

LSO St Luke's

CHAMBER MUSIC

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RADIO



Friday 29 October 2021 1pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Béla Bartók String Quartet No 3
György Kurtág In Nomine – All'ongherese from
'Signs, Games and Messages for Solo Viola'
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart String Quintet No 3
in C major K515

Antoine Tamestit viola
Arod Quartet

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

String Quartet No 3

Béla Bartók

1 Prima Parte: Moderato

2 Seconda Parte: Allegro

3 Ricapitolazione della prima parte: Moderato

4 Coda: Allegro molto

Béla Bartók's six surviving quartets span some 30 years, the most productive part of his composing career. All are infused with the folk elements that were so central to his composing ethos. Bartók found his research as a folk song collector circumscribed by the post-First World War disintegration of the Hapsburg Empire, with former fertile territory now out of reach. To compensate, he drew inspiration from the work of Schoenberg, Berg and Stravinsky, experimenting with modernism in form and content while continuing to absorb the rhythms and melodic shapes of the folk songs which were his lifeblood. The Third Quartet was among the products of this new focus.

This is one of Bartók's most intense and compact pieces. It encompasses four sections, with the third essentially a reworked version of the first, and the Coda related to the second. The entire piece is permeated with Hungarian folk idioms, but the material is treated with formal rigour.

In Nomine – All'ongherese from

'Signs, Games and Messages for Solo Viola'

György Kurtág

Bartók's disciple György Kurtág has become a master of the musical maxim. 'It's possible to make music with practically nothing', he once said, and since the 1960s he has experimented with a series of fragmentary miniatures, 'works in progress' which he constantly revises. They include the piano series *Játékok* (Games), and a similar series of brief pieces for solo string and woodwind instruments entitled *Signs, Games and Messages*. *In Nomine – All'ongherese* is one of these.

It was composed, originally for cor anglais, for the 2001 festival of contemporary chamber music at the German town of Witten, where a series of pieces based on Renaissance English polyphonic techniques had been commissioned from leading European composers. Kurtág's piece pays homage to the spirit of early polyphony, but his music, like Bartók's, is soaked in the idioms of Hungarian folk.

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

String Quintet No 3 in C major K515

- 1 **Allegro**
- 2 **Andante**
- 3 **Menuetto: Allegretto**
- 4 **Allegro**

The first of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's six quintets for two violins, two violas and cello is an early work, dating from late 1773. The remainder were composed during the last four years of his life. K515 in C major and K516 in G minor appeared in the spring of 1787, at a time when Mozart must have begun to realise that the critical and financial success he sought in Vienna was slipping from his grasp. His opera *The Marriage of Figaro* had scored more highly with audiences in Prague than Vienna, and his next opera, *Don Giovanni*, was scheduled for performance in the Bohemian capital. His court position, grudgingly granted by the Emperor, paid very little, and he was beginning to fall into debt.

Mozart's chamber works were intended for the private enjoyment of wealthy amateurs rather than for professional concert performance, and having played his new quintets himself with friends (he customarily played one of the viola parts), he evidently hoped to offer copies for sale on a subscription basis. In the end, his precarious finances obliged him to sell them to a Viennese publisher outright for a bargain price. K515 is the most expansive of Mozart's chamber works. Its huge opening *Allegro*, built from a rising cello arpeggio answered by a plaintive violin response, explores ingenious permutations of the five instrumental voices. The following *Andante* features a sublime duet for violin and viola – a lyrical outpouring for two of Mozart's favourite instruments. It is followed by an elegant *Menuet* in which the cello spins a thread of its own; while the boisterous finale recalls the relaxed humour of Haydn.

Programme notes by Wendy Thompson

LSO Artist Portrait: Antoine Tamestit

Sunday 31 October 7pm, Barbican

See Antoine Tamestit on-stage with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican. He concludes his Artist Portrait series with the London premiere of Jörg Widmann's *Viola Concerto*, written for Tamestit in 2015.

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Antoine Tamestit

viola

Antoine Tamestit is recognised internationally as one of the great violists: as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician. He is notable for his peerless technique and profound musicianship, and for the depth and beauty of his sound, with its rich, burnished quality. His repertoire ranges from the Baroque to the contemporary. He has performed and recorded several world premieres.

Among Tamestit's concerto commissions is the Viola Concerto by Jörg Widmann. Since he gave the world premiere performance in 2015 with the Orchestre de Paris and Paavo Järvi, Tamestit has performed the concerto with the co-commissioners – the Swedish Radio Symphony and Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, both under Daniel Harding – and with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris (again), the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Stavanger Symphony, and the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Tamestit's other world premiere performances and recordings include Thierry Escaich's *La nuit des chants* (2018), the Concerto for Two Violas by Bruno Mantovani (written for Tabea Zimmermann and Tamestit) and Olga Neuwirth's *Remnants of Songs*. Works composed for Tamestit also include Neuwirth's *Weariness Heals Wounds* and Gérard Tamestit's *Sakura*.

Tamestit is a founding member of Trio Zimmermann (with Frank Peter Zimmermann and Christian Poltéra). The Trio has recorded a number of acclaimed CDs for BIS Records (including Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, released in May 2019) and performed in Europe's most famous concert halls and series.

Tamestit was born in Paris, and studied with Jean Sulem, Jesse Levine and Tabea Zimmermann. He received several notable prizes, including First Prize at the ARD International Music Competition, the William Primrose Competition and the Young Concert Artists (YCA) International Auditions, won a Borletti-Buitoni Trust award and the Credit Suisse Award in 2008, and participated in BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists Scheme. He plays on a viola made by Stradivarius in 1672, loaned by the Habisreutinger Foundation.

Quatuor Arod

Founded in 2013, the Quatuor Arod benefited from the teaching of Mathieu Herzog and Jean Sulem, as well as the Quatuor Artemis at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel in Brussels. They have also worked regularly with the Quatuor Ebène and the Quatuor Diotima. In 2016, they won the First Prize at the ARD International Music Competition of Munich. They had already been awarded the First Prize at the Carl Nielsen International Competition of Copenhagen in 2015 and the First Prize at the European Competition of the FNAPEC Concours in 2014. In 2016, they were HSBC laureates of the Festival d'Aix Academy. In 2017, they were appointed BBC New Generation Artist for the seasons 2017 to 2019, and ECHO Rising Star for the 2018/19 season.

For the past few seasons, the Quatuor Arod has been performing in the greatest concert halls in France and worldwide: the Philharmonie de Paris, the Operas of Bordeaux and Montpellier, Vienna Konzerthaus and Musikverein, Berlin Philharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Zurich Tonhalle, Wigmore Hall and Barbican Centre, Carnegie Hall in New-York, and more. They also appear in many festivals.

The Quatuor Arod collaborates with artists such as violists Amihai Grosz, Antoine Tamestit, Timothy Ridout and Mathieu Herzog, pianists Eric Lesage, Alexandre Tharaud and Adam Laloum, the clarinetists Martin Fröst, Romain Guyotand Michel Lethiec as well as cellists Raphaël Pidoux, Kyril Zlotnikov, Camille Thomas, François Salque, Jérôme Pernoo and Bruno Philippe. In 2017, they premiered French composer Benjamin Attahir's first string quartet (commissioned by La Belle Saison, ProQuartet and the Quatuor Arod).

The Quatuor Arod records exclusively for Erato/Warner Classic. Their first release was a Mendelssohn album (2017), then followed a second album dedicated to the figure of Mathilde Zemlinsky, with the participation of the soprano Elsa Dreisig (Schoenberg, Zemlinsky and Webern/2019) which was awarded the Edison Klassiek 2020. Their new album, *Schubert*, was released in 2020 with great public and critical acclaim.

The Quatuor Arod is in residence at the Fondation Singer-Polignac. The quartet plays on instruments kindly loaned from the Boubo-Music Foundation (Switzerland).