

NATIONAL STRING QUARTET FOUNDATION - SPRING SEASON 2022

# EBLANA STRING TRIO

*Jonathan Martindale - violin, Lucy Nolan - viola, Peggy Nolan - cello*

**LIMERICK** - 14th January 2022 at 6.30pm - Belltable

**CORK** - 15th January 2022 at 1pm - Triskel Christchurch

**DUBLIN** - 16th January at 12pm - Hugh Lane Gallery

**Ludwig van Beethoven** [1700-1827]

**String Trio in G major, Op.9 no.1** [1797]

- I. *Adagio: Allegro con brio*
- II. *Adagio, ma non tanto, e cantabile*
- III. *Scherzo - Allegro*
- IV. *Presto*

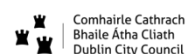
**Ian Wilson** [b.1964]

**Bone Icon, string trio no.2** [2000]

**Ernst von Dohnanyi** [1877-1960]

**Serenade in C major for String Trio, Op.10** [1902]

- I. *Marcia: Allegro*
- II. *Romanza: Adagio non troppo*
- III. *Scherzo: Vivace*
- IV. *Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto*
- V. *Finale: Rondo*



Since its debut in Dublin in 2006, the Eblana String Trio has given countless performances throughout Ireland, the UK and beyond, winning praise from audiences and critics alike for their powerful interpretations of this often neglected repertoire.

Recital concert highlights include Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square, and the Purcell Room, as well as the Bridgewater Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall. The trio has also made appearances at major festivals such as Salisbury, Lake District Summer Music, Stratford-Upon-Avon and Musikfest Goslar. Their many performances at the annual RNCM Chamber Music Festivals include a critically acclaimed performance of the Schoenberg String Trio - "...the late, mercurial, if elliptical, String Trio, a sort of 12-tone divertimento, was brilliantly undertaken by the Eblana String Trio." (Paul Driver - Sunday Times). The trio has also broadcast on BBC Radio 3 on many occasions.

The Eblana's debut album, "The King's Alchemist" was released with Willowhayne Records in 2021 to great acclaim. The album was selected as chamber CD of the Month in a 5-star review in BBC Music Magazine.

City Music Foundation Artists, the trio are passionate about championing new repertoire and have worked closely with many of the leading British composers on their works. These include David Matthews, Hugh Wood, Robin Holloway, and James Francis Brown. They have also given the world premieres of works written for them by Joel Rust, Grace-Evangeline Mason, and Rhiannon Randle.

In addition to their studies at the Royal Northern College of Music the trio attended the International Musicians' Seminar Prussia Cove, as well as sessions of the European Chamber Music Academy. From 2013 until 2015 they held a Junior Fellowship in chamber music at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and now continue their association as visiting tutors in Chamber Music.

[www.eblanastringtrio.com](http://www.eblanastringtrio.com)

## PROGRAMME NOTES

**Ludwig van Beethoven** [1700-1827]

**String Trio in G major, Op.9 no.1** [1797]

Beethoven completed the three Opus 9 string trios between 1797 and 1798, dedicating them to his patron Count Johann Georg von Browne. They are often seen as Beethoven's early attempts at writing for strings, perhaps in preparation for the composition of his Opus 18 string quartets. For example, Beethoven often seems to be yearning for a four-part texture, instead having to share the extra part between the three instruments, with one or more players having to play two notes at once. However, the masterful balance and dialogue between the instruments in these works, together with numerous striking musical characteristics indicates the clear affection and affinity that Beethoven had for the genre.

The Adagio introduction of the G major Trio opens with a unison statement of the tonic arpeggio - a call to attention, or curtain opening! A conversation emerges between violin and the two lower voices, building and then shyly retreating again to make way for the Allegro con brio. The fast section of the first movement is almost symphonic in both thematic material and structural scale with two lengthy repeats and a coda. The emotional core of the work is a slow movement composed, unusually, in the distant key of E major. It is a lilting, lyrical romance with a brooding middle section. The Scherzo is substantial due to its two contrasting trios, the second which was omitted in some early editions. The finale throws caution to the wind - a sparkling moto perpetuo marked presto calling for virtuoso playing from all three musicians.

**Ian Wilson** [b.1964]

***Bone Icon*** [2000]

'Bone Icon' was written in 2000 shortly after my fifth string quartet, '...wander, darkling', and is a close relative of that work in terms of how it approaches string colour and in its use of quarter-tones. 'Bone Icon' was conceived as a work in which the essentials of a piece of music - fragments of melody and harmony, a basic shape - are utilised to create something which wants to be both sophisticated and 'primitive' at the same time.

**Ernst von Dohnanyi** [1877-1960]

**Serenade in C major for String Trio, Op.10** [1902]

Born in 1877, Ernst von Dohnanyi was a virtuoso pianist and composer. His music often strongly reflects his Hungarian roots, whilst also showing the influence of the great Austro-Germanic musical tradition which he grew up in. The Serenade for String Trio was composed in 1902 whilst Dohnanyi was on a concert tour of London and Vienna and premiered in Vienna two years later. Perhaps Dohnanyi had Beethoven's op.8 Serenade for String Trio in mind when writing this work, although it is also true to say that the work follows in the nineteenth-century serenade tradition that had been notably contributed to by Brahms.

The opening Marcia is full of rhythmic vigour and excitement, further added to by virtuosic semi-quaver scales for all three instruments in contrary motion. The movement also contains a second theme that has more of a Hungarian flavour and is always accompanied by a driving rhythmic drone.

A wistful Romanza then follows, the outer sections of which contain a long and evocative melody, again betraying a certain Hungarian inflection. It is first played by the viola accompanied by off-beat pizzicato quavers and later taken up by the violin with the addition of flowing semi-quavers in the viola part

The third movement scherzo is the virtuosic heart of the work, with its rapid chromatic figuration being closely worked into an almost fugal texture. As a contrast to this frenetic music, Dohnanyi writes a more lyrical middle section that he then deftly combines with the earlier rapid figuration later on in the movement.

The Tema con variazioni consists of five variations on a chorale-like theme that is itself a variant of the Hungarian second theme of the Marcia. Perhaps most striking is the final variation, in which cello

pizzicati and a rolling double-stop texture in the violin part create a magical accompaniment for the viola melody.

In the finale the brilliance of the opening movement returns, with fast running semi-quavers shared out between the instruments. The music is joyous and virtuosic throughout, but comes to an unexpected close when the Hungarian theme of the Marcia returns in its original form. In doing this Dohnanyi manages to achieve a satisfying structural unity to a work that is pure enjoyment from start to finish.

### ***Upcoming tours...***

THE VANBRUGH with MICHAEL MCHALE January 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

THE VANBRUGH with MARJA GAYNOR and ED CREEDON February 4<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup>

THE SPERO QUARTET February 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup>

THE CARDUCCI QUARTET March 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>

THE CONTEMPO QUARTET with Christopher Marwood March 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>

THE VANBRUGH with MARJA GAYNOR and ED CREEDON April 1<sup>st</sup> – 3rd

***SEE NSQF.IE FOR DETAILS***

*The National String Quartet Foundation creates and sponsors projects which bring live chamber music to audiences throughout Ireland. It is committed to supporting musicians who wish to explore and perform the string quartet repertoire and to helping concert promoters present this rich and rewarding music. In addition to the support of its major funders, the Arts Council and RTÉ, the Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of University College, Cork, Cork City Council and Cork County Council.*

**Please visit [www.nsqf.ie](http://www.nsqf.ie) for details of upcoming concerts and to sign up to the Foundation's mailing list**

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