



T B S



Ensemble Mirage

Violins: Alexandra Lomeiko & Rosemary Hinton

Viola: Emily Pond

Cello: Mike Newman

Double Bass: Toby Hughes

Clarinet: Matthew Scott

Bassoon: Matthew Kitteringham

Horn: Anna Douglass

22 November 2019

www.tilbach.org.uk



Programme

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Septet in E flat major, Opus 20

Adagio – Allegro con brio, Adagio cantabile, Tempo di menuetto, Tema con variazioni: Andante, Scherzo: Allegro molto e vivace, Andante con moto alla marcia – Presto

In the late 1700s more music was being written for wind ensembles. The Septet in E-flat was composed in 1799 and received its first public performance at a benefit concert for the composer in April 1800, alongside the première of his first symphony, his second piano concerto, a Mozart symphony and some excerpts from Haydn's Creation. Audiences then clearly expected a lot of music for their money! Beethoven introduced new inventions such as a great deal of interplay between the instruments and the swapping of roles instead of giving the melodies just to the trebles.

The opening Allegro, prefaced by a dignified Adagio starring violin and clarinet, sparkles with Mozartean elegance and grace. Its colourful dialogues and thematic richness, quickly establish this as music meant for the concert hall rather than mere background sound for an aristocratic garden party.

The pastoral calm of the ensuing Adagio relaxes the mood, as clarinet and violin exchange the long-lined phrases of a quietly lilting melody. The next movement is a dancing Viennese-flavoured Minuet.

The fourth movement offers variations on a Rhenish folk tune with ever-changing instrumental textures and colour combinations – string trio, bassoon-clarinet duet, and horn abetted by violin triplets and double bass pizzicatos, among others.

The horn leads off in the fifth movement – a playful Scherzo. In the central Trio section, the cello shines, supported by bassoon and strings.

The last movement commences with a dark introduction which soon gives way to a high-spirited sonata-rondo finale. Beethoven reminds the listener that the violin is the only true soprano – while exploiting the deep rich hues of the other instruments, he allows the violin to indulge in a few frilly turns – and even a cadenza – to conclude the piece. Beethoven became aggravated by the popularity of the septet, feeling that this eclipsed his more mature works, but it probably did no harm to the composers pocket or reputation.

---- INTERVAL ----

Drinks are free but donations to cover costs are much appreciated

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Octet in F major D.803

Adagio—Allegro, Adagio, Scherzo: Allegro vivace—Trio, Andante con variazioni, Menuetto: Allegretto, Andante molto—Allegro

Schubert wrote his Octet in 1824, at the request of Count Ferdinand von Troyer, who played the clarinet and asked for a work modelled on Beethoven's popular Septet. Schubert adds an extra violin to the septet to give a full string quartet plus bass, clarinet, horn and bassoon.

The opening Adagio is unique in Schubert's chamber music. Its second bar contains two rhythmic motifs which not only dominate the introduction but pervade the whole work. The main theme of the following Allegro is based on Schubert's song "Der Wanderer" but the rhythmic dotted quaver motifs continue to dominate the movement.

The slow second movement opens with a serene 12-bar melody first on the clarinet, then lovingly paired with the violin. Towards the end of the movement the serenity is broken by a solitary pizzicato bottom F on cello and bass and the movement ends without regaining its previous optimism. The shattering of serenity recurs in Schubert's late chamber music, often with dramatic effect. This may reflect his mood which was often low with the onset of the symptoms of syphilis.

There is no hint of melancholy in the vigorous third movement; it is based on two peasant dances, the vigorous dotted rhythm steps of the G'stampfer and the gentler Ländler of the trio section.

The fourth movement is a set of variations based on the theme of a duet in the Singspiel "Die Freunde von Salamanka" that Schubert wrote nine years before the Octet.

The fifth movement is a classically-structured Minuet and Trio with both sections starting with a version of the dotted motif from the opening movement. However this movement remains a movement of relative simplicity.

The Andante molto introduction to the last movement is grief-stricken and again features the dotted rhythm motif. But, as in the last movement of Mozart's G-minor string quintet, the composer thumbs his nose at fate, and cavorts off in what sounds like it will be boisterous finale. After a while though, tensions appear. The first violin squeals in anguish in one of the most awkward passages in all chamber music, not once but twice. The music drives on into remote keys, calms, drives on again, and abruptly halts: with a growling tremolo we are back to the despair of the movement's introduction, sweetened now by increasingly conciliatory violin arpeggios. With a switch to Allegro molto the original energy returns to triumphant violin arpeggios and a thankfully happy ending.

[From programme notes by Chris Darwin]

Ensemble Mirage

Ensemble Mirage is an ensemble based in London, who play in different configurations from trios to octets and focus on the fantastic range of mixed Wind-String-Piano chamber music. The ensemble continues to evolve, working with a small group of dedicated, passionate and award-winning chamber musicians; pushing the boundaries of the standard chamber repertoire, bringing to light many fantastic, often overlooked works and chamber mediums.

Royal Overseas League Finalists and SJSS Young Artists, they started as the Trio Mirage in early 2014 at the Royal Academy of Music with clarinettist Matthew Scott, Hungarian violinist Júlia Pusker and Romanian pianist Alexandra Vaduva. They soon won the RAM Harold Craxton Prize, followed shortly by a prestigious RAM Chamber Music Fellowship in 2015/16 and then began to grow to explore larger and wider repertoire, resulting in the foundation of Ensemble Mirage.

<http://www.ensemblemirage.com/>

Clarinettist **Matthew Scott** graduated from RAM in 2015. He made his Wigmore solo debut in January 2019. Matthew is autistic, finding art music performance one of few releases. He also enjoys cycling, mountain walking, good food, cats and is an avid Star Wars fan.

Matthew Kitteringham is a 22-year-old bassoonist from the Wirral, currently studying as a postgraduate at the RAM. Coming from a non-musical family, he began his musical career aged 7 when he started learning the flute, and this remained his passion until the age of 15 when he decided to take up the bassoon. At school he fronted a rock band playing the bass guitar and keyboard. In his spare time he likes to play tennis and enjoys cooking.

Tonight's horn player, **Anna Douglass**, made a promise to herself never to pass up an opportunity to play the Schubert Octet. She has a varied freelance career which involves film sessions and orchestral work, but she finds chamber music particularly rewarding, and loves Schubert. Another piece Anna wouldn't say no to is the soundtrack to Star Wars, so she either has a varied taste or she just likes playing the horn.

New Zealander **Alexandra Lomeiko** moved to London at the age of 15 and since then has won various prizes and performs extensively as a soloist. In her free time she loves travelling (especially to sunny places!) cooking, swimming and supporting the All Blacks. Beethoven Septet is one of her favourite pieces, TBS her favourite society and Ensemble Mirage her favourite people to play with - so it's going to be a fun night!

Rosemary Hinton, from Suffolk, has followed in her Grandfather's footsteps to become a professional violinist. She performs with some of the UK's leading Symphony orchestras. She features in recent re-mastered albums by Aretha Franklin and Roy Orbison, and has performed with Martha Argerich, Bryn Terfel, and Kylie Minogue. She hopes to one day publish her sci-fi fantasy novel.

Violist **Emily Pond** married Mirage cellist Mike Newman in the summer of 2019 in beautiful Lytham St Anne's. Throughout the last few years Emily has put on numerous concerts raising thousands for charity. Emily really enjoys teaching and will start her own strings summer school next year. Her favourite composer is Beethoven but earlier this year had the privilege of performing in the Schumann House in Germany. She loves to bake, and drink tea!

Cellist **Mike Newman** from Berkhamsted is equally at home in classical, jazz and folk styles. He studied in Manchester and has a passion for neglected and obscure chamber music works and a particular affinity with music of Milhaud, Koechlin and Boccherini. He's also a composer and arranger and currently works for nkoda, the digital sheet music app.

Double bassist **Toby Hughes** juggles his career as a double bassist alongside his passion as a trapeze artist. He is winner of the string section of the 2014 Royal Over-Seas League Competition, the 2016 Bromsgrove International Competition, the 2018 Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Artists Competition. In his spare time he enjoys snowboarding, but only if he's managed to save up enough to do so.

7 December Tilford Church: Carols by Candlelight

Future Conservatoire Concert Dates @Godalming Baptist Church

30 November: Ensemble Renard (Wind Quintet)

11 January: Baroque Festival

www.conservatoireconcerts.org.uk