

barbican



Classical Music

Concert programme

**Carducci Quartet:
Shostakovich
Quartets, Part 1**

Wed 29 Jan 7.30pm

Milton Court Concert Hall

Important information



When does the concert start and finish?

The concert begins at 7.30pm and finishes at about 9.30pm, with a 20-minute interval.



I'm running late!

Latecomers will be admitted if there is a suitable break in the performance.



Please ...

Switch any watch alarms and mobile phones to silent during the performance.



Please don't ...

Take photos or recordings during the performance – save it for the curtain call.



Use a hearing aid?

Please use our induction loop – just switch your hearing aid to T setting on entering the hall.



Need a break?

You can leave at any time and be readmitted if there is a suitable break in the performance, or during the interval.



Looking for refreshments?

Bars are located on Levels -1, G and 1.



Looking for the toilets?

The nearest toilets, including accessible toilets, are located on Levels G, 1 and 2.



Carrying bags and coats?

Drop them off at our free cloak room on Level -1.

Shostakovich Quartets: Intimate Portraits, Part 1

A series with the Carducci Quartet

Wed 29 Jan 7.30pm, Milton Court Concert Hall

Carducci Quartet
Sonoro Quartet
Guildhall School musicians

Dmitri Shostakovich String Quartet No 1
(Carducci Quartet)

- 1 Moderato
- 2 Moderato
- 3 Allegro molto
- 4 Allegro

String Quartet No 5 (Sonoro Quartet)

- 1 Allegro non troppo –
- 2 Andante –
- 3 Allegro non troppo ma con fuoco

Interval 20 minutes

Galina Ustvolskaya Trio for violin, clarinet and piano (Matteo Cimatti violin Kathryn Titcomb clarinet David Palmer piano)

- 1 Espressivo
- 2 Dolce –
- 3 Energico

Dmitri Shostakovich String Quartet No 9
(Carducci Quartet)

- 1 Moderato con moto–
- 2 Adagio –
- 3 Allegretto –
- 4 Adagio –
- 5 Allegro

Produced by the Barbican

Programme produced by Harriet Smith
All information correct at time of printing
Printed by APS Group on Edixion Offset
FSC Mix Credit



The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre



The Carducci Quartet, a group that delights in challenging preconceptions, tonight launches its latest project built around the quartets of Shostakovich, the 50th anniversary of whose death falls this year. It is joined by musicians from Guildhall School and the Sonoro Quartet.

Dmitri Shostakovich composed the first of his 15 string quartets between May and July 1938. He had waited until his early thirties before turning his attention to the medium, partly because in the early years of Bolshevik Russia it had carried the stigma of bourgeois elitism. As the cultural climate of the 1930s became overshadowed by the gathering clouds of Stalinist Socialist Realism, so, paradoxically, a partial re-bourgeoisification of the country was under way, allowing for the rehabilitation of such supposedly elitist genres as the string quartet.

In 1937, as part of his own rehabilitation process after the stunning public disgrace of his opera *The Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District*, Shostakovich had begun teaching composition at his alma mater, the Leningrad Conservatoire. In many respects the First String Quartet resembles the kind of modest exercise he liked to set his students and often carried out alongside them.

'I tried to convey images of childhood, rather naïve, bright springlike moods,' he wrote in apparent explanation. 'The first page was a kind of exercise, and I had no thought of completing the work or having it performed.' His 'first page' actually became the opening of the finale, as the outer movements were reversed from his original plan. The two middle movements are each dark and troubled: a variation-

form slow movement with a long flowing theme that wanders through different keys, and a muted, breathless waltz.

The Fifth Quartet of 1952 stands as a first highpoint in Shostakovich's increasingly dramatic conception of the medium. At the same time, the presence of 'secret' quoted material lends this and his later quartets a complex emotional and cultural resonance.

Among Shostakovich's relatively few fast opening movements, the Fifth Quartet's *Allegro non troppo* is one of the very finest. He assembles his themes from the group of pithy motifs presented at the outset, broadening the horizons of the first section by an ingenious process of metric modulation, giving the impression that one layer of the music has slowed while the other remains unchanged. As the central phase drives towards an intense climax, a new theme is suddenly introduced, in counterpoint against the first subject. This builds to a pitch of hysteria as the first violin ascends to heights almost unparalleled in the existing quartet literature. This new theme will return in melancholy, restrained guise in the coda, and again at a crucial juncture in the finale.

Apart from the role of these passages in expanding the Fifth Quartet's formal design, they cry out for programmatic explanation. This proves easy to supply, since the theme in question is a direct quotation from the Trio for clarinet, violin and piano (1949) by Shostakovich's pupil Galina Ustvol'skaya. She had studied with him between 1938 and 1947, and at some point he had conceived a strong affection for her. Two years after the Fifth Quartet, following the death of his first wife, he actually proposed marriage, but Ustvol'skaya turned him

down. When her first husband died in 1960 and Shostakovich's second marriage had broken up, he again proposed a relationship and was again rebuffed. It is extremely tempting to read something of his true feelings for Ustvol'skaya in the Fifth Quartet's mood-swings from hysteria through regret to benumbed contemplation.

Ustvol'skaya herself was virtually a myth in her own lifetime. Famously reclusive and independent, she refused to attach herself to any official or underground community in Soviet musical life, her self-image being that of an ascetic whose musical language owed nothing to anyone: 'There is no link whatsoever between my music and that of any other composer, living or dead', she declared, waspishly. And misleadingly: in her Clarinet Trio she took up and elaborated on a theme from the aborted early version of Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony, only for Shostakovich to re-appropriate her version of it in his Fifth Quartet three years later.

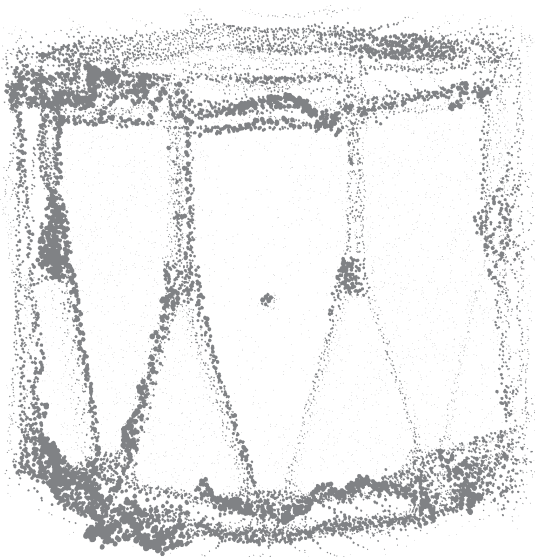
The 17-minute Trio starts with a deceptively leisurely-sounding theme on the clarinet, supported in the depths of the piano. As the violin joins in, it is apparent that the proto-minimalist pared-down lines that were to become one of Ustvol'skaya's signature textures are already foreshadowed, along with an equally characteristic mood of implacable defiance. The short second movement is scarcely less desolate, eventually dying away on a long sustained high violin note. The *energico* third movement revives the implacable marching gestures of the first. As the piano and violin settle into a rocking ostinato, the clarinet introduces the Shostakovich-shared theme, a *sinewy espressivo* idea in

which the pervasive crotchets are reduced to a psalm-like monotone and given a dotted-note frontispiece that stands out the more clearly for the rhythmic uniformity surrounding it. The silence of the clarinet and violin in the coda is as eloquent and symbolic as the fragmentary punctuations on the piano that remain.

Shostakovich's Ninth and Tenth Quartets were both products of a sudden burst of activity in 1964. Part of the credit for this spurt of 'creative diarrhoea' (as he described it) lies in the friendly 'competition' with his disciple Mieczysław Weinberg, who had reached his Ninth Quartet the previous year.

Four out of the five movements of the Ninth Quartet (which, like the three of No 5, play without a break) explore some of Shostakovich's most characteristic modes of expression: anxious circling and a crippled polka; elegiac meditation; manic klezmer; purgatorial standstill. Each of these is then swept up into the maelstrom of the 719-bar summatory finale, all the more remarkable for its courageous, affirmative tone.

© David Fanning





© Tom Barnes

Carducci Quartet

Matthew Denton, Michelle Fleming violin
Eoin Schmidt-Martin viola
Emma Denton cello

The award-winning Carducci Quartet is internationally acclaimed as one of the most accomplished and versatile ensembles of today. In addition to mastering the core repertoire, each season the quartet presents a selection of new works and diversifies further with programmes of film music, pop, folk and rock, as well as concerts of music and spoken word. The group was founded in 1997 and was a prize winner at numerous international competitions, including the Concert Artists Guild International Competition and Finland's Kuhmo International Chamber Music Competition.

The Carducci Quartet regularly appears at prestigious venues across the world, including the Barbican, Cadogan Hall, Southbank Centre, Royal Albert Hall and Wigmore Hall; National Concert Hall, Dublin; Tivoli Concert Hall, Copenhagen; the Frick Collection and Carnegie Hall, New York; Library of Congress and John F Kennedy Center, Washington DC; St Lawrence Center for the Arts, Toronto; Muziekcentrum De Bijloke, Ghent; and

Amsterdam Concertgebouw. The quartet has also held residencies at the Cheltenham, Ryedale, Aldeburgh, Lichfield, Presteigne, Kilkenny, Canterbury and West Cork festivals.

The music of Shostakovich has always been a particular point of focus for the quartet. In 2016 it won a Royal Philharmonic Society Award for its project, *Shostakovich15*, performing Shostakovich's quartets across the UK and North and South America, including a marathon one-day cycle hosted by Shakespeare's Globe here in London. The project was accompanied by recordings of the Fourth, Eighth and 11th Quartets, with subsequent releases of the First, Second and Seventh Quartets (2019) and Ninth and 15th Quartets (2024). Recent projects have included 'Shostakovich's Letters' with actor Anton Lesser – a programme based around translations of texts from the composer himself alongside his music.

In 2015 the quartet curated projects around Philip Glass and Steve Reich as part of the Royal Philharmonic Society Award-winning 'Minimalism Unwrapped' at Kings Place. Its recording of the Philip Glass quartets, for Naxos, has reached over 21 million plays on Spotify. The quartet will be marking

both composers' 90th birthdays with a major project during the 2026/27 season.

Highlights of this season include the current 'Intimate Portraits' series, returns to the Two Moors and Leicester festivals, and Wigmore Hall and collaborations with Charles Owen, Emma Johnson, Julian Bliss, Guy Johnston, and Jacqui Dankworth.

Education work is an important element of the Carducci Quartet's work, earning it a place on the Royal Philharmonic Society Award shortlist for its family concert 'Getting the Quartet Bug!'. The Carducci Music Trust was set up to support the group's work in schools and with young musicians. It also performs a number of school concerts each year supported by the CAVATINA Chamber Music Trust.

Sonoro Quartet

Marley Erickson, Jeroen De Beer violin

Séamus Hickey viola

Isaac Lottman cello

Founded in 2019, the Sonoro Quartet is one of the leading young string quartets of its generation. It gives over 40 concerts annually, with repertoire encompassing core classical works alongside works by contemporary composers, including new commissions.

In 2022 the Sonoro Quartet was chosen as ECHO Rising Stars for the 2023/24 season, embarking on a concert tour that included 17 performances in leading European halls. The quartet has also been selected to join the MERITA Platform, where it will present concerts throughout Europe featuring an innovative artistic project.

Other recent highlights include debuts at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Vienna Musikverein, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, Cologne Philharmonie and Luxembourg Philharmonie among others. In July 2023 the group made its debut in New Zealand, giving 11 concerts in venues across the North and South Islands.

In 2021 it won third prize and two special prizes at the Bartók String Quartet Competition in Budapest. The group has

since returned to the city to perform Bartók's quartets in the Bartók Memorial House.

The quartet is currently studying at the Netherlands String Quartet Academy in Amsterdam, receiving guidance from renowned artists including Marc Danel and Gilles Millet (Quatuor Danel) and Eberhard Feltz. It has also studied with Quatuor Ébène, Pavel Haas Quartet, Gary Hoffman and Heime Müller.

The quartet has performed at festivals such as Midis-Minimes, B-Classic, Storioni, West Cork Chamber Music Festival and Rotterdam Chamber Music, among many others. It has also toured Ireland twice in association with the National String Quartet Foundation.

The Sonoro Quartet has broadcast on international radio stations in Belgium, Ireland, Germany and New Zealand. As part of the Beethoven Fest 2020 in Bonn, it premiered Eric Domenech's String Quartet on SWR.

In addition it has appeared at renowned international venues, including BOZAR, Brussels, the Liszt Academy in Budapest, Tivoli Vredenburg in Utrecht, National Concert Hall, Dublin and The Piano in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Guildhall School is a vibrant, international community of musicians, actors and production artists in the heart of the City of London.

It is ranked as number one in Arts, Drama & Music by the Complete University Guide 2025 and one of the top five institutions in the world for Music and Performing Arts (QS World University Rankings 2024), it offers world-class professional training in partnership with distinguished artists, companies and ensembles.

As a global leader in creative and professional practice, the school promotes innovation, experiment and research, and is also one of the UK's leading providers of lifelong learning in the performing arts, offering inspiring training for children, young people, adult learners and creative and business professionals.

Guildhall School is highly regarded in the profession for intensive, dedicated music training taught by renowned international teaching staff and through partnerships with the Barbican, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Ballet and Opera and the Academy of Ancient Music. Guildhall School offers state-of-the-art facilities to match the talent within its walls, including a world-class concert hall and three theatres, and has a distinguished list of music graduates, including Thomas Adès, Alison Balsom, Sa Chen, Sir James Galway, Tasmin Little, Zara McFarlane, Anne Sofie von Otter, Sir Bryn Terfel, Roderick Williams and Debbie Wiseman.

Matteo Cimatti violin

Kathryn Titcomb clarinet

David Palmer piano

With thanks

The Barbican sparks creative possibilities and transformation for artists, audiences and communities – to inspire, connect and provoke debate.

As a not-for-profit, we need to raise 60% of our income through fundraising, ticket sales and commercial activities. With the help of our generous supporters, we are able to share the work of some of the most inspiring and visionary artists and creatives, enabling the widest possible audience to experience the joy of the arts.

We're passionate about expanding access to ensure anyone can participate in art and creativity in London and beyond. From our work with local schools to provide unforgettable learning experiences, to development opportunities for emerging creatives, to discounted tickets to our events, your support helps us make a real difference every day.

There are many ways you can support the Barbican, including by making a donation, joining our programme as a sponsor, or becoming a Member. To find out more and join our community, please visit barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us or contact development@barbican.org.uk

Founder and Principal Funder

The City of London Corporation

Major Supporters

Calouste Gulbenkian
Foundation (UK Branch)
Kiran Nadar Museum of Art
SHM Foundation
Tia Collection

Leading Supporters

Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley
Marcus Margulies

Programme Supporters

Clore Wyndham
Harry G David
Goodman Gallery
Romilly Walton Masters Award
MENAEA Collection, Kuala Lumpur
Jack Shainman Gallery
Natasha Sidharta
The Rudge Shipley Charitable Trust

Director's Circle

James and Louise Arnell
Farmida Bi ^{CBE}
Jo and Tom Bloxham ^{MBE}
Philippe and Stephanie Camu
Cas Donald
Alex and Elena Gerko
Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley
Professor Dame Henrietta L Moore
Sir Howard Panter and

Dame Rosemary Squire
Sian and Matthew Westerman

*and to all those who wish
to remain anonymous*

Corporate Partners

Apple Original Films
Audible
Bloomberg Philanthropies
Campari
Culture Mile BID
Google Arts & Culture
Mastercard
Searchlight Pictures
Sotheby's
Taittinger
TOAST
Vestiaire Collective

Corporate Members

Bank of America
Bloomberg
BMO
Bolt Burdon Kemp
Deutsche Bank
Linklaters LLP
Macfarlanes LLP
Norton Rose Fulbright
Osborne Clarke
Pinsent Masons
Slaughter and May
Standard Chartered
UBS

Trusts & Grantmakers

Acción Cultural Española (AC/E)
The African Arts Trust
The Ampersand Foundation
Art Fund
Aspect Charitable Trust
Bagri Foundation
CHK Foundation
Cockayne – Grants for the Arts
John S Cohen Foundation
Company of Arts Scholars
Charitable Trust
The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation
Fluxus Art Projects
Helen Frankenthaler Foundation
Henry Moore Foundation
High Commission of Canada
in The United Kingdom
Institut français du Royaume-Uni
Korean Cultural Centre UK
Kusuma Trust UK
Lucille Graham Trust
Mactaggart Third Fund
Representation of Flanders
(Belgian Embassy) in the UK
Royal Norwegian Embassy in London
Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation
US Embassy London

*We also want to thank Barbican Patrons,
members and the many thousands who
made a donation when purchasing tickets.*

Barbican Board

Sir William Russell *chair*
Tobi-Ruth Adebekun *deputy chair*
Tijs Broeke *deputy chair*
Randall Anderson
Munsur Ali
Michael Asante ^{MBE}
Stephen Bediako ^{OBE}
Farmida Bi ^{CBE}
Zulum Elumogo
Jaspreet Hodgson
Nicholas Lyons
Mark Page
Anett Rideg
Jens Riegelsberger
Jane Roscoe
Despina Tsatsas
Irem Yerdelen

Barbican Centre Trust

Farmida Bi ^{CBE} *chair*
Robert Glick ^{OBE} *vice chair*
Stephanie Camu
Tony Chambers
Cas Donald
David Kapur
Ann Kenrick
Kendall Langford
Sian Westerman
Sir William Russell

Directors Group

David Farnsworth *interim CEO*
Ali Mirza *deputy interim CEO and
director of people, culture and
inclusion*
Natasha Harris *director of
development*
Sarah Wall *head of finance and
business administration*
Devyani Saltzman *director for arts and
participation*
Philippa Simpson *director for buildings
and renewal*
Jackie Boughton *director of commercial*
Beau Vigushin *director for audiences*
Hannah Hoban *executive assistant
to CEO*

Events coming up we think you might like



© Tom Barnes

Shostakovich Quartets: Intimate Portraits A series with the Carducci Quartet

Part 2

Fri 28 Feb, Milton Court

Part 3

Thu 27 Mar, Milton Court

Part 4

Tue 29 Apr, Milton Court

Part 5

Thu 29 May, Milton Court



Book now at barbican.org.uk