

Future Concert (2)

Saturday 29 July, 7.30pm Uday Bhawalkar, the internationally renowned Indian Classical singer, performs Indian classical ragas in the Dhrupad tradition.

Dhrupad is the most ancient style of Hindustani classical music that has survived until today in its original form. The nature of Dhrupad music is spiritual, seeking to induce feelings of peace and contemplation in the listener rather than just to entertain. A significant first for TRMS.

DAVID ANGEL of the Maggini String Quartet



At our last event, and less than a fortnight after the superb concert for TRMS by the Maggini String Quartet, I learnt that the Quartet's co-founder and second violinist David Angel had died suddenly of a presumed heart attack at the age of only 62. He was conducting a Maggini Quartet course in Oxford at the time of his death. On behalf of the Society, I sent our condolences to the Quartet via their agent but personally I was deeply upset at the passing of such a fine musician who had warmly and kindly supported the relationship between TRMS and the Quartet's members.

David was a graduate of the Yehudi Menuhin School, where he studied with Yehudi Menuhin, Frederick Grinke, Jacqueline Salomons and Nadia Boulanger, and of London's Royal Academy of Music, where he continued his studies with Grinke alongside chamber music coaching from Sidney Griller.

He performed with the Maggini Quartet since its inception in 1988 and led the second violin section of the London Mozart Players, and of many other ensembles. David had a long-standing duo with pianist David Elwin, and was also in great demand as a chamber ensemble player.

In 1993 he was appointed professor of quartet playing at Birmingham Conservatoire, and was also an honorary fellow of Canterbury Christ Church University and Brunel University.

"He died doing what he loved and excelled at – playing, sharing and teaching his total passion for music", wrote his fellow Quartet members Julian Leaper, Martin Outram and Michal Kaznowski. "A human and musical giant for all who knew him and were fortunate enough to work with him. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and his many colleagues." *Steven Halls*

THREE RIVERS MUSIC SOCIETY 2016-2017 SEASON



ASHLEY FRIPP (piano)

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
English Suite No. 2 in A minor, BWV 807

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)
Piano Sonata in 2 in D minor, op.14

INTERVAL

Claude Debussy (1862-1918): Images, Book 1

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)
Barcarolle in F-sharp major, op.60
Four Mazurkas, op.24
Andante spianato et
Grande Polonaise brillante, op.22

Programme introduced at 7pm by
Ashley Fripp

Wednesday 10 May 2017, Rickmansworth Baptist Church

ASHLEY FRIPP

British pianist Ashley Fripp frequently appears as solo recitalist, chamber musician and concerto soloist in many of the world's most prestigious concert halls, having performed extensively throughout Europe, Asia, North America, Africa and Australia. Recent highlights include the Carnegie Hall (New York), Musikverein (Vienna), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), the Philharmonie Cologne, Bozar (Brussels), the Royal Festival, Barbican and Wigmore Halls (London), the Laeiszhalle (Hamburg), Cité de la musique (Paris), Hamamatsu City Concert Hall (Japan), the Megaron (Athens), Konzerthaus Dortmund, the Gulbenkian Auditorium (Lisbon) and the Konserthus (Stockholm).

He has won prizes at more than a dozen national and international competitions, including the coveted Gold Medal from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Diploma of Outstanding Merit at the 8th Hamamatsu International Piano Competition, 1st Prize at the Brant International Piano Competition, Semi-Finalist Prize in the Leeds International Piano Competition, 1st Prize at the Royal Overseas League Piano Competition and 3rd Prize at the Concours Européen de Piano (France) and The Worshipful Company of Musicians' highest award – The Prince's Prize. He was chosen as a 'Rising Star' by the European Concert Hall Organisation (ECHO), and has also performed in the Chipping Campden, Edinburgh, Brighton, Bath and City of London Festivals. A frequent guest on broadcasting networks, Ashley has appeared on BBC television and radio, Euroclassical, Eurovision TV and the national radio stations of many European nations. He has collaborated with a variety of well-known conductors including Semyon Bychkov, James Judd, Vasily Petrenko, Robertas Šervenikas, Hilary Davan Wetton and Peter Stark.

Ashley studied at the Purcell School and the Royal College of Music Junior Department with Emily Jeffrey and graduated with a Master's degree and Artist Diploma, both with distinction, from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he studied with Ronan O'Hora and frequently with Richard Goode. The Guildhall School also awarded him the Premier Prix and Lord Mayor's Prize. Ashley is currently studying with Eliso Virsaladze at the Scuolo di Musica di Fiesole in Italy and is undertaking doctoral studies into the piano music of British composer Thomas Adès. Ashley Fripp's CD recording of both Chopin Piano Concertos is available on the Spektral Records label.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

English Suite No. 2 in A minor, BWV 807

Prelude, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Bourrée I, Bourrée II, Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach's English Suites date from his early thirties, towards the end of his time living in Weimar, and are thought to be the earliest of Bach's 19 suites for keyboard. The ensuing period, which was undoubtedly his most

THREE RIVERS MUSIC SOCIETY LIST OF FRIENDS & MEMBERS

Below are listed those who have so far joined the Friends, who are "Super"-Members by having donated further funds to this year's season. We acknowledge them with much gratitude as they have enabled the provision of the Schiedmayer grand piano and a small stage extension in the Baptist Church.

<i>Jean Berry</i>	<i>Cathrien Dyas</i>	<i>Irvin Needle</i>
<i>Tony Berry</i>	<i>Owen Edis</i>	<i>John Norris</i>
<i>David Budge</i>	<i>Rev. Arderne</i>	<i>Ash Patil</i>
<i>Jean Butler</i>	<i>Gillies</i>	<i>Marc Queffurus</i>
<i>David Clark</i>	<i>Jennifer Gradidge</i>	<i>Francis Rich</i>
<i>Keith Champion</i>	<i>Steven Halls</i>	<i>Andrew Ross</i>
<i>Sue Clark</i>	<i>Marilyn Hampton</i>	<i>Bill Sharp</i>
<i>Irene Crosby</i>	<i>Joy King</i>	<i>Jan Sharp</i>
<i>Tom Crosby</i>	<i>Shirley Lupton</i>	<i>John Shaw</i>
<i>Mick Currey</i>	<i>Joe Maley</i>	<i>Ann Vernau</i>
<i>John Donegan</i>	<i>Pam Maley</i>	<i>Denise Wellham</i>
	<i>Joan Martin</i>	<i>Shirley Woods</i>

Future Concert (1)

Friday 7 July, 7.30pm Symphonia Academica (Peter Bussereau, violin, Ania Ullman, viola, Julia Graham cello) with Julian Trevelyan, piano

Schubert: String Trio movement in B flat D471;

Beethoven: String Trio op 9 no 1

Adam Roberts: Lacuna;

Ferruccio Busoni: Toccata

Brahms: Piano Quartet in G minor, op25.

We are delighted to have secured a performance of the superb (and fiendishly virtuosic) Brahms piano quartet, which was first mentioned in May last year in the "Requested Pieces" section of our questionnaire to the membership of TRMS. It has never before been heard in the TRMS series, and nor has Adam Roberts' 7-minute piano work *Lacuna*. Some rarely played string trios and the solo piano Toccata by that keyboard giant Busoni complete a tuneful and sparkling programme.

-ment to Maria Wodzińska from 1836 to 1837, he maintained an often troubled relationship with the French woman writer George Sand. A brief and unhappy visit to Majorca with Sand in 1838–39 was one of his most productive periods of composition. In his last years, he was financially supported by his admirer Jane Stirling, who also arranged for him to visit Scotland in 1848. Through most of his life, Chopin suffered from poor health, and he died in Paris in 1849, at the age of 39, probably of tuberculosis.

The *Barcarolle* is an instrumental or vocal work imitative of a Venetian gondolier's song in 6/8 or 12/8 time, usually with a double-stranded melodic line above a lilting accompaniment, suggestive of the gentle rocking of the boat. Mendelssohn and Fauré included several barcarolles among their compositions, but Chopin's single example is by far the most famous of the genre. It is one of his last major compositions, written between 1845 and 1846, when his relationship with his mistress George Sand was becoming heavily strained and his health was in rapid decline. Despite the overt, radiant warmth of the opening, the Barcarolle occupies an enormous emotional spectrum and carries a distinctly Autumnal, wistful tone. Before the reprise of the opening melody there is a remarkable moment of complete stasis where the left hand abandons its paddling motion altogether, allowing the music to relish its hazy reverie.

The *Mazurka* is a Polish folk dance in triple metre, usually at a lively tempo, and with "strong accents unsystematically placed on the second or third beat." Chopin's Mazurkas reveal his deepest desire to write music in a language from his homeland. His use of the basic dance form of his mother country, which he will have heard growing up as a child, was a way for him to keep his connection with Poland close to his heart and creative output, whilst expressing far more than simple folk dances would immediately suggest. The most prolific among his output, 58 in total, these miniatures are musical gems of exquisite refinement and variety.

The genesis of the *Andante Spianato et Grande Polonaise Brillante* is unusual. The polonaise (another national dance of Poland) was originally composed for piano and orchestra in 1831, making it one of the last compositions written in Poland. The *Andante Spianato* (literally 'smooth' or 'even') is a beautifully rippling and improvisatory introduction, written in 1834 once he had settled in Paris and later added to the *Andante*, with the two connected by a blazing fanfare. Written upon his receiving a long-awaited invitation to perform in one of Habeneck's Conservatoire Concerts in Paris, Chopin subsequently arranged it for solo piano in the version we hear today. Teeming with flamboyant virtuosity and nobility of spirit, this work had become one of the most popular of Chopin's works and shows the composer in his most generous and aristocratic vein. His first work, written at age seven, had been a polonaise. Tonight's *Grande polonaise* of 1830–31 was to be the last such he would compose for several years. It preoccupied Chopin in his final months at Warsaw and was finished at Vienna in 1831.

suites for keyboard. The ensuing period, which was undoubtedly his most prolific in terms of keyboard writing, included the completion of the Six English Suites, Six French Suites and the Six Partitas. The name "English" was a posthumous addition by his 18th Century biographer Johann Nikolaus Forkel based on the unsubstantiated theory that the Suites may have been composed for an English nobleman, not because the style or content is distinctly English.

The *English Suite No. 2 in A minor* opens with a dramatic *Prelude* followed by an *Allemande* – a 16th Century German dance form (*Allemande* being derived from the French word for "German") in duple metre with a moderate tempo. It was regarded as a serious, ceremonious dance which was normally performed with the dancers forming a line, extending their paired hands and parading the length of the room pacing three steps, then balancing on one foot. Meaning "running", the *Courante* was a lively Baroque dance in triple time, characterised by fast running and jumping steps. The *Sarabande* is a slow dance in triple time that originated in Spanish colonies in Central America, before heading across the Atlantic to Spain itself. Performance of this intimate dance was banned in 1583 for it was considered obscene. The pair of *Bourrées* show two contrasting characters of this lively French dance in double time. Its performance was especially popular in the Auvergne and Biscay regions. The *Gigue* is a British dance (from "jig") and often formed part of the entertainment in English Baroque theatre. It is an energetic dance in compound time and makes a bold conclusion to the suite.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Piano Sonata in 2 in D minor, op. 14

- 1) Allegro, ma non troppo – Più mosso – Tempo primo;
- 2) Scherzo: Allegro marcato; 3) Andante;
- 4) Vivace – Moderato – Vivace

Sergei Prokofiev was just 21 years old when he completed his *Piano Sonata No. 2* in 1912. Irrespective of the early composition it displays a great many of the uniquely personal qualities we find in Prokofiev's music later on, such as the employment of traditional structures with unexpected turns and harmonic shifts, sneering sarcasm, percussive piano writing and a strong sense of "anti-Romanticism". Prokofiev's language in this composition is not particularly novel. Many of his themes sound quite traditional: both the first and second themes of the first movement begin in a conventional Romantic way. However, the strong contrasts typical of this sonata manifest themselves as early as its opening, when the impatient, Schumannesque first theme is interrupted by harsh dissonances and a recurring chiming motive in the left hand. The *Scherzo* movement is an interesting example of

the toccata-like use of, and mechanical regularity of, rhythm which he enjoyed exploiting to express that biting humour which is so distinctly Prokofiev. This movement's building blocks are a short *ostinato* (obstinate, persistent) motive and rhythmically uniform *non legato* (not smooth) chords, with continually moving middle voices.

The third movement builds upon the tradition of fairy-tale imagery so important in the music of Prokofiev's older Russian contemporaries - Rimsky Korsakov, Lyadov, and Medtner. Instead, the novelty is in the way Prokofiev treats his material. It is a weary, even exhausted *Skazka* – Russian for “fairy tale”; its simple melody has a folk-like naivety about it, but the ghostly *ostinato* figures beneath give the movement a tragic, sombre glow.

The fiery finale is tremendously virtuosic and evokes the full scale and kaleidoscopic sound world we hear in his great orchestral masterpieces and brings the sonata to a rousing conclusion. The work was dedicated to his friend and fellow student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, Maximilian Schmidthof who tragically committed suicide in 1913. He therefore did not live to hear the première performance of the Sonata in February 1914 given by Prokofiev himself.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Images, Book 1

- 1) Reflets dans l'eau (Reflections in the water)
- 2) Hommage à Rameau (Tribute to Rameau); 3) Mouvement

Achille-Claude Debussy was born into a poor family in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France, the oldest of five children. While his family had little money, the lad showed an early affinity for the piano, and he began taking lessons at the age of 7. By age 10 or 11, he had entered the Paris Conservatory, where his instructors and fellow students recognized his talent but often found his attempts at musical innovation strange. In 1884, aged just 22 years old, Debussy entered his cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* (*The Prodigal Child*) in the Prix de Rome, a competition for composers. He took home the top prize, which allowed him to study for three years in the Italian capital, though he returned to Paris after two years. While in Rome, he studied the music of the German composer Richard Wagner, specifically his opera *Tristan und Isolde*. Wagner's influence on Debussy was profound and lasting, but despite this, he generally shied away from the ostentation of Wagner's opera in his own works.

Around 1889 he met Erik Satie, who proved a kindred spirit in his experimental approach to composition and to naming his pieces. Both musicians were bohemians during this period, enjoying the same café society and struggling to stay afloat financially. At the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, Debussy first

heard Javanese Gamelan music and incorporated its scales, melodies, rhythms, and ensemble textures into some of his compositions. After the turn of the century, Debussy established himself as the leading figure of French music. During World War I, he succumbed to colon cancer at the age of 55. Here are two further random facts about Debussy: from 1880, as a young man, he acted as the music-master to the children of Mme. Nadezhda von Meck (1831-1894), the “fervent admirer”, friend and generous patron of Tchaikovsky; he and Stravinsky auditioned the latter's ballet *The Firebird* in an arrangement for four hands to convince Diaghilev, the impresario of the Ballets Russes, to stage its production. (They succeeded, with a profound effect on Western music).

Composed between 1901 and 1905, Debussy's *Images* shows him as one of the great innovators and leading exponents of French Impressionism in music. *Reflections in the Water* exploits a wide variety of piano techniques to evoke the imagery of water in its various forms, from cool and refreshing drops, to torrents of arpeggios and rippling surfaces. The *Tribute to Rameau* is a *sarabande* in a serious and slightly austere spirit befitting a *tombeau* – a piece honouring the memory of a revered composer. *Mouvement* is perhaps the most abstract of the set. Written at a time when cars and aeroplanes were becoming increasingly mainstream, the piece generates exceptional impetus with a perpetual motion of whirring triplets and constantly increasing excitement. Debussy wrote to his publisher, Jaques Durand, saying “without false pride, I feel that these three pieces hold together well, and that they will find their place in the literature of the piano ... to the left of Schumann, or to the right of Chopin.”

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Barcarolle in F-sharp major, op. 60

Four Mazurkas, op. 24

Andante spianato et Grande Polonaise brillante, op. 22

Frédéric François Chopin was born Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin in what was then the Duchy of Warsaw and he grew up in the city of Warsaw. A child prodigy, he completed his musical education and composed his earlier works in Warsaw before leaving Poland at the age of 20, less than a month before the outbreak of the November 1830 Uprising. At 21 he settled in Paris and, during the last 18 years of his life remaining, he gave only some 30 public performances, preferring the more intimate atmosphere of the salon. He supported himself by selling his compositions and by teaching piano, for which he was in high demand. Chopin formed a friendship with Franz Liszt and was admired by many of his musical contemporaries, including Robert Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn, for his dazzling technique and musicality. In 1835 he obtained French citizenship. After a failed engage-