



Music@CC

C L I F F O R D
C H A N C E

Michael Bochmann and friends



Welcome

As past chair of the Music Club committee at Clifford Chance, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you, our audience, and say a few words about this particular concert, which as you will see has a certain amount of significance for me personally.

You will have come to hear Michael Bochmann, star of the show as advertised on our posters, but you will have also noticed the words “and friends” on the poster, and I know that this aspect is the most important for him. Whilst a world-class violinist, he is passionate about bringing good classical music to the widest of possible audiences and participants, which is why his ideals and those of Thomas Tallis School, described elsewhere in this programme, marry so well together. So his ‘friends’ are the children string players from the School – and me, as pianist.

The ideology behind our programming, and indeed behind many of the programmes Michael facilitates, is that you will hear some great playing from Michael, and you will hear some remarkable, very good quality music making from young musicians who have not been learning for very long at all – and they will have the chance to participate in a ‘proper’ concert, giving them aspirations for achieving more in the future. It is therefore absolutely wonderful to see not only children from Thomas Tallis but also so many children from other schools in the audience, and hopefully inspire them in their music making too.

As well as that, you also have the chance to hear a new piece of music composed by the well-known composer Howard Skempton. I commissioned this with a leaving collection given to me when I retired from the Clifford Chance partnership a couple of years ago to pursue my musical, educational and charitable interests, and the brief was to produce a piece which could be used flexibly in a variety of different educational settings, with a medium-easy piano part and a very simple optional melodic line. So thank you to those in the audience who contributed to that collection. I’m delighted with the result in its incarnation for this concert, and may it go through many more performances in many more guises. Thank you Howard! If you want more information about the very interesting commissioning process, you will find Ed McKeon’s *Third Ear* fliers available with this programme – or visit www.thirdear.co.uk.

Finally a word of acknowledgement to Cathy Jones, Head of Community Outreach at CC, who introduced me to the then acting head of music at Thomas Tallis (one of the local schools CC works with in various capacities), Katy Tomczynska, who graciously involved me as a teaching assistant in her GCSE classes last year, and who is therefore the initial stimulus for this enterprise; the Music Club committee here at Clifford Chance who agreed to fund Michael’s workshops with Thomas Tallis, to prepare for this concert; the current staff of Thomas Tallis, who have assisted with preparation for this concert, including Clare Gould, Head of Music, Martin McCormick, one of the most gifted and versatile musicians I’ve worked with, and the guitar legend and multi-tasker, Paul Challenger; and not least of course to Michael himself, whom I know through many sources, including my involvement on the Board at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, where Michael is a professor, and with which Clifford Chance has a thriving community relationship.

I hope you have as much fun listening to this concert as we had putting it together.

Esther Cavett

Programme

Beethoven – *Sonata for Violin and Piano No.5 in F, “Spring”*

Skempton – *Promenade*

Traditional, arr. Bochmann – *Amazing Grace*

Kreisler – *Praeludium and Allegro in the style of Pugnani*

Programme Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven – Sonata for Violin and Piano No.5 in F Major, Op. 24

Allegro

Adagio molto espressivo

Scherzo: Allegro molto

Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

Often known as the *Spring* sonata, this work was published in 1801. Its dedicatee was Count Moritz von Fries, a patron to whom the fourth violin sonata, the string quintet of the same year, and the seventh symphony were also dedicated. The sonata opens with a mellifluous melody that is full of optimism and grace. But, true to form, an impatient Beethoven doesn't linger over its opening for long and rapidly develops the movement with his usual assertive ingenuity. The Adagio is a pastoral miniature in B-flat Major which speaks simply and flowingly, with the violin and piano alternating in presenting the theme in slightly different variations. In the mischievous Scherzo the violin plays mimic to the piano's impertinent tune. The finale is in rondo form with a lyrical theme followed by three episodes utilizing a rigorous development which is both light-hearted and spontaneous – its dotted rhythms exemplify Beethoven's inventiveness.

Reviewed at the time, this pastoral sonata was deemed 'among the best things being written today. This composer's original, fiery and audacious spirit increasingly begins to reject any kind of excess and makes an ever more pleasing impression, without losing any of its character'. The sonata has an obvious appeal – tuneful, inventive and fresh, making the subtitle *Spring* most appropriate.

Howard Skempton – *Promenade*

Howard Skempton was born in Chester in 1947, and has worked as a composer, accordionist, and music publisher. He studied in London with Cornelius Cardew from 1967 and Cardew helped him to discover a musical language of great simplicity. Since then he has continued to write undeflected by compositional trends, producing a corpus of more than 300 works – many pieces being miniatures for solo piano or accordion. Skempton calls these pieces “the central nervous system” of his work.

Skempton's catalogue of works is as diverse as it is long, ranging from pieces for solo cello (*Six Figures*, 1998), and guitar (*Five Preludes*, 1999), to the *Chamber Concerto for fifteen players*, the *Concerto for Hurdy-Gurdy and Percussion*, and *Lento*, premièred by the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican in 1991, and performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ilan Volkov at the 2010 BBC Proms.

Recent commissions include two from the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group – a work for oboe and string trio, *Field Notes*, and a setting of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* for baritone (Roderick Williams) and ensemble – and a *Piano Concerto* for John Tilbury commissioned by the BBC for a premiere at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival in 2015.

Promenade was commissioned by Esther Cavett. The piece is essentially a piano solo but has an optional part for a violin or other melody instrument. The title reflects both the tempo of the music, which is andante (literally, at a walking pace), and its relaxed character. As if endorsing such flexibility, the first performance, in Burford in December 2014, was enhanced by the addition of a young choir. In today's concert, the enhancement is provided by the string group from Thomas Tallis.

Amazing Grace – arranged by Michael Bochmann

Amazing Grace is a hymn published in 1779 with words written by the English clergyman John Newton. John Newton was originally a slave trader in the East of London who later saw the error of his ways, and was also William Wilberforce's mentor in abolishing slavery. *Amazing Grace* has been associated with more than 20 melodies, the most well-known being the tune which will be played today, from the 1830s. This was taken up in many arrangements, and in the current arrangement was the first piece that Michael worked on with the children from Thomas Tallis last term, in a series of workshops and end of term concert. After the first rehearsal, several of the children who had never played a violin before asked if they could take an instrument home to practise! If you compare the role of the children accompanying Michael in this piece with their role in *Promenade*, you will see how far they have come in just one term. Michael created this arrangement originally in connection with his work as Music Director of the Water City Festival in East London (www.water-city.com).

Fritz Kreisler – Praeludium and Allegro

Fritz Kreisler was one of the most influential violinists of his time. He represents a link between the interpretative styles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to commissioning and giving the premiers of major works such as Elgar's *Violin Concerto* in 1910, he composed a range of music for violin and piano. Much of his work was originally published as pastiches in the style of other composers such as Tartini, Vivaldi and, in the case of this work, Gaetano Pugnani. When Kreisler revealed in 1935 that they were actually by him and the music critics complained, Kreisler answered that earlier critics had already deemed the compositions worthy of publication and that although 'the name of the composer has changed, the value remains'. It seems that Kreisler had originally developed a solution to appease critics but by 1935 he had ceased to care or else he just liked causing trouble!

Biographies

Michael Bochmann, violin



Michael was brought up in Turkey and England. As a student he was a prize-winner in the 1972 Carl Flesch International Violin Competition and the Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris. He studied with Frederick Grinke and also received lessons from Sándor Végh and Henryk Szeryng. At 19, he made his first solo broadcasts for the BBC. Michael formed the Bochmann Quartet in 1977 and they made over 50 broadcasts within the next 10 years.

In February 1990 he partnered Sir Yehudi Menuhin in the Bach *Double Violin Concerto* on a 16-concert tour of the USA and Canada. He frequently directs the English String Orchestra and has performed as soloist with them many times in the UK and abroad. His recording with ESO of *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughan Williams has been broadcast many times on Radio 3 and Classic FM.

Recently he has performed and taught in Mexico, South Africa, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany and Italy. Michael is a professor of violin at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

Esther Cavett, piano



Esther had a first career as an academic musician. She was awarded a Henry Fellowship for doctoral research at Yale and subsequently became a lecturer in Music at Oxford University and was invited to become an honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Music. She studied the piano with Guy Jonson at the Royal Academy of Music and also with Susan Bradshaw and Thalia Myers. Esther published widely on Mozart and other musical topics, including a long contribution on Mozart's style to the *Mozart Companion* (Thames and Hudson).

It was partly that last exercise which led her to decide she had the skills to become a lawyer, and she spent over 20 years in the City, most of them at Clifford Chance. She co-founded the CC Music Club whilst running the Corporate Trusts Group in Capital Markets, London. She has now returned to pursuing her musical interests, including as a performer, teacher, Governor of the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and trustee of the City of London Festival.

Thomas Tallis Strings

At Thomas Tallis School we ensure that *all* students have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. We believe that music, including classical music should not be considered complex or difficult, but something that should be accessible and enjoyable from the moment a student picks up an instrument for the first time. The Tallis Strings are a perfect example of what our new musicians can achieve, with a little effort, in a matter of hours. This is the Tallis Strings' first performance outside of school.

We would like to thank Michael Bochmann for his excellent, inspiring string workshops and Esther Cavett for her support of music and musicians at Thomas Tallis School.

Violins

Olivia Carpenter

Kacey Carter

Pelymi Aruna

Amalachi Hill

Aliyah Aden

Ella Luxford

Daniel Luo

Nishan Giri

Tommy Baker

Jane Lee

Rose Smith

Cellos

Joe Galler

Anwar Ellis

Sinead Jackson

Gabriel Pearson

C L I F F O R D C H A N C E

What we do

The Clifford Chance London Music Club has been operating since 2007, enriching the working environment of the firm. We offer staff the opportunity to take piano and singing lessons with experienced teachers in the firm's music room and host several recitals each year. Performances have included world-famous luminaries such as Nikolai Demidenko, Steven Isserlis, the Brodsky Quartet, Nicola Benedetti and the 2012 winner of BBC Young Musician of the Year, Laura van der Heijden. We have also hosted performances by gifted musicians at the start of their careers such as the Southbank Sinfonia and Razumovsky Young Artists. The Music Club also has links with several renowned musical institutions including the Royal Opera House and Wigmore Hall.

Future concerts in the 2015 season include the Yale Alley Cats, on Thursday 14 May, and Martin James Bartlett, on Thursday 1 October.

To find out more about Music@CC, future concerts and music lessons please email music@cliffordchance.com or visit <http://intranet/busserv/london/general/music.html>.