



MALVERN
CONCERT CLUB
FOUNDED 1903 BY SIR EDWARD ELGAR OM

NEWSLETTER

April 2024

malvern-concert-club.co.uk



Our Concert – Thursday 11 April, 7.30pm



We are delighted to welcome **Dudok Quartet Amsterdam** on their first visit to the Club. They come to us from Wigmore Hall, go on to The Sage at Gateshead (now to be known as The Glasshouse), followed by Gdańsk and then off for a tour to Australia.

They say that ‘The challenge as we prepare each programme is to find answers to the questions: ‘What is the true nature of this music and what worlds can we unveil behind the score?’ This quest is our main incentive to delve further into the music. Without losing sight of our rich string quartet tradition, we always search for new formats and new perspectives.’ They are not afraid to explore well beyond the traditional repertoire (see below).

Discography

The Quartet’s most recent recording is the CD *What Remains* on Rubicon (RCD1110). As the title suggests, it features tonight’s quartet by Dutchman Joey Roukens and also an eclectic mix: arrangements of pieces by Perotinus, Machaut and Gesualdo, Steve Reich’s *Different Trains*, and some Messiaen.

The Quartet’s *Reflections* is also on Rubicon (RCD1099). It features music by Shostakovich and the Polish composer and violinist Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969). The Gramophone said that ‘This is repertoire worth getting to know ... I’ll be interested to see where (and how far) it takes them next.’ They also recorded the complete Brahms’ Quartets for Rubicon in 2021. This received wonderful reviews across the board.



Annual General Meeting

A reminder that our Annual General Meeting will take place at 6.30pm on Wednesday 17 July at Elmslie House. Do make a note in your diary and do come. Refreshments and musical accompaniment will complement the official business of the evening; this usually takes less than an hour, so try to see it as an extra concert with complimentary extras!



You will see at the end of this Newsletter mention of a special concert in Bromsgrove to mark the winding up of Bromsgrove Concerts, after 60 years. We understand that this is as much because they have not been able to find volunteers to continue to run the music club, as for other factors. The region lost the Droitwich Concert Club a few years ago for similar reasons.

Malvern Concert Club is decidedly not in this position: we are fortunate, due to your support, to be strong on numbers and even stronger on finances. Nevertheless, the Committee can foresee that a number of vacancies will arise over the next year or so. If you (or indeed someone you know) have an interest in furthering the vision of the Club in providing chamber music of the highest quality in Malvern and would like to contribute to this on the Committee, please contact either Richard Price or Roger Usher. Their contact details are 01432 890415 and 07710 308129 respectively.

Although knowledge of classical music is an advantage, it is far from essential and you may well have other skills or enthusiasms which we would find useful. Please apply no later than 30 June.

Needless to say, an active and committed Committee is vital to the success and indeed continuance of the Club.



Education Outreach



Our last Outreach event for this season is on **19 April**, when Toscana Strings will be coming to two of our Primary Schools (Malvern Wells and the Wyche).

Toscana Strings consist of two violins, viola, cello and double bass and a ballet dancer. They will be presenting *Wind in the Willows* to KS1 and KS2 pupils over the course of the day. Previous visits by them (which we have sponsored) have been very warmly received by the children and staff alike.

The Committee of MCC is engaging with local schools as much as possible to introduce music of all kinds to young people. Severn Arts are very supportive of our ventures and we are very grateful to them for their help.



The Brodskys Weekend: 7-9 June

Another reminder not to miss a unique chance to hear all of Shostakovich's 15 string quartets live in Malvern over a single weekend, or to dip into a selection of them - see this year's brochure or our website for details. The Brodskys are performing these around the world to mark their 50 years as a quartet, and the Club is proud and delighted in equal measure to have been invited by the Quartet to host this cycle in Malvern.

Club members, and new members joining for the 2024/25 season, can buy tickets at just £20 each, or £80 for all five concerts - a considerable saving over box office prices. Please contact the Membership Secretary (not Malvern Theatres) to book at these preferential rates.

The Brodskys have offered an Open Rehearsal at 4pm on the Friday for invited local schools, as part of their and the Club's important initiative to bring young people to classical music.



New Season 2024/25 – Club Membership

As you know, the new season was launched at the last concert. Bryan Ratcliff contacted members a few weeks ago, but hard copy brochures will be available again tonight. Do please take a few brochures to give to friends or acquaintances you think may be interested. Word of mouth is our best recruitment agency.

With the next membership cycle for season 2024-25 now well under way, if you are currently a member or have been in the previous two seasons, we hope you will be renewing your subscription with us. If you have never been a member or haven't been for this and the previous two seasons, then please consider joining us and enjoy the substantial cost advantages that brings, including our discounted offers for the first year of membership.

Joining now rather than in September not only boosts the Club's funds, but it gives the Committee the confidence to secure the best artists, who will often be booked up two years in advance.



Last Concert - 21 March

Tom Poster and Elena Urioste had a large and engaged audience for their recital on 21 March, featuring under-appreciated works (despite some being by famous composers) which the duo believe deserve greater prominence. A new name for most of us was Mel Bonis (1858 - 1937), a Frenchwoman little known until recently. Her Violin Sonata Op.112 turned out to be a delightfully rhapsodic work with a Greek folk melody at its heart. If you liked it, Tom and Elena have just recorded it on Chandos. It has, rightly, been described as a 'first rate piece deserving a firm place in the repertoire'.



The encore was one of Tom's beguiling arrangements of American popular classics: *Over the Rainbow* by Harold Arlen from *The Wizard of Oz*. They have recorded this on their Estrellita album on BIS (it also includes Elgar's *Salut d'Amour*). There are more to be found on their Jukebox CD on Orchid Classics.



Local Music at Malvern Theatres

Friday 12 April	7.30pm	Armonico Consort – Mozart Great Mass in C Bach Magnificat in D
Sunday 14 April	7.00pm	Ukrainian Opera and Ballet Theatre Kyiv – Bizet <i>Carmen</i>
Saturday 20 April	5.55pm	Live From The Met – Puccini <i>La Rondine</i>



Music Elsewhere

Saturday 13 April	3.00pm	St Mary's Church, Painswick Hannah Roper (violin) and Adrian Partington (piano) Vaughan Williams' <i>The Lark Ascending</i> and works by Holst, Coleridge-Taylor and Ethel Bains Tickets £20 from tickets@painswickmusicsoc.co.uk or 07789 006006
Wednesday 24 April	7.30pm	Parabola Arts Centre, Cheltenham Verona Quartet - quartets by Mendelssohn, Bartók, Beethoven Tickets £21 - £26 from cheltmusicsoc.co.uk .
Saturday 11 May	3.00pm	St Mary's Church, Painswick Meliora Collective Ligeti's Old Hungarian Dances, Farrenc's Nonet in E Flat, Brahms' Serenade No.1 Tickets £20 from tickets@painswickmusicsoc.co.uk or 07789 006006
15-19 May		Hellensmusic 2024 Festival – a feast of concerts and masterclasses. Details at hellensmusic.com/festival/programme . Concerts in the Great Barn include:
Friday 17 May	6.30pm	Brahms Sextet No.1, Op.18; Britten Phantasy for Oboe and Strings, Op.2; Beethoven Septet for Wind and Strings, Op.20
Saturday 18 May	6.00pm	Fauré Piano Quartet, Op.15; Rebecca Clare Sonata for Violin and Piano; Beethoven Trio, Op.11; Smetana String Quartet <i>From My Life</i> . This is followed at 9.30pm by a performance of Schubert Piano Trio, D.898 (with the option of a supper between the two concerts).
Saturday 25 May	7.30pm	St Martin's Church, Worcester – Baroque Celebration! Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir and soloists Bach Magnificat and Double Violin Concerto Handel <i>The King Shall Rejoice, Arrival of The Queen of Sheba</i> Tickets £18 from Eventbrite or at the door
Sunday 7 July	7.00pm	Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School, B61 7DU – Enigma Brass Celebrate 100 Years of Gershwin <i>Rhapsody in Blue</i> and Goodbye to 60 years of Bromsgrove Concerts. Reception from 6pm. Tickets just £10. Further details: www.bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk