

25 / 26  
CONCERT  
SEASON

# CONSONE QUARTET

Agata Daraškaite violin | Magdalena Loth-Hill violin  
Elitsa Bogdanova viola | George Ross cello

Saturday, October 11, 2025

Raven's Cry Theatre, Sechelt



This concert sponsored by Peter Sever, in memory of the  
Orford String Quartet's first violinist, Andrew Dawes

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*"...They play with perfect intonation, tremendous attack, and impeccable historical style. All the four instruments work together with such intelligence and imagination that I would happily listen to them every day"*

—Sir Roger Norrington

The first period instrument string quartet to be selected as BBC New Generation Artists, the Consone Quartet are known for their honest and expressive interpretations of repertoire, notably from the classical and romantic eras.

Formed at the Royal College of Music in London, the Consone Quartet launched their professional career in 2015, shortly after which they were awarded two prizes at the 2015 York Early Music International Young Artists Competition, the EUBO Development Trust Prize and a place on the EEMerging Scheme in France. They went on to win the 2016 Royal Over-Seas League Ensemble Prize, and in 2022 were awarded a prestigious Borletti-Buitoni Trust fellowship. Since

2021 the quartet has been awarded a number of grants from Continua Foundation which have enabled the group to take creative programmes to locations across the UK.

The quartet has been enthusiastically received at London's major venues, as well as further afield in Poland, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Slovenia and across North America. Festival invitations include Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Dartington, Two Moors, Buxton, MA Festival in Bruges, Heidelberger Streichquartettfest, Schwetzingen Festival and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in Germany, and Styriarte Graz in Austria. Performing highlights of their 25/26 season include a North American tour with Kristian Bezuidenhout, featuring appearances at the Library of Congress in DC and Salle Bourgie in Montreal; a new collaboration with the Chiaroscuro Quartet (Barbican Centre and NCEM, York); a tour with Helen Charlston (Oxford International Song Festival, Brighton Early Music Festival); and a return to Italy with Alexander Gadjiev.

*Continued on next page*



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# The artists (continued)

In 2023, the Consone Quartet premiered *The Bridges of Königsberg*, a string sextet by Gavin Bryars, commissioned by friends of the Quartet, the Borletti-Buitoni Trust, and BBC Radio 3, broadcast from St Martin-in-the-Fields. Their recent collaboration with Oliver Leith continues a developing commitment to contemporary music: July 2025 marked the English and Scottish premieres of his seven-movement quartet, *On a horse, on a hill, faraway, through fog and bonfire*, which they will also perform at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, in May 2026.

Education work remains a core interest to the group, having worked with students at the Royal College of Music in London, Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, as Hans Keller fellows for 2020–2022. 2025 sees the quartet working with students at New England Conservatory in Boston and continuing their community work in South Yorkshire as "visiting

quartet" for Sheffield's Music in the Round, supported by the Frost Trust.

The Consone's debut recording explored music by Haydn and Mendelssohn and was described by *The Strad* as an album "that instantly leaps out of the stereo at you as something special." In Spring 2023 they released the first of three recordings with Linn Records, centring around Felix Mendelssohn. The album, featuring both the *1823* and *Op. 44 No. 3 quartets*, has been described as 'top-notch' (*Allmusic*) and 'exquisite' (*Pizzicato*). The project continues this season with a disc featuring two further quartets by the composer, alongside his sister Fanny Mendelssohn's string quartet in E major, released in November 2025.

Consone are Artists-in-Residence at Paxton House (2023-2025) and at Saxon Shore Early Music Kenardington (2024-2027).

## The program

### LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born in Bonn, Germany, December 17, 1770; died in Vienna, March 26, 1827

#### String Quartet in F major, H. 34

(Beethoven's own arrangement of his Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1)

*Allegro*

*Allegretto – Maggiore*

*Rondo: Allegro comodo*

### FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

Born in Rohrau, Germany, March 31, 1732; died in Vienna, May 31, 1809

#### String Quartet in B Flat Major, Op. 71, No. 1

*Allegro*

*Adagio*

*Menuetto: Allegretto*

*Vivace*

### INTERMISSION

### FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Born in Hamburg, February 3, 1809; died in Leipzig, November 4, 1874

#### Capriccio from Four Pieces, Op. 81

### CARL CZERNY

Born in Vienna, February 21, 1791; died in Vienna, July 15, 1857

#### String Quartet in A minor

*Allegro espressivo ma animato*

*Andante espressivo*

*Scherzo. Vivace*

*Finale. Quasi presto*

# The program notes

## Notes written by the Consone Quartet

As string quartet players we are lucky enough to have a wealth of fantastic repertoire to play. Haydn's music was some of the first we tackled together as students at the Royal College of Music in London and he remains one of our most played (and loved) composers. Known as the "father of the string quartet," Haydn composed his Op. 71 set in 1793, following a successful tour to London. He returned home to Vienna a celebrity, famous internationally as a composer and public figure.

Beethoven is another staple of our repertoire as a period string quartet. In this programme we will perform the composer's own arrangement of his *Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 14, No. 1*. It was common practice right throughout the baroque and classical periods to arrange popular pieces for whatever instruments you had available, meaning more people could enjoy the music and, on a purely pragmatic level, publishers could sell more copies.

Over the ten years we have been working together in the Consone Quartet, we have developed our own musical language and interpretation. Mendelssohn's quartets have a particularly special place for us in this regard since we are fortunate enough to have access to players' editions of the time—most notably that of Ferdinand David, who premiered many of Mendelssohn's works. His characteristic blue pencil markings give us lots of clues about bowings and fingerings, implying generous use of expressive portamenti slides and a particular freedom of bowing.

The four pieces that make up Mendelssohn's *Op. 81* are rarely performed. Published posthumously as a set, they were in fact written at different points during Mendelssohn's lifetime, with the

"Theme and Variations" and the "Scherzo" written in 1847—the year of his death. Robert Schumann called Mendelssohn "the Mozart of the 19th century, the most brilliant musician, the one who most clearly sees through the contradictions of the age and for the first time reconciles them."

Carl Czerny was an Austrian composer, teacher, and pianist of Czech origin whose music spanned the late Classical and early Romantic eras. He wrote over a thousand works and his books of studies for the piano are still widely used in piano teaching. Czerny occupies an important niche in music history as the link between Beethoven, who was Czerny's teacher—the profound archetype of highly emotional and spiritual music, and Czerny's pupil Franz Liszt—who exemplifies the ultra-romantic and often exhibitionistic virtuoso.

Czerny's music has been a bit of a discovery for us. We all slaved over his piano etudes as students, but in fact it was his symphonies, sacred works and string quartets that he was most proud of. He wrote nearly forty string quartets, though none are published and the music is therefore very tricky to get hold of. We came across these pieces through a wonderful recording by the Berlin-based Sheridan Ensemble, who have managed to track down the scores in a Viennese archive. They have very kindly shared some of these with us and we hope our audiences enjoy listening to this exciting music as much as we love playing it!

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