Friday, 7th July - 7.30pm
Baptist Church, High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 1EH

Symphonia Academica

Peter Bussereau-violin
Ania Ullman-viola
Julia Graham-cello and
Julian Trevelyan-piano

Programme

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
String Trio Movement in B flat D471

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
String Trio No.3 in G major, op.9 no.1
I. Adagio - Allegro con brio; II. Adagio ma non tanto and cantabile
III. Scherzo – Allegro; IV. Presto

Adam Roberts (born 1980??)
Lacuna for solo piano

Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924)
Toccata for solo piano

Interval

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Piano Quartet in G minor, op.25
I. Allegro; II. Intermezzo: Allegro ma non troppo - Trio: Animato;
III. Andante con moto; IV. Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto

Programme Notes

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
String Trio Movement in B flat D471

Schubert's family hailed from Silesia and his parents were first-generation Viennese. His father was a schoolmaster and his mother a maid and they had 14 children of whom 5 survived to adulthood: Franz was the fourth. He was born on 31 January 1797. His father played the cello and all the family played stringed instruments so from 1810 they would have had a string quartet in which Franz played the viola. Young Franz was an adolescent, not an infant, prodigy and his earliest teacher was a man called Holzer, who said of him "I merely talked with him and looked at him with mute astonishment". In 1808, Franz won both a place in the Imperial and Royal Chapel under Salieri (the only teacher he ever

acknowledged) and a free place at the Royal Chapel school, providing him with a fine musical education. After his mother died in 1812, Franz was offered an endowment to stay at the Royal school but would have to take an exam to show he was up to the mark in non-musical subjects (and thereafter decrease music). He chose music so, in 1813, he qualified and practised (unhappily) as a schoolteacher and nearly half the works in the Deutsch catalogue come from these years, during which he wrote 5 symphonies, 4 masses, 6 operas, 4 string quartets, 270 songs and a vast number of smaller pieces. Like Beethoven, he often performed in the countless musical evenings in fashionable Vienna.
A distance of nearly ten years separates the dozen or so youthful string quartets composed during Schubert's initial teenage plunge into the realm of chamber music and the three late quartet masterpieces of 1824-1826. Schubert's mind - and his pen - were hardly occupied with string instruments between these two peaks, but he did find time in his astoundingly busy schedule to come up with two string trios, D471 and D581, both in B flat major and both composed during the month of September, D471 in 1816 and D581 in 1817.
During the autumn of 1816, Schubert finally quitted his teaching post and moved in with his close friend Franz Schober. Away from his overcrowded family home, sharing accommodation with a charismatic young man whose experience of life was far wider than his own, Schubert began to pour forth new compositions, including the present String Trio. The critic, Julian Haylock, described the ten-minute work as "a miniature gem, one of the most treasured works in the string repertoire".

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

String Trio No.3 in G major, op.9 no.1

I. Adagio - Allegro con brio; II. Adagio ma non tanto and cantabile
III. Scherzo – Allegro; IV. Presto

Beethoven was born in Bonn, and was baptized on 17 December 1770. He studied first with his father, Johann, a singer and instrumentalist in the service of the Elector of Cologne at Bonn, but mainly with C.G. Neefe, the court organist. At the age of 11, he was able to deputize for Neefe, he played the violin well and at 12 he had some music published. In 1787 he was sent by the Elector to Vienna for 3 months where he met and had a few lessons from Mozart, who recognised his genius, but he quickly returned on hearing that his mother was dying. Five years later he went back to Vienna, where he settled and the early period of his life is generally regarded as finishing in 1799/1800 with the Septet op 20, just before the arrival of his first symphony (and when the first signs of his deafness appeared). During this time, he pursued his studies, first with Haydn, then with Schenk, Albrechtsberger and Salieri. Until 1794 he was supported by the Elector at Bonn but he found patrons among the music-loving Viennese aristocracy and soon enjoyed success as a piano virtuoso, playing at private houses or palaces rather than in public.
He never re-entered aristocratic service but was dependent on the cultured aristocrats who recognised his brilliance as a pianist and then as composer. They have been immortalised through his dedication of works: the op.11 clarinet trio to Countess Wilhelmine von Thun; the op.18 string quartets to Prince Lobkowitz,; the op.59 string quartets, Count Razumovsky, the Russian ambassador to Vienna; the op.97 piano trio to his patron and pupil, Archduke Rudolph.
His public debut was in 1795 and about the same time his first important publications appeared, three piano trios op.l and three piano sonatas op.2. As a pianist, it was reported, he had fire, brilliance and fantasy as well as depth of feeling, so naturally writing for this instrument dominated in quantity, originality and emotional depth: the *Pathétique* sonata belongs to 1799, the *Moonlight ('Sonata quasi una fantasia')* to 1801, and these years saw the composition of his first two piano concertos and ten piano sonatas in all. Alongside appeared a wind and string septet, a piano & wind quintet, a string quintet, a set of six string quartets op.l8, a clarinet trio, three violin sonatas, two cello sonatas, a horn sonata and five string trios.

Unsurprisingly, this early period is characterised by developments and experiments in many forms that had been pioneered by the giants of the Viennese musical scene, Haydn and particularly Mozart. The three string trios op.9 were composed in 1797–98. He published them in Vienna in 1799, with a dedication to his patron Count Johann Georg von Browne (1767–1827) and they were first performed by the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh with two colleagues from his string quartet. According to the violinist and conductor Angus Watson, these were probably Franz Weiss on viola and either Nikolaus Kraft or his father Anton Kraft on cello. Each of the trios consists of four movements with sonata form in the first movement (suggesting that Beethoven did not intend them to be light chamber pieces) and, although this opus does not contain the most played works by Beethoven, it was a significant milestone

in his development as a composer. At the time of publication, the 28-year-old Beethoven regarded the trios as his best compositions and they can be seen as a part of the preparation for the op.18 string quartets, which became the leading genre among his chamber music and ousted the trios from the concert halls - Beethoven composed no further trios after the op.18 quartets
The most vigorous of the three works is perhaps the 25-minute trio in G major, with the two *Allegro* (fast) movements' thematic richness and almost symphonic elaborations especially in the first movement that is preceded by a slow (*adagio*) introduction. The slow movement in E major (*Adagio ma non tanto and cantabile* – slow, but not too much so, and singing) resembles in its beauty and melancholic atmosphere other slow movements written by Beethoven at that time. The trio ends with a brilliantly fast and virtuosic *Presto.*

Adam Roberts (born 1980??)
Lacuna for solo piano

Adam obtained a Bachelor's degree in composition from the Eastman School of Music in 2003 and his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 2010. He also studied at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna from 2007-2008 on a Harvard University Sheldon Traveling Fellowship. Among his composition professors are illustrious names such as David Liptak, Augusta Read Thomas, Martin Bresnick, Bernard Rands, Joshua Fineberg, Julian Anderson and Chaya Czernowin. Adam has taught at Harvard University, Northeastern University, Istanbul Technical University's Centre for Advanced Studies in Music, and he is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Composition at the University of Georgia's Hugh Hodgson School of Music. His music has been interpreted by prestigious ensembles such as Quatuor Arditti, JACK Quartet, Alarm Will Sound, Le Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and Ensemble FA, as well as at various festivals including Wien Modern (Autriche), Musique Biennale en Scène (Lyon) and the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice (Boston). Adam Roberts teaches music history and composition at Istanbul Technical University and its Centre for Advanced Studies in Music.

In 2011 he was Composer in Residence at the prestigious Tanglewood Music Center. Roberts is a 2016 Guggenheim Fellowship, and is the recipient of a Fromm Foundation Commission, the Benjamin H. Danks Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, the Bernard Rogers Prize (Eastman), the New York Bohemians Prize (Harvard), the Earplay Donald Aird Award, the Christoph and Stefan Kaske Fellowship from the Wellesley Composers Conference, the Leonard Bernstein Fellowship from the Tanglewood Music Center, the Bldodgett Prize (Harvard), and other awards. Commissions have come from the Callithumpian Consort, the Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble, pianist Nolan Pearson, the Tanglewood Music Center, Guerilla Opera, and others.
Adam Roberts' music has been called "a powerful success," "arresting," and "amazingly lush," (The Boston Musical Intelligencer), "an attractive mix of the familiar and exotic," and "otherworldly" (Boston Classical Review), and "invigorating" with a "persistent melodic urge" (American Academy of Arts and Letters citation). Roberts' first disc, "Leaf Metal," was released on Tzadik Records in January, 2014.

In 2010 he won the the André Chevillion-Yvonne Bonnaud Prize at the Ninth Concours international de piano d'Orléans, with the American pianist David Hugues performing tonight's piece Lacuna. It lasts seven minutes and was composed in 2010.

Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924)
Toccata for solo piano

Born in Empoli, just south of Florence, on 1 April 1866, Dante Michaelangelo Benvenuto Ferruccio Busoni was the only child of two professional musicians, his Italian/German mother a pianist, his Italian father a clarinettist. They were often touring during his childhood, and he was brought up in Trieste for the most part. He was a child prodigy and made his public début on the piano with his parents, at the age of seven. A couple of years later he played some of his own compositions in Vienna where he heard Franz Liszt play, and met Liszt, Johannes Brahms and Anton Rubinstein.
Busoni had a brief period of study in Graz before going to Leipzig in 1886. He subsequently held several teaching posts, the first in 1888 at Helsinki, where he met his wife, Gerda Sjöstrand. He taught in Moscow in 1890, and in the USA from 1891 to 1894 where he also toured as a virtuoso pianist. In 1894

he settled in Berlin, giving a series of concerts there both as pianist and conductor. He particularly promoted contemporary music and also continued to teach in a number of master-classes at Weimar, Vienna and Basel, among his pupils being the great pianists Claudio Arrau and Egon Petri. His international career and reputation meant that he met and had close relations with many of the leading musicians, artists and literary figures of his time, and he was sought-after both as a keyboard instructor and a teacher of composition.

During World War I, Busoni lived first in Bologna, where he directed the conservatory, and later in Zürich. He refused to perform in any countries that were involved in the war. He returned to Berlin in 1920 where he gave master-classes in composition. He had several composition pupils who went on to become famous, including Kurt Weill, Edgard Varèse and Stefan Wolpe. He died in Berlin at the age of 58 and left a few recordings of his playing as well as a number of piano rolls. His compositions were largely neglected for many years after his death, but he was remembered as a great virtuoso and arranger of JS Bach for the piano. .

Some idea of Busoni's mature attitude to composition can be gained from his 1907 manifesto, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, a publication somewhat controversial in its time. As well as discussing then little-explored areas such as electronic music and microtonal music (both techniques he never employed), he asserted that music should distil the essence of the music of the past to make something new. Busoni's music is typically contrapuntally complex, with several melodic lines unwinding at once. Although his music is never entirely atonal in the Schoenbergian sense, his later works are often in indeterminate key. In the programme notes for the première of his *Sonatina seconda* of 1912, Busoni calls the work *senza tonalità* (without tonality).

The majority of Busoni's works are for the piano. As he was a virtuoso pianist, his works for piano are often difficult to perform and his Piano Concerto (1904) is probably the largest such work ever written. It lasts for over an hour, requiring great stamina of the soloist, and is written for a large orchestra with a male voice choir in the last movement.

Many of his works are based on music of the past, especially on the music of JS Bach. He edited the complete Bach solo keyboard works and arranged several of Bach's works for the piano, including the famous *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor* (originally for organ) and the *chaconne* from the D minor violin partita, thus some consider him an originator of neoclassicism in music. The first version of Busoni's largest and best known solo piano work, *Fantasia Contrappuntistica*, was published in 1910. About half an hour in length, it is essentially an extended fantasy on the final incomplete fugue from Bach's *The Art of Fugue.*
His Toccata for piano lasts ten minutes. It was publicly performed for the first time on 18 November 1920 in the Philharmonic Hall, Berlin, by the composer.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Piano Quartet in G minor, op.25

I. Allegro; II. Intermezzo: Allegro ma non troppo - Trio: Animato; III. Andante con moto; IV. Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, the son of a double bass player who was employed in the Hamburg Theatre. He received a thorough musical training, became a superb pianist, and supported himself by playing in restaurants, cafés and other places of lesser repute. At 20 he toured with a Jewish-Hungarian violinist called Reményi from which two things flowed: he conceived a love of bohemian music and rhythms and he came to the notice in 1853 of Schumann (via Joachim) and Liszt, who championed him. He became great friends with Schumann and fell in love with Clara, his wife. Before 1860 he was employed in Detmold, then moved to Hamburg. For four years he was employed by a German court then spent a year or so in Switzerland, then settled in Vienna, where he spent the last 35 years of his life.

Brahms adhered predominantly to classical forms, eschewing the pictorialism and literary illustrating of Schumann and Liszt, which makes him a classical-romantic. He was never an opera composer yet he was wrongly pitted against Wagner: both are heirs to Beethoven, the one dramatic, the other lyric. Also, despite the invective hurled at each of them by the factions, Brahms remained aloof and admired

the mature Wagner. He was a kind man and helped a number of composers, most prominently Dvořák, for whose family, the bachelor Brahms wanted to provide, and whose scores he proofread.

The piano quartet was not a form followed by many of the great composers in the 19th century but there are a good number of fine examples. Mozart had left two such works, whose excellence may have daunted subsequent composers. Nevertheless, Beethoven composed a set of three in his early teens which he never published, Mendelssohn and Brahms also composed three whilst Schumann, Dvořák and Fauré each left us a pair. Brahms conceived all three of his contributions to the genre when he was still in his twenties. The first two - No.1 in G minor, op.25, and No.2 in A major, op.26 - were completed in 1861 and 1862, while No. 3 in C minor was actually begun as early as 1855 but was not completed until 20 years later, when it was published as op.60.

At 40 minutes in length, tonight's quartet is the largest of the three piano quartets. It was composed by Brahms between 1856 and 1861 and received its first performance in 1861 in Hamburg, with Clara Schumann playing the piano. It was also played in Vienna on 16 November 1862, with Brahms himself at the piano supported by members of the Hellmesberger Quartet.
This first movement, a sonata form movement in G minor and common time, begins immediately with the first theme, a declamatory statement in straight crotchets in octaves for the piano alone. This theme is the opening cell that governs the content of the rest of the musical material in the movement. The other instruments soon join in to develop this initial theme and cadence in G minor. There are four other themes in the exposition. The second is in B-flat major (for all instruments), the third is in D minor (beginning with violoncello solo), and the fourth and fifth are in D major (the fourth being the D minor theme in the major mode and developed differently as well, and the fifth being a more exuberant idea for all instruments, marked 'animato'). The exposition ends with a closing section that develops only the opening theme and oscillates between D major and D minor, and eventually ends, almost reluctantly, in D major. Although the exposition is not repeated, Brahms creates the illusion of its repetition by starting the development section with the identical ten bars that begins the exposition, up to and including the strong G minor cadence. The development section then goes through many of the themes previously heard and extends them in new ways, and moves from A minor to E minor and eventually to D major. Very atypically, the recapitulation begins not with the first theme, but with the second theme in G major. The resolution is short-lived, as it moves back to the minor mode, where it cadences after an imitative development of the first theme in G minor. The recapitulation ends with a coda that is relatively brief but intense, concluding with an ascending passage built through imitation of the opening cell, whose build-up comes suddenly crashing down in a descending 'fortissimo' phrase. The piece ends on a desolate and incomplete-sounding G minor chord, the highest notes being B flat and D of the G minor triad rather than the G.

The second movement, marked *Intermezzo and Trio*, is in C minor and compound triple meter. It is in ternary form and functions like a *scherzo*, the more traditional second or third movement of a piano quartet. The consistently repeated eighth notes creates an effect of perpetual motion, even agitation, although the melodic themes are quite lyrical. The intermezzo flirts between major and minor and ends in C major. The trio, in A flat major, is quicker and less agitated than the intermezzo; the trio has two primary themes, the first being in A flat and the second beginning in E major. The intermezzo is repeated, followed by a brief coda in C major that restates the theme of the trio.

The *Andante* (walking pace) slow movement is a ternary form movement in E-flat major in triple time. The first subject is very lyrical. A second idea, which brings back the repeated eighth notes from the intermezzo, begins the transition to the second main section. The second section is in C major and starts with fortissimo chords in dotted rhythm for the piano solo. The second theme itself is rhythmically energetic and exuberant in character. It is initially stated by the piano and accompanied by light sixteenth note gestures by the strings, although this is later reversed. After a surprising twist, in which the instruments land on a diminished-seventh chord, the first theme returns, first in C minor and then in the home key of E flat major. A long coda helps to stabilize the often dissonant and unstable harmonies of the movement. Like the previous movements, this movement develops a plethora of themes. The final cadence of this movement, from the minor subdominant to the tonic, is used to conclude many of Brahms's slow movements, such as that from the Piano Quintet. The voicing of the last chord is ominous: the highest note of the strings is the violin's open G string, while the piano plays a tonic chord (again with the third on top) two octaves higher.

This fast rondo (marked *presto* – very quick) is in G minor in duple time. The subtitle *Rondo alla zingarese* has given it the nickname "Gypsy Rondo", and Haydn composed a piano trio with the identical appellation Like many of Brahms's finales, this uses as its principal theme a very fast, rhythmic, tonal, simple idea (see the finales to his Piano Quintet and Double Concerto), this one covering an irregular number of bars. The formal design resembles: ABACDBCADCBA, although the movement is more nuanced than this because each section is in ABA form and cadenzas occasionally interject between sections. This movement is notable for its difficult rhythmic and metrical complexity, and harmonic exploration (for instance, after the final D section, the piano plays a cadenza based on the B section that modulates from G minor to F-sharp minor), and has remained one of the most difficult movements to perform in all of Brahms's chamber music.

The quartet was orchestrated by Arnold Schoenberg in 1937, at the instigation of conductor Otto Klemperer and premièred by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Klemperer; this orchestrated version was made into the ballet Brahms–Schoenberg Quartet by George Balanchine.

The Hungarian-born composer Ernő Dohnányi transcribed the fourth movement as a bravura showpiece for solo piano. There is a recording of Dohnányi playing the transcription on the Ampico B recording piano. This recording was released on a Newport Classic CD called "The Performing Piano II" (NC 60030) however, the piece is incorrectly attributed as being one of the Hungarian Dances.

Adam Roberts