

JUNIOR ACADEMY CHAMBER MUSIC SHOWCASE

SUNDAY 1 MARCH, 3PM
DUKE'S HALL



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MARYLEBONE ROAD, LONDON NW1 5HT +44 (0)20 7873 7373 [RAM.AC.UK](https://ram.ac.uk)

3PM

Gioachino Rossini
(1792-1868)

Overture to *The Barber of Seville*

Coleman Wind Quintet

Sophia Shaw flute

Cara Garrow oboe

Nina Hillnhuetter clarinet

Brad Kwok French horn

Fiona Rodgers bassoon

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

String Quartet in F, Op 96, 'American'

I. Allegro ma non troppo

Blackwood String Quartet

Edward Leung violin

Lidia de Giorgio violin

Ellen Heppell viola

Milly Naish cello

IV. Vivace ma non troppo

Bingham String Quartet

Malena Coia violin

Emilia Eggert violin

Aiqi Liu viola

Kohana Fish cello

Jean Françaix
(1912–1997)

Wind Quartet

III. Allegro molto

IV Allegro vivo

Bergman Wind Quartet

Hannah Maugham oboe

Magnus Whitfield clarinet

Catherine Li flute

Noah Harcourt-Smith bassoon

Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Piano Quartet in C minor, Op 15

I. Allegro molto moderato

III. Adagio

Hallet Piano Quartet

Sofia Demetriades violin

Maya Divet viola

Mayuchi Ono cello

Ethan Yan piano

Short interval until next session at 4pm

Our first session provides an eclectic journey that traverses more than a century of chamber music for a variety of instruments. **Rossini's *Barber of Seville*** has been a smash hit since its premiere in 1816 and is one of the greatest of all musical comedies. The overture has therefore been transcribed for all manner of instrumental combinations, beginning portentously, before the irresistible melodies enter one by one. **Dvořák's *American Quartet*** is likewise one of the most popular works in the string quartet repertoire. It was written in 1893 whilst its composer was resident in the expat Czech community in Spillville, Iowa, taking time off from his new job as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York, and draws on the rich musical influences that the USA afforded. This afternoon we will hear the first movement and finale, played by two different JA string quartets.

Jean Françaix belonged to the generation of French composers who turned away from the influence of the Austro-German tradition and the soul-searching of Romanticism. His music is witty and neo-classical, with a light touch and often a twinkle in the eye. He wrote prolifically for wind instruments throughout his career, and his **Wind Quartet** is an early work from 1933. Our players will be performing the third and fourth movements. Half a century earlier, in 1883, Fauré was completing his **Piano Quartet in C Minor**, full of the Romantic spirit that imbued the music world at that time. However, even in this powerful, dramatic work one can sense the modal colourings and sensual harmonies that would define Fauré's later style; he continued to compose into the 1920s. Today we hear the first and third movements of this early masterpiece.

4PM

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Piano Quintet in F minor, Op 34
I. Allegro non troppo

Heller Piano Quintet
Natasha Freedman violin
Erin Morgan violin
Chloe Chan viola
Laurie Hawtin cello
Anxo Garcia Missan piano

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Piano Trio in D minor, Op 49
I. Allegro molto agitato

Keal Piano Trio
Althaea Tang violin
Kiera Morgan cello
Gabriel Power piano

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

String Quartet No 8 in C minor, Op 110
 I. Largo
 II. Allegro molto
 III. Allegretto
 IV. Largo
 V. Largo

Beach String Quartet
Elizabeth Shepherd violin
Eve Ward violin
Carolina Prieto viola
Ella Mackinnon cello

Short interval until next session at 5pm

Brahms went to a lot of trouble over the work that would eventually become his **Piano Quintet in F Minor**. Its first incarnation was as a string quintet with two cellos (like the famous one by Schubert), but Brahms rejected this, writing a second version that still survives for two pianos. It was his long-time friend and muse Clara Schumann who suggested he combine the forces and score the work for piano and strings – the version that we now know – which had its premiere in 1868. It is telling that the music itself hardly changes between the different versions; Brahms was clearly proud of the work in conception, but was just searching for the right instruments to express it. His faith has been repaid by the quintet's continued place at the forefront of the chamber repertoire and reputation as one of Brahms' crowning achievements. Today we hear the dark, brooding first movement.

Mendelssohn's D minor Piano Trio has also never lost its popularity since Schumann declared it 'the master trio of the age' on its publication in 1839; Mendelssohn did not need to go to quite so much trouble as Brahms in completing his score, however. The first movement shows an ease of melodic writing and a dynamism of construction that speak of a composer in inspired mood, each of the two main themes announced by the cello before they are passed around the ensemble. Mendelssohn's pianistic virtuosity is often on show, but this is a true movement of equals, pitting brooding D minor against radiant major tonalities before the dramatic, anguished close.

Shostakovich wrote his **String Quartet No 8** in 1960, just after he had (reluctantly) become a member of the Communist Party. It is dedicated to 'the victims of fascism and the war' and was apparently completed in just three days. It is almost impossible not to see the work as autobiographical, as Shostakovich makes continuous use of quotes from his other works, as well as the DSCHE motto that spells his own name (es is E flat and h is B natural in German musical notation, so D-E flat-C-D). The five movements are all interconnected and run without a break. The music is utterly uncompromising, often brutal, but also doleful and tragic. Shostakovich was by now a master of writing for strings, having completed seven earlier quartets, but also eleven symphonies at this point in his life. He went on to write seven more brilliant quartets, but perhaps never bettered this searing masterpiece.

5PM

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

String Quartet in F minor, Op 80

I. Allegro vivace

Horrocks String Quartet

Nikolas Tzigiannis violin

Angela Gao violin

Ellen Heppell viola

Theodora Joseph cello

Johannes Ciconia (c 1370-1412)

Tres Dous Compains

Sus une fontayne,

Una Panthera

Pictor Trio

Hassan Marzban recorder

Alma Nunez-Debretzeni recorder

Joseph Sainsbury recorder

Anton Arensky (1861–1906)

Piano Trio in D minor, Op 32

I. Allegro moderato

II. Scherzo: Allegro molto

III. Elegia: Adagio

IV. Allegro non troppo

Ellicott Piano Trio

Vera Hsuan violin

Kaya Edwards cello

Misha Norman piano

If the piano trio that we heard in the last session was an example of **Felix Mendelssohn** at his most effortless, the **String Quartet in F minor** is one of the most desperately heartfelt pieces that he ever wrote. In May 1847, his beloved sister Fanny died; she was always a soulmate and inspiration to her younger brother, herself a brilliant pianist and composer. Felix poured his grief into this string quartet, often uncharacteristically violent and desperate. With his choice of key, that of Beethoven's 'Appassionata' Sonata and Schubert's Fantasy for piano duet, and later the Brahms Piano Quintet that we have already heard, this piece joins a tradition of uncompromisingly tragic works in F minor. By November of the same year, Felix himself was dead.

The penultimate works in our programme take us back some four centuries before any of the other music that has been heard today.

Johannes Ciconia was born in Liège, part of modern-day Belgium, but made his name as a composer in Italy. *Tres Dous Compains* ('Very Sweet Friends'), is followed by *Sus une fontayne*, an example of Virelai, a mediaeval French poetic-musical form. The text concerns a grieving protagonist who gazes upon a fountain and hears an alluring song. *Una Panthera* is an arrangement of a madrigal concerned with the panther on the coat of arms of the city of Lucca.

Arensky studied in St Petersburg, but moved to Moscow, where he became a professor and counted Rachmaninov, Scriabin and Medtner amongst his pupils. He wrote his **First Piano Trio** in 1894, in memory of the cellist Karl Davydov. In this, he joined a tradition of elegiac piano trios, including those by Smetana, Tchaikovsky and his student Rachmaninov; the heart of this work is therefore in the third movement *Elegia*. As a whole, this glittering trio is a wonderful example of Russian Romantic chamber music, full of wonderful heartfelt melody and instrumental virtuosity, particularly from the pianist.

Many thanks to all the JA tutors who prepared our students for today's concert. Thanks also to JA staff Caroline, Karen and John for helping bring this event to fruition.