

Wednesday 5 December 1pm
Jayne Walker Piano Trio
Jane Walker (violin)
Steven Halls (cello)
David Butterworth organ, piano

Franz Schubert (1797-1828) Piano Trio No.2 in E flat op.100 D929-
1. Allegro; 2. Andante con moto; 3. Scherzando: Allegro moderato; 4. Allegro moderato

Schubert's parents were first-generation Viennese. His father was a schoolmaster and his mother a maid and they had 14 children of whom 5 survived to adulthood: Franz was the fourth, born on 31 January 1797. All the family played stringed instruments so from 1810 they would have had a string quartet in which Franz played the viola. Young Franz was an adolescent, not an infant, prodigy and his earliest teacher was a man called Holzer, who said of him "I merely talked with him and looked at him with mute astonishment". In 1808, Franz won both a place in the Imperial and Royal Chapel under Salieri (the only teacher he ever acknowledged) and a free place at the Royal Chapel school, providing him with a fine musical education. After his mother died in 1812, Franz was offered an endowment to stay at the Royal school but would have to take an exam to show he was up to the mark in non-musical subjects (and thereafter decrease music). He chose music so, in 1813, he qualified and practised (unhappily) as a schoolteacher in his father's school but, in 1816, after an unsuccessful application to become Kapellmeister at Laibach, Schubert abandoned teaching to focus on composition. Nearly half the works in the Deutsch catalogue come from his teaching years, during which he wrote 5 symphonies, 4 masses, 6 operas, 4 string quartets, 270 songs and a vast number of smaller pieces. Like Beethoven, he often performed in the countless musical evenings in fashionable Vienna. Schubert spent most of the rest of his short life composing. His career suffered many setbacks, but he gradually gained recognition and began mounting concerts of his own works. Unfortunately, just as he was beginning to achieve public success his health broke and he died of syphilis aged just 31.

Schubert wrote two complete Piano Trios and two movements for Piano Trio, one of which may have been a try-out for inclusion in one of the two complete trios. The Trio No.2 in E-flat major for piano, violin, and violoncello, D.929, was one of the last compositions completed by him, being dated November 1827. It was published by Probst as opus 100 in late 1828, shortly before the composer's death and first performed at a private party in January 1828 to celebrate the engagement of Schubert's school-friend Josef von Spaun. The Trio was among the few of his late compositions Schubert heard performed before his death. It was given its first private performance by Carl Maria von Bocklet on the piano, Ignaz Schuppanzigh playing the violin, and Josef Linke playing cello.

Like Schubert's other piano trio, this is a larger work than most piano trios of the time, taking almost 50 minutes to perform. While the autograph score of the B flat major Trio has long since been lost, in the case of its companion in E flat, we have not only Schubert's final manuscript, but also a working draft of the first three movements. The latter is a fascinating document, and it reveals how radically he altered some of the music's details as he worked. This is particularly true of the slow movement, whose entire shape was changed between the draft and the final version.

The main theme of the funereal second movement was used as one of the central musical themes in Stanley Kubrick's 1975 film *Barry Lyndon*. It has also been used in a number of other films, including *The Hunger*, *Crimson Tide*, *The Piano Teacher*, *L'Homme de sa vie*, *Land of the Blind*, *Dear White People*, *Recollections of the Yellow House*, *Miss Julie*, the HBO miniseries *John Adams*, *The Mechanic*, two episodes of *American Crime Story*, and as the opening piece for the ABC documentary *The Killing Season*.

Joseph Rheinberger (1839-1901) Variations from Suite in C minor op.149, for organ, violin and piano

Joseph Gabriel Rheinberger, the greatest composer ever to emerge from the tiny principality of Liechtenstein, hemmed in between Switzerland on the one side and Bavaria and the Austrian Tyrol on the other, was born in Vaduz on 17 March, 1839. He was an infant prodigy of extraordinary precocity, holding a post of organist at Vaduz Parish Church at the age of seven and making a sensation with the composition of a Mass in three parts with organ accompaniment at the age of eight, yet his parents were not musical and somewhat alarmed at their son's musical bent. His interest had been kindled by his elder sister's piano lessons, and by the age of five he himself was receiving instruction from Sebastian Pohly, a retired schoolmaster from Schandens, and absorbing the techniques not only of piano and organ but also of theory and counterpoint. From that moment there was no stopping him. Rheinberger's real chance came about at the age of ten when turning the music for the leader of an amateur string quartet named Schrammel. During the tuning, the boy remarked that the A string sounded a semitone higher than his piano at home. The discovery of this acute sense of pitch encouraged Schrammel to persuade his father to allow the boy to undertake serious tuition from the choirmaster at Feldkirch, some miles distant, as a resident pupil. The boy went to Feldkirch to study with Philipp Schmutzer for two years, yet retaining his position as organist at Vaduz and walking back home every weekend to fulfil his duties there. In 1850, when still only eleven years of age, he entered the Royal Conservatory at Munich as a student and remained there for the next four years, graduating with distinction in 1854.

It was in Munich that Rheinberger was to settle for the rest of his life. Taking on piano pupils to support himself, he studied composition with Franz Lachner, the friend of Schubert and a prolific composer of conservative bent who fundamentally influenced Rheinberger's own style. Five years later, he succeeded his own piano teacher, Emil Leonard, at the conservatory as professor and the following year became professor of composition as well. In 1865 the Conservatory was reorganised and Rheinberger was appointed coach to the court theatre where he astonished everybody by sight-reading and transposing Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* simultaneously. In 1867 Rheinberger married Franziska von Hoffnaass, a widow seventeen years his senior and a prominent poetess, singer and painter with social connections. In the same year, on the formation of the Royal Music School under the direction of Hans von Bülow, who had called him an ideal composition teacher 'unequaled anywhere in or near Germany' it was hardly surprising to find Rheinberger appointed as professor of organ and composition, the title of Royal Professor being conferred upon him shortly afterwards. Some six hundred composition students flocked to Munich from all over the world to study with him during the last forty years of his life, most notable among them being Humperdinck, Wolf-Ferrari, Furtwängler and Chadwick, not to mention the physicist Max Planck. But his high reputation as a teacher has tended to overshadow his achievement as a composer. His compositions - and we may include his organ works among them - combine the then current traditions of Munich church music with that of the Viennese classics of an earlier age. Their clarity and classic structure and lack of emotional content militated against popularity at a time when not to worship at the shrine of Bayreuth was tantamount to mutiny. In 1892 his wife died and ill-health forced him more and more to retire from public life. He suffered from a lung complaint brought on by a mountaineering expedition. In his last years he became increasingly aware that his compositions had become outdated and unwanted. When he died on 25 November 1901, his remains were carried back to his native Liechtenstein and buried in the cemetery at Vaduz not far distant from the house where he was born sixty two years earlier.