

Mullova Ensemble | *Transfigured Night*

Thursday 19 October 8pm



Mullova Ensemble
Matthew Barley director
Viktoria Mullova violin
Ching-Ying Chien dancer

Jasmine Morris *Transfigured Night, Two People Walk*
Bach Allemande double from B minor partita
Debussy arr. Kang *Clair de Lune* for 2 violas
Strauss arr. Barley *Waldseligkeit* Op 49 No 1 for quartet
Jasmine Morris *Transfigured Night, A Woman's Voice Speaks*
Bach Adagio from G minor sonata for violin solo

Bartók Duos for 2 violins, *Ruthenian Song, Cradle Song, Teasing Song, Sorrow, Ruthenian Round Dance*
Jasmine Morris *Transfigured Night, A Man's Voice Speaks*
Improvisation cello
Improvisation viola and cello
Jasmine Morris *Transfigured Night, Dark Gaze*
Janáček 'Moderato' from String Quartet No 2, *Intimate Letters*
Jasmine Morris *Transfigured Night, There's a Glow Around Everything*
Schoenberg *Verklärte Nacht*

Verklärte Nacht

Arnold Schoenberg (1874 – 1951)

Playing this piece with Viktoria has been in the pipeline for a good 25 years – a dream come true - but it had to wait a long time for the right context...but more of that in a moment.

When Richard Dehmel wrote his poem, *Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night)* in 1896, a youthful and passionate Schoenberg was

moved to write a response in the form of a string sextet that has become one of the iconic works of the repertoire. In the words of Schoenberg's biographer, the plot of the poem goes like this: A man and a woman walk in the woods at night; she confesses that, in her desire to have a child, she had sinned by giving herself to a stranger whom she didn't love; now she is pregnant but, having found 'you', the man she is with and whom she loves, she is full of remorse. Her lover, however, generously tells

her that their love will 'transfigure' the child, which will be his as well as hers. The idea in the poem was considered scandalous in the dying days of 19th century Vienna.

Verklärte Nacht is a favourite of so many string players (a combination of the wonderful string writing and the infectious freedom of expression; the abandon that maybe only a young genius in their 20s could find?), and it has been a favourite of Viktoria's and mine since we were both in our 20s, before we met. After the pandemic I began to dream about this piece again, wondering how to present it in a way that would feel satisfying – I wanted it to be culmination of an evening, something delivered to an audience in an already changed state from the bustle of normal life outside the concert hall, so my thoughts went to finding a way to transport the audience... maybe going down the avenue of something semi-theatrical using the magic of lighting and projections to take the audience into the forest at night with its full moon...something (after all the craziness of covid) that was comforting, something consoling that had love at its centre.

So the idea formed of a string of small pieces before the Schoenberg, and a seventh performer to represent the force of love, the transfiguring power from the poem – a character like a spirit who would move around the stage and open the space for the mysticism of the transfigured night. We had been completely blown away by dancer Ching-Ying Chien's award-winning virtuosity and depth of expression in Akram Kahn's epic *Until The Lions*. We were thrilled when she agreed to take part, dancing the new choreography by Joshua Junker, an upcoming star of the Royal Ballet.

I had been impressed by the music of young Japanese/British composer Jasmine Morris, and commissioned five short pieces for

electronics that would follow the five stanzas of the poem, acting as structural columns in the first part of the concert. The between these five pieces we could programme music that reflected some aspect of either the poem or of Schoenberg's response.

We start with Bach on solo violin, representing the veiled purity of the moonlit night; Debussy's classic *Claire de Lune (Moonlight)*, performed by our two virtuosic viola players just under the projection of the rising full moon; an arrangement of a Strauss song, *Waldseligkeit (Woodland Rapture)* a intimate love song set in a nocturnal forest; violin duos arranged from songs collected by Bartok in the fields of Hungary and Ruthenia, presenting another kind of music made in close connection with nature; some free improvisation that will illuminate how the performers feel onstage in the moment they play with Ching-Ying; and a movement from Janacek's extraordinary second quartet, *Intimate Letters*, a string work that matches *Verklärte Nacht* in its wild expression of ecstatic love.

We are so excited to have been joined in this project by some extraordinary artists - One of my long-time collaborators has been Nick Hillel, director of the fabulous Yeast Culture, creators of very high-class visuals for theatre, dance and concerts and we're delighted he could join the team, along with renowned lighting designer Sander Loonen.

With enormous thanks to the Marchus, Coln, Fidelio, Backstage and Leigh Family Trusts, as well as an anonymous donor – the setup costs for this project have been considerable and we simply could not have done it without them. We are also indebted to Alicia Carey and Hawkwood College in Stroud for their generosity in providing a residency where the ideas were developed in 2022.

Matthew Barley, 2023



Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night)

In 1899 Arnold Schoenberg, inspired by a poem called *Verklärte Nacht* by Richard Dehmel, wrote his eponymous masterpiece for string sextet. The subject matter and language shocked conservative Vienna, but its message of tolerance and the power of love to transform and dissolve obstacles and barriers (represented by the dancer), is as important today as it was then. This performance is dedicated to all for whom the mystery of deeply felt love could bring positive transformation.



Two people walk through a bare, cold grove;
the moon glides above them, they gaze
upward.
The moon glides over tall oaks;
not a wisp of cloud dims the heavenly radiance
into which the black points of the branches
reach

A woman's voice speaks:

I bear a child, and it is not yours,
I walk in sin beside you,
I have gravely offended against myself.
I no longer believed in happiness,
yet still yearned painfully
for a full life, for a mother's joy,
for duty; and so I grew reckless,
and shuddering, I yielded myself
to a stranger, embraced him
and even blessed myself for doing so.
Now life has taken its revenge:
now I have met you – ah you.

She stumbles on her way.

She looks up; the moon glides above.
Her dark gaze drowns in light.
A man's voice speaks:

The child that you conceived –
let it not burden your soul,
oh, look how bright the universe gleams!
There is a radiance all around;
you drift with me on a cold sea,
but an inner warmth glimmers
from you in me, from me in you.
The warmth will transfigure the stranger's child,
you will bear the child, as if it were mine;
you have filled me with the radiance,
you have made me a child myself.'

He holds her around her strong hips.
Their breath mingles in the air.
Two people walk through the soaring, clear
night.

by Richard Dehmel 1896
Translation © 2022 Richard Stokes

Viktoria Mullova Violin

Viktoria Mullova studied at the Central Music School of Moscow and the Moscow Conservatoire. Her extraordinary talent captured international attention when she won first prize at the 1980 Sibelius Competition in Helsinki and the Gold Medal at the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1982 which was followed, in 1983, by her dramatic and much publicized defection to the West. She has since appeared with most of the world's greatest orchestras and conductors and at the major international festivals. She is now known the world over as a violinist of exceptional versatility and musical integrity. Her curiosity spans the breadth of musical development from baroque and classical right up to the most contemporary influences from the world of fusion and experimental music.

Her interest in the authentic approach has led to collaborations with period instrument bands such as the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Il Giardino Armonico, Venice Baroque and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique. Viktoria has a great affinity with Bach and his work makes up a large part of her recording catalogue. Her interpretations of Bach have been acclaimed worldwide and led Tim Ashley to write, 'To hear Mullova play Bach is, simply, one of the greatest things you can experience...' in the Guardian. Her disc of Bach Concerti with the Accademia Bizantina and Ottavio Dantone was highly praised and her recording of Bach's solo sonatas and partitas represents a significant milestone in Viktoria's personal journey into this music. The recording received 5-star reviews from all over the world and she has embarked on an international several season-long, series of solo Bach recitals.

Her ventures into creative contemporary music started in 2000 with her album *Through the Looking Glass* in which she played world, jazz and pop music arranged for her by Matthew Barley. This exploration continued with her second album *The Peasant Girl* which she has toured around the world with the Matthew Barley Ensemble. This project shows a different side to Viktoria as she looks to her peasant roots in the Ukraine and explores the influence of gypsy music on the classical and jazz genres in the 20th Century. This was followed by *Stradivarius in Rio*, inspired by her love of Brazilian songs by composers such as Antonio Carlos Jobim, Caetano Veloso and Claudio

Nucci. A CD of the same name was enthusiastically received. As well as her own projects, she has also commissioned works from young composers such as Fraser Trainer, Thomas Larcher and Dai Fujikura. In 2017, Pascal Dusapin wrote his concerto for violin and cello, *At Swim-Two-Birds* for Viktoria Mullova and Matthew Barley, with them giving the premiere in Amsterdam followed by performances in London, Paris, Seattle and Leipzig. This rich musical diversity has been celebrated in several high-profile residencies, including London's Southbank, Vienna's Konzerthaus, the Auditorium du Louvre in Paris, Musikfest Bremen, Barcelona Symphony Orchestra and Helsinki Music Festival.

Viktoria continues her collaboration with Alasdair Beatson playing Beethoven and Schubert on gut strings and fortepiano. During their three year collaboration they have released their first recording of Beethoven sonatas, recorded and released during the pandemic lockdowns. A second album featuring Schubert appeared in April 2022 and a further recording of Beethoven sonatas will be released later in the year, with the cycle being completed in the 24-25 season.

Current projects include *Music We Love*; a duo partnership her son, bass player Misha Mullov-Abbado, featuring his original compositions, arrangements of Hebrew and Brazilian songs, jazz arrangements and works by Schumann and Bach. With the Mullova Ensemble, Viktoria presents a new exploration of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. The project premiered at London's Milton Court in October 2023 before touring.

Mullova's extensive discography has attracted many prestigious awards. Her recording of the Vivaldi Concertos with Il Giardino Armonico and directed by Giovanni Antonini, won the Diapason D'Or of the Year award for 2005 and her recording featuring Beethoven's Op 12, No 3 and Kreutzer Sonatas with Kristian Bezuidenhout won immense critical acclaim. Other discs have included the Schubert Octet with the Mullova Ensemble, *Recital* with Katia Labèque, Bach Sonatas with Ottavio Dantone, '6 Solo Sonatas and Partitas' by JS Bach and the complete works for violin & orchestra by Arvo Pärt with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra and Paavo Järvi. Recent releases include *Music We Love* with Misha Mullov-Abbado, and Beethoven and Schubert with Alasdair Beatson.

Matthew Barley cello

Matthew Barley's musical world has no geographical, social or stylistic boundaries. His activities in performance, improvisation, crossdisciplinary projects, composition, and pioneering community programmes have developed to form a uniquely eclectic international career. He has been described as 'the world's most adventurous cellist' and is as comfortable with core-classical repertoire and improvisation as he is in a night-club or the Amazon rainforest.

'Deeply fortunate to be doing what I love, I am a magpie, finding a way to play whatever music I love - so I collaborate, improvise, juxtapose, arrange and rearrange.' His studies were at the Guildhall School in London, and the Moscow Conservatoire, and he is a passionate advocate of lifelong learning – constantly seeking to evolve and develop the art of being a travelling musician living in a vibrant community of family and friends.

He has played in many of the world's great concert halls, given premieres by Pascal Dusapin, James MacMillan, Thomas Larcher, Dai Fujikura, Detlev Glanert and Nitin Sawhney; performed with Amjad Ali Khan, Matthias Goerne, the Labeque Sisters, Dima Slobodeniouk, Marin Alsop, Jon Lord (Deep Purple), Martin Frøst and Avi Avital, and records for Signum Classics.

Matthew is married to Viktoria Mullova with whom he loves to make music, lives in London and they have three children. He plays a Cesare Gigli cello from Rome, c.1750

Joshua Junker choreography

Joshua Junker was born in Nijmegen, the Netherlands. He began studying breakdance and contemporary dance from the age of eight at Boys Action. When he was 14, he turned to ballet and started his training at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Two years later, he continued his training at the Royal Ballet School in London.

In 2017, Junker joined The Royal Ballet's Aud Jepsen Young Dancers Programme and was promoted to 'Artist' in 2018, and to 'First Artist' in 2022. His repertory with The Royal Ballet includes the leading role in *The Nutcracker* and several soloist roles in *Swan Lake*, *Romeo and*

Juliet, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker* as well. Junker also danced in several modern pieces such as Wayne McGregor's *The Dante Project* and Crystal Pite's *The Statement*, and performed the leading role in Kyle Abraham's newly created *The Weathering*. Furthermore, he created roles in new works such as Sidi Larbi's *Medusa* and Crystal Pite's *Light of Passage*.

In recent years, Junker has created several promising works for Royal Ballet's choreographic project *Draft Works*. One of these works was performed at *International Draft Works*, a program where upcoming choreographers from ballet companies around the world present their work. Another work, *That's Someone You Never Forget*, was included in the programme of The Royal Ballet Tour in Doncaster, where it received excellent reviews. Junker has also created a new work for The Dutch National Ballet Junior Company which was performed in their touring program *Ballet Bubbles* in 2023.

Junker's awards as a student include De Piket Kunstprijs in The Hague (2014), the School's Lynn Seymour Award for Expressive Dance (2015) and the Ursula Moreton Choreographic Award (2016).

Jasmine Morris composer

Jasmine Morris is a musician and composer currently studying at the Royal College of Music, as a Noël Coward Composition Scholar, supported by the Victor Dahdaleh Foundation Scholarship. She previously studied at the Purcell School of Music on the George Drexler Scholarship. In 2019, she was selected to be one of the composers in residence of the National Youth Orchestra where she had her work premiered at the Barbican centre. Her piece *Sirens* (for Harp and Orchestra) was selected to be performed by the Purcell Symphony Orchestra, and was one of the winning entries for the BBC Young Composer's Competition 2020. Further commissions have come from Solem Quartet and Riot Ensemble.

During the lockdown in 2020, Jasmine collaborated with the Swedish musician Per Runberg on the album *Astrophilia*, released by the label Nonclassical. In 2021, Jasmine was one of 6 resident composers selected for

the Britten-Pears Young Artist programme, which culminated with the premiere of her immersive opera, based on Orwell's *Animal Farm*, at the 2022 Aldeburgh Music Festival.

Ching-Ying Chien dancer

Born in 1988, Taiwan, Ching-Ying Chien graduated from Department of Dance, National Taiwan University of Arts. She did freelance artist work with Akram Khan Company (UK) and Compagnie du Hanne-ton (FR). She has worked with Akram Khan Company since *iTMOi* in 2013. Her performance in *Until the Lions* won the Outstanding Female Performance (Modern) at the 2016 National Dance Awards (UK). Dance critic Lyndsey Winship also praised her as 'a woman of powerful but serene stillness, who shape-shifts between delicate, melting movements, stubborn decisiveness and contorted convulsing. She performed in *Outwitting the Devil* in 2019. She is also as a Akram Khan Company rehearsal director and company repertoire workshop teacher.

In 2020, Ching-Ying started working with James Thierrée -Compagnie de Hanne-ton in creation *Mo's* and *ROOM*. She has also collaborated with different choreographers and companies in Taiwan, such as Fang-Yi Sheu, Shu-Yi Chou and HORSE theater. Besides theater performance, she also worked as the art model and improvising dancer for Guo-qiang Cai's *Day and Night*, a gunpowder drawing. She was the dancer and choreographer for *Stranger*, a music video for hip-hop musician Plan B, and few videos for British electronic band The Chemical Brothers, both projects directed by Adam Smith. Together with Akram Khan, she co-created a duet for *Can We Live with Robots*, a TV documentary commissioned by Channel 4. Recently, she performed in *The Silent Burn Project* - a documentary celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Akram Khan company during the Covid pandemic time.

Her latest choreography piece is *Vulture*, supported by LMF Dance Fund. National Culture and Arts Foundation (Taiwan) and Akram Khan company, which has performed in Lilian Baylis Studio of Sadler's well and Weiwuying National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts. *Vulture* has also been selected as one of twenty pieces in Aerowave 2023.

Nils Mönkemeyer viola

Artistic brilliance and innovative programming are the trademarks that have earned Nils Mönkemeyer a reputation as one of the world's most successful violists, dramatically raising the profile of his instrument.

His programmes run the gamut from rediscoveries and first recordings of original 18th-century viola literature to contemporary repertoire and arrangements of his own. This is also reflected on his CD recordings with Sony Classical, which have repeatedly won awards and been celebrated by the international press. The most recent example, Nils Mönkemeyer's album *Dance for Two*, released in spring 2023, with recorder player Dorothee Oberlinger brings together works from over a thousand years of music history, mostly in their own arrangements for this special instrumentation. Nils Mönkemeyer works together with conductors such as Andrej Boreyko, Sylvain Cambreling, Constantinos Carydis, Nicholas Collon, Reinhard Goebel, Elias Grandy, Pietari Inkinen, Vladimir Jurowski, Joana Mallwitz, Andrew Manze, Cornelius Meister, Mark Minkowski, Kent Nagano, Markus Poschner, Kristiina Poska, Michael Sanderling, Clemens Schuldt, Markus Stenz, Mario Venzago or Simone Young, performing as a soloist with orchestras including Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Berne Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra della svizzera italiana, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester and Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Dresden Philharmonic, Hamburg Philharmonic, Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester, SWR Symphony Orchestra, MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Munich Chamber Orchestra or Berliner Barock Solisten.

Season 2023/24 will again bring Nils Mönkemeyer to major international venues such as Wigmore Hall London, Musikverein Vienna, Royal Library Copenhagen, LAC Lugano, NFM Wroclaw, Pierre Boulez Saal Berlin, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Prinzregententheater Munich and Alte Oper Frankfurt, as well as to festivals such as Schubertiade, Menuhin Festival Gstaad, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,

Kissinger Sommer, Schwetzingen SWR Festspiele and Mozartfest Würzburg. As a soloist, Nils Mönkemeyer will perform, among others, with Staatsorchester Hamburg under the baton of Kent Nagano, where he will premiere Vladimir Tarnopolski's "Im Dunkel vor der Dämmerung" together with Andreas Ottensamer and Edicson Ruiz, as well as with NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, Orchestra della Svizzera italiana, NFM Wroclaw Philharmonic, Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Jena Philharmonic and – together with Alina Ibragimova – Kammerorchester Basel. Special chamber music projects of the season 2023/24 include trio concerts with Sabine Meyer and William Youn, the project "Viola Latina!" with Rubén Dubrovsky and Bach Consort Vienna, as well as a tour with the Julia Fischer Quartet to London, Zurich, Madrid, Prague, Berlin, and Munich, among others.

Furthermore, he is pursuing a heartfelt wish as a musician to build bridges with music by making it accessible to disadvantaged people. To this end, Nils Mönkemeyer founded the chamber music festival "Klassik für Alle" in 2016, in collaboration with the charity Caritas Bonn. Mönkemeyer has been a professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Munich since 2011.

Nils Mönkemeyer plays a viola made by Philipp Augustin.

Kinga Wojdalska viola

Kinga Wojdalska is a prize-winner of solo and chamber competitions. Among others, she received the Karl Doctor Prize at the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition. To support her work, the Hattori Foundation, the Musicians' Company, and the Countess of Munster Musical Trust awarded her scholarships for her artistic achievements. As a proud Varsovian, she received early musical training there. In 2021 obtained a bachelor's degree from the Royal College of Music in London. Currently, she is studying for a master's soloist degree at Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, in Lawrence Power's class. While studying, Kinga performed at Musikverein in Vienna, Jordan Hall in Boston, and Wigmore Hall in London. She also engaged in significant festivals, including Encuentro de Santander (Spain) and West Wycombe Chamber Music Festival (UK). Chamber music is her biggest passion, and sharing a stage with fantastic

instrumentalists, such as Vilde Frang, Ivan Monighetti, and Miklós Perényi, brought her inspiring and unforgettable musical experiences. In 2016, she co-founded the ensemble 'Kameralna N-Harmonia', and since 2020. Besides performing, she regularly takes viola masterclasses, learning from outstanding violists, including Nobuko Imai, Maxim Rysanov, and Máté Szűcs.

Kinga plays a modern viola by Jerzy Maślanka.

Lisa Rieder violin

Praised by influential figures in the world of string-playing for the range, finesse and acuity of her artistry, for her technical command, and for her intense intellectual curiosity, Russian-Swiss violinist Lisa Rieder is building a substantial reputation as a concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber player in Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany and France.

She was born into a musical family in Moscow and started learning the violin at the age of four, under the tutelage of Inna Gaukhman. After studying at the renowned Gnessin Music School, she continued her training in Basel, where her teachers included Raphaël Oleg. She graduated from the Swiss city's Musikademie with the highest honours and the prize for top student in her year.

Mentored since 2013 by Viktoria Mullova, who has lauded her 'technique in the best traditions of the Russian violin school, beautiful sound and a fine understanding of style', she has also studied regularly with Hansheinz

Schneeberger, Dora Schwarzberg and Zakhar Bron, and has participated in masterclasses at such institutions as the Kronberg Academy and Carl Flesch Akademie in Germany and the Internationale Sommerakademie Mozarteum in Austria.

As a soloist Lisa Rieder has appeared with conductors including Heinz Holliger, Christoph-Mathias Mueller, Pavel Baleff and Antoine Maguier, and with orchestras such as, among others, the Sinfonieorchester Basel, the Baden-Baden Philharmonie and the United Nations Orchestra. Among the festivals and series that have hosted her as a recitalist and chamber player are Schwarzberg & Friends in Vienna, the Colmar Festival in France, Ente Concerti di Pesaro in Italy and, in Switzerland, Cully Classique, Schubertiade de l'Espace 2,

Murten Classics, the Basel Altstadt-Serenade and the Concerts du dimanche de la ville de Genève, which take place in Victoria Hall. Displaying a particular affinity with Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann, and with works of the late-Romantic period and the early years of the 20th century, Rieder believes in sustaining the architectural span of each work while enlightening the listener through vivid insights into the composer's intentions, experiences and humanity. Hansheinz Schneeberger, the distinguished Swiss violinist, has placed her in a league with Adolf Busch as an interpreter of Schubert, while Georges Starobinski, Dean of the Musik-Akademie Basel, has said that: 'Lisa Rieder not only possesses an evident musical talent, but also a vibrant sensibility, charisma and authority. She is a genuine artistic personality.'

Peteris Sokolovskis cello

Latvian cellist Peteris Sokolovskis is enjoying a freelance career as a chamber musician,

orchestral player and very occasionally a soloist. Just before the world ended, Peteris managed to perform the Dvorak Cello Concerto with the Barnet Symphony Orchestra and Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante with the Corinthian Chamber Orchestra. As guest principal Peteris has played with the Netherlands Philharmonic and Trondheim Symphony Orchestras and is a regular in the London Symphony Orchestra and Aurora Orchestra. Peteris was a member of Kremerata Baltica for 4 years, touring extensively throughout Europe, North and South Americas and Asia. As a chamber musician Peteris has performed in festivals in Europe and South America. Peteris is a regular teacher at the Oxford Cello School and La Mariette Junior Course in France and he regularly works with the LSO outreach programmes and Multi-Story Orchestra.



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