

# Seaford Music Society

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026, at 3.00 pm**

## **Fibonacci Quartet**

Kryštof Kohout	<i>Violin</i>
Luna De Mol	<i>Violin</i>
Elliot Kempton	<i>Viola</i>
Findlay Spence	<i>Cello</i>

As the only ensemble ever to win both the First and Audience Prize at the Premio Paolo Borciani International String Quartet Competition in 2024, the Fibonacci Quartet are one of Europe's leading young string quartets.

During the 2025/26 season the quartet will perform extensively across Europe, with highlights including performances at Vienna Musikverein, Berlin Philharmonie, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Wigmore Hall, Munich Prinzregententheater and Philharmonie de Paris, as well as festival appearances at Edinburgh International Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Heidelberger Frühling Festival and Bad Tölz Winners Summit.

Alongside their busy performing schedule, the quartet teach as Quartet in Residence at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, as well as at the Royal Academy of Music in their position as Nina Drucker Fellows.

Winners at the 2024 Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) International auditions, they were also recently appointed as Grand Résident ensemble at ProQuartet in Paris for seasons 2025-2027.

Originally formed at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, they were Resident Ensemble at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofia in Madrid with Günter Pichler and at the Dutch String Quartet Academy in Amsterdam.

The Fibonacci Quartet are prolific prize winners and have received numerous awards, including First Prize in the Royal Over-Seas League Chamber Music Competition, First Prize in the Cavatina Chamber Music Competition, The RPS Henderson Chamber Ensemble Award, First Prize in the International Triomphe de l'Art Competition in Belgium, The Kirckman Society Award, Audience Prize at the Schiermonnikoog Festival and Special Prizes of the Shostakovich Association in Paris and Peermusic in Hamburg.

The Fibonacci Quartet are becoming increasingly renowned for their own original arrangements of non-classical repertoire. Their two-year Janáček project paired both of Janáček's quartets with arrangements of Moravian folk songs, and their wider repertoire of sets and encores has expanded to include jazz, musical theatre, heavy metal and beyond. The quartet regularly collaborate with contemporary composers including Kaija Saariaho, Helen Grime, Gérard Pesson, and YCAT Composer Fellow 2025/26 Fergus Hall.

The quartet is generously supported by the Hattori Foundation, the Cosman Keller Trust, The Frost Trust and Fondation Biermans-Lapôte in Paris.



Seaford Music Society gratefully acknowledges the support of Newberry Tully Estate Agents

## Franz Joseph HAYDN (1732-1809)

### String Quartet in D major ('Lark'), Op.64, No.5

- I *Allegro moderato*
- II *Adagio cantabile*
- III *Menuetto: Allegretto*
- IV *Vivace*

The year 1790 brought the death of Prince Nicholas Esterházy, and with it the end of Haydn's post as Kapellmeister in his service, allowing the composer to pursue a wider musical career. In the same year he made his first visit to London. While there he completed a commission from the rich merchant and accomplished violinist Johann Tost to provide six quartets, and the six Op.64 *Quartets* were then published with the Tost dedication. Today they remain some of his most popular works in this field, standing at the end of an era of quartets written for amateurs – albeit gifted ones – and looking forward to the public concert platform.

As the quartet opens, the violin soars with a beautiful melody which has inspired the nickname *The Lark* by which the work has become known, although it was not suggested by Haydn. After this, the rich expansion of the second subject is a wholly unexpected development, and its climax is succeeded by the most surprising stroke of all, as the first subject (the 'Lark' tune) sails calmly in once more and starts a brand new, and this time closely condensed, recapitulation.

The cantabile *Adagio* is one long song for the violin with a modulation to the minor in a central section. Variations on the main theme end the movement.

The same key relationship is present in the minuet and trio, where similarly the trio is based on the melodic material of the minuet. The *Finale* is a sparkling *moto perpetuo*, as semiquavers are passed from one instrument to another throughout the movement.

## Claude DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

### String Quartet No.1 in G minor, Op.10

- I *Animé et tres décidé*
- II *Assez vif et bien rythmé*
- III *Andantino, doucement expressif*
- IV *Très modéré - Très mouvementé et avec passion*

This early work, dedicated to the Ysaÿe Quartet, who première it at a Société Nationale concert in Paris in 1893, has several unusual features. Although Debussy called it 'No.1', it is actually his only string quartet: a second, planned for 1894, never materialised. Specific indication of a key – G minor – is unusual: except for this work and his G major *Piano Trio*, Debussy cites no specific keys in his titles. Curiously, it is identified as Op.10, yet Debussy's other works carry no opus numbers.

The quartet shows the influences that had shaped Debussy's development as a composer. The Exposition Universelle of 1889 introduced him to the gamelan, in particular the way its repeating rhythms set up a pattern of resonance. He had also spent three years as pianist in Mme von Meck's household. She had been the patroness of Tchaikovsky, and he became familiar with the style of both Tchaikovsky and Borodin during this time. Perhaps the most important influence was that of César Franck, who had briefly been one of Debussy's teachers at the Paris Conservatoire. He advocated the use of a cyclic structure using a motto-theme in various guises throughout a whole work to bind it together.

Already excited about 'Impressionism', Debussy disliked the constraints of classical form and subsequently abandoned it. In this quartet he turned to the use of the cyclic form, influenced by Borodin and especially

Franck, although his own personality is strongly present. This work, which strongly influenced Ravel's *String Quartet* of 1903, displays subtle effects, unique harmonies, and novel sonorities.

The germinal or motto theme – descending notes plus a triplet – appears in all movements except the *Andantino*. It opens the first movement and recurs frequently. The first violin and viola present the lyrical second subject.

The motto theme, now in 6/8 time, opens the second movement, a *scherzo* in ABA format. The centre section's violin passage is an extended *cantabile* version of the motto theme, which is later transformed yet again into 15/8 meter.

The beautiful *Andantino* in ABCBA form belongs to the day-dreaming world of a sultry summer afternoon; the sensual theme, always with new tones and shades of colour, moves from instrument to instrument. The finale's long introduction leads to a *fugato* section. The motto theme recurs in many different guises and places, including the coda, which ends the work brilliantly in G major.

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### INTERVAL 15 MINUTES

There are toilets in the lobby at the back of the church; and downstairs via the stairs beside the stage or, **on request**, via the lift next to the entrance foyer.

**Refreshments will not be served during the interval, but we invite you to join us downstairs for tea, coffee and biscuits after the concert ends.**

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## Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1846)

### String Quartet in A major, Op.41, No.3

- I *Andante espressivo – Allegro molto*
- II *Assai agitato*
- III *Adagio molto*
- IV *Finale: rondo*

Although Schumann had once or twice dabbled in chamber music as a young man, it was not until 1842, when he was 32, that he seriously turned to the string quartet. "The piano has become too limited for me. In the compositions I write now I hear many things I can hardly indicate. It is specially remarkable how my ideas are almost all canonic, and how I always discover the imitating voices later, often in inversion, in changed rhythms etc." He had confided to his beloved Clara Wieck in 1838 that he was working on a string quartet "which would come to something if she is true to him, if not they will be buried."

In writing string quartets he prepared himself rigorously by studying the scores of Mozart's and Beethoven's quartets for an uninterrupted two months. Actual composition was swift, and the three quartets were finished in less than a month. Schumann thought them among his best works, and Mendelssohn, to whom they were dedicated, thought so too. The quartets were, however, slow to gain wider recognition and they are still not often played today. The critical view has been that the first two are too occupied with craftsmanship at the expense of feeling, but that the third comes more from the heart.

The first movement of the *A major Quartet* begins with a slow introduction with a prominent falling fifth, which starts the theme of the *allegro*, completed by a running passage in a shapely curve and an upward arpeggio. The following second theme opens first on the cello, then the first violin, accompanied by *staccato* chords. The first section ends in a fanfare from the first violin. The brief development features the falling fifth of the first subject, which, with the rising fourth, makes a connecting link with the other movements.

The *assai agitato* theme is followed by four variations and a coda. The variations are very free and the relationship with the theme tenuous.

The *adagio molto* is a true Schumannesque melody, a long, eloquent, fervent song in D major on the first violin. The freely flowing harmonic part-writing in the other voices seems to suggest the influence of Beethoven. The theme is developed with an accompaniment of increasing complexity. The passionate expression rises to a climax then ebbs to a peaceful close.

The finale, an extended rondo marked *molto vivace*, is much the longest movement, but is the simplest in form. There is life and energy throughout, beginning with the precipitate launching of the irregular 14-bar first theme with its added quaver rhythm. An interlude, on a brief repeated four-bar phrase, is followed by a kind of trio, reminiscent of a Bach gavotte, full of imitative passages and jovial melodies. There are recurrences of earlier sections, including a simplified version of the gavotte, a final development of the energetic beginning, and then a brilliant rushing close.

*All programme notes courtesy of Making Music*

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**We warmly invite you to join us downstairs after the concert for a cup of tea or coffee**  
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## **Our next concert**

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 3.00 pm, at Seaford Baptist Church, Belgrave Road, Seaford**

An intriguing exploration by **Eleanor Westbrook** of songs, words and music from over three centuries, in her presentation '**One Mouth, Many Voices**'.

Membership of the Society grants you free entry to both remaining concerts this season, without additional charge. A limited number of children and young adults (under 26) may also attend without charge (children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult).

If you are not a member and would like to join, see our Treasurer, Paul Moore, at the desk in the entrance foyer. There will be a reduction in your annual membership subscription because you are joining after the start of the season, and the cost of your ticket for today's concert will be credited towards your subscription.

For non-members, tickets for the next concert cost £15, and can be purchased in advance from **Newberry Tully Estate Agents** in Church Street, Seaford; from **Seaford, Newhaven** and **Lewes Tourist Information Centres**; online through **TicketSource**; or from **our Treasurer, Paul Moore**.

## **Additional benefits for members of Seaford Music Society**

Members may bring one guest to any of the concerts in our 2025-26 season of concerts, at a reduction of £3 off the single-ticket price, subject to the concert not having sold out.

On presentation of their current membership card, members also enjoy the following benefits:

- A reduced price of £14 at any Haywards Heath Music Society concert in their 2025-26 season
- A reduced price of £17 at any Nicholas Yonge Society concert in their 2025-26 season
- A discount of £3 off the price of any Uckfield Music Club concert in their 2026 season

Tickets at these reduced prices are available at the door, on concert days only. Details of the concerts can be found on each organisation's website:

<b>Uckfield Music Club:</b>	<a href="http://www.uckfieldmusicclub.uk">www.uckfieldmusicclub.uk</a>
<b>Haywards Heath Music Society:</b>	<a href="http://www.haywardsheathmusicsociety.org.uk">www.haywardsheathmusicsociety.org.uk</a>
<b>Nicholas Yonge Society:</b>	<a href="http://www.nyslewes.org.uk">www.nyslewes.org.uk</a>