

NATIONAL STRING QUARTET FOUNDATION - AUTUMN SEASON 2022

BANBHA QUARTET

Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke and Maria Ryan, violins - Robin Panter, viola - Aoife Burke, cello

NENAGH - Wednesday 21st September at 8pm - **Nenagh Arts Centre**

CLIFDEN - Thursday 22nd September at 1pm - Christ Church - presented by **Clifden Arts Festival**

WEXFORD - Friday 23rd September at 8pm - St Iberius' Church, Main Street - presented by **Music for Wexford**

CORK - Saturday 24th September at 1pm - **Triskel Christchurch**

DUBLIN - Sunday 25th September at 3pm - **National Concert Hall**

Wolfgang Mozart [1756-1791]

String Quartet in D major K.575 [1789]

1. *Allegretto*
2. *Andante*
3. *Menuetto (Allegretto)*
4. *Allegretto*

Tom Lane [b. 1984]

'Refractions' [2022]

Valentin Silvestrov [b.1937]

'Icon' [2004]

Felix Mendelssohn [1809-1847]

String Quartet in E minor Op.44 No.2 [1837]

1. *Allegro assai appassionato*
2. *Scherzo: Allegro di molto*
3. *Andante*
4. *Presto agitato*



The Banbha Quartet is a new quartet founded in 2020 and made up of four of our most celebrated musicians. This is their third tour for the National String Quartet Foundation.

Lidia Jewłoszewicz-Clarke, violin

Lidia Jewłoszewicz-Clarke is an award-winning Polish violinist living in Ireland. She is a winner of the Hibernian Orchestra Concerto Competition (Ireland) and the Gdańsk Mozart Prize (Poland). She was a founding member of the Lupus Piano Trio, with whom she received the Special Prize at the International Brahms Competition in Gdańsk, and was a finalist of the Bacewicz International Chamber Music Competition in Łódź. Lidia is the recipient of a scholarship from the President of the University of Music in Luzern, Switzerland and an Artistic Scholarship from the President of Gdańsk for Special Achievements in Music and Culture. Most recently, Lidia was awarded an Agility Award by The Arts Council in Ireland.

Lidia regularly performs with Camerata Ireland, Musici Ireland, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra and the Ulster Orchestra. Lidia graduated with honours from the Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdańsk. She furthered her studies in London at The Royal Academy of Music and graduated with an MA in Performance. Her teachers included Remus Azoïței, Sebastian Hamann, Tomotada Soh and Mirosława Pawlak.

Maria Ryan, violin

A native of Kilkenny, award-winning violinist Maria Ryan is a member of the Banbha Quartet, the newly-founded Marble Collective and performs in duo partnership with Dr. Gabriela Mayer. She also recently performed with the Prizm Trio as part of Cork Orchestral Society's concert season.

In 2010, Maria moved to London to join Southbank Sinfonia; there she was awarded the position of Leader and chosen to perform in their chamber music showcase at Wigmore Hall. Over the following ten years, Maria worked with some of the UK's most prestigious orchestras, including the BBC Concert and Symphony Orchestras, the English Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra. She recently undertook a Music Network Residency at St. John's Arts Centre, Listowel with the Marble Collective and looks forward to another nationwide tour with the Banbha Quartet in January 2023, supported by the National String Quartet Foundation.

Maria is a recipient of the RDS Music Bursary and winner of the Heineken Violin Competition. She was awarded an Agility Award by The Arts Council in 2021. She studied at the CIT Cork School of Music with Ruxandra Petcu-Colan and subsequently at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz in Cologne with Emilian Piedicuta.

Maria moved back to Kilkenny in 2019 to live on a farm in the countryside with her two children. She works regularly with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, Irish National Opera, Camerata Ireland and is a Lecturer at the MTU Cork School of Music.

Robin Panter, viola

Robin Panter is from Liverpool and studied the viola at the Royal Northern College of Music with Roger Benedict and Scott Dickinson. Robin joined the viola section of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in 2004, and while in Glasgow teamed up with a group of musicians to set up the Scottish version of El Sistema, visiting Venezuela and applying its ground-breaking social and community development programme to schools in Raploch, Stirling.

Robin now lives in Ireland where he is a member of the Irish Chamber Orchestra and performs with the RTÉ Concert, National Symphony and Ulster Orchestras. Robin is a keen chamber musician and is a member of the Robinson Panoramic Quartet, and more recently Trio Táin with his wife Vourneen Ryan (Flute) and Aisling Ennis (Harp). Robin is a trained Suzuki violin teacher and teaches the viola at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin.

Aoife Burke, cello

Selected by The Arts Council as a Next Generation Artist in 2020, cellist Aoife Burke leads a diverse career as a recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral player, curator and producer.

An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated with The Vanbrugh, the ConTempo String Quartet and the Gavin Bryars, Kirkos, Ficino and Crash Ensembles. Her love for chamber music was fostered, in tandem with many other influences, during a Chamber Studio mentorship with Richard Lester at King's Place, London. Aoife has also appeared as soloist with orchestra several times both at home and abroad. Her début with the New York Concerti Sinfonietta in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2016 was described as *"a thing of beauty...intelligent, poised, and refined"*. (The Epoch Times)

Aoife studied at undergraduate level with Emma Ferrand at the RNCM in Manchester, and with Christoph Richter and Andreas Reiner at the Folkwang Universität der Künste in Essen, Germany, graduating in 2014 with a first-class BMus. (Hons.). During the course of her studies, Aoife won the Raphael Sommer Music Scholarship and partook in the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. Aoife subsequently obtained a Master's Degree in Arts with Distinction from the CIT Cork School of

Music, where she studied under Christopher Marwood, and pursued further study on the Performance Certificate Course (Corso di Perfezionamento) at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, Italy, with Paolo Bonomini and Francesco Dillon. She is grateful for the generous support of Music Network's Music Capital Scheme, funded by The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Music Network is funded by The Arts Council.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Wolfgang Mozart [1756-1791]

String Quartet in D major, K.575 [1789]

The years 1789-91 saw many dramatic changes in Mozart's life. Austria's war with Turkey was bleeding Vienna. Much of the nobility was involved in the army and others left Vienna for their country estates. The large orchestras of the nobility were disbanded and subscription concert series were abandoned for lack of support. In Mozart's life bourgeois society and the Schikaneder theatre were to replace the aristocratic salon and the court opera. Mozart's only court appointment required him to compose large quantities of dance music for the court balls given in the Imperial palace at Carnival time. In his endless search for money he would sell piano transcriptions of these dances to the publisher Artaria. It should be remembered that in the absence of copyright law, Mozart earned nothing from his huge success all over Europe. So apart from the Imperial commission for *Così*, Mozart had to turn his attention from concertos and symphonies to smaller scale works.

Thus the Spring of 1789 saw Mozart travelling to Berlin and Potsdam to meet the cello playing King Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia in the hopes of either a commission or a remunerative post. Given Mozart's absolute determination not to compromise his independence and the fact that Austria and Prussia were recently at war, the latter option was always unlikely though it seems a serious offer was made. He was however given a commission to compose a series of quartets and sonatas, which he began on the way home. The D major Quartet was actually written on paper he bought in Bohemia on his journey back to Vienna. Unfortunately it would appear that there was a deadline on the completion of the commission, which Mozart was unable to meet despite strenuous efforts the following summer, and he ended up selling the three so-called Prussian Quartets to the publisher Artaria.

The first two movements of this strange Quartet are comparatively straightforward by Mozart's standards. However the actual sonority of the quartet is very new; it is not just the extensive role the cello plays, the music seems to inhabit another dimension especially the first subject and the B minor opening of the development. The Andante in A-major is in simple ternary form with no surprising modulations. It has that simple, unassuming beauty that Mozart so excelled at and the cellist king gets his share of the limelight. The Menuetto is in the usual binary form with repeats; the first half has nothing unexpected but the second half drops the polite mask with some searing chords and brutal tonal shifts. The Trio is miraculous with the cello getting the delicious cantilena solo part at the beginning before handing it to the others taking care to integrate the cello soloist, however royal, into his quartet.

The Finale returns to the sound-world of the first movement but with a much more adventurous structure, a kind of modified sonata form. The main theme, in the cello again, is clearly related to the first movement. It is later accompanied by a counter melody in descending triplets that is made much of in the development sections. In place of a second subject the first returns at the second violin with new accompaniments and is followed out of nowhere by a beguiling new theme. The development concentrates on the triplet counter melody and travels through more modulations and dissonances than in the rest of the work. Clearly the cellist King had to be shown that good music can be complex as well as beautiful, challenging as well as melodic. *Francis Humphrys*

Tom Lane [b. 1984]

'Refractions' [2022]

Commissioned by the Banbha Quartet with funds from The Arts Council

The title "Refractions" refers in part to the kaleidoscopic harmony of the piece's musical material – rotating clashing major thirds whose close proximity create colourful contrast. This material is then continuously refracted using various techniques to create alternating sections which explore the potential of this rich musical content. Structurally, the piece continuously returns to the musical material of the opening in a quasi-rondo form. The intervening passages develop different characteristics of the opening material until an extended melodic passage is reached about two thirds of the way through the

piece. A densely chromatic rising section builds tension before returning to a reimagined version of the music from the beginning of the piece.

Valentin Silvestrov [b.1937]

'Icon' [2004]

Music should be so transparent that one can see the bottom and that poetry shimmers through this transparency. (Valentin Silvestrov)

Valentyn Silvestrov was born on 30 September 1937 in Kyiv, Ukrainian SSR, then part of the Soviet Union. He became interested in music around the age of 15 and after first teaching himself, he studied piano at the Kyiv Evening Music School from 1955 to 1958 whilst at the same time training to become a civil engineer. He attended the Kyiv Conservatory from 1958 to 1964, and then taught at a music studio in Kyiv. Silvestrov worked as a freelance composer in Kyiv from 1970 to 2022, when he fled from Ukraine following the Russian invasion in February. He lives in Berlin.

Silvestrov is perhaps best known for his post-modern musical style; some, if not most, of his works could be considered neoclassical and post-modernist. Using traditional tonal and modal techniques, Silvestrov creates a unique and delicate tapestry of dramatic and emotional textures, qualities which he suggests are otherwise sacrificed in much of contemporary music. "I do not write new music. My music is a response to and an echo of what already exists," Silvestrov has said.

In 1974, under pressure to conform to both official precepts of socialist realism and fashionable modernism, and likewise to apologise for his walkout from a composers' meeting to protest the Soviet Union invasion of Czechoslovakia, Silvestrov chose to withdraw from the spotlight. In this period he began to reject his previously modernist style. After the fall of the Soviet Union, he began to compose spiritual and religious works influenced by the style of Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox liturgical music.

'Icon' was composed in 2004 for the Rosamunde Quartet. It is a calm and introverted composition in the style of a prayer.

Felix Mendelssohn [1809-1847]

String Quartet No 4 in E minor Op.44/2 [1837]

In March 1837 Mendelssohn married Cecile Jeanrenaud and his music at that time reflects his happy situation. It was partly sketched during their honeymoon, which they spent in the Black Forest area. The score is dated June 1837. *Everything flows so easily and delightfully from my pen at this time*, wrote the composer. It was given its première by Ferdinand David's Quartet at the Leipzig Gewandhaus in November that year, when it was a great success.

An ardent rising theme opens the first movement, a theme that looks forward to his Violin Concerto, which he started work on the following year and which shares the same key. It is a richly scored piece both intense and lyrical. It is the longest movement of the work and Mendelssohn develops his material with a sure hand. In contrast the second-placed Scherzo is the Quartet's shortest movement, and reflects the shimmering strings we know and love from his *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. For a moment it appears he will provide a contrasting central section, but it is a false start and the lovely melody launched by the viola is quickly replaced by the opening tune which brings the movement to an abrupt ending.

A Bach-like accompaniment leads into a soaring song-without-words tune for the slow movement. A contrasting melody follows with gentle staccato chords and a serpentine theme. Mendelssohn develops his ideas with complete assurance, creating a gently thoughtful atmosphere. The finale explodes into action with a surging arpeggio theme, this is set against a song-like secondary theme. The material is skilfully interwoven with imaginative modulations and clever variants of the basic material, bringing this honeymoon Quartet to a resounding conclusion. *Ian Fox*

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