

Total performance time: approximately 60', with no interval

## Resol String Quartet

**Maria Vila Ariza** violin

**Annabel Kidd** violin

**Raphael Chinn** viola

**Alasdair Morton-Teng** cello

**Henriëtte Bosmans** (1895–1952)

String Quartet (1927)

12'

*i. Allegro molto moderato*

*ii. Lento*

*iii. Allegro molto*

The **Resol String Quartet** are Britten Pears Young Artists for 2022–23 and participated in the week-long Chamber Connections course in February 2023 with tutors Nicholas Daniel, Elena Urioste, Tom Poster and Isabelle van Keulen.

**Rebecca Clarke** (1886–1979)

Poem (1926)

8'

The quartet was formed in 2018 at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Taking its name from the Catalan word meaning 'reflection of sunlight', the quartet's members were brought together by their shared vision to make classical music more inclusive and accessible both in the present and for the future. Education is an important aspect of their work and each concert tour sees them visit local schools in the communities in which they perform.

**Florence Price** (1887–1953)

String Quartet No.2 in A minor (1935)

31'

*i. Moderato*

*ii. Andante cantabile*

*iii. Juba: Allegro*

*iv. Finale: Allegro*

The quartet is grateful to the National Lottery through Creative Scotland to support its outreach and performance activities for the 2022–23 season. Last season it was named as one of Chamber Music Scotland's 'Ones to Watch' and was accepted to work with Live Music Now Scotland. It has appeared live on BBC Radio Scotland's 'Classics Unwrapped' and performed on BBC Scotland's 'Scotland's People 2022' alongside Brit Award-winning artist Tom Walker.

### **Bosmans: String Quartet**

The pianist and composer Henriëtte Bosmans was one of the most important Dutch musicians of the early 20th century. Initially, her composing style tended towards the Romantic but in 1927, aged 32, she began taking lessons from a contemporary, Willem Pijper. He was already an established and highly-regarded composer, and Bosmans' only string quartet, which she dedicated to him, clearly shows his influence. Not only had he introduced her to the work of pioneers such as Debussy, Ravel and Poulenc, he had also opened the door to a new soundworld with a less formal attitude to tonality. The quartet has a strongly impressionistic feel and although Bosmans never fully embraced the atonal style, she evidently appreciated its possibilities and began to forge a path in its direction.

In 1942, the Nazis banned Bosmans from all musical activity on account of her Jewish mother but she continued to compose in secret and after the war, returned to work with renewed energy. She was knighted in 1951 and when she died, an award was created in her name, specifically for the encouragement of young, Dutch composers.

### **Clarke: Poem**

Another composer with a parallel performing career, the Anglo-American Rebecca Clarke was a virtuoso viola player. In 1912 she was one of the first women to join a professional orchestra and later became an internationally-renowned soloist.

As a composer, however, she faced blatant discrimination and felt obliged to publish under a male pseudonym. This resulted in favourable reviews of music by her *alter ego* 'Anthony Trent', while pieces in her own name were ignored. And when she entered a prestigious competition as herself and tied for first place with Ernest Bloch, the prize went to her rival on the grounds that such a fine piece could never have been written by a woman.

Discouraged, Clarke gradually stepped back from composing, restricting herself mainly to small-scale works, often for herself to play with various all-female ensembles. This calm, reflective *Poem* appeared in 1926: it displays a shifting tonality that was typical of the period and is one of just two short pieces she is known to have written for string quartet.

### **Price: String Quartet No.2**

Florence Price was four when she made her debut as a pianist: at 11, she saw the publication of her first composition. She later became the first African-American woman to have a serious symphonic work played by a major American orchestra when the Chicago Symphony Orchestra premiered her Symphony No.1 in 1933. The resulting celebrity provided a useful boost to her career – until then, she had supported herself by writing advertising jingles and accompanying silent films on the organ.

This quartet, which appeared a couple of years later, demonstrates a style heavily influenced by her cultural experience. Racial tensions in her home state of Arkansas had driven Price north to Chicago and she felt a need to reflect the ordeal in her music by combining conventional classical idioms with material rooted in the African-American tradition. She gave the piece a distinctly American feel, with spirituals woven throughout and a third movement written as a *juba* – a central African form that had become familiar in the southern States as a plantation dance.

Despite her early success, Price continued to face prejudice on grounds of both race and gender. Most orchestras were reluctant to programme her music and after she died, much of it disappeared. It only came to light again in 2009, when this quartet was among a significant cache of works discovered in her abandoned summer house in Chicago.

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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



Supported using public funding by  
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