

Artistic Temperaments Festival 2024

Liturina Fortepiano Trio

Saturday 10 February 2024

Liturina Fortepiano Trio

Gabriella Jones historical violin
Samuel Ng historical cello
Dominika Maszczyńska
1826 Broadwood Grand Pianoforte

Sterndale Bennett

Chamber Trio in A, Op 26 for violin, cello
& piano

Schumann

Piano Trio No 3 in G minor Op 110

Mendelssohn

Piano Trio No 2 in C minor Op 66



William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875)

Chamber Trio, Op 26 (1839)

Andante tranquillo ma con moto
Serenade. Andante ma un poco scherzando
Finale. Allegro fermato

Tonight's trio of composers were friends. Sterndale Bennett was the whizz-kid at the RAM when he asked Mendelssohn if he could come to Leipzig as his student. 'Come as my friend' said Mendelssohn. Sterndale Bennett's diaries paint an interesting picture of life in Leipzig, from the special 'birthday party' his friends dreamt up for him to the novel 'Christmas Trees' – this was four or five years before the Prince Consort introduced this German tradition to Britain. Sterndale Bennett conquered the Leipzig public by playing his own piano concertos, and became Schumann's boon companion – they dedicated pieces to each other. Alas, the looked-for English musical

renaissance had to wait for Parry and Stanford (not to mention Elgar), and so Sterndale Bennett devoted most of his life to teaching, though at a very high level – he was principal of the Academy and Professor at Cambridge, but he also had to teach piano at Queen's College, Harley Street: it was Sterndale Bennett's time at Cambridge that revealed that the post of Professor did not actually have a stipend attached to it. He was indefatigable in the cause of women's education – Queen's College was a girls' school, and he helped set up Bedford College. He was a Commissioner of the Great Exhibition, fully justifying Sir John Betjeman's description of him as 'Queen Victoria's favourite musical knight'. He was married in All Saints Church near Southampton's Bargate. His most famous pupil was Sir Arthur Sullivan, who never lost an opportunity to promote his teacher's music.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Piano Trio No 3 in G minor, Op 110 (1851)

Bewegt, doch nicht zu rasch
Ziemlich langsam - Etwas bewegter - Tempo I
Rasch - Etwas Zurückhaltend bis zum
langsameren Tempo - Tempo I
Kräftig, mit Humor

Schumann's G minor Trio was dedicated to Niels Gade, the Danish composer, who was also studying in Leipzig. Both he and Mendelssohn saw their trios as part of their campaign against worthless music. There was a lot of it about – empty virtuosic variations on popular tunes from operas were just the tip of the iceberg. One of Southampton's excellent PhD students recently interested herself in the piano *potpourris* from Meyerbeer's opera *Robert le diable*. Chopin was at the opera's premiere, and wrongly predicted 'Meyerbeer has made himself immortal'. I refrain from making a judgment of the opera itself, which I have not witnessed. And clearly, it needed to be witnessed – that famous painting by Degas, dominated by four bassoons sticking up from the orchestral pit, shows the ballet from *Robert le diable*. It was painted 45 years after Chopin's prediction, which was still holding good at that point. But oh, those *potpourris*!

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Piano Trio No 2 in C minor, Op 66 (1845)

Allegro energico e con fuoco
Andante espressivo
Scherzo. Molto Allegro quasi Presto
Finale. Allegro appassionato

A great deal can be gathered from the words composers use. Sterndale Bennett did not

write a 'piano trio'; he wrote a 'chamber trio', just as, when he wrote what would normally be called a 'cello sonata', he called it a 'sonata duo'. This is an excellent attitude to take to chamber music – it should be more widely followed. Something of the same flexibility of mind can be seen in his qualifications 'but with movement', 'but a bit skittishly', while the title 'Serenade' (and the pizzicato) takes us directly to the heart of Romanticism.

Schumann shows us another side of that aesthetic, with contrasting tempos built in to his two middle movements. It was Schumann's multiple personalities that were his undoing, leading him to throw himself into the river, and to end his days in an asylum. Syphilis may have had something to do with it, but his literary imagination had always led him to people his music with characters which were really Schumann in disguise. He could be Eusebius or Florestan or David, always fighting the Philistines (a personification of artistic ignorance that seems to have originated with Schumann). And if you notice that Clara (his wife), David, Eusebius, and Florestan, form an alphabetical sequence, you'll get an idea of how Schumann's mind worked.

Mendelssohn's tempo directions, in contrast to both the others', use 'and' rather than 'but'. I shall have more to say on Mendelssohn on Sunday morning.

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Carducci Quartet & Anton Lesser

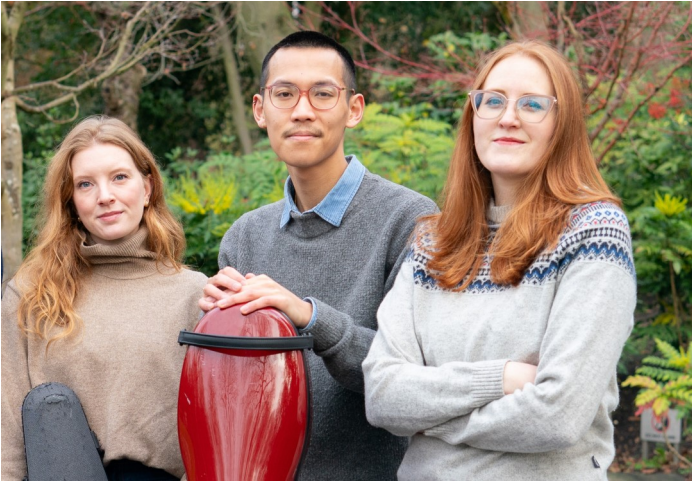
Life, Letters and Friendship

Sun 10 Mar / 3pm

The quartet perform the music of Shostakovich interspersed with historical sources and letters read by actor Anton Lesser (*The Crown*, *Game of Thrones*).



CAVATINA: If you are aged 18 - 25, you can see this concert for FREE



Liturina Fortepiano Trio

Gabriella Jones enjoys a diverse career performing as a soloist and chamber musician across the UK and Europe, and is in demand as a historical and modern violinist. She performs regularly with ensembles such as the Academy of Ancient Music, Florilegium, The English Concert, Solomon's Knot, Aurora, and the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique.

She is a founding member of Liturina, an historical chamber group specialising in the trio sonata repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries, and she leads Wond'rous Machine and the Waterperry Opera Festival Orchestra. Gabi studied for ten years at Chetham's School of Music, before graduating from Trinity College, Cambridge in 2016. Following a Masters degree at the Royal College of Music with Detlef Hahn, Gabi pursued an Artist Diploma in Historical Performance, studying with Lucy Russell and Bojan Cicic. She was awarded the Constant and Kit Lambert fellowship for 2019-20, during which time she led and directed various projects in historical performance. An experienced educator, Gabi teaches at the prestigious Chetham's School of Music. She is a Yeoman on the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Her historical violin is a 1756 Jacob Kloz which is generously on loan by the Cherubim Trust.

Samuel Ng is a London based cellist and viol player who has studied with Sarah McMahon, Reiko Ichise, Jonathan Rees, Raphael Wallfisch and Hélène Dautry. He has appeared at festivals such as the Vienna Philharmonic Ball and the BBC Proms, and his chamber career has brought him through most of Europe, both performing and broadcasting on radio. As a member of the chamber

ensemble Liturina, they were finalists at the York Early Music Competition, have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and have been heralded as 'particularly delicately played...an impressive performance.' Both as a cellist and viol player, Samuel regularly works with ensembles such as The English Concert, Academy of Ancient Music, Gabrieli Consort and Players, La Serenissima, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Orchestra of the Sixteen, Irish Baroque Orchestra and The Hanover Band. Samuel currently teaches at the Royal College of Music Junior Department.

Born in Poland, **Dominika Maszczyńska** performs on a variety of historical keyboard instruments. She graduated with distinction from the Royal College of Music and the Academy of Music in Katowice. As both a soloist and continuo player she has performed alongside such musicians as Jos van Immerseel, Ophélie Gaillard, Andrew Parrott, Ashley Solomon, Bojan Čičić, Reiko Ichise. Dominika has collaborated with various orchestras and groups including The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Zabrze Philharmonic Orchestra, EEEmerging+ Academy Orchestra, RCM Baroque Orchestra, Florilegium, De Profundis. She regularly performs with the ensemble Liturina. Her fortepiano performance of Beethoven's 5th Piano Concerto with the Volantes Orchestra and Jos van Immerseel was well received by the press: Dominika impressed with her energetic expression, musicality and technical dexterity. Her connection and communication with the orchestra were excellent (klasikaplus.cz). Her performances were broadcast by BBC Radio 3 and Polskie Radio Program 2 among others. Dominika regularly performs on original instruments (Cobbe Collection, St. Cecilia's Hall, Horniman Museum, RCM Museum). She won the RCM Historical Performance Competition and the Century Fund Prize. Dominika was a semi finalist of the prestigious Musica Antiqua Competition in Bruges. She was awarded the Charles Colt Scholarship in 2019 and the Fellowship in Historical Keyboards at the Royal College of Music for three consecutive years, 2020-2023. Dominika is a Keyboard Charitable Trust Artist and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Young Associate 2023.



Artistic Temperaments Festival 2024 Friday 9 - Sunday 11 February

What's the Festival about?

That's best answered by another question:

When is a G-sharp not a G-sharp?

When it's an A-flat! It's a tricky question. Sharps and flats have to share the black keys on the piano keyboard, but they are actually different notes. Over the years, that dilemma has led to many different ways of tuning pianos. The compromise we use now, called equal temperament, was not established until after the time of Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin. Before that, pianists preferred bolder compromises. Most of the piano music we love best, we've never heard as its composer heard it.

Artistic Temperaments Festival 2024 gives us the opportunity to hear what we've been missing. Our great collection of keyboard instruments – including one of our fine modern

grands – will be tuned historically, with our Steinway remaining in the modern tuning so we can compare.

The important thing about historical tunings is that the different keys – D major, A minor, and so on – all sound different from one another. There was actually a reason for the weird chromatic semitones in Haydn's last sonata; a reason for Beethoven choosing C minor for one sonata and C-sharp minor for another; even a reason for Schubert's beloved G-flat Impromptu first being published in the key of G. It's a question of harmonic flavour, like using the right herbs and spices.

Besides our professional concerts and demonstrations by our excellent student pianists, the Festival will also make room for YOU to play. You can sign up for a private session to try your favourite Mendelssohn Song without Words on a nineteenth-century piano, or that lovely Bach Prelude on a harpsichord.

You can discover more events for Artistic Temperaments Festival at turnersims.co.uk

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