



1ST

London Festival of Bulgarian Culture

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Programme

2 – 26 November 2010



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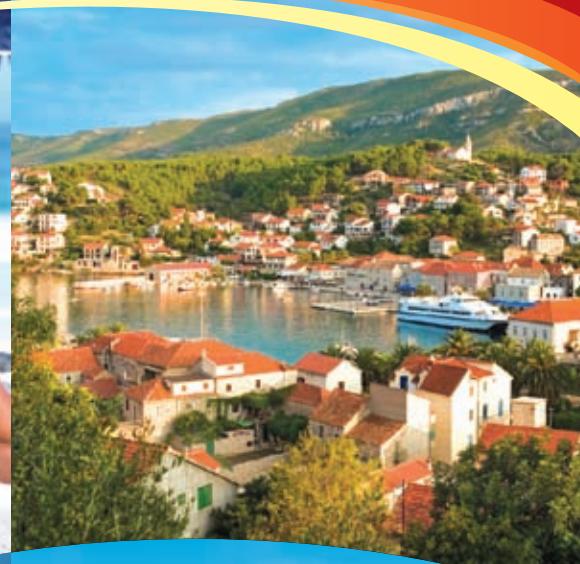
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**FESTIVAL
PROGRAMME
BY DATES:**

2 November, 7:30pm
Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares
Children presented by
“Dimitar Berbatov” Foundation

Southbank Centre's
Queen Elizabeth Hall
Belvedere Road
London
SE1 8XX

3 November, 7.30pm
Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares
Presented by Serious

Royal Northern College of Music
124 Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9RD

4 November, 7.30pm
Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares
Presented by Serious

Birmingham Town Hall
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B3 3DQ

5 November, 7:30pm
The Bridge String Quartet
Devorina Gamalova - violin / viola

St. James's Piccadilly
St James's Church
197 Piccadilly
London
W1J 9LL

12 November, 7:30pm
London Bulgarian Choir

St. John's Smith Square
Smith Square
London
SW1P

19 November, 7:30pm
The Forte String Quartet
Sarkis Zakarian - piano

St. James's Piccadilly
St James's Church
197 Piccadilly
London
W1J 9LL

26 November, 7:30pm
Sofia Soloists Chamber Orchestra
Kristine Blaumane – violoncello
Vania Vatralova-Stankov – soprano
Ivo Stankov – violin

St. James's Piccadilly
St James's Church
197 Piccadilly
London
W1J 9LL

1 – 13 November
Exhibition

Bulgarian Embassy in London
186-188 Queen's Gate
London
SW7 5HL

7 and 20 November
Educational Events:
Violin, viola, and violoncello
Master Classes

Bulgarian Embassy in London
186-188 Queen's Gate
London
SW7 5HL

14 November
Violin competition

Bulgarian Embassy in London
186-188 Queen's Gate
London
SW7 5HL

FROM THE ORGANISER



IVO STANKOV

I would like to welcome you to London Festival of Bulgarian Culture, where the breadth, artistry and history of Bulgarian culture, will be showcased in the first festival to celebrate Bulgarian arts in London.

There are a number of reasons why such an event is taking place now in London. It is true to say that the general public in the UK knows very little about Bulgarian culture and, as a musician, I would add that it is perhaps especially true for Bulgarian classical music. The idea of presenting works by Bulgarian composers gradually evolved in my mind over the last few years, and became “alive” around two years ago when my wife and I decided that it was time that we, as performers and Bulgarians living in London, should do something about propagating our rich cultural heritage in arguably the biggest cultural capital of the world.

The programme in our first edition of the festival features mainly concerts, but also includes an exhibition, and two educational events – instrumental master classes and a violin competition. Some of the most internationally renowned Bulgarian musicians will take part, and works of the most celebrated Bulgarian composers from the 20th Century, their names mostly unknown in the UK, will be performed. But this festival is not confined to presenting and propagating our national culture and achievements, it is also about establishing a dialogue of fresh and new creative ideas and art experimentation between artists living in London and Bulgaria.

We are presenting three World and four UK Premieres, two of them written especially for the festival. Gwyn Pritchard, John Howard, and The Bridge Quartet will, through their compositions and performances, portray their views of Bulgarian music and what is more, will take a personal and distinct look of the unique rhythms and sounds which characterize it.

Martin Georgiev and Dobrinka Tabakova are two of the most sought after young generation of Bulgarian composers. Both are based in London, have won major prizes at competitions and already gained international recognition, and have established their unique and personal style. I am delighted that their works will also be premiered in our festival's programme.

Lastly I would like to say a big ‘thank you’ to our friends, supporters, and patrons, who have contributed to this project. In this very challenging current financial climate, it is nothing short of a miracle that the festival has become a reality. Despite a few setbacks, and the general lack of financial support from the Bulgarian Government, I am thrilled that we have received significant support from both the Bulgarian Embassy in London, and also of many individuals and companies in Bulgaria and the UK. This makes me feel optimistic about the future - my vision for this festival is that it should take place every two years, expanding its diversity and establishing itself as one of the most interesting, vibrant, and dynamic cultural forums in London.

A WORD FROM OUR PATRONS

AMBASSADOR LYUBOMIR KYUCHUKOV

Culture is wealth, yet a wealth that increases when shared.

The London Festival of Bulgarian Culture, will give the British audience an opportunity to discover the beauty of Bulgarian traditional and contemporary music and art, and will enhance cultural and business links between Bulgaria and the UK. The Bulgarian Embassy is proud to support this festival and hopes you will enjoy its exciting programme.

DIMITAR BERBATOV

It is wonderful that London will have a chance to sample through this festival the Bulgarian culture which we are proud of. Our culture, the quest for education and the upholding of our traditions through the centuries are the reason for the survival of our national spirit.

I am delighted that through the talents of the children "Dimitar Berbatov Foundation" is presenting at the festival, the audience will be able to appreciate their special gifts, which certainly will carry over that spirit into the future.

SONIA ROUVE-OVALIEVA

As Director of the Ouvaliev Foundation, a charitable foundation registered in Bulgaria for the promotion of culture in the name of the Ouvaliev family, I am especially happy to support this initiative. The London Festival of Bulgarian Culture, with its rich musical programme, is sure to be a great success.

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

BULGARIAN COMPOSERS

Our concert programme is packed with many fantastic music pieces. It will feature works written by some of the most celebrated Bulgarian composers from the 20th Century such as, Pancho Vladigerov, Marin Goleminov & Parashkev Hadjiev.

THREE WORLD PREMIERES

John Howard - From Darkness Into Light

John Howard's new work called "From Darkness Into Light", is a Concertino for Violin/Viola and String Quartet inspired by and dedicated to the soloist Devorina Gamalova. It features a soloist who begins the work playing viola, and changes to violin at about the halfway point. The work is in one continuous movement. "From Darkness Into Light" is John Howard's 3rd quartet. The musical material includes folk song material from Bulgaria and other Eastern European sources.

Interesting fact: For the first time in the world a composition features a soloist changing instruments – from viola to violin, halfway through the performance.

Martin Georgiev – String Quartet No1

Inspired by the Bulgarian Eastern-Orthodox Chant, and developing its modality and microtonal features through a method influenced by the technique of "morphing images" in cinema, this string quartet explores a conflict between the spiritual and the earthly in a concise yet dramatic narrative.

Interesting fact: 'Morphing Modality' is Martin Georgiev's particular compositional method developed upon features of Bulgarian and Byzantine Chant. Those traditions exhibit a unique approach to modality and music theory, distinctly different from both the Antic modal system and the Western modality which has been developed on its basis.

Kiril Todorov - Six new songs for the London Bulgarian Choir

Acclaimed composer Kiril Todorov (Emeritus Professor of the Bulgarian Academy of Arts and Science) has a unique style fusing folk and jazz into a thrilling new a cappella genre. He has written for some of Bulgaria's leading folk ensembles and his works are already a vital and favourite part of the London Bulgarian Choir's repertoire. To celebrate its tenth anniversary, the Choir commissioned the composer to write six special songs which will be premiered at this concert. The songs were crafted for almost a year in both Bulgaria and in London and we are very proud to present them to you for the first time.

Interesting fact: The London Bulgarian Choir is unusual by Bulgarian folk choir standards because it has men. The choral arrangements it performs are substantially rearranged to accommodate the male element. Kiril's new songs are the first major commission in the genre for a mixed choir.

THREE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

We will be celebrating the 20th Anniversaries of two of the most renowned string quartets in the UK and USA respectively The Bridge Quartet and The Forte String Quartet, as well as celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the London Bulgarian Choir!

Performance details:

Friday, 5th of November,
St. James's Piccadilly
The Bridge Quartet / Devorina
Gamalova – violin/viola

Performance details:

Friday, 19th of November,
St. James's Piccadilly
The Forte String Quartet

Performance details:

Friday, 12th of November,
St. John's Smith Square
London Bulgarian Choir

FOUR UK PREMIERES

Gwyn Pritchard – “In The Silence of Turned Earth” for soprano, violin, and string orchestra (text by Imogen Robertson)

In the Silence of Turned Earth was composed for the present performers, and is a response to the suggestion that the piece should in some way relate to Bulgarian music. Although there are no audible, direct references to any specific features of traditional Bulgarian music, the composition of the work was nonetheless effected by the composer’s experience of listening to a large amount of Bulgarian folk music. The text, specially written by Imogen Robertson, also touches on a traditional Bulgarian theme.

Interesting fact:

The World Premiere of this work with Sofia Soloists and Stankov Ensemble was performed on 16th of September 2010 in Sofia, as part of the celebrations of Day of Sofia.

Performance details:

Friday, 26th of November,

St. James’s Piccadilly

Sofia Soloists Chamber Orchestra,

Vania Vatralova-Stankov - soprano,

Ivo Stankov - violin

Dobrinka Tabakova - Dawn-Day from Sun Triptych

Dawn is the first of three pieces making up the triptych Dawn-Day-Dusk. It represents sunrise with low, rich chords in the orchestra, which ascend throughout the pieces with decorated solos which lead the progress. Day then takes over, with insects buzzing in sun drenched meadows, reflected in the textures of the orchestra and soaring solos like bird song. The work is written for Gidon Kremer, Kristine Blaumane and Kremerata Baltica in celebration of the orchestra’s 10th anniversary and Gidon Kremer’s 60th birthday.

Performance details:

Friday, 26th of November,

St. James’s Piccadilly

Sofia Soloists Chamber Orchestra,

Kristine Blaumane - violoncello,

Ivo Stankov - violin

Interesting fact:

Kristine Blaumane, to whom the work is officially dedicated, will be performing it on the night!

Parashkev Hadjiev – Four Songs for Soprano and string orchestra (arranged by Plamen Djouroff)

Written originally for soprano and string quartet by Hadjiev, this work was rediscovered recently by Maestro Plamen Djouroff who orchestrated it especially for the commemoration concert of the Day of Sofia Celebrations this year. It was performed by Sofia Soloists and Vania Vatralova-Stankov to critical acclaim and we are delighted to feature its UK Premiere at the festival.

Performance details:

Friday, 26th of November,

St. James’s Piccadilly

Sofia Soloists Chamber Orchestra

Vania Vatralova-Stankov – soprano

Interesting fact:

Parashkev Hadjiev is one of the most frequently staged and most prolific Bulgarian opera composers.

Marin Goleminov - Quartet No 4 (Micro quartet)

Goleminov’s Fourth String Quartet revealed him to be a modern master of the miniature. Throughout the work each diverse movement is dedicated to an individual compatriot. Goleminov as a violinist chose many colours through specific effects to impart maximum character to each short movement.

Performance details:

Friday, 5th of November,

St. James’s Piccadilly

The Bridge Quartet

Interesting fact: Marin Goleminov’s most famous ballet “Nestinarka” (which incidentally is also the most performed Bulgarian ballet of all time), was banned by the Bulgarian communist government for nearly ten years in the early 1940’s, because it was thought that some scenes of “mystical nature ”were not in accordance with the regime’s official cultural policy and shouldn’t be performed.

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MASTER CLASS TUTORS AND COMPETITION JURY

Dimitar Burov
Head of Strings at Harrow School

Dr. Devorina Gamalova
Lecturer at Goldsmiths College, Trinity College
of Music, LCM and Birmingham Conservatoire

Ivo Stankov
Violin teacher at JAGS, JASSPA, SLYO,
and director of LFBC

Kalin Ivanov
Violoncellist, teacher on the faculty of
Brooklyn College/CUNY, and Adelphi University
New York, USA

THREE AGE CATEGORIES

Group A (10-14 years)
Group B (15-18 years)
Group C (19-24 years)

COMPETITION PRIZES

£200 Special LFBC prize for best interpretation of Bulgarian piece, and £250
in total awarded to the winners of the first three prizes.

DATES

Violin Master Class – Sunday 7th of November 2010
Violin Competition - Sunday, 14th of November 2010
Violoncello Master Class – Saturday 20th of November 2010

LOCATION

All events will be held at the Bulgarian Embassy,
186-188 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HL.

HOW TO ENTER

Full details of the master class and competition, including the Bulgarian
pieces for each category, can be downloaded from the official website of
LFBC at: <http://lfbc.eu/en/masterclass.html>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please call 0208 648 28 22, 0757 646 0676
or e-mail: masterclass@lfbc.eu



AMAZING VOICES

Tuesday, 2 November, 7.30pm

Queen Elizabeth Hall

LE MYSTERE DES VOIX BULGARES

Female Vocal Choir which used to be known all over the world as The Bulgarian State Television Female Vocal Choir, is an ensemble of rare artistic gift and enormous popular appeal. The choir truly represents one of the most amazing success stories in music. Created in the early Fifties the choir's first mission was to record authentic and arranged music for multi-voice choral folk songs to be recorded and broadcast first on the radio and later on TV.

Marcel Cellier, the Swiss music producer, discovers the beauty of Bulgarian folk songs, folk singers, their unique voices and choral skills and in 1975 releases his first album – Volume I which he called “Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares”(The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices). In 1987 Volume II was released, earning it in 1990 an American “Grammy Award”.

It was at that time that the choir was renamed “Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares”. In 1988, the choir began a world tour and has since performed five times in the USA and Canada, three times in Latin America, and given annual tours in most European countries. It has also performed in India and Hong Kong. Their CD named “Rituals” released by Nonesuch in 1994 was also nominated for a “Grammy”. Warner Brothers also released Cellier’s volumes I, II, III (1990) with sales of more than a quarter of a million albums in USA and over a million internationally.

The ensemble under the direction of Prof. Dr.Dora Hristova has for many years now performed in an exotic multi-voice style beautifully arranged songs combining folk melodies with sophisticated harmonies and compelling rhythms. The repertoire of the choir is drawn from arrangements created by the esteemed Bulgarian composers Philip Koutev, Krassimir Kyurkchiyski, Nikolai Kaufman, Petar Lyondev, Ivan Spassov, Stefan Moutafchiev, Kiril Stefanov, etc.

“These are the singers that won the Grammy Award and endorsement from such pop superstars as Paul Simon, Linda Ronstadt, George Harrison, Bobby Mcferrin, Midori and many others all over the world. They create a crossover sensation everywhere they perform as listeners of all music faiths gather in the presence of sounds more strangely wonderful than almost any they have heard before... Everyone could consider himself richer in spirit for having heard Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares” (Chicago Tribune).

The singers transform sounds into strange vocal colours as if something other than human voice, perhaps some foreign instrument, is playing. The singers “jubilate, shout, ornament, form fast and perfect glissandos, let one crazy rhythm follow another and make their voices build the most daring chords” and “suddenly a listener believes he has heard an archaic world of sounds from times long ago”, another sees “the marriage of the avant-garde and the Middle ages”.



"DIMITAR BERBATOV" FOUNDATION PRESENTS

MARIELA APOSTOLOVA - 11 YEARS OLD

Mariela performs songs from all folk regions in Bulgaria, but her favourite ones are from Thrace. Her slow songs as well as her fast ones represent the folk music of the Pazardzhik region in a brilliant way. According to the specialists in the field of folk singing, Mariela has a voice rich in timbre colour, a wide range and she can easily perform sophisticated ornaments. At 11, she has a singing technique which was inherent only to the best performers of this genre.

NATALIA VLADIMIROVA - 12 YEARS OLD

..I immensely love to sing and play the piano! I sing Thracian songs and songs from the Strandja mountain since I was 4 years old. I participate in a lot of concerts and I get excited before the start of each one of them. My dream is to become a great pianist one day, as well as to glorify the Bulgarian folklore all around the world ... I am currently a pupil at the National School for Music and Theatrical Art 'Prof. Pancho Vladigerov' – in Burgas."

ALEXANDRA BORISOVA - 13 YEARS OLD

Alexandra has been revealing an unusual talent for music since she was a little girl. Encouraged by the unreserved support of her family, she started to play the piano to improve her musical talent. Her first appearance on the stage was when she was four years old. Her teacher in vocal music is her mother Gergana Borisova. She is a winner of many awards and insignia of honour in various national and international music competitions.

MARIA ENCHEVA - 16 YEARS OLD

Being brought up in the traditions of popular folklore, Maria took up singing in her very early childhood. Gradually she engaged her efforts in the performance of Thracian folkloric songs with their typical vocal ornaments. It is precisely in the Bulgarian national song that Maria discerns the unmistakable beauty of her home country and sees her life-long vocation. Student of renowned figures in the domain of Bulgarian national folkloric singing, and thanks to her unique voice, Maria has attained a number of awards.

"Dimitar Berbatov" Foundation was founded with a constitutive act from April 7, 2008 by the football star Dimitar Berbatov, led by his desire to contribute to the personal development and realisation of the children of Bulgaria. The Foundation is a non-profit, non-religious and politically independent social organisation.

Its main mission is to vastly help young people to educate themselves, to develop their gifts and talents, as well as to give them a chance to share them with the world. The Foundation is establishing itself as an organisation for realising deeds to benefit society.





COSMOS, FIREWORKS AND LIGHT - FROM HAYDN TO HOWARD

Friday, 5 November 2010, 7.30pm

St. James's Piccadilly

THE BRIDGE QUARTET

DEVORINA GAMALOVA - VIOLIN/VIOLA

On this Bonfire Night the Bridge String Quartet, celebrating their 20th Anniversary this year, will light the touch paper with one of Haydn's most improvisatory quartets Op.54 No.2. Tchaikovsky's effervescent first quartet provides the explosive finale. The Bridge Quartet also give the UK PREMIERE of the pithy "Microquartet" by Marin Goleminov, and then they are joined by Bulgarian violinist and violist Devorina Gamalova for the WORLD PREMIERE of John Howard's Quartet "From Darkness Into Light."

BRIDGE QUARTET

The Bridge Quartet have a strong English repertoire built round their acclaimed recordings of the four quartets by their namesake. They gave a three-concert Bridge Cycle on the South Bank for the Kirckman Concert Society and repeated this at the Dartington International Summer Festival. The Bridge Quartet have performed in major Festivals in the UK, Europe and America including Cambridge, City of London, Tuscany, Dubrovnik, Fayence, Jacksonville, Jimena, King's Lynn, Machynlleth and Newbury. The Bridge Quartet's diverse educational portfolio includes projects with students from Trinity College of Music and Sikh musicians from the Raj Academy. They hold regular residential courses in England, France, Italy and Switzerland.

DEVORINA GAMALOVA

Dr. Devorina Gamalova graduated the State Academy of Music in Sofia [violin], Royal College of Music [PG violin], GSMD [PG viola] and in 2008 was awarded a PhD degree in London. She worked as principal leader of a symphony orchestra in Germany and later moved to the UK focusing on solo and chamber performance as well as devoting herself to teaching. She worked also as a regular recitalist for Yehudi Menuhin's "Live Music Now!", has several CDs and broadcasts and performs throughout Europe as a soloist, recitalist and as a leader of a quartet.

WORLD PREMIERE

JOHN HOWARD – COMPOSER

John Howard is active as a composer, music educator/musicologist, and conductor. His music has been widely commissioned, performed and broadcast internationally, and his output includes commissions by the Medici String Quartet, and Singapore Symphony Orchestra amongst many others. His music has been performed worldwide, and by many distinguished performers including Peter Lawson, Richard Deering, Lontano, London Sinfonietta Voices, Electric Phoenix, Resonance, Inter-Artes, the London Collegiate Brass, Mary Weigold, and John Bingham. Recent work includes There the Dance is, for the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, two string quartets for the Medici Quartet, African Toccata: a solo piano piece for Julian Hellaby, and Making War, Seeking Peace, for the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra.

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THE LONDON BULGARIAN CHOIR

Led by Dessislava Stefanova

Friday, 12 November, 7.30 (doors at 7 pm)

St John's Smith Square

Westminster

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS WITH NEW SONGS AND
WELL-LOVED FAVOURITES IN ONE OF LONDON'S
MOST MAGICAL VENUES

"About a year ago, the wondrous Bulgarian choir appeared before us as if from musical heaven, a total delight, surprise, revelation... a shimmering vision of purest sound and beauty." Max Reinhardt, composer, presenter of Late Junction, BBC Radio 3

"A guaranteed stunning, aural delight." Time Out

The Choir was founded in 2000 by Dessislava Stefanova, a former singer and assistant conductor with the renowned Philip Koutev Bulgarian National Folk Ensemble. This vibrant and sociable group of singers has grown to win hearts and minds from the Yorkshire Dales to Bulgaria's mountain villages. Forty-strong, the largely non-Bulgarian choir has brought its repertoire of traditional Bulgarian songs to concert halls, nightclubs, festivals, rock concerts and even a barge on the Thames. The Choir marks its ten-year journey by launching six spine-tingling, newly commissioned songs by acclaimed Bulgarian composer Kiril Todorov.

Kiril is a master of blending folk and jazz into a sublime new a cappella genre. His new compositions and arrangements of traditional songs have taken the Choir on an electrifying musical journey – both metaphorical and real. Less than three months ago, the choir travelled to Bulgaria and performed the songs to the composer's friends and colleagues. This discerning audience was amazed and moved: from the joyous Sabrali Sa Se Nabrali, featuring the unsuspected talents of the singers on a variety of instruments, to the haunting resonance of Razbolyal Se E Mlad Stoyan – a dying hero's last words to his mother.

The Choir's notable achievements include winning the title of BBC Radio 3 Open Choir of the Year in 2006, being featured as one of Joan Armatrading's Favourite Choirs on BBC Radio 4 and performing at Westminster Abbey in 2010. The choir has collaborated with numerous rock, jazz and classical musicians, most prominently with rock band Doves at the BBC Electric Proms, broadcast live on BBC 2 in October 2009. The London Bulgarian Choir has released a beautiful album, Alyana Galyana and a Christmas Concert DVD. Members of the Choir sang on the award-winning soundtrack of the BBC's Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen.

The Choir would like to thank the BBC's Performing Arts Fund for the award which made the commission possible and the Bulgarian Embassy in London for its vital support and hospitality.

For information go to www.londonbulgarianchoir.co.uk



ART EXHIBITION 'IMPROPTU'

1 - 13 November

Sofia Gallery, Bulgarian Embassy

186-188 Queen's Gate

London SW7 5HL

Cerise Art Agency Is delighted to present Art Exhibition 'Impromptu' as part of the London Festival of Bulgarian Culture. The exhibition is supported by the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in London.

The aim of the exhibition is to present a selected number of works by contemporary British and Bulgarian painters and sculptors which embody their impressions and intuitive perceptions of Bulgaria and the influence on their art. The event will offer a selection of works especially created for the Festival.

ARTISTS

Dian Dimitrov

Elena Stoeva

Dimityr Stoianov

Mihail Jarovoi

Marcaeus Yates

Patrick Palmer

For further information:

www.lfbc.eu

www.ceriseagency.com



COLOURFUL MOSAIC OF SOUNDS

Friday, 19 November 2010, 7.30pm

St. James's Piccadilly
London
W1J 9LL

THE FORTE STRING QUARTET

Celebrating their 20th Anniversary this year, New York based The Forte String Quartet is one of the most sought-after chamber ensembles touring, recording and broadcast in the United States as well as in Europe. Their programme will include Shostakovich's energetic quartet in D major no.4, and the WORLD PREMIERE of the quartet commissioned by the festival from the young Bulgarian composer Martin Georgiev. The concert will finish with Schumann's consummate masterpiece - the Piano Quintet in E Flat Major op 44, celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the composer's birth.

SARKIS ZAKARIAN

Having performed in some of London's major venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. James'Piccadilly, Sarkis Zakarian has established a solo and chamber music career in the UK and abroad. Originally from Bulgaria, he graduated from the Royal Academy of Music with highest distinction and won prizes at renowned competitions in Europe. Having continuously been re-invited to music festivals in the country and abroad, Zakarian's performances have been hailed as

“...showing playing of considerable individuality, harnessed by the most beautiful bel canto lines and endorsed by a true spirit of spontaneity.”

WORLD PREMIERE MARTIN GEORGIEV – COMPOSER

Award-winning composer-conductor Martin Georgiev is a Conducting Graduate and PhD researcher in Composition at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Amongst his teachers have been Colin Metters, Dr Philip Cashian, Sir Colin Davis, George Hurst, and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. Georgiev is a laureate of 19 prizes from competitions for composers and percussionists including the International Composers Forum Tactus in Brussels, the Grand Prize for Composition of the Sofia National Philharmonic and the UBS Golden Stave award. He is currently a finalist for the Hindemith Prize for Composition at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany.

He has worked as a composer-conductor with Bulgarian National Radio Orchestra, the National Orchestra of Belgium, Sofia Philharmonic, Varna Philharmonic, London Bloomsbury Opera, Aldeburgh Festival Opera, London Royal Academy Concert Orchestra and Manson Ensemble, the Azalea Ensemble amongst many and his works have been performed in Europe, the USA, and Israel.



New Balkans Law Office



New Balkans Law Office is a Bulgarian legal services provider with offices in Sofia and London, specialising in corporate and commercial law, with a particular emphasis on advisory and cross-border work. NBLO has recently been developing an interest in the technology and venture capital, and in the private equity sectors.

NBLO also maintains a strong private client practice and services HNWIs and non-HNWIs from both overseas and Bulgaria in arranging their Bulgarian and cross-border estates, pensions, family affairs and in catering for their employment and immigration needs.

Founded in 2005, the firm has gone from strength to strength, providing advice primarily to international clients and diversifying its portfolio of practice areas.

We believe in the importance of supporting cultural initiatives, building on our strong interest in cultural property and charity law. We are proud to sponsor the London Festival of Bulgarian Culture.

We would like to thank the organisers who have worked tirelessly to put on a series of events and workshops that makes a compelling bid for the need for Bulgarian culture's more prominent representation in London's cultural calendar.

We hope you enjoy the events of the festival. In the meantime, if we can facilitate any of your plans in Bulgaria with legal advice and representation, we would be more than happy to assist you.

For more information on what we do, please visit our website at:
www.newbalkanslawoffice.com



CHAMBER EXTRAVAGANZA

Friday, 26 November 2010, 7.30pm

St. James's Piccadilly

London W1J 9LL

SOFIA SOLOISTS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The Sofia Soloists will perform two UK PREMIERES - "Dawn-Day" by Dobrinka Tabakova, and "In The Silence of Turned Earth" by Gwyn Pritchard, especially commissioned for the festival. The concert will also feature the wonderfully melodic songs for soprano and orchestra by Parashkev Hadjiev, and the Pièce de résistance of the orchestra's repertoire - Sergey Prokofiev's "Fugitive Visions". The evening will conclude with one of the masterpieces written for a chamber orchestra - Tchaikovsky's Serenade for strings.

The distinguished Bulgarian chamber orchestra has performed over 3000 concerts all over the world in their 48 years of history. They have premiered over 100 works, some of them written especially for them. Sofia Soloists have recorded over 60 CDs for BMG, Decca, and Columbia amongst others, and some of the most internationally renowned musicians such as Henryk Szeryng, Heinz Holliger and Nigel Kennedy have performed with them.



KRISTINE BLAUMANE – VIOLONCELLO

Kristine was born in Riga into a family of musicians. In 1996 she moved to England. She has won many prestigious competitions and awards including the Latvian Philharmonic Young Musician of the Year, the Carmel International Competition and the Lord Mayor's Prize. She gives recitals and performs with orchestras such as the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and Amsterdam Sinfonietta, amongst many others, under conductors including Thomas Sanderling, Lev Markiz and Peter Oundjian.

She has been a guest at major international festivals such as Lockenhaus, Gstaad, Salzburg and Verbier, and has performed chamber music with artists such as Isaac Stern, Gidon Kremer, Bruno Giuranna, Yo Yo Ma, Yuri Bashmet and Nikolaj Znaider. In 2005, Kristine became a laureate of the Great Music Award, the highest prize given by the Latvian State in the field of music.

VANIA VATRALOVA-STANKOV – SOPRANO

The Bulgarian Soprano is a recipient of numerous awards, including an Award from the Spanish Ministry of Education and the Donizetti Award from the Welsh National Opera School for two consecutive years. She has performed recitals at many festivals in the UK and Europe, including the Belcanto Festival Dordrecht (Holland), Varna the International Summer Festival, Sofia Music Weeks Festival, and the International Summer Festival in Peralada, Barcelona. She has also performed the mainstream oratorio repertoire with orchestras such as the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and the Valencia Baroque Orchestra.

Vania has recorded for the major Spanish Television Channels as well as a CD recording of an Early Music of the



“Mystery of Elche”- recognized as part of the UNESCO’s Patrimony of the Humanity Treasures. On the operatic stage she has appeared as Traviata, Rusalka and Ana Bolena with WNOS, Royal Opera School, Madrid and also took part in the Tower of London Festival’s production of Ana Bolena (in the title role), with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Alex Ingram. She recorded her second CD “Operatic Favorites” in 2008, with the Sofia Symphony Orchestra.

IVO STANKOV – VIOLIN

Ivo Stankov is one of Bulgaria’s leading artists of his generation. He has performed extensively through the UK and Europe as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral leader. He made his recital debuts to critical acclaim at the Wigmore Hall and the Bulgaria National Hall and has performed at all the major chamber music venues in London. He has also performed as a soloist at the Royal Albert Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Glasgow Concert Hall, the RAI Congress Centre Amsterdam, and Sofia National Palace of Culture, to name a few. He has also taken part in the international festivals Sofia Music Days, Varna Summer, International Flanders Festival Ghent, and Torino- Milano International Music Festival. Ivo is a leader of various ensembles based in London, and has collaborated and performed alongside many artists such as Mark Knopfler, Sir Cliff Richard and Johann Johansson.



UK PREMIERES

DOBRINKA TABAKOVA – COMPOSER

Dobrinka Tabakova is an award winning British/Bulgarian composer who studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and King’s College London. She works with some of the world’s leading musicians, amongst whom are Maxim Rysanov, Janine Jansen, Gidon Kremer and has been performed at international festivals such as the Gaudeamus Music Week, Cheltenham and Bath Music Festivals, World Choral Symposium and Spectrum Concerts Berlin.

GWYN PRITCHARD – COMPOSER

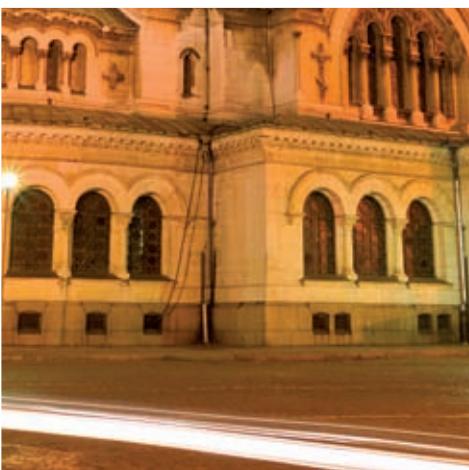
Gwyn Pritchard was born in Yorkshire in 1948 and studied ‘cello and composition at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. Much of his compositional activity has always been based outside the UK, notably in Poland, Switzerland, Germany and Italy, but also in the USA, Canada, Australia, China and Hong Kong; and at many leading international festivals. His substantial output contains music for orchestra, ensembles, solo instruments, voices and electronics. He is a professor of composition at Trinity College of Music, London.

PARASHKEV HADJIEV – COMPOSER

Parashkev was taught initially by his parents, both leading figures in the early years of Bulgarian opera (his father was a conductor, his mother a singer); he then studied composition with Josef Suk (1932-33) before entering the State Musical Academy in Sofia (1933) as a pupil of Pancho Vladigerov. On the recommendation of Vladigerov he took lessons with Joseph Marx in Vienna before completing his studies at the Berlin Hochschule fur Musik (1938-40). In 1940 Hadjiev became a lecturer at the Sofia Academy. He was one of the most prolific Bulgarian opera composers, and one of the most frequently staged.

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