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A “virtual” Coffee Concert recorded at the Holywell Music Room, Oxford

Sunday December 13, 2020 at 11:15

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We very much hope you enjoy this concert. If you would like to become a patron of the Oxford Coffee Concerts or make a donation to help support our “virtual” concerts, please get in touch with us via the contact page at coffeeconcerts.com.

This is one of the virtual Coffee Concerts recorded and streamed from our YouTube channel at 11:15 on Sunday mornings throughout autumn 2020. (These concerts will be available for a limited time after release.)

Maria Włoszczowska (violin), Steffan Morris (cello) & Dinis Sousa (piano)

- Haydn: Piano Trio no 45 in E flat major, Hob XV:29
- Schubert: Piano Trio in B flat major, D 898

Maria Włoszczowska (violin)

Maria Włoszczowska performs as a soloist, chamber musician and guest concertmaster worldwide. She is recognised for her versatile musicianship, having won the First Prize and Audience Prize at the XXI Leipzig International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in 2018, as well as numerous prizes at the XV International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition. Maria gave her debut recital at the Wigmore Hall with pianist Alasdair Beatson in 2016. She has appeared as soloist with several international ensembles since, including the Janáček Philharmonic Ostrava, Concerto Budapest and several of Poland's symphonic and chamber orchestras. She regularly performs at festivals around Europe where her chamber music partners

have included Robert Levin, Philippe Graffin, Nobuko Imai, Amy Norrington, Paolo Giacometti, Bengt Forsberg, Matthew Hunt, Alasdair Beatson, Dinis Sousa and the Doric String Quartet amongst others.

Recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Emily Anderson Prize, the Hattori Foundation Senior Award and Poland's Minister of Culture and National Heritage Prize, Maria based herself in the UK after studying at the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles with Leonid Kerbel, the Royal Academy of Music in London and completing her studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Hungarian violinist and conductor András Keller.

More information:

<https://www.mariawloszczowska.com>

Steffan Morris (cello)

Much in demand as a soloist, chamber and orchestral player, Welsh cellist Steffan Morris enjoys a very varied career. At 13 years old, Steffan started studying at the Yehudi Menuhin School in Surrey with distinguished cellist, Thomas Carroll. While a student there, he performed as a soloist at many notable venues such as St David's Hall and Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff, and Wigmore Hall and the Royal Albert Hall in London.

At 17 years old, Steffan won the Texaco Young Musician of Wales and in 2010 moved to Vienna to study the cello under Professor Heinrich Schiff at the University of Music and Performing Arts. He is the youngest ever guest principal cello with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra and has also been guest principal cello with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. He is now principal cellist with the Royal Northern Sinfonia.

Steffan is Creative Associate for Sinfonia Cymru and has performed with them as a soloist. He has also performed as soloist for The Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra, the Surrey Philharmonic Orchestra and The Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra amongst others. His concert and recital engagements have taken him to Japan, Holland, Germany, Italy, Russia and Austria.

Steffan is Artistic Director of the Nidum Ensemble – a dynamic, diverse and innovative group of young professional musicians who are passionate about bringing chamber music to audiences across the UK. As cellist of the Marmen Quartet, he has performed across the UK and internationally. As a tutor, Steffan

regularly teaches at the Yehudi Menuhin School, the Royal College of Music and the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama.

More information:
<http://www.harlequin-agency.co.uk/>

Dinis Sousa (piano)

Portuguese pianist and conductor Dinis Sousa studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he was the Conducting Fellow. At Guildhall, Dinis studied conducting with Sian Edwards and Timothy Redmond and piano with Philip Jenkins and Martin Roscoe. As a pianist, he had the opportunity to study with musicians such as Yekaterina Lebedeva, András Keller, Angela Hewitt, Richard Egarr, Ralf Gothóni, amongst others. Dinis plays as a duo with violinist Maria Włoszczowska.

Dinis is founder and artistic director of Orquestra XXI, an award-winning orchestra that brings together some of the best young Portuguese musicians from around Europe. Orquestra XXI has already established itself as one of the leading performing groups in Portugal, appearing regularly in its main concert halls. He has also worked closely with Sir John Eliot Gardiner and his ensembles — the English Baroque Soloists, Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique and the Monteverdi Choir, culminating in his appointment as the Monteverdi Choir & Orchestras' first-ever Assistant Conductor. He has assisted Sir John with other orchestras as well, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Berliner Philharmoniker and Tonhalle Orchester Zürich. In recognition of his work with Orquestra XXI, Dinis was awarded the title of Knight of the Order of Prince Henry in Portugal.

More information:
<https://dinissousa.com/>

Piano Trio no 45 in E flat major, Hob XV:29 by Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

1. Poco allegretto; 2. Andantino ed innocentemente; 3. Finale. Allemande. Presto assai.

Haydn's piano trios used to be among his most neglected groups of works, but recently they have begun to receive the attention they deserve. They grew out of the repertoire of mid-18th Century chamber music in which the keyboard part tended to predominate, with violin parts treated as accompaniments, or even as dispensable. As late as the 1780s and 90s Haydn's trios were still being advertised as 'Sonatas for harpsichord or forte-piano with a violin and violoncello'. In these later works the keyboard is still the dominant partner, and though the violin has more of an independent part, the cello tends to do little more than double the keyboard's left hand.

The E flat trio, (No 29 in Anthony van Hoboken's catalogue, No 45 in the more recent and more comprehensive listing by Haydn scholar HC Robbins Landon) is the last of a group of three written sometime

before April 1797, possibly two years earlier. They are dedicated to a well-known virtuoso pianist of the day, Theresa Jansen (under her married name of Bartolozzi). Haydn also dedicated two of his last piano sonatas to her, as did two of the most prominent pianist-composers of the day, Muzio Clementi and Jan Ladislav Dussek.

The first movement is predominantly playful, but with a darker minor-key section that is, in fact, a variation of the opening. The gently flowing andantino that follows is in B major – a typical example of Haydn's exploration of remote key relationships. A momentary darkening of the mood towards the end steers the music back towards E flat ready for the sparkling finale. The designation 'Allemande' in the heading for this movement refers to the dance of that name, whose spirit underpins the music's ebullient energy.

Piano Trio in B flat major, D 898 by Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

**1. Allegro moderato; 2. Andante un poco mosso;
3. Scherzo. Allegro; 4. Rondo. Allegro vivace.**

Schubert is thought to have composed his two mature piano trios in the autumn of 1827, his first works for the medium since a single-movement piece in B flat, D28, written in 1812. It is not known what prompted him to return to an instrumental ensemble he had not explored since his teens (though his friendship with three leading players of the day has been suggested), but the impulse, whatever it was, spurred him to produce two of his greatest chamber works.

The E flat Trio was written in November 1827, and though the autograph of the one in B flat is lost, there is some evidence to suggest that it was written shortly before. One of the two trios – surviving documents don't say which – was played at a public concert in Vienna in December 1827. The following March Schubert, for the first and only time in his career, promoted a public concert of his own music. A trio was played on this occasion, too, the one in E flat according to the

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recollections of Schubert's friend Leopold von Sonnleithner. At each concert the trio in question was advertised as 'new' which, according to the Viennese convention of the day, meant that it had not been played in public before. If the E flat Trio was 'new' in March 1828, the one played the previous December must have been the B flat.

"The mountains had always acted as a catalyst for Schubert", stated the composer's biographer, John Reed, in support of his speculation that the B flat Trio may owe at least some of its fresh, outgoing character to the composer's holiday in the countryside around Graz, in south-east Austria, in September 1827. Certainly there is a relaxed, expansive feel to the first movement, the rhythmic kick beginning in the piano's left hand in the very first bar adding to the music's springiness.

A flowing song-like theme dominates the second movement, begun by the cello over a gently rocking piano accompaniment and taken up by the violin. An abrupt change of mood brings in the agitated central section, after which the music works its way back to the return of the opening. Schubert leads it through some unexpectedly distant keys and further emotional probing, before it settles back where it began.

The main sections of the Scherzo are typical of Schubert at his freshest and most buoyant; the central trio section is gently waltz-like. A jog-trot rhythm characterises the finale's opening theme, establishing an air of amiably discursive energy. The music explores some typically Schubertian key shifts, before eventually arriving at a presto coda that sets the seal on this invigorating, mostly sunny, work.

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Coming up...

Sunday December 20, 2020

Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective

- Walker: Lyric for Strings
- Beech: Romance for Violin and Piano, op 23
- Elgar: Piano Quintet in A minor, op 84
- Mancini: Moon River