

Bedford Music Club presents

BRAHMS AT THE RED HEDGEHOG



A weekend of Hungarian music and culture

Save the dates for your diary



October 24-26

**Re:Past Black Voices
All Saints Church,
Queen's Park, Bedford**

As part of Black History Month we celebrate the black voice in music.

Artists include: Leon Bosch and his award-winning arrangements of spirituals for double bass and piano, Beatrice Nicholas and her jazz trio exploring the legacy of those classically trained African-American women who when barred from work in their chosen field turned with huge success to jazz and the internationally renowned London Adventist Chorale and their well-known conductor Ken Burton (BBC Songs of Praise).

There will be much to celebrate in talks, concerts, film, food, drink community events.

Red Hedgehog background



Red Hedgehog background

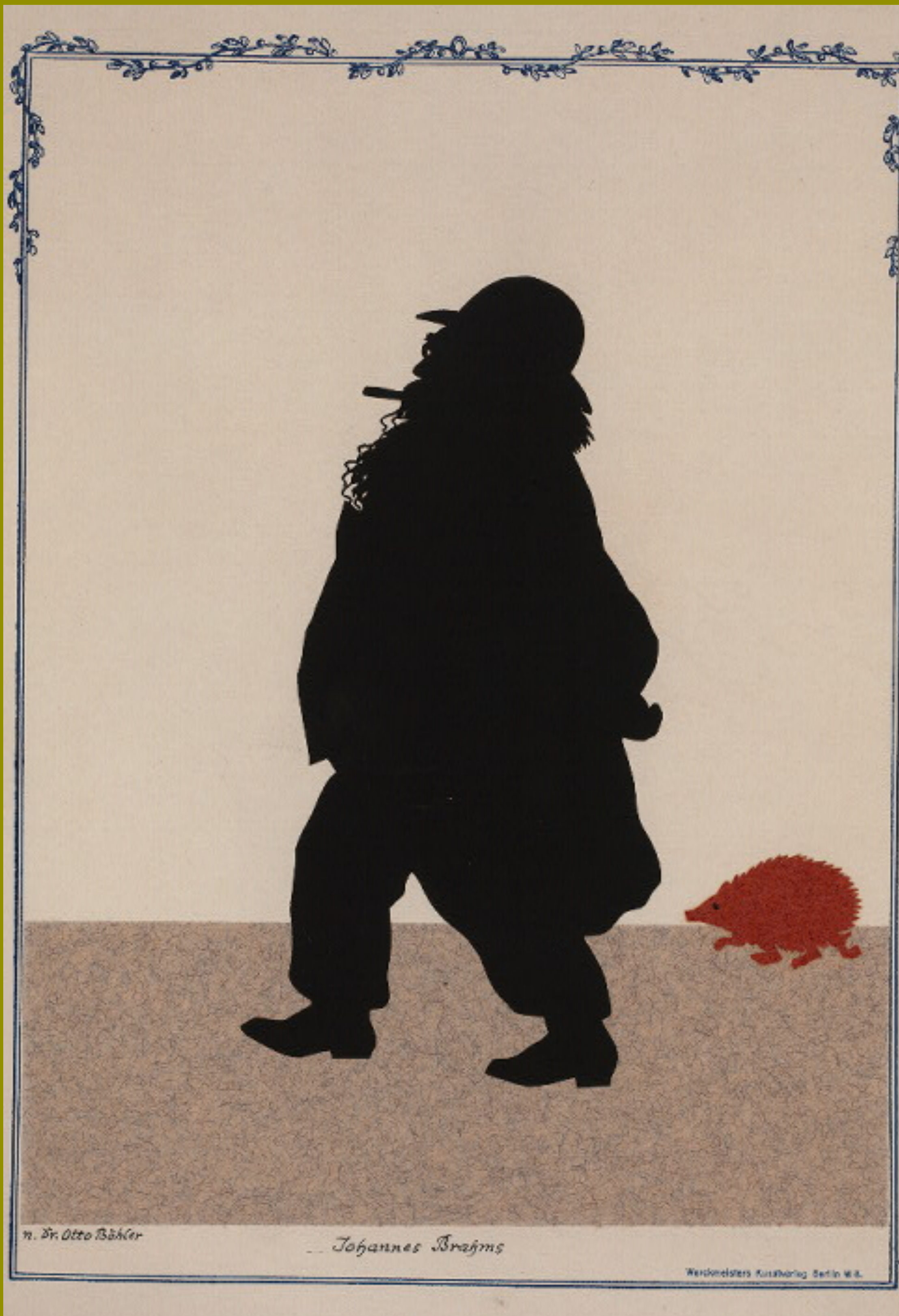
Brahms at The Red Hedgehog

Bedford Music Club is proud to present a weekend festival of Hungarian music and culture: 'Brahms at The Red Hedgehog'. Join us for a deep immersion into the cultural melting pot that was C19 Vienna!

Brahms is our focus but why 'The Red Hedgehog'? The Red Hedgehog, a popular tavern in Vienna, was a regular watering hole for many famous composers including Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn. And an elderly bachelor, one Johannes Brahms, who in later years hardly ate or drank anywhere else! This weekend's events explore the kinds of Hungarian music that Brahms would have heard at the tavern and how popular idioms found their way into his greatest works, not least his sublime Clarinet Quintet.

Over the weekend we will be immersing ourselves in Brahms's sound world and exploring how cultures and musics mix and re-thinking what 'originality' means in today's world of artificial intelligence and mash ups.

Brahms at The Red Hedgehog is the first outing for **Re:Past** a new festival experience from Bedford Music Club that will explore how cultures and musics influence each other. **Re:Past** will run twice a year in the Autumn and Spring. Each weekend will explore a particular theme in depth through talks, concerts, film and other cultural experiences.



BRAHMS ON HIS WAY TO THE ROTE IGEL

Otto Böhler (1847-1913)

Joseph Muller Collection, New York Public Library

The Red Hedgehog Tavern

The Gasthaus Zum Roten Igel ('The Red Hedgehog' Tavern) was a Viennese hub of socialising, beer-drinking and music. Schubert and Brahms went there to hear gypsy musicians play and their influence found its way into their writing, most closely in the Brahms Clarinet Quintet and the Schubert C major Quintet.

Crusty old bachelor Brahms was very attached to the place and stubbornly refused to eat or drink anywhere else. In fact he became such a fixture that his and the name of the tavern became synonymous - at least in pictures like the one on the previous page. He rarely ate alone and always had two or three acquaintances with him and the meal could be accompanied by jokes and prickly insults of all sorts, no doubt aimed at conductors, singers and politicians.

Brahms was extravagantly fond of goulash and the staff at the Roten Igel kept a small barrel of the finest Hungarian Tokay in the cellar for his private consumption. He was also known to have a special weakness for Rindspilaw (beef pilaf), a simple peasant dish. He also had a fondness for herring salad and often made loud demands for whitebait, a favourite fried food of dockworkers. There is even a story that that, when opening a can of sardines, Brahms would drink the oil directly out of the can. The moral of the story? You can take the boy out of the Hamburg slums, but you can't take memories of his favorite childhood foods out of the man.

The Red Hedgehog wasn't just a place to eat. Brahms had a close relationship with the 'Hungarian Gypsy' style. There is evidence that relatively early on, he heard Romani bands playing in his native Hamburg. By his late teens, he had become an accompanist for the Hungarian virtuoso violinist Ede Reményi, who had fled from Hungary to avoid persecution following the failed revolution of 1848. Brahms toured with Reményi in the early 1850s, and they played arrangements of various Hungarian Romani songs. Later, Brahms moved to Vienna, where he made many Hungarian friends, and both visited and toured Hungary several times. There are several stories of the composer passing hours listening with fascination to virtuosic Romani bands, both in Vienna and during his visits to Budapest.

It appears that Brahms, more than perhaps any other famous 'art music' composer, conceived of 'Gypsy fiddlers' not only as exotic stereotypes but as capable musicians who had forged a style potentially compatible with the German idioms he most prized. *Over our Brahms at The Red Hedgehog weekend we will recapture the spirit of the tavern. Imagine the scene late at night, with Brahms listening intently to Gypsy bands drawn from Jews, Greeks and Russians as well as Hungarian Roma - and quite probably the odd tramp or two. And from this melting pot came some of his finest creations, not least the late Clarinet Quintet which features large in our festival.*

Red Hedgehog events



Red Hedgehog events

Brahms at the Red Hedgehog

Programme

Saturday 26 April 2025 at Bunyan Meeting

Brahms at the Tavern

6.00pm talk, Dr Jon Banks

The Hungarian Connection

7.30pm concert, Alkyona Quartet with Magdalenna Krstevska, clarinet

Sunday 27 April 2025 at The Quarry Theatre

Brahms and the Gypsy

2.00pm concert, ZRI

The Klezmer Project

4.15pm film showing

Café Danube

6.30pm concert, ZRI



Brahms at the Tavern



Dr Jon Banks shares his insights into the popular influences on Brahms in a talk illustrated with rare archival recordings of bands from the early twentieth century—as close as we can get to Brahms’s own experience.

Brahms at the Tavern

Dr Jon Banks speaker

Brahms's Hungarian Dances and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies are among their most famous works, and the wider influence of Hungarian 'Gypsy Bands' on the great romantic composers is well-known. The bands themselves, however, have remained in the shadows, and assumed to belong to an unknowable oral tradition of which nothing remains apart from some highly exoticised literary hyperbole.

This talk presents the opposite side of the story. Based on the research for Jon Banks's *Hungarian 'Gypsy-Band' Music in Vienna, 1850–1914*, to be published this June, it reanimates world of "Gypsy Bands" and the places they played. Alongside images and anecdotes from the Viennese press, it presents some of the earliest recordings of this music, issued shortly after Brahms died and made by artists that he almost certainly heard.

Come and meet some extraordinary personalities and a new angle on music in old Vienna!



Plaque at the site of The Red Hedgehog tavern in Vienna,
now demolished

The Hungarian Connection



The Alkyona Quartet and Magdalenna Krstevska perform folk-inspired music by Dohnányi, Bartók and Brahms — his late and sublime Clarinet Quintet which forms the weekend's centrepiece.

The Hungarian Connection

Alkyona Quartet

Emma Purslow violin

Marike Kruup violin

Claire Newton viola

Jobine Siekman 'cello

with **Magdalenna Krsetvska** clarinet

Ernö Dohnányi 1877-1960

Serenade in C for string trio, Op. 10 1902

I Marcia: Allegro

II Romanza: Adagio non troppo

III Scherzo: Vivace

IV Tema con variazioni: Andante con moto

V Rondo (Finale): Allegro vivace

Ernö Dohnányi was a towering figure in Hungarian musical culture as a pianist, composer, conductor, administrator and educator in the years before the First World War.

The Serenade in C for String Trio was composed in 1902 during a concert tour and premièred two years later in Vienna with considerable success. The work is in five movements in the 19th century serenade tradition, as advocated by Fuchs and Brahms, but its deep sense of form and sparseness of means point to a new sensibility on the wake. It is strongly influenced by Hungarian folk melodies, giving it an unmistakeable mark of the composer's homeland.

Béla Bartók 1881-1945

A selection from 44 duos for two violins 1931

arranged for viola and 'cello

17 Menetelő nótá (Hungarian March)

19 Mese (Fairy Tale)

25 Magyar nótá (Hungarian Song)

13 Lakodalmás (Wedding Song)

35 Rutén kolomejka (Ruthenian Kolomejka)

Bartók wrote his 44 violin duos as a set of progressive lessons arranged from least to most difficult. The purpose of the duos was to enable “students, from their very first years of study, to play works in which the natural simplicity of folk music, and its melodic and rhythmic features, can be found.”

A professional folklorist, who spent years recording folk music in rural areas and transcribing the tunes as faithfully and accurately as possible for publication, Bartók deeply respects the folk tradition and does not develop the tunes. They are presented, repeated, and end, with each duo lasting on average about a minute.

INTERVAL

Johannes Brahms 1833-1897

Clarinet Quintet in b minor, Op. 115 1891

I Allegro

II Adagio

III Andantino

IV Con moto

In 1890 Brahms completed his String Quintet in G major, Op.111, and announced that this would be his final work as, at 57, he was giving up composing. Around this time many of his old friends died and, with a feeling of depression, he became obsessed with his own mortality.

Fortunately he received a new stimulus and the decision was reversed. For that we owe a debt to one man. In March 1891 Brahms visited Meiningen to hear one of the greatest orchestras of the day, under its new conductor Fritz Steinbach. He was immediately impressed by the playing of the orchestra's clarinettist Richard Mühlfeld and a firm friendship soon developed between the two men. It was Mühlfeld who provided the stimulus for Brahms to write his last four great chamber works for clarinet—the Trio, the two Sonatas, and the Quintet.

The quintet was written in 1891 at Brahms' summer retreat of Ischl in the Salzkammergut, and it was first performed in December of the same year at one of Joachim's concerts in Berlin, when the critics declared it to be the finest work for clarinet since Mozart's.

It is, indeed, a work of autumnal beauty, introspection and quiet melancholy. While Brahms created a feeling of rhapsodic freedom, he also ensured a unity of emotion, tonality and thematic content, and the clarinet does not adopt a solo role, more that of an equal.

The first movement *Allegro* opens with a sensuously beautiful theme which contains the seeds upon which the whole work is built, including the heart-stoppingly beautiful second idea.

The *Adagio* begins with a tender, dream-like melody which is Brahmsian romanticism at its zenith. A rhapsodic middle section, with echoes of his beloved gypsy music, precedes a return to the opening mood.

Again the *Andantino* opens with a broad melody, a faster, delicate *Presto* taking over to continue the movement with many references to the germinal theme.

Reflecting the content previously encountered, a theme with five variations forms the final movement. The variations continue the underlying tranquillity of mood, except that in the second the gypsy character of the *Adagio* once more comes to the fore. Hints of each of the movements are to be found in the closing passages, in particular, a chilly dénouement as the principal theme of the opening *Allegro* combines with that of the variations.

Programme note by John Dalton, April 2010

Brahms and the Gypsy



Hear Brahms's Clarinet Quintet once again in a completely fresh guise. ZRI reimagine it, rescored for earthy folk instruments and with improvisation that digs deep into the Hungarian soil.

Brahms and the Gypsy

ZRI

Ben Harlan clarinet

Max Baillie violin

Matthew Sharp 'cello

Jon Banks accordion

Iris Pissaride santouri

Hungarian traditional melody *Tigeneascau*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: I Allegro*

Kolomeyke *Carpathian traditional melody*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: I Allegro continued*

Klezmer melody *Hora mit tsibiles (Hora with Onions)*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: I Allegro continued*

Ukranian traditional melody *Sarba Maracini*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: II Adagio*

Klezmer melody *Der Gasn Nign (The Street Tune)*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: II Adagio continued*

INTERVAL

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: III Andantino*

Romanian traditional melody *Dance from Korond*

Klezmer melody *The Golden Wedding*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet: III Andantino continued*

Brahms *Clarinet Quintet – IV: Con moto*

ZRI stands for 'Zum rothen Igel'—the Red Hedgehog, the Viennese tavern where Brahms took his meals daily for the last fourteen years of his life. In the days before the famous *Musikverein* hall was built, 'Zum rothen Igel' was also the name of the grand concert hall connected to the tavern by a passage, where Schubert and Beethoven had premiered their works. Viennese taverns had a music of all their own though, and Brahms was a particular aficionado of the Hungarian 'Gypsy-Bands', who were everywhere in the city. Their music was a far cry from the elegant waltzes so often associated with Vienna; Brahms's contemporaries described it as "primitive wildness", a "jingling, whistling, gurgling clatter", and Liszt—a major fan, as Brahms was—memorably called it "a frightful uproar, as if every possible sound or tone was crashing down together". Brahms had absorbed the style as a teenager in Hamburg, drew on it directly for his Hungarian Dances, and incorporated it at a deep level in many other works, especially his soulful clarinet quintet.

This concert presents the quintet rescored in its entirety to embrace accordion and *santouri* and interleaved with this high-energy traditional music that was ever-present in the sensibilities of its original audiences. Setting this this romantic masterpiece back in this more earthy context evokes a *fin-de-siècle* Viennese soundworld that links Brahms not just back to the classics but also forward to the avant-garde of Klimt, Freud and Schönberg.

The Klezmer Project



Best First Feature at the 2023 Berlin Festival this multi-layered documentary traces the journey of a couple through Eastern Europe in search of a vanishing culture ... and romance.

The Klezmer Project 2023

A film by Leandro Koch and Paloma Schachmann

Road movie 2023, 115 minutes, English subtitles

Synopsis

Argentinian cameraman Leandro makes a living from filming Jewish weddings. At one of his jobs, he falls in love with Paloma, the clarinettist of a klezmer band. To seduce her he pretends to be shooting a documentary film about traditional Yiddish folk music. What Leandro does not know is that his 'fake' film project will take him on an unscripted journey throughout Eastern Europe in search of the last remaining klezmer melodies.



Director's note

Both of us, the directors of the film, are grandchildren of Jewish immigrants. We grew up hearing stories from our grandparents that spoke of a Judaism that was nothing like the one we knew. At first, it seemed to us that those stories were simply a romanticisation of the past. But when we began the research for this documentary about klezmer music, we discovered that there was something more. We knew from the first moment that we had to film in Ukraine, because historically it is a territory that was inhabited by Jews, where they developed their culture and traditions for years.

What is klezmer music?

Klezmer was born within the Yiddish culture, a culture that disappeared firstly due to the Holocaust and secondly because the new 'Jewish identity' that was sought with the creation of the State of Israel did not have a place for that culture. Klezmer music is the instrumental music of Yiddish culture, that was mainly used in Jewish weddings in Eastern Europe. Although it comes from a specific culture marked by religion, klezmer is the pagan music of this culture; therefore, it is never heard in religious situations.

Klezmer Revival

Klezmer music was kept silent until the 70's, when a vanguardist movement called Klezmer Revival appeared in the United States, decided to 'rescue' the klezmer melodies recorded at the beginning of the century and create a new genre. At that moment, klezmer went from being the music of Jewish wedding rituals, to being a music style in itself. It was then that one the most essential elements of this culture with vast artistic production resurfaced: its music. Through music, this documentary intends to understand what that Judaism was like, before the generation (whose members are around 90 years old now) that was part of it or that shared territory with it, die.



Café Danube



Join our closing celebration as ZRI recreates the atmosphere of The Red Hedgehog tavern. Prepare to laugh, yell and maybe shed a tear with music from Bach and Johann Strauss to Donna Summer and Taylor Swift.

Café Danube

ZRI

Ben Harlan clarinet

Max Baillie violin

Matthew Sharp 'cello

Jon Banks accordion

Iris Pissaride santouri

Music flowing into Vienna from the East

No city ever celebrated its river in music quite like Vienna and the beautiful blue Danube. But even in those glory days the Danube was more than just a symbol of gilded elegance; it passed through nine neighbouring countries, could boast the largest river shipping company in the world, fuelled by coal mined in Hungary and running over a thousand vessels all the way to Odessa; in the age of steamers and heavy industry, the Danube was the new silk road.

It also brought in people. The imperial citadel that Schubert and Beethoven once knew was a sprawling metropolis for Brahms, the quadrupled population mostly made up of immigrants from down river. The Hungarian Roma bands arrived on this tide, deeply traditional but also priding themselves on learning Strauss favourites and even whole operas instantly and by ear.

This magical facility delighted and confounded the Viennese, who even subjected it to quasi-scientific tests to eliminate any possibility of cheating. Their suspicion was symptomatic of a deeper anxiety about their apparent disregard for authority; as one newspaper put it in 1860, “It exerts a violence, this gypsy music, an elemental effect, like a force of nature; it rushes at us like a storm, grips us like an irresistible whirlpool, and we have to swim with it, whether we want to or not”.

Brahms adored these bands, visiting the ‘Csárdá’—the Hungarian tavern in Vienna that hosted them for over 30 years—“often and gladly”, as one friend put it. At the peak of their popularity a dozen groups played nightly at different venues around the city, for guests at imperial balls and dancers at popular nightclubs alike, who recognised their own romantic aspirations in the pathos of the music, and the defiance that it represented.

Our performances of these tunes are very much in the spirit of the earliest recordings, which draw on some melodies that are surprisingly familiar thanks to the Rhapsodies and Hungarian Dances arranged by Liszt and Brahms.

Red Hedgehog artists





ALKYONA QUARTET

Marika Kruup, Emma Purslow, Jobine Siekman, Claire Newton



MAGDALENN KRSTEVSKA

clarinet

Alkyona Quartet

Formed in the bustle of London in 2018, the **Alkyona Quartet** present fresh imaginative interpretations of both well-known and hidden gems of the string quartet repertoire. The quartet also revels in finding and championing scintillating but overlooked works. They love collaborations across the arts and are often found presenting both string quartet and collaborative works in more unusual presentations. Why **Alkyona**? A question our audiences often ask us. We have a bird lover in our midst, Emma.

Alkyona means 'Kingfisher' in Greek. All music makers can relate to the thrill of chasing the fleeting fulfilled musical moment, or the 'flash of blue' as the kingfisher streaks past. A rare sight, but a moment that stills time. One we hope you'll remember forever.

The **Alkyona Quartet** present fresh, imaginative interpretations of both well-known and hidden gems of the string quartet repertoire. They are well known for their warm connection to audiences and vivacious performances, and are 'as vibrant and memorable as their 'Kingfisher' namesake'.

alkyonaquartet.com

Magdalenna Krstevska

Australian clarinettist **Magdalenna Krstevska** has performed as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician and orchestral clarinettist in renowned music halls across the UK, Australia, Europe, and China. Recent engagements include recitals at St. James' Piccadilly, Buxton Music Festival and Banstead Arts Festival.

She has performed with the English National Opera, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony, Melbourne Chamber, Opera Australia, and Australian World orchestras. As clarinet fellow with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2018, she performed in over twenty-five mainstage programs and a European tour, including in the role of principal and principal E-flat clarinet.

A strong advocate of diversity in classical music, **Magdalenna** is the founder of the Corelia Project, an initiative that spotlights the works of women composers. The Corelia Project has created a database of repertoire by women to enable easy access for instrumentalists, and regularly presents inspired and exciting concert programmes across the UK.

magdalenna-krstevska.com

Interview with Alkyona Quartet and Magdalenna (Mena)

Visited Hungary?

Yes, I have stepfamily—originally from St Petersburg—there now. They live in Máriakálnok, in the north west of Hungary and really not far from Bratislava where composer Dohnányi was born. —**Jobine**

Favourite Brahms?

Two Songs for Contralto, Viola and Piano, Op.91 — I had it during my wedding ceremony! —**Claire**

Your most memorable gig?

My favourite performance I've ever given was the London premier of Dobrinka Tabakova's Patience of Trees violin concerto. The audience was walking among the musicians, and in the most intimate moment of the piece a little girl came and sat on my music stand! There was such a sense of togetherness, moving through a work of art as a shared experience. —**Emma**

Best advice?

"It's not about you - it's about the music!" This has always helped me, particularly when I'm feeling nervous about a concert or audition. We spend so much time perfecting our craft, worrying about the notes and being hard on ourselves, but when we get to the performance it's important to remember that we are a channel of the music. It's not about how perfect we are, or about how many mistakes we make, rather about sharing the innermost emotions and story music with your audience! —**Mena**

In five years' time?

A few months ago my answer would have been quite different, it would have been more music and career focused. The world is a busy place and we are taught to always be driven, heading from one exciting opportunity to the next. Today since having my daughter before Christmas, my whole purpose seems to have changed. I'm consciously trying to stay in each moment for a little longer, not letting her grow up so fast. It is unbelievably awesome that our job is to work on gorgeous and brilliant music and to take it to our audiences, it is a huge privilege and I am enjoying it perhaps even more with this new found 'in the present' approach. So I'd love to have more of what I already have. Love and happiness from my family and chance to make music and to share it, wherever that is. —**Marike**

Desert Island disc?

Can I have two?! Janine Jansen's recording of Verklärte Nacht, which never fails to make me cry. And the Wombats 'Let's Dance to Joy Division', which always puts a smile on my face and is my favourite remedy for pre performance jitters! —**Jobine**



ZRI

Iris Pissaride, Max Baillie, Jon Banks, Matthew Sharp
Ben Harlan (front)

ZRI

ZRI take their name from Zum Roten Igel, the Viennese venue in the times when Brahms and Schubert were alive; a serious classical concert hall on one side, and a space where composers drank and caroused on the other. Born out of a passion for the classics, each ZRI performance feeds off the intensity of the music when it was new and shouting to make itself heard.

Beginning with their radical re-scoring of the Brahms Clarinet Quintet to include accordion and santouri (dulcimer), ZRI has developed captivating programs that re-imagine Schubert's great C major quintet, adventure with Charlie Chaplin, and waltz with Schönberg, drawing the audience into a world where they are free to let go of genre distinctions and simply experience the concert story.

ZRI are five world-class musicians drawing together a wealth of collective experience with international orchestras, improvising, and cross-cultural collaborations into a single focus. The group has performed at major festivals across the UK and Europe, including Gottweig, Lindau, Liestal, Boswil and Alpentöne, and has made critically-acclaimed discs of both the Schubert and Brahms Quintets; 'The Cellar Sessions' was released in 2023, bridging the serenity of Schubert and Bach with contemporary songs and this theme sails further east with 'Café Danube', released by Naxos in 2024. In an interconnected world, classical becomes radical.

Interview with Ben Harlen

Visited Hungary?

Yes. I felt very lost and then had a delicious fried something for lunch and felt better.

Favourite Brahms?

The German Requiem.

Favourite venue?

Anywhere where the artistic directors really care about what you're doing.

Best concert you've been too?

The Rite of Spring by Danztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch.

Your most memorable gig?

Walking onto the stage of a packed Albert Hall, mid-big band riff, blasting a huge clarinet solo.

Best advice?

Be in love with what you are making—just interested is not enough (my Dad!)

In five years' time?

Performing with ZRI, composing more film scores, hanging out with my family.

Desert Island disc?

That's too difficult ... Café Danube by ZRI, wait, Goldberg Variations played by Glenn Gould (1981 recording) .. or Cold Blow and the Rainy Night by Planxty, no, no Born to Run by Bruce Springsteen ... etc., etc.

Interview with Iris Pissaride

Visited Hungary?

Not yet.

Favourite Brahms?

The Clarinet Quintet—ZRI version!

Favourite venue?

The Zum Roten Igel in 18th century Vienna

Best concert you've been too?

Difficult to say....my most recent favorite was seeing Gilberto Gil live in Barcelona

Your most memorable gig?

ZRI and the Vasteras Orchestra a couple of years ago in Sweden.

Best advice?

To drink more water!

In five years' time?

Relaxing on a mountain cabin, reading books, and traveling to play and hang out with ZRI.

Desert Island disc?

It changes every year. This year it's our Café Danube album!

Interview with Jon Banks

Visited Hungary?

Yes, I've done concerts in Budapest and Esterházy and, via the internet, had great conversations with Hungarian archivists and record collectors for my book *The Csárdás Craze*.

Favourite Brahms?

It has to be the Clarinet Quintet, although I also fell in love with the *Geistliches Lied* when I was a choir boy.

Favourite venue?

Tough one! There's the Registan Square in Samarqand; the dry dock actually underneath the Cutty Sark in Greenwich; the Lion Hotel in Shrewsbury, where Paganini once played; the Nigel Mansell motor racing museum in Jersey...

Best concert you've been too?

Impossible to answer! Most recently, Julie Fowlis in my home town of Hertford.

Your most memorable gig?

Our first ZRI concert, in the amazing atmosphere of the old Dalston boxing club. A complete blast.

Best advice?

Don't read the books, just listen to the music (thank you Dr Fred Sternfeld, Oxford, 1980!).

In five years' time?

Touring with this group so fast you won't see me for dust.

Desert Island disc?

Think it would have to be *Workin'* with the Miles Davis Quintet—I can remember hearing it for the first time as a teenager.

Interview with Matthew Sharp

Visited Hungary?

Yes - thermal baths, House of Terror (mind-blowing & soul-shattering), Liszt, Kodály and late-night cellar sessions.

Favourite Brahms?

Today? The Violin Concerto...listening to it right now.

Favourite venue?

Oooof...right now, the thought that's coming to mind is Victor Hugo's House on Guernsey...many years ago I did a performance there - the first performance in the house since Victor Hugo had been living there...and it was so intimate and pulsing with so much epic creativity.

Best performance you've been too?

Tristan & Iseult by Kneehigh Theatre at the National Theatre.

Your most memorable gig?

The first time I ever performed John Tavener's The Protecting Veil...or jumping in at 36 hours notice as Sweeney Todd, Royal Swedish Opera...religion or razors? Tough call...

Best advice?

'Go on stage as if to a hot date...not root canal' (David Mamet).

In five years' time?

Making more magic with ZRI, singing Falstaff, performing my new solo cello music theatre show.

Desert Island disc?

Daniil Shafran playing the Glazunov arrangement of Chopin's Étude op.25/7.

Interview with Max Baillie

Visited Hungary?

Yes, a few times. The first time was to play at a psychedelic trance festival deep in the countryside, then mostly classical festivals.

Favourite Brahms?

Ooo much too hard question.. if I'm playing then it'll be that one!

Favourite venue?

The Red Hedgehog Tavern of course! The original no longer exists but our band conjures its spirit.

Best performance you've been too?

I played Kodály Duo with my dad in the belly of a fishing vessel packed with people. I had to sit because the ceiling was too low for my bow.

Best advice?

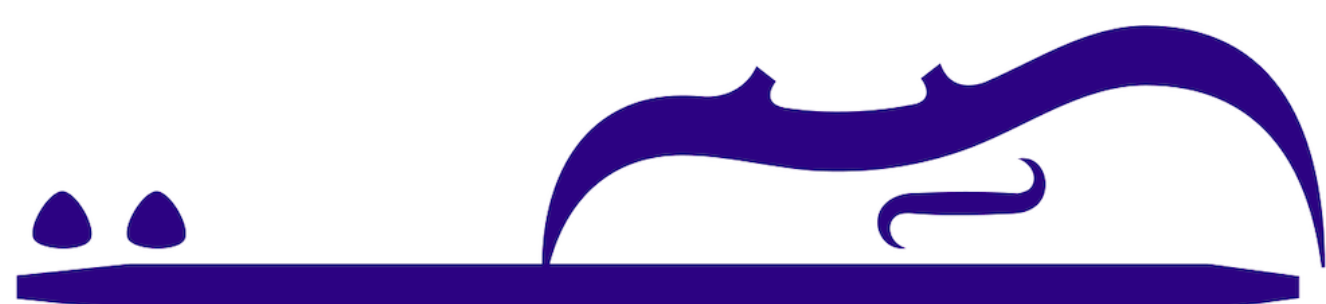
Have courage and patience. (From Georges Enescu to Ivry Gitlis, my teacher.

In five years' time?

Everything I'm doing now and more!

Desert Island disc?

I just appeared on BBC Radio 3s This Classical Life, you can hear them there!



Bedford Music Club



Brahms at The Red Hedgehog
is generously supported by the
Gale Family Charity Trust

