

Total performance time: approximately 50', with no interval

Kleio Quartet

Yume Fujise violin
Katherine Yoon violin
Jenny Lewisohn viola
Eliza Millett cello

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

String Quartet No.9 in C,
Op.59 'Razumovsky', No.3 (1806) 31'

- i. Andante con moto – Allegro vivace*
- ii. Andante con moto quasi allegretto*
- iii. Menuetto – Grazioso*
- iv. Allegro molto*

Jessie Montgomery (b.1981)

Strum (2006, rev.2012) 8'

Kleio Quartet

The Kleio Quartet are Britten Pears Young Artists for 2022–23 and are participants on Chamber Music in Residence at Snape Maltings.

The quartet was formed at the Seiji Ozawa International Chamber Academy in 2019 and has performed in major international venues such as the Wigmore, Victoria, Cadogan and Royal Festival halls, and the DR Koncerthuset. The quartet is particularly grateful to have received support and mentorship from Alina Ibragimova, as well as from John Myerscough through ChamberStudio's Mentorship Scheme. It has also received coaching from world-renowned chamber musicians Sadao Harada, Nobuko Imai, Pamela Frank, Pinchas Zukerman, Eckart Runge, Michael Gurevich and Pablo Hernán Benedí. The ensemble is delighted to have been selected as a winner of the Tunnell Trust's Music Club Awards Scheme 2022–23.

The Kleio Quartet are City Music Foundation Artists and are grateful for the ongoing support of Le Dimore del Quartetto.

Beethoven: String Quartet No.9, Op.59 No.3

When the Russian Ambassador Count Razumovsky commissioned three string quartets from Beethoven in 1805, he unwittingly triggered something best described as a quartet revolution. This was the start of Beethoven's so-called 'middle period', during which he freed himself from musical convention and struck out in a new direction, most notably with the publication of his radical third symphony, the 'Eroica'. Equally original was his approach to chamber music. In the 'early' quartets (Op.18) Beethoven had already begun to move away from the Classical model laid down by Haydn and Mozart: this new set took the process immeasurably further, with works that proved almost as demanding for audiences as for performers. One reviewer described them as profound and well-crafted but 'not easily comprehended', and a violinist who saw them in manuscript questioned whether they were music at all. 'Oh,' replied Beethoven, 'they are not for you. They are for a later age.'

This is the only one of the set not to include a Russian theme in recognition of its sponsor. It does, however, encompass a vast range of emotions – from a slow, almost mournful introduction right the way through to an extraordinary fugal finale, a movement so tempestuous and defiantly triumphant that the work was sometimes referred to as a second 'Eroica'.

Montgomery: Strum

Jessie Montgomery grew up on Manhattan's Lower East Side at a time when artists of all kinds were flocking to the area, creating what became a hotbed of artistic experimentation. It was a vibrant and stimulating environment in which her parents – both performers – were active participants. The effect on their daughter was profound and the deeply-felt music she was to produce later has been described as 'turbulent, wildly colourful and exploding with life'.

She conceived *Strum* in 2006 as a tribute, she says, to 'American folk idioms and the spirit of dance and movement'. The dance element is unmistakable from the start, as is the inspiration for the title, which refers to the 'strumming' effect in the *pizzicato* plucked strings.

Although *Strum* clearly combines elements of classical music with folk idioms, Montgomery says she did not deliberately set out to create a 'cross-cultural' mix. Her focus, she says, was primarily on instrumental colour and the various ways in which melodies and rhythms blend into each other. She scored the original for string quintet with two cellos, using the full range of the instruments to give the work a truly expansive sound quality. The version we hear today was arranged two years later.

Catriona Chase © 2023

The Britten Pears Young Artist Programme is made possible with the generous support of our Trust & Foundations and Individual supporters

We are grateful to
the Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust,
the Nicholson family in memory of Patricia Nicholson,
and The Radcliffe Trust
for their support toward Chamber Music in Residence