

NATIONAL STRING QUARTET FOUNDATION AND FINDING A VOICE PRESENT

BANBHA QUARTET

Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke & Maria Ryan, violin - Robin Panter, viola - Paul Grennan, cello

CASTLEBAR - Wednesday 4th March at 8pm - Linenhall Arts Centre

ENNIS - Thursday 5th March at 8pm - glór

CLONMEL - Friday 6th March at 7.30pm - Main Guard - *presented by Finding a Voice*

CORK - Saturday 7th March at 1pm - Triskel Arts Centre

DUBLIN - Sunday 8th March at 1pm - Abbey Presbyterian Church

Henriëtte Bosmans

String Quartet (1927)

- i. Allegro molto moderato*
- ii. Lento*
- iii. Allegro molto*

Jane O'Leary

***Mystic Play of Shadows* (1995)**

Germaine Tailleferre

String Quartet (1919)

- i. Modéré*
- ii. Intermède*
- iii. Final. Vif – Très rythmé – Un peu plus lent*

Dobrinka Tabakova

***The Smile of the Flamboyant Wings* (2019)**

Emilie Mayer

String Quartet in G minor (c. 1840-1850)

- i. Allegro appassionato*
- ii. Scherzo. Allegro assai*
- iii. Adagio con molto espressione*
- iv. Finale. Allegro molto*



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council
Arts Ealaíona



The Linenhall
arts centre

glór
ENNIS

HUGH LANE
GALLERY



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

triskel

BANBHA QUARTET

The **Banbha Quartet** was founded in 2020 and is made up of four of our most celebrated musicians. This is their sixth tour for the National String Quartet Foundation.

Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke, violin

Lidia Jewloszewicz-Clarke is an award-winning Polish violinist living in Ireland. She is a winner of the Hibernian Orchestra Concerto Competition (Ireland) and the Gdańsk Mozart Prize (Poland). She was a founding member of the Lupus Piano Trio, with whom she received the Special Prize at the International Brahms Competition in Gdańsk, and was a finalist of the Bacewicz International Chamber Music Competition in Łódź. Lidia is the recipient of a scholarship from the President of the University of Music in Luzern, Switzerland and an Artistic Scholarship from the President of Gdańsk for Special Achievements in Music and Culture. Most recently, Lidia was awarded an Agility Award and a bursary by The Arts Council in Ireland.

Lidia regularly performs with Camerata Ireland, Musici Ireland, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra and the Ulster Orchestra. Lidia graduated with honours from the Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdańsk. She furthered her studies in London at The Royal Academy of Music and graduated with an MA in Performance. Her teachers included Remus Azoitei, Sebastian Hamann, Tomotada Soh and Mirosława Pawlak.

Maria Ryan, violin

Award winning Irish violinist Maria Ryan returned to Kilkenny in 2019 after spending ten years performing and touring from London, UK. Maria is a member of the Banbha Quartet, formed in 2020, supported by The National String Quartet Foundation. She also teaches at the MTU Cork School of Music. Maria enjoyed an eclectic mix of orchestral performing in London, from Symphonies with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, to performing at the Proms with The Jacksons and enjoys performing regularly with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Camerata Ireland, and Musici Ireland.

Maria was the winner of the Heineken Violin Competition in 2010, and winner of the Aileen Gore Cup and RDS Music Bursary in 2008. She was a recipient of the Arts Council of Ireland Agility Award in 2021, and was recently awarded the Kilkenny Arts Office EDI Bursary in 2024, striving to make classical music more accessible.

Maria is grateful to the wonderful teachers she had the good fortune to study with, including Philip Edmondson, Maeve Broderick, Geraldine O' Grady and Ruxandra Petcu-Colan, and Emilian Piedicuta.

Maria currently plays on a Roger Hansell violin and a bow from the renowned Irish bow maker Noel Burke, supported by the Music Network Music Capital Scheme, the Department of Culture, Communications and Sport, and The Arts Council.

Robin Panter, viola

Robin Panter is from Liverpool and studied the viola at the Royal Northern College of Music with Roger Benedict and Scott Dickinson. Robin joined the viola section of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in 2004, and while in Glasgow teamed up with a group of musicians to set up the Scottish version of El Sistema, visiting Venezuela and applying its ground-breaking social and community development programme to schools in Raploch, Stirling.

Robin now lives in Ireland where he is a member of the Irish Chamber Orchestra and performs with the RTÉ Concert, National Symphony and Ulster Orchestras. Robin is a keen chamber musician and is a member of the Robinson Panoramic Quartet, and more recently Trio Táin with his wife Vourneen Ryan (Flute) and Aisling Ennis (Harp). Robin is a trained Suzuki violin teacher and teaches the viola at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin.

Paul Grennan, cello

Irish cellist Paul Grennan spent his childhood roaming the fields and beaches of County Wicklow. After studying at the RIAM he was accepted to the RNCM following masterclasses and a personal recommendation from the renowned cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. Whilst at the RNCM, Paul won the John Barbirolli Cello Prize, received second place in the Premio Francesco Geminiani in Verona while also receiving scholarships and a Music Education Award from the MBF.

He has given chamber music recitals throughout Europe and worked on a personal basis with composers such as Kurt Schwertsik, Alexander Goehr, James MacMillan and Colin Matthews. Paul has performed chamber and solo works by James MacMillan and quartets and works for Cello and Piano by Goehr at the Wigmore Hall in London.

As well as being a member of the wonderful Hallé cello section, Paul freelances with orchestras throughout the UK and Ireland including the The BBC Philharmonic, RLPO, Irish Chamber Orchestra, RSNO, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and more.

Paul has toured Asia, USA, Australia and Europe with various classical and pop groups as well completing a residency in the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts with the contemporary ensemble Psappa.

As a soloist, Paul has performed at the Stockhausen Festival and Minimalist Festival at the Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens as well as performing at the Barbican Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in a production of Max Richter's *Memoryhouse*.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Henriëtte Bosmans (1895-1952) | String Quartet (1927)

Henriëtte Bosmans is considered one of the most important Dutch composers of the first half of the twentieth century. Born in Amsterdam in 1895 into a family of musicians, Bosmans encountered tragedy early in life when her father – then principal cellist of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra – died when she was only 8 months old. Her early music education was with her mother Sarah, a renowned concert pianist, at the Amsterdam Conservatory, where she also studied music theory and composition. At the age of 20, she made her *début* as a concert pianist with the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra and over the following decades had a successful career as a soloist, performing across Europe with internationally renowned orchestras, and working with conductors such as Pierre Monteux, Adrian Boult, and George Szell.

She began composing in her late teens and had the first public performance of her music – her Violin Sonata – in 1919. Her initial focus was on chamber works, before she began composing orchestral works (often with a cello solo) in the 1920s. Her early impressionist-tinged style shows the influence of Debussy as well as her teacher Willem Pijper, although she quickly finds her own distinctive sound. As a woman composer Bosmans initially struggled to achieve recognition, except from colleagues and friends, and it was not until 1938 that she had an international breakthrough when her *Concert Piece for Violin and Orchestra* was performed in Paris, Prague and the United States. Unfortunately for Bosmans, further international engagements were subsequently blocked by the outbreak of war the following year.

During the German occupation of the Netherlands, Bosmans refused to become a member of the Nazi-controlled *Kultuurkamer* (Chamber of Culture) and this, coupled with her Jewish heritage led to her being banned from performing by the Nazis. She continued to perform in secret at illegal private concerts (“black evenings”), risking arrest and persecution, while also working to secure the release of her mother, who had been sent to a detention camp. After the war, she turned her attention to song, but her last creative period was impacted by illness, and she died at the relatively young age of 56.

Bosmans’s String Quartet was composed in 1927 and is dedicated to her teacher Willem Pijper. The three-movement work is a compact but vibrant gem from interwar Europe and demonstrates Bosmans’ skilfulness in writing for strings. The energetic and lively outer movements play with syncopation and modal harmonies, enclosing a lyrical and expressive slow movement with rich harmonic suspensions. The first performance of the quartet was given on 28 January 1928 by the Amsterdam String Quartet, all members of the Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Jane O’Leary (b. 1946) | *Mystic Play of Shadows* (1995)

Born in Hartford, Connecticut, Jane O’Leary became resident in Ireland in 1972, making her home in Galway. A founding member of Aosdána, she is a graduate of Vassar College and holds a PhD in composition from Princeton University. She was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music Degree by the National University of Ireland in 2007. In 2025 she was awarded a National Concert Hall Lifetime Achievement Award for her contribution to the musical life of Ireland.

As artistic director and pianist of Concorde, Ireland’s first new music ensemble, Jane has been deeply committed to connecting performers, composers and listeners since the group was founded in 1976. Her music has been performed at prestigious international festivals and venues, including the Kennedy Center in Washington, the Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall in New York, the Chicago Cultural Center, and Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris in addition to festivals in Italy, Brazil, and Spain, and at venues across Ireland.

CDs of her chamber and orchestral music were released on Navona Records label in 2017 and 2021 and a portrait concert featuring her music for clarinet and piano was presented in New York City in 2019. In 2021, *Some Call it Home*, a dramatic work commissioned by University of Plymouth as part of the Mayflower 400 commemorations, was premiered in Plymouth, England. In 2022 Navarra Quartet featured *the passing sound of forever* in a concert at Kings Place London, and the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland premiered *unfolding soundscapes*, for piano and orchestra, in Galway and Dublin.

Mystic Play of Shadows was written at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Annaghmakerrig, Co. Monaghan and was inspired by the birdsong around the lake at dusk. The descriptive title comes from a poem by Walt Whitman, *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*, and is one of O’Leary’s earliest works for string quartet, a medium that she has explored extensively ever since. As with much of the composer’s work, the music is evocative and concerned with instrumental colour and texture, drawing the listener in to an imagined landscape. *Mystic Play of Shadows* was premièred on 24 June 1996 by the RTÉ Vanbrugh Quartet at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival in Bantry, Co. Cork.

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983) | String Quartet (1919)

French composer Germaine Tailleferre is probably best remembered as the only female member of Les Six, the influential composer collective in the early twentieth century, whose other members included Poulenc, Honegger, and Millhaud. Born on the outskirts of Paris, Tailleferre studied at the Paris Conservatoire – something she was forced to do in secret as her father opposed her involvement in music. By the time she became involved in Les Six, she was already a firm part of the cultural life of the French capital, friendly with figures such as Jean Cocteau, Guillaume Apollinaire, and Pablo Picasso, and making a name for herself as a rising composer of sophisticated modern music.

Although the members of Les Six went their own separate ways after a short time, Tailleferre continued to carve her own path, including a trip to America in the mid-1920s where she met and played piano with Charlie Chaplin. The early success and

notoriety she gained with the group overshadowed her later career, although she continued to compose prolifically over the next five decades, writing chamber, vocal, symphonic and keyboard works, as well as music for stage, radio and film. She was awarded the Medal of the City of Paris, and the Prix d'Italia and taught at the Schola Cantorum in Paris until her ninetieth year. Her only string quartet dates from 1919 and was written at a time when the post-World War I vogue for neo-classical music was at its height. There are influences of both Debussy and Ravel with whom she studied, although Tailleferre's own distinctive voice can be heard in the quartet's playful syncopations and fresh harmonies. Cast in three movements, the quartet shows the composer's youthful inventiveness, with a graceful opening movement and spritely scherzo-like second, giving way to a dramatic final movement that evokes the saltarello, a traditional Italian dance.

Dobrinka Tabakova (b. 1980) | *The Smile of the Flamboyant Wings* (2019)

Dobrinka Tabakova's music has been described as "exciting" and "deeply moving" by the *Washington Times* and as having "glowing tonal harmonies and grand, sweeping gestures [which] convey a huge emotional depth" by *The Strad*.

Born in the historic town of Plovdiv in Bulgaria to a music-loving family of doctors and scientists, Dobrinka Tabakova moved to London in her early teens, where she has lived since. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music Junior Department and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and holds a PhD in Composition from King's College London. Her teachers have included Simon Bainbridge, Diana Burrell, Robert Keeley and Andrew Schultz, and she has taken part in masterclasses with John Adams, Louis Andriessen, Alexander Goehr, and Iannis Xenakis among others.

She has held residencies with ensembles including the BBC Concert Orchestra and MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra and has been invited composer-in-residence and featured composer at leading festivals across the UK and Europe. Notable commissions include three suites and a concerto for violist Maxim Rysanov, and commissions for BBC Radio 3, the Royal Philharmonic Society and the European Broadcasting Union. Her music has featured in high-profile film and dance projects worldwide, and been widely performed and recorded on ECM, Delphian and Hyperion among other labels.

Ever since her acclaimed and Grammy-nominated debut album *String Paths*, her work has shown a particular affinity for strings, from large-scale pieces such as the Concerto for Viola and Strings (2004) and Concerto for Cello and Strings (2008) to chamber and ensemble works, including four string quartets, all with descriptive titles. *The Smile of the Flamboyant Wings* is her fourth quartet and was commissioned by Cité de la Musique and premiered in Budapest by the Goldmund Quartet, for whom it was written. The title is borrowed from a painting by Joan Miró, though the music does not attempt to illustrate it directly. Any parallels, according to the composer, arise from "the relationship between the linear and the horizontal, and the interplay between filled and empty space."

Emilie Mayer (1812-1883) | *String Quartet in G Minor Op. 14* (c. 1840-1850)

Emilie Mayer was born in the German town of Friedland. As a child she studied piano and organ but initially set music aside to manage the household for her widowed father. After his death, when she was twenty-eight, Mayer pursued formal musical training, moving to Stettin (now Szczecin, Poland) to study composition with Carl Loewe, who immediately recognised her remarkable talent and encouraged her. On his recommendation she later moved to Berlin to study with Adolph Bernhard Marx, one of the leading composition teachers of the day and a friend of the Mendelssohn family, into whose circle Mayer was introduced.

Remaining unmarried - a circumstance that likely afforded her greater independence - Mayer was able to devote herself entirely to composition. She was unusually productive, particularly for a woman composer of her time, producing large-scale works rarely attempted by her female contemporaries. Her catalogue includes eight symphonies, six piano trios, two piano quartets, seven string quartets, two string quintets, seven violin sonatas, and twelve cello sonatas.

The String Quartet in G minor is the only one of her seven quartets to be published in her lifetime and the only one bearing an opus number. Although dating is uncertain - Mayer began publishing around 1860 despite having written much earlier - stylistic evidence suggests the work originated in the 1840s. The quartet opens with an intense and turbulent *Allegro appassionato*, followed by a brisk *Scherzo* with a gentler trio section. The lyrical slow movement includes a quotation from Bach's chorale "Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten" ("Whoever lets only the dear God reign"). The *Allegro molto* finale is full of energy and drive. Well received in its day, the quartet failed to secure a lasting place in the repertoire - a reflection of the barriers Mayer faced as a woman composer. Its craftsmanship and expressive range place it alongside the chamber works of Mendelssohn and Schumann. Both historically important and musically compelling, it shows Mayer's command of form and invention and deserves the renewed attention it is receiving in performance today.