, that will never let us down.'

~ Leonard Bernstein ~

1959

'To perform Beethoven to the exclusion of the living is to display a total lack of imagination.'

~ Alex Ross ~

2014

Immortality is to be remembered. With Beethoven, man has never stopped remembering.

**THE
CLAIRE DEBONO
MASTERCLASSES**

**Friday 17 April, Saturday 18 April
International Spring Orchestra Festival & Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector
Music Room, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta, 10.30am**

**Claire Debono
soprano
Julia Miller
accompanist**

Meet the Artists

Claire Debono was a student in London of Laura Sarti at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Her biography is one of golden collaborations. William Christie, Christophe Rousset, Jérémie Rhorer, François-Xavier Roth, Jean-Christophe Spinosi, Paavo Järvi, Emmanuelle Haïm, Brian Schembri ... Le Jardin des Voix, Les Arts Florissants, Le Concert Spirituel, Concerto Köln, Orchestre de Paris, London Sinfonietta ... Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Lyon Opéra, Opéra de Lille, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, Opéra Comique de Paris ... Teatro Real Madrid, Versailles, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, the Barbican, Teatru Manoel ... Aix-en-Provence, Edinburgh, Glyndebourne, Ambronay ... 'Her voice shattered across the orchestra like iced glass, she reached stratospheric heights with laser accuracy, her wracked body and wrenched hands dramatising the text with all the tragedy of a Greek heroine' – *Classical Source* on her creation of Karl Fiorini's *de dioses y de perros*.

Polish pianist **Julia Miller** teaches at the Malta School of Music, Hamrun.

ISOF RISING STARS

**Students from the Yehudi Menuhin School, Stoke d'Abernon
Teatru Manoel, 7 pm**

**Emiri Kakiuchi
violin
Daphne Delicata
piano**

*'To play great music, you must keep your eyes on a distant star'
~ Yehudi Menuhin ~*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) *Violin Sonata in D major, Op 12 No 1* (1797-98, dedicated to Salieri) I *Allegro con brio*; II *Tema con variazioni, Andante con moto*; III *Rondo: Allegro*

Meet the Artists

Born in Tokyo in April 2006, **Emiri Kakiuchi** started the violin at the age of four. She joined the Yehudi Menuhin School in 2018, where she now studies with Akiko Ono and Tereza Privratska. She won second prize in her age category at the 2019 International Grumiaux Competition.

Multi award-winning thirteen-year-old **Daphne Delicata** from Gozo began studying under the guidance of her father, Marco Delicata, before continuing with Irina Fedčenko-Carbonaro. She is currently in her first year of advanced training at the Yehudi Menuhin School in England, working with Marcel Baudet - the first ever musician from the Maltese Islands to be accepted by this world-leading establishment.

OPENING CONCERT

Friday 17 April
International Spring Orchestra Festival & Teatru Manoel
Teatru Manoel, 8pm

Gottlieb Wallisch

piano

Wiener Akademie Soloists

Tatjana Zimre oboe; Peter Rabl clarinet; Katalin Sebella bassoon; Hermann Ebner horn

'Forgive me, Majesty. I am a vulgar man! But I assure you, my music is not.'
~ Peter Shaffer, *Amadeus* ~

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-91) *Fantasy in C minor, K 475* (20 May 1785)
Appearing a couple of months after the C major Piano Concerto, K 467, this resplendent extemporisation is customarily associated with the scarcely less grand Sonata in the same key, K 457, completed in mid-October 1784. Though sharing some similarities and published together – as Mozart's Op XI, advertised in the *Wiener Zeitung* for 26 April 1786, six days before the premiere of *Le nozze di Figaro* – both are evidently self-articulated entities. Drama, expressivity and fire bind the piece in a finely wrought quinquartite design, predominantly without key signature, that for all its temporal changes – *Adagio-Allegro-Andantino-Più Allegro-Adagio* – skirts the pitfalls of sectionalisation. Mozart dedicated it to his student Therese von Trattner, whose husband had been his landlord in the Old Town near St Stephen's Cathedral. In evenings to come, before the dining hour, one might imagine a Masonic gathering, a veneered Anton Walter fortepiano waiting, straight-strung, black and white keys reversed, candles, 'Brother Mozart [entertaining] with his much-loved extemporisations' ... the strains of this dark, new piece haunting forgotten rooms.

MOZART *Quintet for Piano and Winds in E flat major, K 452* (30 March 1784) I *Largo-Allegro moderato*; II *Larghetto*; III *Allegretto* Mozart's fondness for woodwind is lavishly documented – think of the three great Serenades (1781-82). Joseph II's Vienna was home to notable players and instrument makers – more particularly the clarinettist Anton Stadler and the horn player Joseph Leutgeb. His Quintet for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn – a unique combination ventured again only by Beethoven (aside from Friedrich Grund in 1816 and Spohr around 1820 [flute replacing oboe], no other classicist took up the medium) – was first performed at the National Court Theatre, 1 April 1784, two days after its completion, the occasion a personal 'benefit' concert of symphony, concerto, aria and improvisation. Mozart expressed himself pleased with the outcome. 'A quintet for hautboy, clarinet, corno, bassoon, and pianoforte, was received with extraordinary applause,' he reported to his father in Salzburg ten days later. 'I consider it myself to be the best thing I ever wrote in my life. How I wish you could have heard it; and how beautifully it was executed! But, to tell you the truth, towards the close I was quite worn out from incessant playing, and I think it is much to my honor that my audience were not so also.' 'The particular charm of this work,' believed Alfred Einstein in his 1944 Mozart study, 'consists in its feeling for the tonal character of each of the four wind instruments, of which none is disproportionately prominent ... and in the fact that none ... is subordinated.' Felicitous touches abound. Novelty no less – for example the contrapuntally impelled *cadenza in tempo* of the rondo finale. More than passingly the *concertante* tracery of piano and wind writing reminds of things unborn – the Piano Concerto, K 482, for instance, completed over eighteen months later, the last three symphonies, No 39 especially ... much within the comfort of E flat major, not wholly by coincidence.

Interval

BEETHOVEN *Fantasy in G minor, Op 77* (1808-09) 'I do not like or want to have anything to do with people who refuse to believe in me because I have not yet achieved a wide fame for myself.' Theater-an-der-Wien, 22 December 1808, 'in the bitterest cold, from half-past six to half-past ten'. Lack of rehearsal, antagonistic players, enemies by the plenty, back-stabbing politics, Salieri, 'my most active opponent', leading the charge. Beethoven's last public appearance as a pianist. A man not yet forty, disappointed, disillusioned, angry, frustrated that in the metropolis of his adoption were '*kapellmeisters* who not only do not know how to conduct but also can hardly read a score'. The Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Fourth Piano Concerto, the Choral Fantasy. Introduced for the first time. One of Western culture's great nights, the mire of the hour, the pettiness of small, corrupt minds, defiantly crushed into perspective. Less a performance from manuscript than an improvisation to be tapered and written out later (not published until November 1810), the G minor Fantasy, which preceded the Choral Fantasy, lurks among the curiosities of Beethoven's catalogue. A capricious progressive tonality 'mixed genre *potpourri*' (Czerny) – hitting D flat major in the sixth bar, G minor lasting a mere nine beats, never to be heard again – living in a time-shifting world of fragments, figurations and fermatas, visceral runs and figuratively familiar cadenzas, alternately fiery and childlike, questioning and answering, the whole coming to rest and clarification in a long B major variation chapter texturally and pianistically prophetic of the late sonatas. Beethoven was one of the feared extemporisers of his day.

BEETHOVEN *Quintet for Piano and Winds in E flat major, Op 16* (1796) I *Allegro ma non troppo*; II *Andante cantabile*; III *Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo* Dedicated to the banker, benefactor and landowner Prince Joseph Johann zu Schwarzenberg (of Haydn oratorio association), this was first performed in Vienna in April 1797. The first edition appeared in March 1801, available also in a version for piano quartet. Mozart's K 452 model, down to structure and keys, flashes of cadenza, the crossover between *harmonie* and concerto, even the horn flourish at the end of the first movement, is never far away – though Beethoven could only have known it through manuscript or performance (Mozart's widow, Constanze, was one of his early supporters). Einstein, a touch ungenerously, suggests that Beethoven tried to 'surpass' Mozart, 'although he did not succeed in doing so'. Surpass? The impulse, the rhythmic cut and motivic energy, the assertive stance, suggests far more a burgeoning composer in his twenties mindful of gods – Haydn, Mozart – but out to carve his own way, the swarthy new boy of the Op 1 Piano Trios, the virtuoso of the C major Sonata from Op 2. 'Clever, serious, full of deep significance and character' ('Amusements of the Viennese after Carnival', Berlin *Frey müthige*, 12 April 1803).

Meet the Artists

Born in Vienna, **Gottlieb Wallisch** first appeared on the concert stage when he was seven years old, and at the age of twelve made his *début* in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein. Among the teachers who influenced his musical direction were Heinz Medjimorec, Pascal Devoyon, and Oleg Maisenberg. A concert directed by Yehudi Menuhin launched Wallisch's international career: accompanied by the Sinfonia Varsovia, aged seventeen, he played Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto. Since then he has received invitations to appear at the world's most prestigious concert halls and festivals – from Lucerne and Salzburg, London and Zürich, to Moscow and New York, Beijing and Singapore. Conductors with whom he has appeared as soloist include Giuseppe Sinopoli, Sir Neville Marriner, Dennis Russell Davies, Kirill Petrenko, Louis Langrée, Lawrence Foster and Bruno Weil. In recent years he has intensively studied historic interpretation on early pianos, leading to collaborations with Christopher Hogwood and the Camerata Salzburg, the Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra Los Angeles, and a Beethoven cycle with the Orchester Wiener Akademie directed by Martin Haselböck. An in-demand recording artist, his many albums have been released by LINN, Deutsche Grammophon, Alpha Classics and Naxos among others. Between 2010 and 2016 Wallisch was professor of piano at the Geneva University for Music; in 2016 he was appointed to the Berlin University of Arts (UdK Berlin).

Tatjana Zimre, specialising in baroque oboe, was born in Germany and studied at the Salzburg Mozarteum. Founder of the Tyrolean Clarinet Orchestra and solo clarinettist of the Tyrolean Symphony Orchestra in Innsbruck, **Peter Rabl** received the 2012 Jakob Stainer Prize. A graduate of the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy in Budapest, **Katalin Sebella**, period specialist and reed-maker, is solo bassoonist of the Wiener Akademie and contrabassoonist of Concentus Musicus Wien. **Hermann Ebner**, baroque horn, completed his studies at the University of Arts and Music in Graz. He is principal horn of the Wiener Akademie, Musica Angelica Los Angeles, L'Orfeo Barockorchester, and Les Musiciens du Louvre Grenoble.

**CONCERT II ~ Saturday 18 April
Teatru Manoel, 8pm**

Somogyi String Quartet, Budapest
Péter Somogyi violin; György Lendvai violin; Balázs Tóth viola; László Pólus cello

'There is no place for compromise or for a majority opinion in a good string quartet'
~ Norbert Brainin ~

BEETHOVEN *String Quartet No 1 in F major, Op 18 No 1* (1798-1800, second version) I *Allegro con brio*; II *Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato*; III *Scherzo: Allegro molto*; IV *Allegro* Quintessentialising Beethoven's supremacy of the classical quartet style inherited from Haydn and Mozart, *discussione* and *conversazione* in civilised, liberated temperament, his set of six Op 18, dedicated to his Bohemian patron Prince Lobkowitz, appeared in Vienna in 1801. Second to be composed, the F major comes in two versions, the familiar final draft, in Robert Simpson's words, 'a root-and-branch revision [of the first], a magnificent lesson in composition'. 'Beethoven shows himself worthy of his forerunners in the First Quartet in F major ... What beautiful melancholy and elegiac depth animate the fantasy-like *Adagio* in D minor [inspired, according to Beethoven's sketches for the coda, by the tomb scene from *Romeo and Juliet*: "il prend le tombeau; désespoir; il se tue; les derniers soupirs"]', and how impudently and teasingly does the rondo, in contrast, bubble forth with jovial humour!' (*Berliner Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, 22 November 1826).

SEBASTIAN THEMESSL (born 1975) *String Quartet No 4 The Kraken* (2019, International Spring Orchestra Festival commission, *World Premiere*) I *Largo*; II *Quasi Allegro*; III *Adagio*; IV *Quasi Allegretto* Sebastian Themessl was born in Innsbruck to a Viennese family of musicians. At the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, he studied composition with Erich Urbanner (a disciple of Fortner, Stockhausen and Maderna), graduating with distinction in 2003. During this period he further attended master-classes by Leon Schidlowsky in Zaragoza, Spain, and Azio Corghi at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy, with further studies leading him to the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome, the University for Music in Prague, and the Conservatory of Naples. His artistic work has been acknowledged by several awards and scholarships from the Theodor Körner-Fond, the Republic of Austria, the Emanuel Fohn-foundation, the City of Innsbruck, and the Republic of Italy. Currently on the professorial faculty of the Tyrolean State Conservatory, Innsbruck, founded in 1818, he also teaches at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna

His Fourth Quartet, dedicated to Karl Fiorini, draws its title from Tennyson's 1830 Nordic sonnet, *The Kraken*.

*Below the thunders of the upper deep;
Far, far beneath in the abysmal sea,
His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep
The Kraken sleepeth: faintest sunlights flee*

*About his shadowy sides: above him swell
Huge sponges of millennial growth and height;
And far away into the sickly light,
From many a wondrous grot and secret cell
Unnumbered and enormous polypi
Winnow with giant arms the slumbering green.
There hath he lain for ages and will lie
Battening upon huge sea-worms in his sleep,
Until the latter fire shall heat the deep;
Then once by man and angels to be seen,
In roaring he shall rise and on the surface die.*

The composer writes: 'The first movement is a short calm introduction to the second, which presents a development of contradictory material before stopping abruptly. At the centre of the work is a wide spreading *adagio*, a *Passacaglia funèbre*. The fourth movement develops a single idea, reaching a “chaotic” climax and ending in a reprise of the second movement's close.'

Interval

ALBERT PACE (born 1958) *String Quartet No 2 Haunted by B* (2017) Visiting Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of Malta, Albert Pace was born in Ħamrun and studied composition with Charles Camilleri. He gained his master's degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1998, and his doctorate from the University of Malta in 2007. His catalogue includes a musico-scenic representation of Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*, *Psalms for Today*, *Salve Regina profugorum* for soprano, chorus and strings, *In Amore illo ardeas* for orchestra, concertos for flute, clarinet and piano, and a recent Concertino Grosso for Maltese traditional instruments, as well as various chamber and solo pieces, including *Overlapping Backgrounds* for piano taken up by Murray McLachlan. His acclaimed 2007 cycle *Għanjiet ta' bniedem solitarju (Songs of a Solitary Man)*, for tenor, baritone, chorus and orchestra, setting poems by the Maltese poet Rużar Briffa has been recorded by Charles Vincenti, Albert Buttigieg, Kor Mirabatur and the Junge Philharmonie Brandenburg under Hans-Jürgen Nagel.

The composer writes: 'I have always been fascinated by Beethoven's string quartets, and particular events from different ones stick in my memory. This quartet was inspired by some of these events and motifs, as well as by the fact that some of these were found to be related to each other. The piece comprises “four Microludes and a Fantasy”. The term “microlude”, borrowed from Kurtág, was preferred to “bagatelle”, because the latter term conveys an idea of levity. The “fantasy” is longer than the four microludes put together. Microlude I begins with an obsessive repetition of an anguished motif from the slow movement of Beethoven's Op 18 No 1. Then follows a section based on the dotted rhythm of the scherzo from Op 127, and later by material from Op 130 and other quartets. Microludes II and III take up the same Op 127 motif, together with others, particularly a lighter version of the opening element of the whole composition. Microlude IV revolves around a continuous repetition of a motif from the last movement of Op 131, the intervals expanding at different rates in the different instruments. The closing Fantasy reverts to the Op 127 dotted rhythm, with a main section that is inspired by the *Grosse Fuge* plus material from further quartets. At three strategic points during the movement, the music turns into a straightforward D flat major, with phrases taken from Opp 74, 130 and 59 No 1 respectively. The last time is followed by a questioning ending, highlighting the prominence of the interval of the minor second.'

The work received the Mullord Award at the 2016/17 Alvarez Chamber Orchestra Composition Competition, 'As you like it'.

BEETHOVEN *String Quartet No 16 in F major, Op 135* (1826) I *Allegretto*; II *Vivace*; III *Lento*

assai e cantante tranquillo; IV Der schwer gefaßte Entschluß [The decision taken with difficulty] *Grave, ma non troppo tratto* (Muß es sein?)-*Allegro* (Es muß sein!)-*Grave, ma non troppo tratto-Allegro* 'Between the completion of the Ninth Symphony in February 1824 and his death in [March] 1827, Beethoven filled at least 1,899 pages of sketches for his five late string quartets and other projects, not counting a further 700 pages of completed scores and copies. This represents over 2,500 densely-packed, often almost illegible pages in less than three years [averaging] two and a half pages a day, every single day for 32 months — hieroglyphic postcards for a later age' (Peter McCallum, University of Sydney, *The Conversation*, 3 February 2020). Dedicated, on third-party instruction, to Johann Wolfmayer - a wealthy Viennese textile merchant, music lover, closeted patron and supportive friend of Beethoven's since at least the early 1800s – Op 135, the last of the quartets, in the key of the published first, was printed in Berlin/Paris shortly after Beethoven's death, the first performance following in Vienna in March 1828. *Externally* more concise than its immediate companions, its design is explicit. First movement, sonata-plan, without introduction or exposition repeat. Scherzo, impossibly teasing, of a style rarely pursued by the Romantics, placed second in the late manner of the *Hammerklavier* Sonata and Ninth Symphony. *Lento*, dark 'stopped string' D flat, the pre-Revolution 6/8 *pastorale* idiom transformed into some profoundly intimate dreamscape deep within stellar space. Finale, both halves repeated, the 'Es muß sein!' motif and its falling fourth associated originally with the Op 130 Quartet, the opening *Grave, ma non troppo tratto* returning theatrically in the second half. *Internally* it's about a supreme clarification of argument, texture and timbre, tonally far-ranging, the visual openness of the page belying the complexities within. Dvořák, you feel, must have warmed to the last movement. Milan Kundera certainly did: 'Es muß sein!' is the 'music' of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* - 'a young woman in love with a man torn between his love for her and his incorrigible womanizing'.

Beethoven, history passes down, was deaf for much of his life, profoundly so by the years of the *Missa solemnis* and Ninth Symphony. Modern research is changing that view. Analysis of Beethoven's conversation books, suggests Theodore Albrecht, Kent State University, Ohio, points to at least some hearing ability. 'Baths [and] country air could improve many things,' the master advises a stranger in his favourite coffee house in 1823. 'Just do not use mechanical devices [ear trumpets] too early; by abstaining from using them, I have fairly preserved my left ear in this way'.

Meet the Artists

Nearly a quarter of a century together, the Hungarian **Somogyi String Quartet**, returning to the International Spring Orchestra Festival by popular demand, was formed by former students of the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Budapest. In 1998 it was invited to the Ravinia Festival, Illinois, working with the Tokyo, La Salle, Cleveland and Emerson Quartets. Widely recognised for its discerningly informed advocacy of contemporary music, the Quartet appear annually at the Budapest Mini-Festival, founded by Zsolt Durkó in 1987, and won the Hungarian Artisjus Award in 1999, 2004 and 2006. Attila Bozay dedicated his Third Quartet to the members.

CONCERT III ~ Sunday 19 April Teatru Manoel, 8pm

Ameraldi Piano Trio, Zürich
Rachel Kisacanin violin; Diane Lambert cello; Alex Stukalenko piano

E flat major
'The key of love, devotion, intimate discourse with God, the Holy Trinity'
~ Christian Schubart ~

BEETHOVEN *Piano Trio in E flat major, Op 1 No 1* (c 1793-95) I *Allegro*; II *Adagio cantabile*; III *Scherzo: Allegro assai*; IV *Finale: Presto* Among Beethoven's first champions in Vienna was the Mozart disciple Prince Carl von Lichnowsky, 'one of my most faithful friends and

patrons of my art,' in whose first-floor quarters in the Alsergrund district he lived as a guest from the summer of 1794 to May 1795. The contrast between the two, contemporaries agreed, could not have been more extreme. The prince - 'a friendly and distinguished gentleman,' 'a great lover and connoisseur of music.' The composer - 'small and plain-looking;' pock-marked and unpowdered, with dark, shaggy hair, 'unmannerly in both gesture and demeanour,' speaking 'in a strong [Bonn] dialect, and in a rather common manner [...] dressed in the informal fashion of the other side of the Rhine.' The one middle-aged and evidently cultured. The other coltish, unbroken-in, seemingly 'malicious [and] ill-natured, [a] quarrelsome drunkard [without] feeling for music.' Paid for by the prince, the original edition's subscription list of 123 names boasted the cream of Austro-Bohemian-Hungarian nobility as well as the Russian Ambassador Count Rasumovsky - as much a vote of confidence in the 'Grand Mogul' as a commercial guarantee, a handsome profit accruing on the 244 copies pledged in the two months prior to the music going on general sale. Despite at least one (anonymous) critic thinking that here were the 'confused explosions of the impulsive bravado' of a young man not yet twenty-five, the parts remained before the public, numerous editions and arrangements, from keyboard to orchestra, appearing from European and English houses. 'The pearls of all sonatas.'

No inconsequential divertimento, all three instruments equal in contribution, the First suggests less the heroic/spiritual aspect of E flat than the urbane/galant. Breaking with tradition - witty scherzo substituting courtly minuet - the third movement is a diverting curtain-raiser The finale - lively, humorous, artfully counterpointed - is structurally frolicsome. Digression and excursion at their most delectably unpredictable.

DIANA BURRELL (born 1948) *Frieze* (2019-20, International Spring Orchestra Festival commission, *World Premiere*) Diana Burrell was born in Norwich and studied at Cambridge University before moving to London for thirty years, and then Harwich, Essex, where for a time she was artistic director of the Harwich Festival. She prioritises the need for 'strong, rough-edged things, brave disrespectful shapes and sounds' - as much a reference to her love of modern architecture as a declaration of her compositional creed. A creative voice at once primeval and unequivocally of our time.

The composer writes: 'Gustav Klimt's wonderful *Beethoven Frieze* created for the fourteenth Vienna Secession in 1902 provides the inspiration behind the music for this short work for piano trio. Klimt's painting was made in honour of the sculptor Max Klinger whose Beethoven torso formed the centrepiece of the exhibition. Klimt's painting took the form of a frieze along the upper half of three walls in one of the gallery rooms, and the painter's beautiful, stylised figures in their earthy shades of browns, creams and ochre overlaid with gold and rich blue symbolised the Secession's belief that "art leads us into the ideal realm, wherein alone we can find pure joy, pure happiness, pure love".

'*Frieze*, like Klimt's work, is in three linked sections. The first (following his label, 'Longing for Happiness') begins with music which is serene and simple, gradually brightening and intensifying before subsiding onto a low D in the cello and piano parts. As in Klimt's middle panel ('The Hostile Forces'), the second section is full of unsettled and rough music, but it is transformed in the third ["Pure joy, pure happiness, pure love"] into sounds of warmth and lyricism representing the fulfilment of that archetypal journey through darkness into light - a concept that so much art and music has concerned itself with over the ages. Strong violin and cello *tremolandi* with thick piano clusters and *glissandi* across the instrument's lowest strings draw the work to a close.'

Interval

BEETHOVEN *Piano Trio in E flat major Op 70 No 2* (1808) I *Poco sostenuto-Allegro ma non troppo*; II *Allegretto*; III *Allegretto ma non troppo*; IV *Finale: Allegro* 'He never flatters and therefore makes many enemies.' Completed by the Christmas of 1808, the Op 70 Trios were first heard privately in the Viennese salon of their dedicatee, Countess Marie Erdödy. Reichardt, former Kapellmeister to Frederick the Great, reported: 'Beethoven himself [partnered by Ignaz Schuppanzigh and Joseph Linke of later Schubert fame] played with great bravura and resolution [...] The charming, sickly, yet so touchingly serene Countess and one of her friends, a young Hungarian lady, showed such enthusiastic enjoyment of every beautiful, bold passage and every fine, effective new idea in the music that the sight of them was as agreeable to me as Beethoven's masterly work and execution. Fortunate the artist who can be certain of having such listeners!'

Lewis Lockwood (2003) speaks of the E flat Trio turning 'from the demonic [of its D major *Ghost* companion] to the human'. Joy before bite but not without the latter, the lyrical face of the years 1806-08 predominant in its *maggiore* demeanour – Violin Concerto, Fourth Piano Concerto, Fourth and Sixth Symphonies – it's unusual for two central back-to-back *allegrettos*, and a third movement that's terpsichorean without being either minuet or scherzo. The first is a bucolic 6/8 canter, grace and acumen to the fore, with a ruminating introduction recalled briefly in the coda. Flirtatiously, the finale banters humour, winsomeness and *alla zingarese* swagger, its geniality and self-possession admired by ETA Hoffmann in 1813. Lockwood thinks the key relationships of the whole 'surprising'. Less so perhaps given the line from Beethoven's teacher, Haydn, through to his disciple, Schubert. The whole fabric, fantastical flights aside, is pivotally geared. I, E flat *via* G to II, C *via* C to III, A flat *via* E flat to IV, E flat. It all works like a Swiss clock.

Meet the Artists

Making a welcome return to the International Spring Orchestra Festival, the **Trio Ameraldi** was formed by Rachel Kisacanin and Diane Lambert in 2015.

Rachel Kisacanin, violin, born in Marseille, studied at the Conservatoire Regional de Musique in Lyon, completing her studies with Yuri Zhislin at the Royal College of Music, London, and Raphaël Oleg, at the Musikhochschule in Basel in 2012. Parallel with her studies, she gained experience with the National Youth Orchestra of the Netherlands, Lorin Maazel's Castleon Festival in Washington, the Lucerne Festival Academy, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra, playing under such conductors as Bernard Haitink and Esa-Pekka Salonen. In June 2013 she was the soloist in Bartók's First Concerto with the Basel Symphony Orchestra directed by Adrian Prubava. In addition to her chamber work – she is leader of the Esprit Quartet – she guests with the Zürich Chamber Orchestra, Argovia Philharmonic, Festival Strings Lucerne, and St-Gallen Symphony Orchestra.

Paris-born, **Diane Lambert**, cello, comes from a family of musicians. Aged seven, she started lessons at the Conservatoire de musique de Massy, before transferring to the Conservatoire Regional de Musique in Lille, receiving the Médaille d'or de prix supérieur. She completed her studies with Raphael Wallfisch at the Hochschule der Künste, Zürich, and Rafael Rosenfeld at the Musikhochschule, Basel. Winner of the 2015 Bellan International Competition in Paris, her solo engagements have included André Caplet's *Epiphanie* with the Basel Symphony Orchestra. An experienced orchestral player, she appears regularly with the Basel Symphony Orchestra, Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, and the orchestra of Zürich Opera, working with an international line-up of conductors and soloists.

Based in Switzerland, **Alex Stukalenko**, piano, born in Kiev, studied at the National Music Academy of Ukraine and with Konstantin Scherbakov at the Zürich University of Arts. A competition laureate, he has participated in masterclasses with leading masters of the Russian piano tradition, including Vladimir Krainev, Dmitri Bashkirov, and the Serbian Aleksandar Madžar. A sought-after artist of strong romantic temperament, he divides his time between solo concerts and chamber music. He teaches at the Musikschule Küssnacht.

ISOF RISING STARS

CONCERT IV ~ Monday 20 April
Music Room, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta, 12.30pm

'What tremendous manifestations of the human spirit we are dealing with'
~ Heinrich Neuhaus ~

Marta Casha
piano

BEETHOVEN *Presto alla Tedesca*

Sonata in G major, Op 79 (1809, commissioned by Clementi), I

BOHUSLAV MARTINŮ (1890-1959) *Prélude en form de Danse*

Préludes, H 181 (1929), 4

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685-1750) *Sarabande, Gigue*

English Suite No 2 in A minor, BWV 807 (c 1713- 14), IV, VIII

AUGUSTE DURAND (1830-1909) *Première Valse in E flat major, Op 83* (c 1883)

Josefa Muscat
clarinet
Julia Miller
piano

FRANCIS POULENC (1899-1963) *Clarinet Sonata, FP 184* (1962)

I *Allegro tristamente*; II *Romanza*; III *Allegro con fuoco*

HENRI RABAUD (1873-1949) *Solo de Concours, Op 10* (1901)

Francesca Spiteri
piano

MOZART *Allegro in B flat major*

Sonata in B flat major K 570 (February 1789), I

FRYDERYK CHOPIN (1810-49) *Raindrop Prélude* (1839)

Préludes, XV, D flat major

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918) *Première Arabesque, L 66 No 1* (1890)

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953) *Nimble Feet*

Dances in the Canebrakes (1953), I

CONCERT V ~ Tuesday 21 April
Music Room, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta, 12.30pm

'The most beautiful gift given to mankind is not reason but feeling
– for to feel is at once passionate and terrifying'
~ Charles Camilleri ~

Keylann Spiteri
piano

RAFF, BEETHOVEN, CHARLES CAMILLERI, SHOSTAKOVICH, CHOPIN, GRIEG
Programme to be announced

Angelo Muscat

tenor

Julia Miller

piano

VINCENZO BELLINI (1801-35) *Malinconia, ninfa gentile*

Melancholy, gentle nymph - Sei Ariette No 1 (1829)

Words by Ippolito Pindemonte

MOZART *Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön*

This image is enchantingly lovely - Die Zauberflöte (1791), Act I, Pamino

Words by Emanuel Schikaneder

GAETANO DONIZETTI (1797-1848) *Romanza: Una furtiva lagrima*

A furtive tear - L'elisir d'amore (1832), Act II, Nemorino

Words by Felice Romani after Scribe

PAOLO TOSTI (1846-1916) *L'alba sepàra dalla luce l'ombra*

The dawn divides darkness from light - Canzoni d'Amaranta (1907), No 2

Words by Gabriele D'Annunzio

Charlotte Cheung

violin

Milica Lawrence

piano

PABLO DE SARASATE (1844-1908) *Fantaisie de Concert on Carmen after Bizet, Op 25* (1882)

Introduction: Allegro moderato - I Moderato; II Lento assai; III Allegro moderato;

IV Moderato

NICCOLÒ PAGANINI (1782-1840) *La Campanella, Rondo à la clochette*

Violin Concerto No 2 in B minor, Op 7 (1826), III

CONCERT VI ~ Tuesday 21 April

San Anton President's Palace, Attard, 6.45pm

Bernard Curmi

violin

Daniel Zak Borg

piano

In my student days, when Leschetizky was dissatisfied with the way we turned a phrase, he would bid us leave the piano and walk about the room with our eyes shut until a new phrasing suggested itself.

Then we were allowed to play for him.'

~ Benno Moiseiwitsch ~

BEETHOVEN *Romance in F major, Op 50* (?1795)

BEETHOVEN-ANTON RUBINSTEIN (1829-94) *Marcia alla Turca*

Die Ruinen von Athen (1811), IV

FRANTIŠEK DRDLA (1868-1944) *Carmen Fantasie after Bizet* (1909)

BEETHOVEN *Sonata quasi una fantasia in C sharp minor Op 27 No 2, Moonlight* (1801)

I Adagio sostenuto - II Allegretto; Presto agitato

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (1873-1943) *Prelude in C sharp minor*

Morceaux de fantaisie (1892), No 2

JOHANNES BRAHMS-JOSEPH JOACHIM (1831-1907) *Hungarian Dance No 2 in D minor*

(1858-68) Allegro non assai

Meet the Artists

Daniel Zak Borg, eighteen, is active as a pianist, accompanist, organist and music arranger. He is currently reading for a medical degree at the University of Malta with the aim of becoming a cardiothoracic surgeon. He has appeared at the International Spring Orchestra Festival, The Three Palaces Festival, Notte Bianca, Maltese Islands Festival, and the Malta International Organ Festival, as well as in Carnegie Hall in 2018, showcasing works by Joseph Vella. Recently he's been collaborating with the celebrated Valletta violinist George 'il-Puse' Curmi and his son, Bernard.

Bernard Curmi, fifteen, from a famous Maltese musical dynasty, started the violin at the age of four, studying with Joanna, and then Romeo, Giacomotto. Presently attending St Augustine College, Pietà, he's an experienced recitalist and orchestral player, appearing widely around the Islands and occasionally abroad. Aged ten he became the only child ever to perform during an edition of the Ball of the August Moon under the patronage of the President of Malta. Last year he joined the newly established Palace String Orchestra.

FIDELIO

Wednesday 22 April
International Spring Orchestra Festival & The Strada Stretta Concept
The Splendid, Strada Stretta, 8pm

a new street-theatre cabaret
production of
BEETHOVEN'S
Grand Opera

Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci
director
Karl Fiorini
arranger

Clare Ghigo, mezzo-soprano (Leonore/Fidelio); Charles Vincenti, tenor (Florestan, Jaquino);
Ken Scicluna, baritone (Rocco); Nicola Said, soprano (Marzeline);
Louis Andrew Cassar, bass (Don Pizarro)

Tom Armitage, piano, music co-ordinator; Nadine Galea, violin;
Oliver Degabriele, doublebass; Joseph Camilleri Jr il-Bibi iż-żghir, percussion

'This mighty work'
~ Carl Maria von Weber, January 1823 ~

1st version (*Leonore*, three acts, 1804-05, French Occupation of Vienna); 2nd version (*Leonore*, two acts, 1806); 3rd version (*Fidelio*, two acts, 1814, Congress of Vienna); Fiorini arrangement, 1814 version abridged and re-ordered, Paris 2019-20) Libretto by various hands after Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal* (Paris 1798) *Dramatis personae* Florestan, a prisoner; Leonore, his wife, disguised as a man under the alias Fidelio; Rocco, gaoler; Marzeline, his daughter; Jaquino, assistant to Rocco; Don Pizarro, governor of the prison.

Overture *Fidelio*

Act I

Duet: 'Jetzt, Schätzchen, Jetzt sind wir allein' (Jaquino, Marzeline)
Aria: 'O wär' ich schon mit dir vereint (Marzeline)
Quartet: 'Mir ist so wunderbar' (Marzeline, Leonore, Rocco, Jaquino)
Recitative and Aria: 'Abscheulicher! wo eilst du hin' (Leonore)
Aria with Chorus: 'Ha! welch' ein Augenblick!' (Pizarro, The Watch)
Duet: 'Jetzt, Alter, Alter jetzt hat es Eile!' (Pizarro, Rocco)

Act II

Introduction and Aria: 'Gott! welch' Dunkel hier!' (Florestan)
Melodrama and Duet: 'Nur hurtig fort, nur frisch gegraben!' (Leonore, Rocco)
Terzetto: 'Euch werde Lohn in bessern Welten' (Florestan, Rocco, Leonore)
Quartet: 'Er sterbe!' (Pizarro, Florestan, Leonore, Rocco)
Duet: 'O namenlose Freude!' (Leonore, Florestan)
Finale: 'Heil! Heil! Heil sei dem Tag!' (People and Prisoners)

Meet the Cast

Clare Ghigo studied with Leah Marian Jones and Laura Sarti, completing her postgraduate training at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff. Admired for her rôles in operas by Bizet, Humperdinck, Monteverdi, Mozart, Piazzolla, Rachmaninov and Rossini, her Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture engagements included the world premieres of *Aħna Refuġjati* and Reuben Pace's *Belt il-Bniedem (City of Humanity)*. She also took the part of Anna Rosa in Brian Schembri's centenary revival of Carlo Diacono's 1918 opera *L'Alpino*. A versatile recitalist, she has appeared in concert with Richard Bonyngé, Monserrat Caballé, Joseph Calleja, Daniela Dessi, Nelly Miriciu, Luciana Serra, Anna Tomova Sintova and Bryn Terfel; and has toured China with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra. Clare forms part of the Monteverdi Project (Malta) and the Orfeo Foundation(Amsterdam), and is an ENOA (Aix-en-Provence) and Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto scholar. She wishes to thank the BOV Joseph Calleja Foundation for their support.

Charles Vincenti read music at the University of Malta. He began his vocal training with Claire Massa, subsequently attending Éva Andor's masterclasses at the British Kodály Academy. He studies currently with Juliette Bisazza Zanni. Operatic appearances have included rôles in *Gianni Schicchi*, *Tosca*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Turandot*, *Otello*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Candide*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *La cambiale di matrimonio*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *L'elisir d'amore*; while non-operatic performances have ranged from Bach oratorio and passion through Mozart and Haydn masses, Rossini, Gounod and Saint-Saëns, to Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*. His interest in Maltese music focusses on a repertory from Isouard, Vassallo and Nani to Carmelo Pace and Joseph Sammut, Charles Camilleri's opera *Il-Wegħda* to Albert Pace's *Songs of a Solitary Man*.

Ken Scicluna, active in the visual, performing and broadcasting arts scene from an early age, was the first ever Maltese singer to study at the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory in St Petersburg, in the class of the legendary Kirov/Mariinsky tenor Yuri Marusin. He also attended master-classes with Cheryl Studer, Sergei Leiferkus and Fabio Mastrangelo, and worked with Helmut Rilling in Germany. His operatic and oratorio appearances, in theatres from Malta to Russia, Italy, France, Germany, Israel and Spain, have featured standard repertoire works by Mozart, Puccini, Verdi and Bizet as well as Salieri's *Prima la musica e poi le parole*, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Cox and Box*, *Patience*, Menotti's *Ahmal and the Night Visitors*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. A seasoned traveller, fluent in six languages, his engagements during the Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture year included Andrea in Diacono's *L'Alpino*, Corto Maltese in Monique Krüs's *Corto Maltese, the Ballad of the Salty Sea* (a Teatru Manoel Youth Opera initiative), the Monk in Reuben Pace's *Belt il-Bniedem*, and a Bernstein centenary concert with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra under Wayne Marshall. *Fidelio* is his third opera for the Strada Stretta Concept.

Enjoying a blossoming profile, **Nicola Said**, Malta Airport Foundation Ambassador and a scholar of the BOV

Joseph Calleja Foundation, is a graduate of the Guildhall Opera Course in London, where she studied with Yvonne Kenny. In 2014, on the personal nomination of Joseph Calleja, she spent time at the Salzburg Mozarteum. She is coached currently by Juliette Bisazza Zanni, Michael Lloyd (Guildhall), and Caroline Dowdle (Verbier International Music Festival, Royal Opera House Covent Garden). Her recent rôles include Donizetti's Lucia with Festival Lyrique-en-Mer, Mozart's Madame Herz with Teatru Manoel, and Verdi's Nannetta with Grange Festival Opera (cover). During Valletta 2018 she premiered the part of Maria in Reuben Pace's *Belt il-Bniedem*.

Louis Andrew Cassar commenced vocal studies at the age of thirteen with Brian Cefai, working subsequently with Patrizia Morandini in Italy. He is currently under the artistic direction of Juliette Bizazza Zanni. He pursues an active operatic, oratorio and concert career, his repertory taking in key principle and secondary rôles. Among sacred works by Maltese composers, he was involved in the 2016 APS project reviving Antonio Nani's Requiem Mass with the Bulgarian Philharmonic Orchestra under Joseph Vella. The following year he took the part of St Paul in the world premiere of Marco Firisina's oratorio *Fino ai confine della terra* with the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the composer. During the Capital of Culture year, Valletta 2018, appeared in the premieres of *Ahna Refugjati* and the children's opera *Il-Qtates ta' max-Xatt*, an adaptation of the award-winning children's book by Claire Azzopardi. In 2019, he was one of the soloists in the Victoria International Arts Festival's opening concert when Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Mendelssohn's *Die Walpurgisnacht* were programmed.

BEETHOVEN'S CELLO SONATAS

CONCERT VII ~ Thursday 23 April

CONCERT VIII ~ Friday 24 April

Grand Salon, National Museum of Archeology, 8pm

Sébastien Hurtaud

cello

Pieter-Jelle de Boer

piano

Bridging Beethoven's life, from alleged first to third periods, his cello sonatas and variation sets remain central to the cellist's New Testament, commanding an imperious high ground between Bach and Brahms. 'Pour Le clavecin ou Piano-Forte avec un Violoncelle obligé' asserts the title page of Op 5, 'Freie Sonate für Klavier und Violonschell' reveals the autograph of Op 102 No 1: definitions in keeping with the conventions of their period (up to Brahms, in fact) that say nothing at all about what goes on between the pages – cellist and pianist as equal protagonists, grand actors debating, conversing and sharing, the cello's 18th century continuo rôle banished. Here is Beethoven on a learning curve in fiery youth – the 1796 'Prussian' Sonatas Op 5, the Mozart and Handel variations. Here is genius, either side of the 1815 Waterloo divide, reaching for the Matterhorn – the Opp 69 and 102 Sonatas, published in 1809 and 1817 respectively. Think of the finales of Op 5 No 2 and Op 69 for motif and momentum; the slow chapters for pathos, poetic depth and (Op 102 No 1) progressively quartet-like intensity; the anatomy and scaling of Op 69 for muscular heroism (plus a gloriously cantering yet songful scherzo); the post-Bachian fugal assimilation of the Op 102 pair for textural clarity and wrapt concentration; the variation cycles for limpid grace with a touch of storminess. These are rich hunting grounds, 'a cellist's dream' ...

23 April

'My art is winning for me friends and respect'

~ Beethoven, 1796 ~

Twelve Variations in G major on Handel's 'See the conqu'ring hero comes' (Judas Maccabaeus), WoO 45 (1796) Beethoven discovered Handel early, revering him to the end. Undemanding composition making. Dedicated to Princess Christiane von Lichnowsky - thirty-one and 'beautiful'

it was said.

Cello Sonata No 1 in F major, Op 5 No 1 I *Adagio sostenuto-Allegro*; II *Rondo: Allegro vivace*
Dedicated to Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia, a keen cellist, the Op 5 Sonatas were written during a concertising visit to Berlin, where Beethoven encountered the renowned Duport brothers, cellists *extraordinaire* – Jean-Pierre (who taught the king) and Jean-Louis (of whom Voltaire said, 'you will make me believe in miracles, for I see that you can turn an ox into a nightingale'). Self-contained, complementary key, slow movements, exceptionally, are omitted. Both works, however, offer weighty, extended 'fantasia' introductions by way of alternative. The 'double concerto' brilliance, cadenzas and tempo plains of the F major, the gallantry of its opening *Allegro's* first subject, conjure a place, time and youth – pianist at full flourish, cellist in soaring tenor flight, a king and his cultured courtiers surprised and regaled.

Interval

Twelve Variations in F major on Mozart's 'Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen' (Die Zauberflöte), Op.66 (?1796-98) This Papageno homage was Beethoven's first printed works to be reviewed in the Leipzig *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, unfavourably. One modulation near the end, from F to D, especially offended. 'However I examine and listen to these transitions, they are and remain clumsy, and are and remain so all the more, the more pretentiously and blatantly they are presented.'

Cello Sonata No 2 in G minor, Op 5 No 2 I *Adagio sostenuto ed espressivo-Allegro molto più tosto presto*; II *Rondo: Allegro* In post-First World War Paris the aristocratic Vincent d'Indy (1929) thought this a composition of 'curious innovations, the tentative efforts of a well-taught pupil, not yet quite sure of his technique'. He admired the first movement for what he called its 'terminal development', but found the rondo 'tedious', believing its method of 'over-weighted' construction to compromise unity.

24 April

*'The cello is like a beautiful woman who has not grown older, but younger with time,
more slender, more supple, more graceful'*

~ Pablo Casals ~

Seven Variations in E flat major on Mozart's 'Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen' (Die Zauberflöte), WoO 46 (1801) Another bad Leipzig review - a piece 'accompanied by *obbligato* cello throughout: whoever plays this must have complete command of his instrument. These variations do not belong among the best for which we have to thank this master'. Curiously, in error possibly, the title page of first edition omitted any reference the cello's presence.

Cello Sonata No 3 in A major, Op 69 (1807-08) I *Allegro ma non tanto*; II *Scherzo: Allegro molto*; III *Adagio cantabile-Allegro vivace* Beethoven the symphonist post-*Eroica* continuing to resist classical sonata protocol as a cello container. He brings a minor/major (quintepartite) scherzo into play but dispenses with a slow movement while transferring the introduction element of his Op 5 set from opening to closing chapters (*Waldstein*-like). He begins with the cello in its low register unaccompanied for six bars - *dolce*, sweetly. Once under way, it glows and flames, reaching stratospheric regions in the finale, taking whatever stresses and figurations are thrown at it, yet with latitude for tenderness, charged pathos, a sad cry. Op 69 is a work of determined strength, developmentally taut, the flanking *allegros* sharing a neat if terse cyclic relationship. Whether or not some cryptic Latin in the autograph of the first movement - 'Inter lacrymas et luctus' (Amid tears and sorrows) – is a clue to Beethoven's emotional fragility when he composed it or a ciphered comment on the Napoleonic backcloth of its genesis we cannot be sure. Theories differ. We know though that 1807 was not an easy year for him. He'd long loved one of his former students,

Countess Josephine Deym, a young widow, wanting her hand in marriage. He strived, only to wrap up his heart in the autumn. The impossibility of commoner and aristocrat. 'How it hurts ... but it is better for your peace of mind and mine not to see you'.

Interval

Cello Sonata No 4 in C major, Op 102 No 1 (July 1815) I *Andante-Allegro vivace*; II *Adagio-Allegro vivace* **Cello Sonata No 5 in D major, Op 102 No 2** (August 1815) I *Allegro con brio*; II *Adagio con molto sentimento d'affetto* - III *Allegro-Allegro fugato* These two pinnacles of the species, written probably for Countess Erdödy and the cellist Josef Linke to play, inhabit arenas of progressive thought and texture beckoning the Beethoven's crowning masterworks. Contemporaries were baffled by them. 'They are completely and utterly remote from what is enjoyed and played nowadays ... disdaining all that is merely brilliant ... all that is merely charming, sonorous and gratifying to the ear ... [their] melody is not infrequently coarse, the harmony sometimes harsh' (*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, Leipzig 11 November 1818). Forty years later Wilhelm von Lenz placed them in the cosmos. 'No instrumental duet has gone so far in transmitting the musical idea in abstraction from the medium. The form is raised above itself ... the ensemble [not the tournament] of two intelligent musicians becomes a triumph of poetic import' .

Superficially, the double-movement introduction/*allegro* blueprint of No 1 suggests a throwback to Op 5, but actually belongs far more with the mature double-movement piano sonatas. Unexpectedly, the *Allegro* of the first movement is in A minor not C major, its dotted rhythms typically late period. The rhythms of the finale remind of someone looking back, re-imagining the skittish air of the G major Piano Sonata from Op 14 or the First Symphony, the cumulative energy gloriously throated and exultant. Both introductions are lyrical arias, the second recalling the first – effectively a slow movement divided into two separated halves.

With outer *Allegros* flanking a decorative, opulent core, No 2, architecturally, is the only one of the canon to more or less conform with the notion of a classical sonata. Beethoven surprises, however, by writing a work that, for all its toughness, development, incident and modulation, remains rooted to the keynote, D, the *Adagio* oscillating between minor and major. Leading on without a break (an old Beethoven ploy), the closing fugue (its subject much sketched) is innocently dance-like before becoming gritty, 'rough' and monumental. Grand brilliance.

Meet the Artists

Born into a family of artists, **Sébastien Hurtaud** studied at the Conservatoire de La Rochelle (Gold Medal, 1994) and in Paris at the Schola Cantorum, graduating in 1997, and the Conservatoire. Subsequently he furthered his education at the Hochschule für Musik, Detmold, the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester (studying with Karine Georgian), the Conservatoire de Boulogne Billancourt, and the Southern Methodist University of Dallas. During his apprenticeship years he benefitted further from contact with Celibidache as well as attending one of Rostropovich's last masterclasses. A laureate of the Naumburg Foundation, he won the Adam International Cello Competition in 2009.

Characterfully potent in voice, the Dutch pianist, organist, conductor and composer **Pieter-Jelle de Boer** studied in Amsterdam and at the Paris Conservatoire, gaining the Premier Prix in conducting under Zsolt Nagy. He received subsequent coaching from Murray Perahia, Emanuel Ax and Peter Eötvös. A refined musician of urgent, adventurous ideas, equally versatile playing period or modern instruments, his projects have ranged from programming the Beethoven piano concertos with organ rather than orchestra to a recent orchestration of Duruflé's organ Suite, premiered by the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse and published by Durand in 2016. He has recorded a diverse repertory for Naïve, Naxos and Etcetera.

'OF BEETHOVENS THERE IS ONLY ONE'

CLOSING CONCERT

Saturday 25 April
International Spring Orchestra Festival & Valletta Cultural Agency Annual Concert
Ballroom, Casino Maltese, Valletta, 8pm

Tasmin Little
violin
European Union Chamber Orchestra
Doriane Gable
leader
Dimitri Scarlato
conductor

'I do not write for the multitude, I write for the cultured'
~ Beethoven, April 1806 ~

Violin Concerto in D major, Op 61 (1806) I *Allegro, ma non troppo*; II *Larghetto*-III *Rondo: Allegro* Cadenzas by Fritz Kreisler (published 1928) Franz Clement, a noted Viennese soloist and conductor of the day (he led the first performance of the *Eroica*), premiered this, the first great violin concerto of the 19th century, at a concert in the Theater-an-der-Wien, 23 December 1806, reputedly without rehearsal, the first movement separated from the second and third, trickery and sundry diversions in between. 'The verdict of the cognoscenti,' the critic of the *Zeitung fur Theater, Musik and Poesie* reported (8 January 1807), 'is unanimous: they conceded that it has some beauty, but maintain that the continuity is often completely fragmented, and that the endless repetition of some commonplace passages might easily prove wearisome. They assert that Beethhofen [*sic*] could put his undoubtedly great talents to better use.' Modern opinion — since the occasion in early-Victorian London when, under the baton of Mendelssohn, it was revived by the twelve year old Joachim for his Philharmonic Society debut, 27 May 1844 (to 'prolonged and rapturous applause') - begs to differ.

Combining facets echoing the groundplans of Mozart's keyboard and fiddle concertos, the first movement - launched by a bar of soft drum taps (nothing else) - is an expansive sonata design, the accent not so much on individual subjects as a pair of open-ended thematic groups tonally energised. The closing section remains for ever miraculous, a lingering farewell where violin and orchestra entwine in an ethereal dialogue the sublime stillness of which is impervious to the surrounding drama. The song of this *Allegro* is matched by that of the tonally static G major *Larghetto*— a dream-like utterance of 91 bars untouched by the Napoleonic battlefields of its genesis. Ostensibly, it's a set of variations, but such impression is contradicted half way through when the soloist (unmuted against *sordino* orchestral violins, a subtle touch) suddenly enters with a completely new idea, *cantabile* on the G and D strings. *Galante* patterns and fantastical images, tumbling among waterfalls of brightly rainbowed sound, course through the concluding 6/8 sonata-rondo, music of bacchanalian pastures and gruff humour. Dance-like in its refrain and the *a la chasse* style of its hunting-horns, reflective in the violin and bassoon conversation of its G minor central episode, teasingly denying in by-passing the obvious (for example the extraordinary, if not quite unprecedented, resolution of the final cadenza in A flat, the remotest of keys), the vibrancy of its life cannot be stilled.

Interval

Symphony No 4 in B flat major Op 60 (1806) I *Adagio-Allegro vivace*; II *Adagio*; III *Menuetto &*

Trio: Allegro vivace/Un poco meno allegro; IV Allegro ma non troppo Honouring a commission from Count Franz von Oppersdorff, this 'slender Grecian maiden between two Nordic giants' of Schumann's future fancy, is outwardly urbane and leisurely, in keeping with the lyrical vein of a year that witnessed the Violin and Fourth Piano Concertos. Within, however, a tough (cyclically cross-referenced) rationale operates, the 'slender' aspect of the music more a matter of proportion than property. On 20 April 1807 Beethoven signed a contract with Clementi for the publication of his recent music in England, including this symphony and the *Coriolan* Overture. Paying £200 (around 18,000 in modern equivalency), Clementi was pleased with the deal. 'I have at last made a complete conquest of that *haughty beauty*, Beethoven [...] The symphony and the overture are wonderfully fine [...] a very good bargain.'

For Hans Gál (in an unpublished bicentenary essay, 1969/70), the E flat *Adagio* was the Fourth's gravitational centre, a rondo *concertante* dressed in dotted rhythms, rolling phrases and fanciful arabesques shadowed by distant processions and war-like trumpet-edged drums. Its tapestry left Berlioz almost lost for words. 'This movement seems to have been signed by the archangel Michael, one day when, overcome by melancholy, he contemplated the world from the threshold of the empyrean'. Beethoven called the bucolic third movement a minuet. But in every respect it's a vintage middle period scherzo, one, furthermore, in the five-part form (presaged by Haydn) to which the composer was to become partial. The *moto perpetuo* finale is redolent of the corresponding movement of Mozart 39. With vernal charms offset by crusty temper – as in that episode midway through the second subject group when the innocence of the major key explodes in the fury of its own minor before disintegrating in the tonal rootlessness of a savagely unsettling diminished seventh chord – sharp contrasts are integral to its dynamic. 'Prince! what you are, you are by circumstance and by birth. What I am, I am through myself. Of Princes there have been and will be thousands. Of Beethovens there is only one.'

Meet the Artists

What has not been said or admired about **Tasmin Little** OBE, for thirty years Britain's best loved violinist at home and abroad. A formidable concerto soloist and recitalist, with a critically distinguished catalogue of recordings, she retires from playing this summer – tonight's International Spring Orchestra Festival appearance is one of her last. A Londoner, she studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School before going on to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, of which she is a Fellow. She made her Proms début in 1990, playing Janáček's *Pilgrimage of the Soul* with Charles Mackerras. An Ambassador for The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, and for Youth Music, she won the BBC Music Magazine Personality of the Year Award in 2019. Other accolades have included the Critic's Choice Award at the 2011 Classic BRIT Awards for her Chandos recording of the Elgar Violin Concerto with Sir Andrew Davis and the Royal National Scottish Orchestra; a Gramophone Award for Audience Innovation for her ground-breaking musical outreach programme, *The Naked Violin*; and a Diapason d'Or for her disc of Delius Violin Sonatas with Piers Lane. She plays a Giovanni Battista Guaragnini violin, Milan 1757.

Winner of the 2015 International Spring Orchestra Festival Composition Prize, the Italian composer, sound designer, conductor, arranger, pianist and keyboard player **Dimitri Scarlato** studied in Rome at the Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia and the Università La Sapienza (graduating with a dissertation on Wittgenstein and Webern); and in London at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Royal College of Music (working with Kenneth Hesketh and Mark-Anthony Turnage). Pursuing a range of interests and passions, political to culinary, he works extensively in theatre and film, beginning in 2009 with the score for Giacomo Cimini's *La città nel cielo*, screened at the 66th Venice Film Festival. In 2019 he was appointed Area Leader in Composition for Screen at the Royal College of Music, London.

European Union Chamber Orchestra

Violin I: Doriane Gable, leader, Jacob Reina Caro, Kamila Bydlowska, Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux, Christopher Cohen • Violin II: Anita Martinek, Georgina Pennewaert, Peter Asp, Marijke Schaap • Viola: Ainis Kasperavicius, Mara Tieves, Shiry Rashkovsky • Cello: Steffan Rees, Michael Wigram • Double Bass: Vilmos Buza • Flute: Alison Hayhurst • Oboe: Arco van Zon, David Benfield • Clarinet: Jonathan Parkin; Christopher Goodman • Bassoon: Julia Staniforth, Sarah Whibley • Horn: Mark Paine, Jonathan Farey • Trumpet: Sarah Campbell, Thomas Fountain • Timpani: Connor Chambers

Biographical Notes and Player Listings correct at time of going to press.

Programme Notes
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2020 International Spring Orchestra Festival would like to thank

Arts Council Malta
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French Embassy
Valletta Cultural Agency
Office of the President of the Republic of Malta

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International Spring Orchestra Festival
15th edition
Valletta 9-17 April 2021