

#### IV. Final: Animé

Against a backdrop of violin arpeggio harmonics (previously used by Ravel in his *Trois poèmes de Mallarmé*) and trills from the cello, the piano presents the five-bar first theme. The trumpet calls in the development section played by the piano may be an allusion to the declaration of war in August 1914, which coincided with Ravel's work on this movement. As the most orchestral of the four movements, the Final exploits the resources of the three players to the utmost, and Ravel rounds off the entire work with a brilliant coda.

## The Odora Piano Trio

The Odora Trio was formed in 2017 at the Royal Academy of Music. They have performed widely throughout London and the UK including a tour of Scotland, Canterbury Music Club, Hay Music, Eaton Square, Elgar's Birthplace, Royal Academy of Music, The Korean Cultural Centre, The London Charterhouse, Michaelchurch Escley, Herefordshire and Concerts for Craswall.

The trio was selected to take part in the Piano Festival at the Royal Academy of Music where they were mentored by renowned cellist Adrian Brendel. They also attended the Wye Valley Chamber Music Summer Residency in 2018, with the generous support from the SPOFF foundation, performing the John Ireland Piano Trio no.3 in E They were also semi-finalists at The St Martin's In The Fields Chamber Music Competition 2020. The trio has been under the guidance of eminent professors such as members of The Doric Quartet, Andrew West, Richard Lester, William Fong and Jo Cole.

Next Concert: Elizabeth Bass (Harp) and Katherine Bryer (Oboe)  
Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2022

*This concert is sponsored by  
Jon Turnbull*

*Programme Notes compiled by John Walker and kindly sponsored by Avril Philips*



Programme Notes  
29<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## The Odora Piano Trio

Sophie Hinson (Violin) Songeum Choi (Piano) Harriet Butterworth (Cello)

### Haydn (1732-1809)

#### Piano Trio in A Major Hob XV:18

*1. Allegro 2. Moderato, 3. Andante, 4. Allegro.*

During his second visit to London, in 1794-95, Haydn composed about a dozen piano trios. Then in his early 60s, Haydn was at the height of his powers - this was the period of his final six "London" Symphonies - and the piano trios composed in London demonstrate a similar sophistication.

His earlier piano trios, intended for the growing number of amateur musicians, were often in only two movements of no great complexity. The London trios, however, are much more refined music: they are in three movements and show greater individuality than the earlier trios.

The Piano Trio in A major is a good example of Haydn's late trios. The Allegro moderato opens with three firm introductory chords, then instantly settles into the flowing mood that marks the entire movement. Haydn marks the opening subject cantabile. The music remains fairly gentle throughout this movement, and particularly remarkable is the harmonic freedom of Haydn's writing, especially in the development, where the music flows smoothly between unexpected keys.

The middle movement is an Andante in ABA form that moves along steadily in its 6/8 meter. After the genial opening movement, the A-minor tonality sounds subdued. However the lyric central episode returns to A major. Without pause, Haydn proceeds directly into the Allegro finale. Frequent syncopations and chirping grace notes contribute to the lively spirits of this movement, which dances happily to the good-natured close.



## Robert Schuman (1810-1856)

### Piano trio No. 2 in F major Op.80

The Piano Trio No. 2 in F major, Op. 80, by Robert Schumann was written in 1847. It has four movements:

1. *Sehr lebhaft*

2. *Mit innigem Ausdruck – Lebhaft.*

3. *In mässiger Bewegung*

4. *Nicht zu rasch*

Schumann's first two piano trios were written in close succession, despite the large gap between their opus numbers. The second piano trio is more effervescent and cheerful in mood than the first trio – the composer himself said that it makes a “friendlier and more immediate impression” than its predecessor.

Schumann's genius is heard in the way in which the first movement's relatively peaceful second subject sounds new and fresh, despite being a rhythmically altered version of the first subject. The expressive second movement, in the key of D-flat major, opens with a sustained violin melody over an accompaniment consisting of cello and piano left hand in close strict canon.

The waltz-like third movement, in B-flat minor, is also extensively built on canonic imitation. The material of the finale is largely built on the interplay between three contrasting elements in the first theme: a smoothly winding snatch of piano melody, a staccato answer in the cello, and a driving continuation in the violin.

\*\*\* Interval \*\*\*

## Herbert Sumsion (1899-1995)

### Piano Trio No.2 (1982)

1. *Lento.* 2. *Andante* 3. *Scherzo.*

Herbert Whitton Sumsion CBE was an English musician who was the organist of Gloucester Cathedral from 1928 to 1967. Through his leadership role with the Three Choirs Festival, Sumsion maintained close associations with major figures in England's 20th-century musical renaissance, including Edward Elgar, Herbert Howells, Gerald Finzi, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Although Sumsion is known primarily as a cathedral musician, his professional career spanned more than 60 years and encompassed composing, conducting, performing, accompanying, and teaching. His compositions include works for choir and organ, as well as lesser-known chamber and orchestral works.

In terms of the piece itself, it's influence is English and pastoral. There are elements of French 20th century music, some of it reminding us of the Ravel Trio. It is in two parts- the first and second are almost a stand-alone piece in ternary form, beginning with a solo cello line, which is developed throughout these first movements, before returning to its original form at the end. It makes use of irregular time signatures, giving a feeling of forward movement and restlessness. There are also some regular march passages, before returning to the free, French colour.

The second movement is jovial and scherzando, the piano taking the lead in this movement of great contrast to the first. Once again, rhythm is used in a disjunct and unsettled way, with the use of polyrhythms and syncopation. The middle section is minor and more reflective, but with an almost constant movement in inner and lower voices.

## Maurice Ravel 1875-1937)

### Piano Trio in A minor

1. *Modéré.* 2. *Pantoum (Assez vif)* 3. *Passacaille (Très large)* 4. *Final (Animé)*

During the summer of 1914, Ravel did his compositional work in the French Basque commune of Saint-Jean-de-Luz. Ravel was born across the bay in the Basque town of Ciboure; his mother was Basque, and he felt a deep identification with his Basque heritage. During the Trio's composition, Ravel was also working on a piano concerto based on Basque themes. Although eventually abandoned, this project left its mark on the Trio, particularly in the opening movement, which Ravel later noted was “Basque in colouring.”

#### I. *Modéré*

According to Ravel, the first movement draws on the Zortziko, a Basque dance form. Ravel employs sonata form in this movement but not without introducing his own touches. The second theme is presented in A minor, and reappears untransposed in the recapitulation but with different harmonies. In the recapitulation, the appearance of the main theme in the piano is superimposed over a rhythmically modified version of the second theme in the strings.

#### II. *Pantoum: Assez vif*

This movement is based on a traditional scherzo and trio A-B-A form. The scherzo presents two themes: the piano opens with the spiky first theme in A minor, while the strings respond in double octaves with the smoother second theme in F sharp minor.

#### III. *Passacaille: Très large*

The third movement is a passacaglia based on the piano's opening eight-bar bass line, which is derived from the first theme of the Pantoum. The cello joins next, followed by the violin. While the melody is passed between the three instruments, the movement builds singlemindedly to a powerful climax, then dies away.