

Brodsky Quartet

Thursday 12th February, 7:30pm
Firth Hall

**PERFORMANCE
VENUES
CONCERTS**

W. A. Mozart - Adagio and Fugue in C Minor, K. 546

K. Tanaka - At the Grave of Beethoven

L.V. Beethoven - String Quartet no.3 in D Major, Opus 18

INTERVAL

D. Shostakovich - String Quartet no. 3 in F major, Opus 73

Brotsky Quartet

"They are one of a handful of string quartets that have come to represent an elite in redefining the nature and function of a string quartet ensemble." - The Scottish Herald

Formed in 1972, the Brotsky Quartet is an award-winning ensemble made up of violinists Krysia Osostowicz and Ian Belton, violist Paul Cassidy and cellist Jacqueline Thomas. Over the course of their 50-year career, they have performed at over 3000 concerts on major stages worldwide, and have released more than 70 recordings. Alongside their current record label Chandos Records, they have released works including 'Petits Fours'- a celebratory album of 'encore' pieces arranged exclusively by the quartet for their 40th anniversary- the complete quartets of Shostakovich recorded live, the Elgar String Quartet and Piano Quintet with Martin Roscoe, and 'Rocking Horse Road' which is a celebration of their long-standing collaboration with Jacqui Dankworth.

As well as performing the complete quartet cycles of Schubert, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Britten and more, the ensemble's name has become synonymous with the Complete Shostakovich Cycle after having been awarded 'Artistic Associate' at London King's Place in 2012. Since then they have released their second recording of the cycle, which was performed live at the Muziekgebouw, Amsterdam.

The quartet took their name from the great Russian violinist Adolf Brodsky, the dedicatee of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto and a passionate chamber musician. They are ongoing educators in the field of chamber music and aim to pass on experience whilst staying in touch with the next generation.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Adagio and Fugue in C Minor, K. 546

Born in Salzburg in 1756, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is widely considered one of the most influential composers of the classical period. He was a prodigious composer who, beginning at age 10, wrote 50 symphonies throughout his life. His highly technical yet melodic compositional style contributed to the development of major classical forms such as the symphony, opera, string ensemble and concerto. At the time of his death, he was considered one of the greatest composers of all time- a legacy that lasts to this day, over 200 years later ([Biography](#)).

Mozart's Adagio and Fugue in C Minor was originally written for two pianos in 1783 before being arranged for string quartet in 1788, the same summer his final three symphonies were written. The introductory adagio, also added in the later rendition, features a dotted rhythm evoking a more baroque feel and a sense of occasion. The fugue is also strongly rhythmic, and has a less lyrical feel than many of Mozart's other compositions. ([LA Phil](#))

Karen Tanaka - At the Grave of Beethoven

Karen Tanaka is a Japanese composer whose works have been performed by many distinguished performers and ensembles across the world, including BBC Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra. As well as being commissioned to write for a number of performers and organisations- including the Royal Academy of music, the Juilliard School and the BBC- Tanaka has scored many short films, animations and documentaries,

including BBC's *Planet Earth II* and the Academy-Award-nominated short film *Sister*. She currently teaches composition at the California Institute of the Arts ([Wise Music Classical](#))

At the Grave of Beethoven was commissioned by the Brodsky Quartet for the bicentenary anniversary of Beethoven's *String Quartet no. 3 in D Major*. Tanaka's piece focuses on the first four bars of Beethoven's, building upon the opening theme and reflecting it in a more contemporary light. The second movement is inspired by images of blooming lotus flowers, as a symbol of peace and serenity in reaction to the civil war in Kosovo between 1998 and 1999 ([Wise Music Classical](#)).

Ludwig Van Beethoven - String Quartet no.3 in D Major, Opus 18

I - Allegro (D major)

II - Andante con moto (B ♭ major)

III - Scherzo Allegro (D major) – Trio (D minor)

IV - Presto (D major)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was one of the most influential composers in history, his work defining the Classical and Romantic periods of Western Classical music. After having been brought up in Bonn, Germany and tutored by his father, Beethoven moved to Vienna, the musical capital of Europe, to pursue a career as a composer. It was here that he was tutored by Joseph Haydn, and that he wrote many of his most famous works ([lvbeethoven](#)).

Beethoven's third string quartet in D major was published in 1801 within a set of six, and was his first attempt at writing for the ensemble. The opening movement seems to be inspired by the melodic writing style of Mozart, before it abruptly enters Beethoven's typically more dramatic, energetic style. The Scherzo takes on the form of a lively folk dance, whilst the final movement is an uproarious, blazing finale to the piece ([Earsense](#)).

Dmitri Shostakovich - String Quartet no. 3 in F major, Opus 73

I - Allegretto

II - Moderato con moto

III - Allegro non troppo

IV - Adagio (attacca)

V - Moderato

Dmitri Shostakovich was a Russian composer born in 1906. His music was immensely popular during his lifetime, and he was often named the Soviet Union's most promising talent. Despite this, he often battled negative opinions on his work, with many critics denouncing his morals and saying that he had sacrificed his creative individuality under the oppressive demands of the Soviet system. Soviet authorities themselves also found his music to be frivolous and underwhelming, and famously denounced his 9th symphony. However, Shostakovich's legacy lasts today as an introspective, ironic composer, capable of conveying deep, complex emotion through his work ([BBC Music Magazine](#)).

Shostakovich's third string quartet was first performed in Moscow in 1946 by the Beethoven Quartet, to whom the work was dedicated. Interestingly, the piece was originally presented as a "war quartet", with subtitles for each of the movements ranging from "Calm unawareness of the future cataclysm" to "The eternal question: why and to what purpose?". These subtitles were later removed without explanation, and there is much discussion around whether the piece was written to convey hidden political messages under the growing enforcements on culture during Stalin's rise to power ([Quartets](#)).

Coming Soon:

We've got loads of great events coming up, you can visit our website for full details - www.performancevenues.group.shef.ac.uk

Hong Kong Plucked String Chinese Orchestra

Monday 16th February - 5:30pm

Free

Firth Hall

A rare opportunity to catch the powerful sound of Chinese plucked string instruments in Sheffield, played by a globetrotting ensemble. Presented in Collaboration with The University of Sheffield Confucius Institute.

The Hong Kong Plucked String Chinese Orchestra promotes and develops the rich and unique legacy of Chinese plucked string music – with instruments such as the guzheng and the pipa. They inherit the foundation of the plucked string instrument arrangement from the Tang dynasty court music tradition. Their membership comprises young Chinese musicians who are students, undergraduates and alumni of the Department of Music of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Baptist University.

Musica Antica Rotherhithe

Wednesday 18th February - 7:30pm

£10-£17

Firth Hall

Musica Antica Rotherhithe present cantatas and extracts from operas written for Venice's public theatres in the mid-seventeenth century, many of which have lain unperformed for over 350 years. Using surviving payment records from venetian theatres, Mezzo Camilla Seale and countertenor Tristram Cooke will be accompanied by an ensemble which matches a Venetian theatre band of the time as closely as possible, comprising two violins, bass viol, two theorbos, harpsichord and a pentagonal virginal.

Musica Antica Rotherhithe was founded by Oliver Doyle and Jessica Eucker in 2016 with the aim of presenting affordable, accessible concerts of rarely heard music from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since then, it has created a popular home for lesser-known repertoire in South East London.

Free Concerts on campus

Throughout term time we run free informal recitals and events in Firth Hall, including visiting guests and the performances from the talented students from the Department of Music.

These events are free to attend and are performed at lunch time and rush hour, which we believe make the events accessible for everyone to enjoy. To find out more about these events and to reserve your ticket, head to our website.

Wednesday 18th February	Rush Hour Concert - Pop and Jazz Ensembles	Mappin Hall	17:45
Monday 23rd February	Lunchtime Concert - Performances from our students	Firth Hall	13:10
Monday 2nd March	Lunchtime Concert - Women Composers Spotlight	Firth Hall	13:10