

- PROGRAM -

BEETHOVEN *Sonata No 4 in A minor Op 23*

(1) *Presto* (2) *Andante scherzoso più allegretto* (3) *Allegro molto*
violin George Carrard piano Murray Brown

ALBENIZ *Asturias (Leyenda)*

Guitar Giuseppe Zangari

MAHLER *Piano Quartet in A minor*

(1) *Nicht zu schnell*
violin Debbie Gray viola John Keller cello Sharon Maennl
piano Neil Semmler

Two Pieces

POPPER *Gavotte*

MENDELSSOHN/SEMMLER *On Wings of Song*

cello Sharon Maennl piano Neil Semmler

TCHAIKOVSKY *Piano Concerto No 1- Slow Movement*

Adagio

piano John Keller

INTERVAL

Seven Songs

(1) Jacob GADE *Jealousy* (2) LEHAR *You are my Heart's Delight*
(3) SCHUMANN *The Two Grenadiers* (4) SANDERSON *Shipmates O' Mine*
(5) KEEL *Trade Winds* (6) WOOD *The Sea Road*
(7) OFFENBACH *The Bold Gendarmes*
tenor Michael Riddiford baritone Mark Berriman piano Patsy Short

Two Pieces

(1) GERSHWIN/SEMMLER *The Man I Love*

(2) SEMMLER *Trivia Piece 01*

violin Debbie Gray viola John Keller cello Sharon Maennl
piano Neil Semmler

REFRESHMENTS

Notes

BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) *Sonata in A minor Op 23*

Beethoven was 31 when he composed this sonata in 1801. He intended to publish Op 23 and 24 ("The Spring") as Op 23 No 1 and 2, but the sonatas were separated owing to a publisher's error. In the 1790s Beethoven had already captured the imagination of Viennese audiences as a virtuoso pianist and his 1795 piano trios Op 1 established his credentials as an up-and-coming composer keen to distinguish himself from his esteemed teacher, Haydn.

Beethoven's late symphonies can be seen as pairs according to their prevailing mood: Nos 3 ("Eroica"), 5 and 7 being dramatic or heroic and Nos 6 ("Pastorale") and 8 more gentle. There is a similar pattern with his violin sonatas. Of the three Op 12 sonatas No 1 is dramatic and Nos 2 and 3 more serene. No 4 is dramatic, 5 ("Spring") serene. The three Op 30 sonatas are numbered 6 to 8: No 7 is the dramatic one with 6 and 8 more serene. No 9 ("Kreutzer") is dramatic, No 10 has a gentle mood.

Beethoven's disregard for the customary niceties is apparent in the opening *Presto* of Op 23, which plunges the listener into a maelstrom of roiling triplets. Only after a minute or so does he introduce a smoothly flowing theme that gives the music a countervailing semblance of repose. He dispenses with the traditional pair of middle movements (adagio and minuet or scherzo); in their place, he gives us a hybrid *andante scherzando* in A major, fleshed out with recurring fugal passages. Most unconventional of all is the finale, which combines three sharply contrasting themes in an episodic structure that is tightly knit yet full of unexpected twists and turns.¹

ALBENIZ *Asturias*

A German publisher posthumously and erroneously named this piece Asturias - Leyenda (meaning Legend), and included it in the 1911 "complete version" of the suite *Española*. Albéniz did not give it this name nor did he intend the piece for this suite. The piece is not suggestive of the folk music of the northern Spanish region of Asturias, but rather of Andalusian flamenco traditions. The music alters between a solo and accompaniment, typical of flamenco. Written as a piano piece, Segovia's transcription for guitar is the most famous and influential.²

MAHLER (1860 - 1911) *Piano Quartet in A minor*

Mahler began work on the Piano Quartet towards the end of his first year at the Vienna Conservatory. He was only 16 years old when it had its first performance. Only the first movement and a fragment of a scherzo movement survive. The remainder has either been lost or was never written.

TCHAIKOVSKY (1840 - 1893) *Piano Concerto No 1- Slow Movement*

The First Piano Concerto is one of Tchaikovsky's best known works. The second movement is soft and charming - "short and sweet"!

Two Pieces for Cello and Piano

POPPER (1843 - 1913) David Popper was a famous cello performer, whose compositions for the cello are often played today. The *Gavotte* is one of his best known pieces. MENDELSSOHN (1809 - 1847) composed *On Wings of Song* when he was in his mid 20s. It is set to a poem by Heinrich Heine: "On Wings of Song, / Sweetheart, I carry you

¹ <https://www.carnegiehall.org/m/event.aspx?view=prog&id=10737421478>, <http://beeri.org/notes/beethoven-violin-sonatas.html>.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violin_Sonata_No._4_%28Beethoven%29, Beethoven symphonies in *New York Review of Books* 3 December 2015.

² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asturias_\(Leyenda\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asturias_(Leyenda))

away,/Away to the fields of the Ganges,/Where I know the most beautiful place.” Sharon found a rather bland arrangement of Mendelssohn’s famous song and Neil enhanced it with some simple counter-phrases and accompanying figures from Liszt’s famous piano transcription.

Seven Songs Mainly Light

(1) Jacob GADE (1879 – 1963) was a Danish violinist and composer, remembered today for a single tune, the familiar "Jalousie", also known as Jalousie 'Tango Tzigane' and Tango Jalousie. (2) LEHÁR (1870 –1948) an Austro-Hungarian composer, is mainly known for his operettas, in particular The Merry Widow. "You Are My Heart's Delight" ("Dein ist mein ganzes Herz") is from his 1929 operetta The Land of Smiles. It was written for tenor Richard Tauber. (3) *The Two Grenadiers*, by SCHUMANN (1810 - 1856), set to a poem by Heinrich Heine (author of *On Wings of Song* above), tells of two French soldiers returning from Napoleon's campaign in Russia. The French national anthem "La Marseillaise" makes a brief appearance toward the end of the poem when the grenadier remembers his promise to offer defence from beyond the grave. (4-6) The three English seafaring songs, published by Boosey & Co in 1913, from a collection entitled *The Pick of the Bunch of Sailors' Songs*, although popular hits in their day, are now rarely performed. "Shipmates O' Mine", "Trade Winds" and "The Sea Road" written by Wildred Sanderson (1878 - 1935), Frederick Keel (1871 - 1954) and Haydn Wood (1882 - 1959) respectively, suggest interesting links - with the English Art Song, Vaudeville and the Musical. (7) OFFENBACH (1819 –1880) wrote an operetta entitled "Genevieve of Brabant" in 1859 based on the tale of a chaste wife falsely accused and repudiated, on the word of a rejected suitor. He incorporated "The Gendarme's Duet" in an expanded version eight years later. From 1871, the opera ran for 18 months in London. As well as being a popular performance piece, it formed the basis for the US "Marines' Hymn".

Two Pieces for Piano Quartet

GERSHWIN/SEMMLER *The Man I Love*. Neil's arrangement presents an introspective interpretation of this song rather than the more common 'torch song' style. First published as "The Girl I Love" in 1924, the song was originally intended as part of the musical "Lady, Be Good". Gershwin also created an arrangement of the song for piano solo. SEMMLER *Trivia Piece 01* Google defines "trivia" as "details, considerations, or pieces of information of little importance or value". A game genre has arisen - quizzes based on responding to questions with trivial answers - where the facts requested could be considered "of little importance or value". *Trivia Piece 01* is the first of a series of arrangements where the music or theme is the basis for a trivia game. Instructions will be provided for the audience prior to the performance.

concert organisers George Carrard and Joan Bolton

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