

Mozart

Symphony No. 41
'Jupiter' in C major, K. 551

Strauss

Suite in B flat major
for 13 wind instruments, Op.4

Beethoven

Overture
from *the creatures of
Prometheus*, Op. 43

Conductor
Alex Fryer

2 October 2022 - 5pm
St. Katharine Cree, EC3A 3BP

Tickets £14 Adult, £12 Under 30/Conc., £7 students
Available at www.academyofstmarylebow.com

Welcome

Good afternoon and welcome to this afternoon's concert. The Academy of St Mary-le-Bow is delighted to be back at St Katharine Cree, where we performed back in April as part of a City-wide festival celebrating T.S. Eliot's poem *The Wasteland*. Today, for our first ever Sunday afternoon concert, the orchestra is playing a dramatic programme of Mozart, Strauss and Beethoven.

Mozart's 41st Symphony, nicknamed 'Jupiter' after the opening was likened to the god Jupiter hurling thunderbolts, is the composer's last symphony and one of his best loved works. The piece is particularly notable for the complex counterpoint of the final movement (which, in non-musical terms means lots of different musical ideas happening at once, that all fit together like a giant musical jigsaw). The final movement of Richard Strauss' *Suite in Bb for 13 wind instruments*, written almost 100 years later, similarly features masterfully complex counterpoint but here is set within the lush harmonic language of the late 19th century. Interestingly, we know Strauss conducted Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony*, and there is evidence of his interpretation in the form of a recording made on primitive equipment in 1926.

Our programme tonight is completed by the overture to Beethoven's 1801 ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* in another nod to accent mythology. In the ballet, Prometheus steals fire from Zeus to make mankind from clay, Zeus being the Greek equivalent of the Roman Jupiter - see what we did there!

This afternoon also marks the launch of our 2022/23 season, which is filled with exciting projects for the orchestra and audience. In November, we are collaborating with the Covent Garden Chorus, performing Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* under conductor Tori Longdon. In January, the orchestra will perform a concert inspired by fairytales and folklore, including another Stravinsky masterwork, the *Firebird Suite*. March sees the orchestra join forces with the Cantus Ensemble to perform Bach's *St John Passion*, and we perform Beethoven's 5th Symphony, uncondacted, led by guest director Alexandra Caldon in April. Our season will finish on home turf, as always, with a concert in the LIVE at St Mary-le-Bow festival in June. Full information on all our concerts can be seen later in the programme and on our [website](#).

With the start of our new season, we are also re-launching our Friends scheme. The scheme gives you, our wonderful audience, an opportunity to support our orchestra in return for some orchestra-related perks! You can find out more about the scheme and how to sign up later in this programme.

We hope you enjoy this afternoon's concert and look forward to seeing you at other concerts across the season.

Alex Fryer

Programme

Overture from
The Creatures of Prometheus
(Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus), Op. 43

L. V. Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

Strauss: Suite in B-flat major
Op.4, TrV 132

R. Strauss
(1864 - 1949)

- I. Praeludium
- II. Romanze
- III. Gavotte
- IV. Introduction und Fuge

- Interval -
(20 mins)

Symphony No. 41 'Jupiter'
in C major, K. 551

W. A. Mozart
(1756 - 1791)

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Andante cantabile
- III. Menuetto
- IV. Molto allegro

Programme Notes

Beethoven

Overture from *The Creatures of Prometheus*

Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany, in 1770 and showed early talent at the piano, to the extent that his father attempted to turn him into a child prodigy like Mozart. Aged 17, Beethoven found employment as a court musician, but upon moving to Vienna five years later he began studying composition with Joseph Haydn and began establishing himself as a composer. His compositional style is often divided into three chronological sections by musicologists: an early period which includes works such as his first two symphonies and early quartets; an intermediate period from the early 1800s where his music became more emotionally expressive; and a final phase featuring his late string quartets and Ninth Symphony. Tonight's overture was written towards the end of the composer's early period when he was 31.

Whilst undoubtedly one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time, Beethoven notably began to lose his hearing before he turned 30. Frustration at his auditory health gave way to bouts of depression, but Beethoven's desire to compose allowed him to push through the dark days. In 1802 he wrote "I would have ended my life - it was only my art that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me."

The Overture performed tonight is the opening to Beethoven's only ballet: *The Creatures of Prometheus*, based on a tale from Greek mythology. The work paints a scene of Prometheus running through a forest having stolen celestial fire from the god Zeus in order to breathe life into his clay 'creatures': the first man and woman. As the story continues, Prometheus takes his creatures to Apollo, so that the god can teach them science and art. The story of the ballet highlights Beethoven's support of the Enlightenment movement. After its premiere in 1801, Beethoven met Haydn in the street. Upon Haydn expressing his appreciation of the ballet, Beethoven humbly replied "Oh, my dear Papa, you're very kind, but it's a long way from being a 'Creation!'" (referring to Haydn's masterwork *The Creation*).

Strauss

Suite in B-flat major

Richard Strauss was born in Munich in 1864. His father was the principal horn of the Bavarian Court Opera and was well known for being a master of the instrument. Strauss began composing aged six and at ten started composition lessons with Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer, an assistant conductor at the Court Opera. By adulthood, he had already written over 140 pieces.

Strauss took his first foray into writing for winds in 1881 with the composition of his Serenade, (which we performed back in 2017). Strauss was only 17 and used Mozart's Serenade in Bb 'Gran Partita' (which we performed in 2020) as a model - no doubt upon his father's suggestion. This work was programmed by the Meiningen Orchestra under Hans von Bülow in the winter of 1883 and after hearing reports of its success, Strauss began work on a longer piece for the same ensemble. In autumn 1884, Strauss presented Bülow with a four-movement suite in Bb, and the conductor allowed the young Strauss (now aged 20) to conduct the work in concert, launching what would become an illustrious conducting career.

Strauss' career flourished until his death in 1949. He is perhaps best known for his operas and orchestral tone poems, which form a well-loved part of the orchestral repertoire and beyond. The opening to his work *Also sprach Zarathustra* famously features in the opening of the film 2001: A Space Odyssey. During the 1930s and '40s the composer had a complicated and strained relationship with the Nazi regime as his career relied on cooperation with the party, though he was clearly at odds with their ideology, writing in his private notebook "I consider the Jew-baiting... a disgrace to German honour." Although he was made president of the Reich Music Chamber and composed the anthems for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, he fell out of favour after refusing to blacklist Jewish artists and writers.

The opening movement of the Suite in Bb major is in sonata form, featuring a rousing opening section and a contrasting, melancholic second theme heard in the oboe. The second movement, entitled 'Romanze', is gentler with long meandering phrases and a prominent solo clarinet line that has a quasi-improvisatory feel. The third and fourth movements of the suite are more adventurous in their use of form and development of ideas: clearly an example of the young Strauss beginning to flex his compositional muscles. The third, titled 'Gavotte', is a fast movement, filling the traditional slot of a scherzo or minuet and trio in symphonic form.

The final movement is entitled 'Introduction und Fuge'. The introduction quotes the second movement of the suite, before giving way to the 'fuge', or fugue. Strauss' fugue is a creation of utter genius - a show of complete

technical mastery. The subject of the fugue, which is first heard in the horn, features 4 long notes (including an awkward downward diminished 7), followed by a set of faster notes. Throughout the fugue, Strauss employs all the compositional techniques in his arsenal, presenting the theme in inversion (played upside down), augmented (played at half speed), as well as using a technique known as *stretti* (where entries of the theme come closer together, not allowing one iteration to finish before the other joins). This technical mastery makes the last movement rather dense in texture, but Strauss attends to this by giving us episodic moments of respite. The final climax of the work brings the whole suite to a glorious ending in a blaze of Bb major.

Mozart

Symphony No. 41

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is perhaps the most famous composer ever to have lived. He was born in 1756 and died in 1791. As a pianist, he was a child prodigy and undertook performance tours of Europe from a very young age, encouraged by his father Leopold (also a well-known composer and violinist). His older sister Maria Anna was also an incredible pianist and often received top billing above Wolfgang on their performance tours as children. At the time it, was impossible for women to have careers, and she soon stopped performing.

Mozart settled in Vienna, where he found fame and fortune composing and performing (often his own works) for several years during the 1780s. By 1786 the Austro-Turkish War had sparked a decline in the consumption of arts and culture, causing the composer financial troubles. Although it appeared that things were looking up in the late 1780s, and Mozart had started to pay off his debts, illness struck in September 1791, and by December Mozart had died. He left behind his wife, Constantine, and two children (a further 4 children had died in infancy). In his short life, he wrote over 800 works, including symphonies, operas and concerti, as well as solo and chamber music.

Mozart wrote his last symphony no. 41, 'Jupiter', in 1788. In the summer of that year, he wrote three symphonies (nos. 39 - 41) and though he was to live another three years, he would not write another, instead focusing mostly on opera. Jupiter is the longest of Mozart's symphonies and is often regarded as his greatest work, though it is unclear if Mozart ever actually heard the work performed, as it was not published during his lifetime. There is speculation as to who exactly came up with the nickname 'Jupiter', but it is thought that the opening statements of the work reminded listeners of the god Jupiter throwing his thunderbolts.

The first movement of the symphony is in sonata form. Sonata form usually consists of an exposition (where two themes are introduced, usually contrasting in character) a development (where the thematic material from the exposition is manipulated and varied) and a recapitulation (where the first two themes come back in full). However, breaking with tradition, in his Jupiter symphony, Mozart adds a third theme at the end of the exposition, a self-quotation from an aria (*'Un bacio di mano'* or 'A kiss on the hand') he wrote to be used in another composer's opera, Pasquale Anfossi's *Le gelosie fortunate*. He also then uses this third theme to form the majority of the development section, before returning to the recapitulation.

The second movement of the symphony is a lyrical slow triple-time movement, followed by a traditional minuet and trio that forms the third movement. The fourth, marked 'Molto allegro', is a compositional tour-de-force. Again, using sonata form, Mozart takes some very simple thematic cells and combines them in increasingly ingenious ways. Much like in the final movement of the Strauss suite, he makes great use of inversion and *stretto*. The movement finishes with a *coda* of five-part invertible counterpoint using the thematic material from the exposition and is considered one of Mozart's most technically brilliant and thrilling achievements.

Conductor

Alex Fryer

Alex read music at the University of Southampton, studying oboe performance as well as conducting. During his time there, he was assistant conductor to both the University Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra. After graduating, he pursued a post-graduate degree at the Royal College of Music in oboe performance.

During his time at the Royal College of Music, Alex played principal oboe with the RCM Symphony Orchestra in addition to taking part in multiple other ensemble projects including contemporary music groups and chamber music recitals. Since graduating with a distinction in 2016, Alex has enjoyed a career as a freelance musician.

In 2019 he joined Southbank Sinfonia for a year-long orchestral fellowship and has recently enjoyed taking part in the Pathway Scheme at the Wigmore Hall, training as a music leader for education and participation work. During the pandemic, Alex trained as a Covid-19 vaccinator, which he still does alongside his musical work.

The Orchestra

Violin I

Patrick Bevan
Ilana Lederman
Christabel Pidduck
Claire Oldfield
Felicity Porter
Sarah Benson
Ellen Dunn
Miranda Porter

Violin II

Harri Caddick
Chloe Rush
Henry Gleave
Camilla Fletcher
Tamsin Ireland
Sarah Mercer

Viola

Rachel Lunt
Ed Daley
Jess Cselko
Claire Everson

'Cello

Laura Oldfield
Grace Dunn
Natalie Bevan
Magdalen Christie

Bass

Manuel Dell'oglio
Cathy Lear

Flute

Rebecca Pozzuto
Katie Clay

Oboe

Charlotte Evans
Sophie Hunt

Clarinet

Dean Wood
Luke Westcombe

Bassoon

Jamie King*
Charlotte Wyatt

Horn

Máté Tózsér*
Jack Bradley-Buxton*
Tom Allard
Ben Horton

Trumpet

Ellena Teal*
Daniel Greenhalgh

Timpani

Gloria Yehilevsky

* Denotes guest

Become a Friend

Joining the Academy of St Mary-le-Bow Friends Scheme costs just £50 a year. All funds go towards the running of the orchestra which allows us to put on an exciting and varied programme of events. In return, Friends receive a number of benefits including:

- Entrance into a prize draw to win free concert tickets
- 2 discounted tickets per concert (if you don't win the draw)
- A free drink per concert
- A special acknowledgement in our programme
- Reserved seating (upon request)

If you're interested in becoming a friend, please visit our [website](#) or email friends@academyofstmarylebow.com

Many thanks to our current friends: Martine and Paul Allard, Charles Durose, Stephen and Jackie Fryer, Janet High, Steve and Nandita Nelson

Our 2022/23 season

2 October 2022 - 5pm - St Katharine Cree

To kick off its sixth year, the orchestra will be performing a Sunday afternoon concert at 5pm on 2nd October at St. Katharine Cree. Under the baton of its Musical Director Alex Fryer, the ensemble will be performing one of Mozart's best-loved works, his 'Jupiter' Symphony, No. 41, alongside Strauss' Suite in B-flat Major for 13 wind instruments and Beethoven's overture to *The Creatures of Prometheus*

5 November 2022 - 7:30pm - Holy Trinity Sloane Square

Later this year on 5 November at Holy Trinity Sloane Square, the orchestra is honoured to be joining forces with the Covent Garden Chorus for an exciting programme of music by Stravinsky, Boulenger and Poulenc conducted by the chorus' principal conductor Tori Longdon.

28 January 2023 - 7:30pm - St Cuthbert's, Earls Court

January 2023 will see the ensemble bring Stravinsky's magical Firebird Suite to life in the stunning surroundings of St Cuthbert's in Earls Court with newly devised narration and special lighting in true Academy of St Mary-le-Bow style. The programme will also feature fairytale-inspired music by Ravel and Humperdinck.

25 March 2023, 7:30pm - St Cuthbert's, Earls Court

The orchestra returns to St Cuthbert's for its second choral collaboration of the season, this time with the esteemed Cantus Ensemble for a performance of Bach's sacred masterpiece, the St John Passion. The orchestra will be conducted by the Cantus Ensemble's director Dominic Brennan and will be joined by a host of outstanding soloists.

29 April 2023 - 7:30pm - Venue TBC

The Academy of St. Mary-le-bow returns with a performance of Beethoven's iconic 5th Symphony. This performance will be uncondacted, directed by guest leader Alexandra Caldon from the Britten Sinfonia.

19 June 2023 - 7:30pm - St Mary-le-Bow

Of course, the ensemble's annual season would not be complete without its regular contribution to our home venue's weeklong festival: LIVE at St Mary-le-Bow.