

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 29 May 2023
7.30pm

Supported by The Dorset Foundation - in memory of Harry M Weinrebe

Yiddish Cabaret

Jerusalem Quartet

Alexander Pavlovsky violin

Sergei Bresler violin

Ori Kam viola

Kyril Zlotnikov cello

Hila Baggio soprano

Erwin Schulhoff (1894-1942)

5 Pieces for String Quartet (1923)

*Alla Valse viennese • Alla Serenata • Alla Czeca •
Alla Tango milonga • Alla Tarantella*

Leonid Desyatnikov (b.1955)

Yiddish - 5 songs for voice and string quartet (2018)

*Varshe • In a hoyz vu men veynt un men lakht •
Ikh ganve in der nakht • Yosl un Sore-Dvoshe •
Ikh vel shoyt mer nit ganvenen*

Interval

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957) String Quartet No. 2 in E flat Op. 26 (1933)

*I. Allegro • II. Intermezzo. Allegretto con moto •
III. Larghetto. Lento • IV. Waltz. Tempo di valse*



This concert is part of the CAVATINA Chamber Music Trust ticket scheme, offering free tickets to those aged 8-25

Our Audience Fund provides essential unrestricted support for our artistic and learning programmes, connecting thousands of people with music locally, nationally, and internationally. We rely on the generosity of our audience to raise £150,000 each year to support this work. Your gifts are, and continue to be, indispensable.

To donate, please visit <https://wigmore-hall.org.uk/support-us/wigmore-hall-audience-fund>

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management.

In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.

Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141.

Wigmore Hall is equipped with a 'Loop' to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • wigmore-hall.org.uk • John Gilhooly Director

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG
Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Erich Wolfgang Korngold was born in 1897, in Vienna, the second son of a high-ranking music critic, Julius Korngold, who wrote for the Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*. Erich's prodigious musical talent placed him and his family at the centre of high art society, at a time when a parallel avant-garde society of cabaret, film and small theatre was growing in popularity and prestige. Both societies expressed disquiet over the future of their cultural heritage. Korngold's musical style is attributed equally to his unique character and to his musical mentors, Mahler, Zemlinsky and Strauss. Erich never wavered from his belief that music should cope with the horrors of his time by serving to elevate the soul rather than drag it down. When the possibility of delineating creative development into early, middle and late styles was still an officially recognised measure of the true artist, Korngold's musical style merely matured while remaining intact, essentially romantic, effusive, luxuriant and most significantly, harmonious.

In 1934 Korngold was invited by Warner Brothers to compose music for the film *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in America – in retrospect, this proved to be the lifeline that saved him and his loved ones from the gas chambers in occupied Europe. Behind this invitation stood his friend the theatre and film director Max Reinhardt (1873-1943), who later also emigrated to the US. Korngold composed many film scores for full symphony orchestra and became one of the pioneers and leading exponents of film music. He won two Academy Awards. After World War II he attempted to resume a European career but this was not a success, and after a few concerts and premières he returned to Hollywood in 1951. He died a few years later, at the age of 60, believing that he had been forgotten in Europe.

Korngold is most closely associated with large-scale works, his operas and film scores, but throughout his career he composed chamber music and an impressive collection of songs. In February 1933, following Hitler's rise to power, he began to look for a country of residence in Europe. His four-movement Second String Quartet Op. 26 was composed that year and premièred by the Rosé Quartet in Vienna on 16 March 1934, just before he left for America.

Though far less known than his First, the Second Quartet presents a self-assured composer who knows how to combine Schoenberg's expressionism with Romantic sonorities, and a complex chromatic language reminiscent of Richard Strauss with his own confident handling of timbre, colour, and a broad emotional range which is characteristic of his musical language. In this quartet the music of the countryside of Korngold's native Austria is expressed in ripe Viennese sensuality.

Erwin Schulhoff was born to a Jewish family in Prague in 1894 and showed musical talent from an early age. Dvořák advised him to pursue a career in music. By 1918 he was already known as a composer and received the Mendelssohn Prize for his Piano Sonata Op. 22.

His music up to the First World War had shown influences ranging from Brahms and Dvořák to Strauss, Debussy and Skryabin. Following his service in the Austrian army, he adopted a more radical stance both artistically and politically. In the next few years he composed in a more expressionistic idiom he had learned from Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School. In

addition, he was influenced by the radical style of the Dada school espoused by Georg Grosz, whose advocacy of jazz was to find its way into much of Schulhoff's music from that period.

In the 1930s, he composed the cantata *Das kommunistische Manifest* ('The Communist Manifesto'), in which he expressed his political beliefs. He lived in Prague during most of the inter-war period, working as a pianist in theatre productions and radio broadcasts. Having taken Soviet citizenship, he was arrested before he had completed the process of emigration to the Soviet Union and was then deported to a concentration camp in Wülzburg where he died in August 1942.

Schulhoff's String Quartet No. 1 was composed between the years 1920 and 1924 and was a great success. Schulhoff had been encouraged to write another work for string quartet; this is how the *5 Pieces for String Quartet* were composed in 1923. The work was first performed in Salzburg on 8 August 1924. Although the work follows the outlines of a Baroque dance suite, each of the pieces is a self-contained miniature that emulates a particular dance style in a manner which unashamedly recalls the popular music of the era.

The *5 songs for voice and string quartet* is a piece based on Yiddish songs that were performed in Poland between the two world wars. **Leonid Desyatnikov** chose five songs representative of Yiddish cabaret style, which portray the lives of Jews in urban Poland, their joy, their suffering and hope. Jewish musicians and performers were dominant in popular music in Poland and collaborated in composing Polish and Yiddish songs. Their works influenced cabaret music throughout Europe as well as Hollywood film music and Broadway theatre music in the United States.

Desyatnikov chose these songs to commemorate the life of Jewish cities before the Holocaust. As he writes: '*Yiddish* is based on the material of cabaret songs that circulated in Warsaw and Łódź between the two world wars. My cycle is a series of free transcriptions of such songs. Usually, this type of music is assigned to the "lowbrow" area. It is the eclectic culture of the *assimilantes*, the lumpenproletariat and the outsiders, the culture of cheap chic, and at the same time – in its best forms – a brazen, talented culture full of self-irony and latent despair. The strict, staid sound of the string quartet transforms this music into an exquisite gravure.'

The first song is a nostalgic paean to the city of Warsaw, and the second a parody of an American song that relates the fate of a Jewish prostitute. The third and fifth songs are from the repertory of Yiddish 'thieves' songs', reflecting marginal groups of the Jewish underworld. The fourth song is a duet between a man, Yosl, and a woman, Sore-Dvoshe, who live in poverty but dream of having a large family and enjoying life in the big city.

Yiddish has been a vernacular and literary language of the Jews of Europe from the 12th Century onwards. We know of Yiddish folksongs from as early as the 14th Century. During World War Two, hundreds of songs were composed and sung, but many were lost for ever. Thus the song cycle, in its new and sophisticated arrangement, brings together 'lowbrow' and 'highbrow' cultures of language and music with a bitter smile and humanity.

Leonid Desyatnikov (b.1955)

Yiddish - 5 songs for voice and string quartet (2018)

Varshe

Arnold Perlmutter

Oyf berg un tol
tseshpreyt,
In der leng un breyt,
Prekhtik sheyne shtet
zaynen faran.

Vien, London un Pariz,
Nyu York du shtoltser riz,
Oykh Berlin do iz, Rom un
Milan.

Fun dem a perlshtur
Shaynt aroys far mir
Vi a diment reyn
Varshe aleyn.

Varshe, vi zis dayn nomen
klingt mir,
Varshe, a lid dayn nomen
zingt mir.
Varshe, printsesn, shtoltse
yatn,
Varshe, a kleyn Pariz:
belcante, sharmante!
Varshe, di shtot fun toyznt
farbn,
Far Varshe oykh greyt bin ikh
tsu shtarbn!
Yede gas un yeder vinkl
tayer – lib iz mir,
Varshe, mayn leben gib ikh
dir!

Proshe, '*viens, viens, mon
p'tit chéri.*'
Proshe, idź Pan do cholery!
Proshe, zey zehen nisht keyn
frayer,
Proshe, es kost bay mir nisht
tayer, a fayer!
Varshe, ot shtey far dir a
korbn,
Varshe, fun dayne zin
fardorbn,
Oy, mayn vist un hintish lebn,
Ikh bin shoyt fun dir mid!
Varshe, farendikt zikh mayn
lid.

Warsaw

Spread out over
mountains and valleys,
far and wide,
there are beautiful
cities

Vienna, London, Paris,
New York the proud giant
and also Berlin, Rome and
Milan...

Among them a pearl shines
out for me
like a pure diamond
Warsaw itself.

Warsaw... How sweet your
name sounds to me,
Warsaw... your name
sings a song to me,
Warsaw... princesses,
proud heroes,
Warsaw... a little Paris,
spicy and charming!
Warsaw... you city of
thousand colors,
I'm prepared to die for
Warsaw!

Every street and every
corner is dear to me –
Warsaw, I give my life to
you.

[Please... come, come, my
little darling]
Please... Sir, go to hell
Please... they aren't
suckers,
Please... a fire would not
cost me more!
Warsaw... here I stand, a
sacrifice for you,
Warsaw... I was corrupted
by your sins.
Oh, my empty day's life,
I'm tired of you!
Warsaw... my song will
soon be over.

In a hoyz vu men veynt un men lakht

Anonymous

Batrakht nor menchn atsind,
Vi dos lebn geyt haynt baym
mentsh,
Men yogt tsikh un men plogt
tzikh arum,
Voil iz dem ver s'iz
gebentsht.
Ober men klert nisht vos vet
shpeter zayn,
Ir darft dos gedenken
atsind,
Ir darft gor akhtung gebn oyf
eyn zakh
Nisht ahintsushikn ayer froy
un kind.

Ikh bin arayn gekumen in a
shtub,
A yung(e) meydle ze ikh zitsn
shtark batrift.
Ikh bin nor tsu ir
tsugekumen,
Veyn zi far mir mit trenn fil.
Zi tut mikh betn: oy,
Yungerman!
Rat'vet mir aroys, ikh vil do
nisht zayn.
Ikh bin farnart gevorn fun
mayn hoyz
Durkh a yungn sharlatan
Un do leyde ikh, hunger un
payn.

In a hoyz vu men veynt un
men lakht
Bin ikh amol geven a gantse
nakht.
Ikh hob dort gezen, damen
un hern tsuzamen
In a hoyz vu men veynt un
men lakht.

Bakent hob ikh zikh mit a froy,
Yung un sheyn iz zi damolt
geven.
Shpet baynakht hob ikh
geton mit ir
In a dansing arayn geyn.
Ven mir zitsn bay a tishl un
trinken shampaner,
Ikh vil shoyt fun ir avekgeyn.
Zogt zi tsu mir: neyn,
yungermantchik,
haynt vestu mit mir zayn.
(*schluchzt*)

In a house where one cries and one laughs

Just think now people,
how life goes for us these
days,
one rushes around,
plagued,
happy is the one who is
blessed,
but you don't think about
what happens later,
think now, and pay
attention to one thing
don't send your
wife
and child to that
place...

I went into a
house,
and saw a young and very
sad woman.
I went to her and she
cried
many tears in front of me.
She begged me: young
man, save me!
I don't want to be
here.
I was deceived, drawn
away from my home
by a young charlatan
and here I suffer from
hunger and pain.

In a house where one
cries and laughs
I once spent a whole
night.
I saw women and men
together there
in a house where one
cries and one laughs.

I met with a woman;
She was young and pretty
then.
Late at night I fooled
around
with her in a dancehall.
When we were sitting by
a little table
and drinking Champagne,
I wanted to leave, but she
said to me:
'No, young man, you'll be
with me today.'

Ikh freg ir, zog mir libe
froy,
Funvanen kumstu dortn
arayn?
Un ze vi di froy entfer
nisht,
In ire oygn bavayzt tsikh a
geveyn:
Gehat hob ikh a man mit
kinderlekh tsvey,
Gut is mir damolt
geven.
Ikh hob tsikh mit im tsusheyd.
Un nisht gehat vu tsu zayn
Hob ikh gemuzt nebekh do
arayn geyn.

In a hoyz vu men veynt un
men lakht...

Ikh ganve in der nakht *Moishe Broderzon*

Ikh ganve in der nakht,
Di nakht iz khoyshekh shvarts,
Un du host mikh
fartshapet
Gelatkht mir mayn harts.
Az ikh latkhn iz dokh gut,
A simen, az ikh toyg,
Ikh bin dokh a beyre,
Dos vaysl fun dayn oyg.

Ikh latkhn a brilyant,
In perelekh a baytsh,
Tsum sof ze ikh dikh geyn
gor
Mit Yoselen dem
daytsh.
A nafke mine
zest
A daytsh tsi a frantsoyz,
Bay mir ken er
bakumen
A parekh mit a royz.

Undz nisht shatn
Keyn maysematn,
Mit shtotparad
Zenme blat, zenme blat.
Shpil pavole
Nor di role
Zog mir, yat,
Hareyat, hareyat.

Dos knipekhl er glantst,
Es shpilt dokh vi a smik,
Ikh broykh dokh nisht keyn
brunes,
Vayl teykev makh ikh khik.

I ask her: 'Tell me, dear
woman,
where did you come from
to end up here?'
and see how the woman
does not answer.
In her eyes one sees a
lament:
I had a husband and two
children,
things were good for me
then.
I parted from him
and had nowhere to go.
I was forced, poor me, to
come here.

In a
house...

I steal at night

I steal at night,
the night is inky black,
and you've gotten hold of
me
and stolen my heart.
If I've stolen it, that's good –
it's a sign that I am capable,
after all, I'm skillful,
the apple of your eye.

I steal a diamond
and a string of pearls,
and in the end I see you
walking
with Yosele, the German
(dandy).
You see, it makes no
difference –
a German or a Frenchman,
from me he can get
inflamed
skin rash.

No prison
will hurt us.
We've corrupted
everyone in the city.
Just play the role slowly.
Buster –
tell me
you'll marry me!

The switchblade glitters
and plays like a bow.
I need no
weapons
for I'll slit his throat.

Nu shoy'n, ikh vel nisht geyn,
Mit Yoselen mer geyn,
To veln mir keyn Boyne
Forn bloyz in tsvey'n.

Undz nisht shatn...

Yosl un Sore-Dvoshe *Kasriel Broydo*

Akh, mayn libe Sore-Dvoshe,
Vos zhe zitstu do in
gas
Un kukst oyf der levone?
Akh, antshuldik, kh'hob fargesn
Bins nokh alts oyf mir in kas,
Mayn likhtige madone.
Zog mir vos di sibe iz
Fun nokh anader broygez zayn,
Lomir shoy'n sholem makhn.

Refrain: Lyubov' moya, ved'
ya lyublyu tebya,
Mayn Sore-Dvoshele,
Povyer' zhe mnye.

Yosl, vos zingstu mir a
Serenade
Un lozt nit zitsn a sheyne
meydele in gas!
Du koyf mir beser a groyse
plite shchikolade
Veln mir shpatsirn
un ikh vel mer nit zayn in
kas.

Akh, a plite shchikolade,
Narishkeyt, nu, zog aleyn,
Es kost nit mer vi a zlote,
Lomir beser in yidishn
teater geyn, teater
geyn
Dort kost mir nit keyn
prute,
Der balebos vos zitst baym
tir,
Er iz mayns a leter, er lozt arayn,
Er iz a yid a
guter.

Lyubov'
moya...

Yosl, mir veln zitsn ershte
reye,
Un zikh luboyen mit Vevle,
Vos est kompot, du vest mir
koyfn

Well, I won't go
with Yosele anymore.
We'll only go together
to Buenos Aires.

No prison...

Yosl un Sore-Dvoshe

Ah, my dear Sore-Dvoshe,
why are you sitting here
on the street
and looking at the moon?
Ah, forgive me, I forgot –
You're still mad at me,
my radiant Madonna.
Tell me, what is the reason
for always being angry?
Let's make peace already.

Refrain: My darling, know
that I love you,
my little Sore-Dvoshe,
believe me.

Yosl, why are you
serenading
and not letting a pretty
girl sit on the street?
You'd do better to buy me a
big piece of chocolate,
and then we'll take a stroll
and I won't be mad
anymore.

Ah, a piece of chocolate.
A trifle, don't you agree?
It only costs a zloty.
Let's rather go to the
Yiddish theater, to the
theater
– there it doesn't cost me
a cent.
The manager who sits at
the door
is my uncle
– he'll let us in; he's a
good fellow.

My darling, know that I
love you...

Yosl, we'll sit in the first
row
and cuddle with Vevle,
who eats stewed
fruit.

A bisl semetshkes tsum kayen,
A por
tsukerkes
Tsu smotshkenen
volt nit
geshat.

You'll buy me
some sunflower seeds to
chew,
and a couple of cookies
to munch wouldn't hurt
either.

Akh, mayn libe Sore-Dvoshe,
Vi derlebt men di minut dir
tsu der khupe firn,
Du a galande, ikh a smoking,
A vaysn shipsele dertsu veln
mir in zal shpontsirn.
Di mekhutonim groys un kleyn
Oysgeputst dokh zeyer
sheyn
In esik un in
honik.

Ah, my dear Sore-Dvoshe,
how will I be able to last till
the time of our wedding?
You in a wedding gown,
I in a tuxedo, with a white
tie in addition.
We'll stroll into the hall.
The in-laws, big and
small,
all decked out beautifully
in finery.

Lyubov'
moya...

My darling, know that I
love you...

Yosl, mir veln a tsendlik
kinder hobn
Un geyn shpatsirn
mit zey iber der breyter
gas.
A tsendlik hering, a pud
kartoflyes optsushobn,
S'vet zayn a lebn, oy, zis vi
tsuker un eplkvas.

Yosl, we'll have a dozen
children
and we'll promenade with
them on the broad
avenues.
A dozen herrings, a bushel
of potatoes to peel.
What a life, it'll be – sweet as
sugar and apple cider.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit ganvenen

Anonymous

Ikh hob far keynem keyn
moyre,
Keyn bushe, keyn moyre,
keyn bushe,
Vayl mayn professie
kumt mir
beyrushe.

I am not afraid or
ashamed
in anyone's
presence
because I received my
profession as an
inheritance.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit ganvenen,
Nor nemen, nor nemen,
Vel shoyt mer nit ganvenen,
Nor nemen, nemen.

I will not steal any more,
I'll just take, just take.
I will not steal any more,
I'll just take, just take.

Az ikh bin geven a nar
Un hot nisht folgn mayn
tatn,
Haynt zits ikh in turme
Un kuk aroys durkh di kratn.

Because I was an idiot
and did not take my
father's advice,
now I am sitting in jail,
looking through the bars.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit
ganvenen...

I won't
steal...

Kh'bin arayngekrokhn in a
finster, -
Kh'bin gevorn royt, kh'bin
gervorn royt,
Me hot mikh gekhapt
Un geshlogn shir tsum
toyt.

I crept through a
window
but I was caught and
turned red,
they grabbed me
and beat me nearly to
death.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit
ganvenen...

I won't
steal...

Flizhe, mayn feygele,
Iber di kshakes, iber di kshakes,
Gib op mayne grusn
Di Varshever bosyakes.

Fly over the bushes
my little bird,
give my greetings
to the bums in Warsaw.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit
ganvenen...

I won't
steal...

Riboyn shel oylam,
Ikh shver dir aleyn, ikh shver
dir aleyn,
Kh'vel aroysgekumen fun
pov'yak,
Vel ikh ganvenen nisht geyn.

Master of the Universe,
I myself swear to
you,
if I get out of the slammer,
I won't steal anymore.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit
ganvenen...

I won't
steal...

Kh'vel aroysgekumen fun tfise,
Vel ikh geyn in dayn
shtheyger,
Dem erstn pochontik –
A goldenem zeyger.

If I get out of prison,
I'll walk on your righteous
path.
The first order of business?
A gold watch.

Ikh vel shoyt mer nit
ganvenen...

I won't
steal...