

Firebird Chamber Platform: Trio de Beauvoir



PROGRAMME

Tuesday 21 March 2023

St George's Hanover Square, London

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Orchestra

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London Firebird Orchestra's 10th Anniversary Season

Welcome to the first concert of the newly launched Firebird Chamber Platform - a new string to our bow. Tonight's performance features the Trio de Beauvoir, an ensemble of three very fine artists including Charlotte Kaslin who has performed as Firebird's principal cellist for several years.

Their programme includes celebrated works by Beethoven and Dvorak and two items by female composers, Fanny Mendelssohn and Gabriela Lena-Frank.

Tonight's performance would not have been possible without the unstinting support of our Friends & Benefactors Society. I would like to thank each and every one of our donors who have provided support to the charity.

If you are not yet a member, do please consider joining us as your support would be extremely valuable to the orchestra - particularly in these challenging times. Just join online by visiting our website at www.LondonFirebird.com. Our full season programme is also viewable on our website. Do book tickets online!

We hope you enjoy this evening's performance and look forward to seeing you again very soon.

Marc Corbett-Weaver

Artistic Director & Chief Executive, London Firebird Orchestra

Programme design and digital support by Revolution Arts





Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Piano Trio in B flat, Op. 11

I. Allegro con brio

II. Adagio

III. Tema con variazioni (Pria ch'io l'impegno: Allegretto)

Beethoven composed his Piano Trio in B-flat major in 1797, and published it in 1798, when he was 28 years old.

It was written for the piano, clarinet - or violin, as in tonight's performance - and cello (which is sometimes replaced by a bassoon). The work is sometimes known as the *Gassenhauer Trio*, after a melody used in the third movement by a composer Joseph Weigl which had become so popular that it could be heard sung by members of the public in city lanes, 'Gassen' being German for lanes.

Though the clarinet part is interchangeable with the violin, Beethoven composed the work with a particular virtuoso clarinetist in mind, Joseph Beer. In the 1790s, the clarinet was a fairly new instrument, and Beethoven was still getting used to it and what it could do. As a result he made few technical demands on the performer. This gives the overall work a relaxed and carefree mood, like a *divertimento* (light and cheerful music for an evening's entertainment), though there is still a fair amount of virtuosity on the piano.

The Trio is in three movements. The first is in sonata form, with the three instruments together playing the main theme. After a

dramatic chord, the piano plays a quiet second theme in the surprising key of D major, after which the violin resumes the theme in F major.

The second movement is slow and serene and made up of two expressive themes. The first is a lyrical melody that is introduced by the cello. The second comes in with an ascending scale also played by the cello, and answered by the violin. There is then a short and dramatic development section.

The third and final movement features nine variations on a popular and light-hearted tune (the hit referred to above) from the opera *L'Amor Marinaro*.



Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847)

Piano Trio in D minor, Op. 11

I. Allegro molto vivace

II. Andante espressivo

III. Lied: Allegretto

IV. Allegretto moderato

Fanny Mendelssohn was the sister of the more well-known composer Felix. She was four years his senior and, herself being musically gifted from a young age, helped to tutor and nurture her young brother's talent when they were children.

Her compositional career and fame were inhibited not only by the social expectations of women generally in her time, but also of high-class women, which she was, who were not supposed to work. Her beautiful Piano Trio in D Minor gives an indication of the great things she was capable of.

She composed the piece as a birthday present for her sister, in 1846 and 1847, shortly before she died of a stroke, aged 41. It was published in 1850, three years after her death.

The Trio is in four movements. The first, fast movement opens with a flowing and

restless accompaniment by the piano over a sweet and yearning melody played on the strings.

The second, slow movement is typically German Romantic: both introspective and lush. The third movement is in the style of a song ('Lied' in German), the sort without words also beloved by her brother Felix and made famous through him.

The fourth movement opens with a long introduction on the piano, before the strings eventually join. It features a heavy and Hungarian-style theme, somewhat sad in mood. A second theme with contrasting rhythm then enters and alternates with the first, and in so doing manages to brighten it up.



Gabriela Lena-Frank (1972-)

Four Folk Songs

I. Canto para La María Angola

II. Children's Dance

III. Serenata

IV. Chavín de Huantar

Gabriela Lena Frank was born in 1972 in Berkeley, California, to a Peruvian/Chinese mother and a Lithuanian/Jewish father.

She studied at Rice University in Houston, Texas, and went on to qualify in composition from the University of Michigan. In 2017 she founded the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of music to support other composers and performers. The organisation's website says of its founder:

'Gabriela explores her multicultural heritage through her compositions. Inspired by the works of Bela Bartók and Alberto Ginastera, Gabriela has travelled extensively throughout South America in creative exploration. Her music often reflects not only her own personal experience as a multi-racial Latina, but also refract her studies of Latin American cultures, incorporating poetry, mythology, and native musical styles into a western classical framework that is uniquely her own.'

Frank wrote the following description of the inspiration for her *Four Folk Songs*, which she composed in 2012:

'Four Folk Songs for violin, cello and piano, loosely draws inspiration from the melodic motifs and

rhythms of my mother's homeland, Perú. As an American-born Latina, so much of my understanding of this small yet culturally rich Andean nation has been necessarily fashioned from within my private imagination from the time I was a young child. Frequent trips to Perú in my adulthood, always done with my mother, leave me with a sense of belonging to something larger than myself as I connect private musings with the actual existing reality.

'Seeing the María Angola church in its highland setting after reading myths about it, for instance, makes Perú's connection to colonial Spain that much more real; and this provide the inspiration for the first movement of Four Folk Songs: Canto para La María Angola (Song for the María Angola).

'The universality of children playing in the streets, albeit with Peruvian toys such as wooden llamas and shakers, is portrayed in the second movement, Children's Dance. The third movement, Serenata, is inspired by the ubiquitous guitar/charango-vocalist duo one sees in most pubs and eating houses; and the last movement harkens to Perú's pre-Inca past in imagining the sounds of an isolated, warlike yet artistically creative culture, Chavín de Huantar.'



Antonín Leopold Dvořák (1841-1904)

Piano Trio no. 4 in E minor, Op. 90 *Dumky*

I. Lento maestoso - Allegro quasi doppio movimento

II. Poco adagio - Vivace non troppo - Vivace

III. Andante - Vivace non troppo - Allegretto

IV. Andante moderato - Allegretto scherzando - Quasi tempo di marcia

V. Allegro

VI. Lento maestoso

The Czech composer Antonin Dvorak finished composing his Piano Trio in E minor in 1891. The work is also as the *Dumky*, a word deriving from a Ukrainian term (“dumka”) for a song typically in the style of a brooding lament, which had been incorporated into Czech folk music, a genre that Dvorak had loved since hearing his father play it as a child.

As an adult musician, he turned back to the music of his childhood and ancestry, inspired by burgeoning Czech nationalism and independence movement at the time.

With his Piano Trio, Dvorak told a friend that he was aiming for a lighter style than was typical for the solemn dumka, to achieve an overall effect of ‘*both happy and sad*’.

The work is made up of six *dumky* (the plural) with sharply contrasting moods, from plaintive melodies to jolly dances.

It is unconventional for a Trio to have more than three or four movements, another factor that gives the work originality.

The first three *dumky* are marked *attaca subito*, indicating that they should be played as a unit without a pause between them. The first, *Lento maestoso*, features a passionate melody, introduced by the cello, followed by a lively dance theme. The second, *Poco adagio*, turns to introspection and some sadness, which evolves into a sense of lyrical tranquillity in the third.

The fourth part, *Andante moderato quasi tempo di Marcia*, features a sombre melody, played over march-like rhythms. This gives way to a sudden contrast in the fifth, *Allegro*, which is feisty and rhythmic, like a traditional scherzo. The sixth and final *dumka*, *Lento maestoso*, features dark passages with vigorous dances, alternating like a rondo, and concluding with a spirited whiling outburst.

PROGRAMME

Firebird Chamber Platform

Tuesday 21 March 2023

St George's Hanover Square, Mayfair

Trio de Beauvoir

Violin **En Yuan Khong**

Cello **Charlotte Kaslin**

Piano **Élisabeth Pion**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Piano Trio in B flat, Op. 11

INTERVAL

Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847)

Piano Trio in D minor, Op. 11

Gabriela Lena-Frank (1972-)

Four Folk Songs

Antonín Leopold Dvořák (1841-1904)

Piano Trio no. 4 in E minor, Op. 90 *Dumky*

*Members of the audience are respectfully requested to refrain from
filming or recording any part of this evening's performance on phones
or other electronic devices. Recording is strictly prohibited.*



The De Beauvoir Piano Trio

The De Beauvoir Piano Trio is a London-based, prize-winning ensemble formed by violinist Enyuan Khong, cellist Charlotte Kaslin and pianist Élisabeth Pion.

The Trio seeks to amplify marginalised voices, creating a new narrative of classical and contemporary music-making.

Recent competitions include 2nd Prize at the Virtuoso & Belcanto Competition in Italy (2021), 3rd Prize at the IX Stasys Vainiunas Competition in Lithuania (2022) and Finalists of the St-Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Competition in the UK (2020), postponed due to Covid-19.

They have been invited on scholarships to festivals across Europe, including Jeunesses Musicales in Germany and Musique à Flaine in France.

They were bursary holders at the 2022 Prussia Cove International Musicians Seminar under the tutelage of Thomas Adès and will perform a recital on behalf of IMS in 2023.

The Trio has been selected to take part in the ECMA (European Chamber Academy) Seminars and will participate in their showcase in Oslo in 2023.

The Trio performs regularly in venues across the UK and Europe. They were Ensemble in Residence of the 2022 Britten Pears Young Artists' Programme and the Festival Sainte-Mère.

Past engagements include the 50th anniversary of the IMS at the Wigmore Hall (2022), Leeds International Concert Season (2021), and the Institut Français in London and in Edinburgh (2021). The trio is a part of the Le Dimore del Quartetto agency in Italy.

En Yuan Khong

A versatile soloist, chamber musician, writer and improviser, violinist Enyuan Khong is committed to promoting music as a tool for connection.

Recipient of the Stephen Bell Charitable Trust Award, the Ivy Sharp Scholarship, winner of the Ivan Sutton Prize, St James Prize, and string finalist in the Royal Overseas League Competition, Enyuan has performed as soloist across Europe with orchestras including the Jenaer Philharmonie, Oxford Philharmonic and Sound Collective Orchestra. As a chamber musician, she has performed in the Santander, Oxford and Wye Valley Chamber Music Festivals, and partnered with musicians such as Simon Crawford-Phillips, Miguel Da Silva, Andreas Frölich, Carole Presland and Ursula Smith among others.

A keen promoter of contemporary music and cross-arts collaboration, Enyuan works closely with composers and performers across genres.

Among other projects, Enyuan has worked on a Royal Opera House commission of Matt Rodgers' opera *She Described It to Death* with members of the London Contemporary Orchestra, and is a co-founding member of contemporary music ensemble Sound Salon, which workshops repertoire directly with composers, experimenting with multi-disciplinary spaces.

She is resident solo improviser with the Richard Chappell Dance Company and is currently composing the music for their new show of 2023, *Hot House*.

Enyuan graduated with Distinction from her Masters in Performance at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, receiving a Concert Recital Diploma for an outstanding Final Recital. She also read German Literature at the University of Oxford, where she graduated with First Class Honours. Enyuan is grateful for the mentorship and guidance of András Keller, Adrian Brendel, Felix Andrievsky and the late Thomas Brandis.



Cello

Charlotte Kaslin

Celloist Charlotte Kaslin studied in Paris until 2014 where she transferred to the Royal Academy of Music under the tutelage of Josephine Knight and Christoph Richter.

She graduated from her Master degree with Distinction, and the DipRam for an outstanding final Recital, before transferring to the Royal College of Music in Artist Diploma in the class of Alexander Chaushian. Charlotte was awarded the Thompson Family Charitable Trust Award, the Peter Halling memorial prize and the Ann Driver Trust Scholarship.

An experienced chamber musician, Charlotte participated in the Encuentro Santander 2019, and has collaborated with musicians such as Maxim Vengerov and Miguel Da Silva.

As well as being the founding member of the De Beauvoir Trio, Charlotte is working with the Aurora Orchestra and is guest principal cello in many groups including Opera North, Welsh National Opera, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Firebird Orchestra and Orchestra 430 de Vigo (Spain).

Piano

Élisabeth Pion

A curious and innovative artist, Canadian pianist Élisabeth Pion distinguishes herself as a soloist, chamber musician, and artistic collaborator both on the Canadian and international cultural scene.

In 2020, she co-founded the Festival Unisson in Quebec, inspired by The Artist is Present (Marina Abramovic) and the 1:1 Concerts.

Élisabeth is currently a Junior Fellow at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

She also is an alumna of the Imogen Cooper Trust and a Young Artist of the Musicians' Company of London until 2024.

Highlights of the upcoming 2022/2023 season include her concerto debut in the US with the Toledo Symphony Orchestra & Maestro Alain Trudel (Mozart's Concerto number 24), her debut with the Orchestre symphonique de Sherbrooke & Maestra Geneviève Leclair in Canada (Liszt's Concerto no 1), and her first solo recording under the label ATMA Classique.



London Firebird Orchestra's 10th Anniversary Season

Now celebrating its 10th Anniversary Season, the London Firebird Orchestra was founded in 2012 with Dame Judi Dench as Patron and Marc Corbett-Weaver as Artistic Director. The orchestra supports extraordinary talented musicians of the younger generation who have either recently graduated or are still studying at one of the major London conservatoires, by enabling to perform in orchestral concerts and outreach projects.

The orchestra performs regularly at its main home venue St George's Hanover Square. Every two years it performs at Kings Place and SJE Arts Oxford and it also has a residency at Middlesex University. Firebird for Schools – the orchestra's tailor-made concert for school children – takes place annually. Firebird has also performed on several occasions at the Royal Festival Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Cadogan Hall, St Paul's Covent Garden and the Bath Pump Room. Performances have been received fantastic reviews in *The Times*, *Evening Standard*, *Classical Music Magazine*, *Musical Opinion*

Magazine, *Seen & Heard International* and BBC Radio London.

The orchestra has collaborated with many internationally-renowned soloists including Jamal Aliyev, Thomas Gould, George Harlono, Aleksei Kiseliyov, Jennifer Pike, Yury Revich, Leonard Schreiber and Raphael Wallfisch. Each Season, Firebird showcases a small number of prize-winning conductors of the younger generation. The orchestra also organises an annual composition competition for young composers, with a cash prize and live performance for the composer of the winning work. Angela Slater is among the recent prize-winners.

Over the years, Firebird players have moved on by securing places in leading orchestras across the UK and beyond, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, the Philharmonia, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the Orchestra of Opera North among many others.

A complete list of Friends & Benefactors can be found on page 2 of this programme.

Concert programme 2023

Join us for more fabulous live concerts in London



European Classics: Virtuoso

Two great masterpieces of the 19th century stand sentinel either side of the latest work from virtuoso violinist Yury Revich in this Midsummer Firebird concert on **13 June**.

Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64

Yury Revich New Work (TBA)

Brahms Symphony no. 1, Op. 68



European Classics: Emperor

The talented pianist George Harliono will perform Beethoven's vast and heroic fifth piano concerto on **19 September**. The concert programme includes:

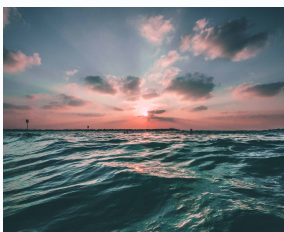
Beethoven Piano Concerto no. 5 in E flat, Op. 72 *The Emperor*

Ralph Vaughan Williams Symphony no. 5 in D

Book tickets for live concerts and see online the filmed concerts below at www.londonfirebird.com



From the New World



Eroica!



From the Germanic Lands



London Firebird Orchestra's 10th Anniversary Season

SUPPORT US, BECOME A FRIEND

At the heart of our organisation is the Firebird Friends & Benefactors Society. Launched at the orchestra's inception in 2012 and now with around 100 members, the Friends & Benefactors Society is a growing association of supporters forming the core of our audience. Members commit an annual donation to the charity, providing a vital bedrock of funding for the orchestra.

Each concert costs several thousands of pounds to produce. Even with good ticket sales from popular concerts, Firebird's concert income falls short of its expenditure. The need for subsidy is of course a reality encountered by almost all projects in the performing arts world. By supporting this short-fall with an income stream our members enable the orchestra's work to continue to prosper. The orchestra has ambitious plans for future development too, which require an increase in income to achieve.

Membership of the Friends & Benefactors Society focuses upon charitable giving. However, the orchestra is very keen to acknowledge support and to offer what it can in return. Members are invited to an annual reception at the start of each concert season every autumn, at which there is a chance to meet the orchestra's players and conductors. Supporters also enjoy priority booking and other privileges at the concerts themselves, as well as recognition in concert programmes and on the website.

**Sign up today at www.londonfirebird.com
or speak to one of our team.**