

Bloom and HRH Prince Philip. Rupert has lectured in non-classical cello styles at the New Directions Festival in Cologne and the Cello Akademie Rutesheim. Rupert has worked with artists such as Alison Moyet (Yazoo), Shara Nelson (Massive Attack), Katy Carr, Delain and Modern Nature, and been featured on many occasions on BBC Radio and television with various ensembles. Rupert also has an ongoing YouTube series called "Jazz Cello Tunes", where he performs a different jazz standard every week.

Eddie Hession (Accordion)

Eddie is a former All-Britain Solo Accordion Champion. He also studied piano and percussion at the Royal College of Music. He has played the accordion with all of the leading London orchestras and has been involved with studio sessions for many years. As well as playing on the soundtrack, he also makes a brief appearance in Captain Corelli's Mandolin. He has played with a variety of artists including Luciano Pavarotti, Alfie Boe, Grace Jones and Chris Rea. Eddie played accordion in the Gypsy Tango band Zum and currently plays in the Budapest Cafe Orchestra, led by the violinist Christian Garrick.

Next Concert: Lara Melda (Piano)
Saturday 30th April 2022

This concert is sponsored by
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Programme Notes compiled by John Walker and kindly sponsored by Avril Philips



Programme Notes
26th March 2022

The Kosmos Ensemble

Harriet Mackenzie (Violin) Meg-Rosaleen Hamilton (Viola)

Rupert Gillet (Cello) Eddie Hession (Accordion)

Described by Richard Morrison (The Times) as having "telepathic rapport, dazzling virtuosity, serious scholarship, intellectual curiosity and impeccable musicianship", Kosmos Ensemble is redefining the relationship between classical and world music.

Each member of Kosmos is an international soloist in their own right and brings individual flavour to the group.

Concert programme

Kosmos prefer to introduce their programmes and talk about the music from the platform but the following is a brief background to some of the musical traditions that inspired tonight's programme:

Music in Greece. Greece bridges the West and the Orient and its music spans millennia of history. Greek traditional music has origins traced to Greek antiquity, both in its folk and Byzantine origin manifestations. Byzantine music also included a rich liturgical chanting tradition with strong influences in later music – the inflections, expression and modal nature of much of the music are connected to Byzantine chant. There is a huge variety of Greek music. Every island and region has its own specific style, tradition, instrumentation and folk songs.

Gypsy music More correctly known as the Roma people, one of the best-known nomadic groups in the world, appearing in literature and folklore, they are historically often referred to as "Gypsies"- a term that is based on a mistaken belief of an origin in Egypt. The Roma people are believed originally to have come from Rajasthan in India, and travelled to many corners of the world including Spain where they are famous for flamenco, France where they are associated with manouche ("Gypsy- jazz"), and in the Balkans and Russia, where they are also known and celebrated for their musical talents. Brahms, Sarasate, Dvorak, Liszt, Ravel and Enescu were profoundly inspired by Gypsy melodies and virtuosity.



Music of Jewish origin. The Jewish diaspora has resulted in a huge wealth of Jewish music. There are two main strands of traditional Jewish music in Europe and the Balkans, and both are of interest to Kosmos.

1. Klezmer: Music of the Ashkenazi Jews of nineteenth century Eastern Europe. Until the holocaust, klezmer was often heard played by professional Jewish musicians at weddings and celebrations in Eastern Europe. A few surviving musicians including Roma people miraculously kept some Jewish music alive, and since the revival of klezmer music in 1970s America, it has become increasingly popular at both Jewish and non-Jewish events both in and especially outside Eastern Europe. Stylistically, Klezmer borrows from the Hassidic nigun (an emotive table song without words), and is played in Jewish prayer modes (shtaygerim) based on the cantorial nusach. Features distinguishing klezmer from other Eastern European and Balkan folk styles include an emphasis on emotional content, with a quintessential downward glissando effect and the unique use of the 'krecht' - a stopped note, giving a wailing, sobbing sound.

2. Sephardic music: The music of the Sephardim was born out of medieval Spain, and performed at the royal courts in cities such as Toledo and Fez. Sephardic Jews spoke and sang in Judeo-Spanish (Ladino). Following their expulsion from Spain in 1492, the original Spanish of the time became infused with other languages including Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Slavic languages, as well as Portuguese, French and Italian. This geographical spread of the community is reflected in the musical variety of Judeo-Spanish folk songs carried down to the present day. Musicians assimilated North African high-pitched, extended ululations, Balkan rhythms such as the 9/8 meter, and the Ottoman makams. This mix is a fundamental inspiration for Kosmos.

Tango: A sensuous and rhythmic dance music from Argentina, tango has come to epitomize the glamour and elegance of high society. However, it originated in Argentine society's underbelly – the brothels. As immigrants from Europe and Africa, streamed into the outskirts of Buenos Aires during the 1880s, many found themselves working in the houses of ill-repute. The dance became a highly theatrical representation of the relationship between the prostitute and her pimp, accounting for its daring combination of sleaze and elegance. Since the 1880s the genre has grown in 'respectability' and tango has developed into one of the most popular dances in the world.

Music in Japan: As well as adopting western classical music, and enjoying a thriving popular music culture, Japan boasts a rich tapestry of traditional genres and distinct styles from traditional Buddhist chanting (shōmyō) and orchestral court music (gagaku) to Enka, a vocal genre popular in the 1950s (derived from music of the late 19th century) evoking romanticized and idealized Japanese culture.

Enka singers, predominantly women, usually perform in a kimono, making use of the pentatonic scale, vocal Melismas specific to the genre and often, traditional folk songs.

Japanese folk songs (min'yō) include work songs, religious songs (such as Shintoist music), songs used for weddings, funerals, and festivals (matsuri, especially Obon), and children's songs (warabe uta). Sakura (Cherry Blossom) is an example of a popular Japanese folk song and depicts spring, the season of cherry blossoms.

The Kosmos Ensemble

Harriet Mackenzie – Violin

Harriet is an internationally renowned concerto soloist and has performed across five continents. Recordings include concertos with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra Nova and the English Symphony Orchestra and these have received international acclaim, including Five Star review in The Times (Richard Morrison), Editor's Choice in Gramophone Magazine (Richard Whitehouse) and a nomination for 'Recording of The Year' in Music Web International:

"There is a completeness, a confidence, an honesty and a consistent lyrical beauty that has moved me again and again. These qualities all emerge in Harriet Mackenzie's utterly magisterial performance.." - Richard Hanlon.

Harriet graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with First Class honours, M.Mus and Dip Ram. In 2015 she was awarded the Richard Carne Fellowship at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and in the same year, she was honoured to be made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM) recognising her contribution to music.

Meg – Rosaleen Hamilton (Viola)

Millennium Award winning, classically trained violist and violinist, with music degrees from Edinburgh University and Trinity College of Music, Meg has developed a varied career in classical and traditional music. Kosmos bridges several musical genres for Meg including classical, jazz, and music from around the world.

She has toured Klezmer and Balkan music since 2002 with She'Koyokh, hailed as the UK's "best klezmer and Balkan band" (Evening Standard). She'Koyokh has showcased Meg as a violinist and Balkan music specialist throughout UK and Europe on stages such as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Aldeburgh's Snape Proms and The Brighton Dome.

The group has released four critically acclaimed studio albums worldwide.

Rupert Gillett (Cello)

Rupert is a jazz cellist, double bass player, composer and producer based in London. He plays in a number of ensembles, including the chamber-jazz ensemble "Butterfly's Wing" with jazz-icon Jacqui Dankworth MBE, the folk-fusion duo "One Voice, One Cello & A Mad Belgian" and "Arcopia" with cellist Gunther Tiedemann and violinist Chris Haigh. He has also performed to audiences such as Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Jude Law, Orlando