

WINTER CONCERTS 2022–23

WMS

WITNEY MUSIC SOCIETY

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Friday 14 October 2022 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

CONSONE QUARTET

MAGDALENA LOTH-HILL (VIOLIN) | GEORGE ROSS (CELLO)
AGATA DARAŠKAITE (VIOLIN) | ELITSA BOGDANOVA (VIOLA)



Photo: Bertrand Pichene

Haydn – String Quartet Op.33 No.2 *The Joke*

Mozart – String Quartet K465 *Dissonance*

Mendelssohn – String Quartet Op.44 No.2

The first period instrument string quartet to be selected as BBC New Generation Artists, the **CONSONE QUARTET** is rapidly emerging as one of the most exciting ensembles of their generation.

Celebrated for presenting historically informed interpretations of classical and romantic repertoire, their debut CD – released in 2018 on the French label Ambronay – explored music by Haydn and Mendelssohn and was described by *The Strad* as an album “that instantly leaps out [...] as something special.”

Formed at the Royal College of Music in London, the Conson Quartet launched their professional career in 2015, shortly after which they were awarded two prizes at the 2015 York Early Music International Young Artists Competition, including the EUBO Development Trust Prize and a place on the EEEmerging Scheme in France. They later received the 2016 Royal Over-Seas League Ensemble Prize and in 2022 were awarded a prestigious Borletti-Buitoni fellowship.

The quartet has already appeared at Wigmore Hall and other notable venues in London, and at festivals throughout the UK. Further afield, they’ve been invited to perform at the Philharmonie de Paris and Auditorium de Lyon in France, at the Concertgebouw Brugge, AMUZ and de Bijloke in Belgium and at other venues across Europe. They will make a highly anticipated North American debut in February 2023.

This concert is kindly supported by Great Experience Travel, Witney.

Friday 11 November 2022 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

ALEXANDER SOARES

PIANO

Scarlatti, Bach, Croft et al – Baroque Suite

Schubert – Impromptu in E-flat major Op.90 No.2

Beethoven – Sonata Op.10 No.3 in D Major

Chopin – Nocturnes Op.62 No.1, 2 & Op. posth in C-sharp minor

Sibelius – Impromptu Op.5 No.5

Liszt – Sposalizio

Albeniz – *El Puerto / El Albaicin* (from *Iberia*)

A BBC Music Magazine Rising Star in 2021, pianist **ALEXANDER SOARES** is commended as an authoritative soloist and dynamic recording artist. In recital, he's been praised for his playing of "huge intensity" (*The Telegraph*) and "diamond clarity and authority" (BBC Radio 3). He came to international attention in 2015, performing the music of Boulez in a BBC Radio 3 broadcast at the Barbican Centre; in that year he also won the Gold Medal in the prestigious Royal Over-Seas League Competition and was selected as a solo artist by City Music Foundation. Alexander has since performed in major venues and festivals across the UK, Europe and USA, with regular broadcasts on Radio 3 and other European radio stations.

In 2019 he signed with Rubicon Classics to release his debut solo album *Notations & Sketches*. Praised for its captivating programme — the piano solo works of Boulez, Dutilleux and Messiaen — the disc was selected as 'Editor's Choice' by *Gramophone Magazine* and received widespread critical acclaim. In 2021, following the release of *Threnodies*, his second solo CD, Alexander was noted as "a thoughtful programmer" (*BBC Music Magazine*), with Gramophone affirming his dynamic performance. He combines a busy and varied performing schedule with doctoral supervision at Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and research of musical memorisation.



Alexander Soares is a Making Music
selected artist



Friday 9 December 2022 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

CONNAUGHT BRASS



Left to right: Aled Meredith-Barrett (tuba),
Harry Plant (trumpet), Chris Brewster (trombone),
Robyn Blair (French horn), Aaron Akugbo (trumpet)

Mogens Andresen – Prelude – Rheinlaender from Norwegian Dances

Steven Verhelst – Suite from Pulcinella 2.0

Gabriel Fauré arr. Ullrich – Pavane Op.50

Victor Ewald – Quintet No.1

Enrique Crespo – Suite Americana

Florence B. Price arr. Blair – Adoration

Georges Bizet arr. Foster – Suite from Carmen

CONNAUGHT BRASS are quickly making a name for themselves as a fresh talent in the chamber music world. The ensemble won first prize in the inaugural Philip Jones International Brass Ensemble Competition (2019) and the Royal Over-Seas League Mixed Ensemble Competition (2022). Vibrant, spirited and bold, Connaught Brass place emphasis on their friendship with one another to showcase their individual musical personalities within a unique collective sound.

Recent notable engagements include a tour of Switzerland in 2021, recitals at Società Filarmonica Trento (Italy) and across the UK as well as performing live on BBC Radio 3's In Tune programme. Their ever-growing repertoire spans 500 years, from Renaissance to contemporary works, across a wide range of genres. The ensemble also take great pride in their outreach work, including that supported by the Worshipful Company of Musicians and Cavatina Trust.

Having been principal players in the European Union Youth Orchestra and National Youth Orchestras of Great Britain, Scotland, and Wales, members are now appearing on the professional circuit, including freelancing with major orchestras throughout the UK.

The ambition of Connaught Brass is to explore and share the broadest range of musical repertoire with as wide an audience as possible, bringing brass chamber music to the forefront of today's musical world.

Friday 13 January 2023 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

LEO POPPLEWELL CELLO

ANTONINA SUHANOVA PIANO

Bach – Gamba Suite No.2 in D major BWV 1028

Brahms – Cello Sonata No.2 in F Op.99

Janáček – Pohádka

Shostakovich – Cello Sonata Op.40

Dynamic young cellist **LEO POPPLEWELL** studied at Clare College, Cambridge, and later at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Leo has performed in many of the world's leading concert halls, including New York's Carnegie Hall, and London's Wigmore Hall, Barbican Hall and Southbank Centre. He has also appeared in many music festivals throughout the UK. In 2019 he won the Coro Nuovo Young Musician of the Year competition. He has broadcast regularly on national radio, most recently on BBC Radio 3.

In 2017 he formed the Mithras Piano Trio, that has since won several prizes and been selected as BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists for the 2021-23 seasons.

Pianist **ANTONINA SUHANOVA** has performed on the international stage since 2000. After studies in her native Latvia, she acquired B.Mus and Master of Performance degrees, both with distinction, at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. After completing the Artist Diploma course, Antonina was appointed junior fellow there.

Antonina has played at prestigious venues in the UK and further afield and at renowned festivals worldwide. In 2018, her solo debut at the Wigmore Hall was broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. In 2020 as the Musicians' Company prize winner, Antonina made her solo debut at the Southbank Centre Purcell Room.



Photo: Sintija Sandore



Leo Popplewell is a selected artist under the Countess of Munster Musical Trust scheme



Friday 10 February 2023 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

ENSEMBLE MOLIERE



Photo: Matthew Johnson

Left to right: Kate Conway (viola da gamba/cello), Alice Earll (violin), Satoko Doi-Luck (harpsichord), Flavia Hirte (flute), Catriona McDermid (bassoon)

A Sultana's Garden

La Sultane, a lesser-known work by Couperin for 4 obligato instruments, is at the centre of this programme, while other masterpieces by Rameau, Rebel and Couperin set the scene. We picture the female sultan surrounded by rich musical flora and fauna, which at times can be taken both literally and metaphorically. *L'amphibie* from Couperin's *Pièces de Clavecin* might have been one of her more fickle friends, or just a frog perching on a water lily... But we also come across an array of flying animals, plants, and the summer wind. Finally, the pleasures of the outdoors are summed up in J.F. Rebel's collection of dances *Les Plaisirs Champêtres*.

ENSEMBLE MOLIERE have gained a reputation as an established early music ensemble. Their unique combination of instruments provides memorable and creative programmes from the repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries, all performed on historical instruments.

Ensemble Molière have been selected as the first-ever Radio 3 New Generation Baroque Ensemble for two years from October 2021, a new scheme run in partnership by BBC Radio 3, the National Centre for Early Music and the Royal College of Music.

As finalists at the York Early Music International Young Artists Competition and Future Baroque Artists at the London Festival of Baroque Music, they have given concerts throughout the UK and Europe, including the MAFestival fringe in Brugge and the Oudemuziek Fringe Festival in Utrecht.

Ensemble Molière have been invited to perform live on BBC Radio 3 In Tune with highlights from *Pygmalion* (their cross-art opera project, part funded by Arts Council England) and from their spoken word and music programme, *Medicine and Mortality*. They have also recorded their first EP, a collection of French baroque dance movements entitled *Dance Sweets*, which is available on physical and digital release.

Friday 10 March 2023 at 7.30pm at High Street Methodist Church

ENSEMBLE MIRAGE

Prokofiev – Overture on Hebrew Themes

Mozart – Clarinet Quintet K.581

Copland – Sextet

Zdenek Fibich – Quintet, Op.42

ENSEMBLE MIRAGE is a dynamic flexi-ensemble based in London that enables the exploration and programming of the whole range of clarinet-string-piano chamber music, beginning with the core clarinet trios and building upwards. It evolved from the award-winning ensemble Trio Mirage, formed in early 2014, with British clarinettist Matthew Scott, Hungarian violinist Júlia Pusker and Romanian pianist Alexandra Vaduva. Having met during their studies at the Royal Academy of Music, they began exploring the diverse range of repertoire offered by their trio. They soon won the Academy's Harold Craxton Prize and were awarded a 2015/16 Chamber Music Fellowship, during which they worked with Academy composers to produce new works for the ensemble alongside chamber recitals.

To explore larger repertoire, Trio Mirage began collaborating with other musicians, resulting in Ensemble Mirage. Individually all members are award-winning artists in their own right, active across all areas of the profession including solo, chamber, orchestral and outreach work. The ensemble has performed in various flexes for music societies and festivals throughout the UK.

The clarinet/string quartet/piano sextet enables programming of the whole range of clarinet and piano quintets along with a variety of original sextet works. Blending the sound of a full string quartet with the piano and the vocal qualities of the clarinet begins to provide an orchestral effect, with a vast possibility of instrumental colours and textures.



*This concert is in memory of **Avery Baines**,
the music society's treasurer for more than
40 years.*

