

The Vanbrugh & Friends

Keith Pascoe, violin

Katherine Hunka, violin

Simon Aspell, viola

David Kenny, viola

Christopher Marwood, cello

Wolfgang Mozart [1756-1791]

String Quintet in C major K.515 [1787]

Johannes Brahms [1833-1897]

String Quintet No.1 in F major Op.88 [1882]

The Vanbrugh and their guests present two of the greats from the string quintet repertoire. Adjectives have been heaped on Mozart's C major quintet – effortless, elegant, sublime, majestic, joyful, bewitching... call it what you will, they are all testament to its timeless appeal. And then the Brahms F major quintet, written a century later is also all of these things and more. Written in the summer of 1882, it was a work that Brahms was particularly fond of, and from the gorgeous opening melody, through the exquisite slow movement, to the high octane finale, it is easy to see why.

THE VANBRUGH

The Vanbrugh has evolved from the work of the legendary Vanbrugh Quartet. Over three decades the quartet gave close to three thousand concerts, presenting the chamber music repertoire to audiences throughout Ireland, Europe, the Americas and the Far East. Commercial recordings include more than thirty CDs of repertoire, ranging from the complete Beethoven quartets to many contemporary Irish works. In 2016 the group was presented with the National Concert Hall's Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of their contribution to music in Ireland. For this concert the core members of the Vanbrugh, Keith Pascoe, Simon Aspell and Christopher Marwood, welcome two wonderful colleagues, violinist Katherine Hunka and violist David Kenny

KATHERINE HUNKA, VIOLIN

Born in London, Katherine Hunka grew up under the musical guidance of teacher Sheila Nelson. She performed chamber music at London's South Bank and the Royal Albert Hall, was soloist with the City of London Sinfonia and led the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Katherine was awarded a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music where she studied with Gyorgy Pauk, and then furthered her studies in the USA at Indiana University where she also acted as teaching assistant to her professor, Mauricio Fuks. This instilled in her a great love of teaching. She has since returned to Indiana as a guest Professor and been made a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music.

Katherine has been Leader of the Irish Chamber Orchestra since 2002 and regularly directs from the leader's chair. As director and soloist with the ICO she has toured Germany, China and Singapore, appeared at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, and more recently, at the Kilkenny Arts Festival.

Katherine directs ICO national tours, which take the orchestra all over Ireland and enjoys collaboration with contemporary composers. She has directed premieres with many Irish composers. As leader, she has also enjoyed performing solo concertos and chamber music with Jörg Widmann, Pekka Kuusisto, Anthony Marwood and Nigel Kennedy amongst others.

Katherine performs regularly as a chamber musician and soloist at festivals throughout Ireland and the UK. At the Aldeburgh Festival she premiered Benjamin Britten's rediscovered Double Concerto. She has been a regular at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival and the Killaloe festival. Her trio Far Flung, with accordionist Dermot Dunne and bassist Malachy Robinson, delights audiences with its light-hearted approach, their repertoire spanning from Bach to Klezmer with anything in between. They have recently released their first album.

Katherine has been a guest leader with the Manchester Camerata, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. She has also been guest soloist with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra and Concert Orchestra. She is currently a Professor at the CIT Cork School of Music and the Irish World Academy of Music.

DAVID KENNY, VIOLA

A native of Cork, David Kenny studied with Constantin Zanidache and Simon Aspell at the CIT Cork School of Music. He has worked with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Wexford Festival Opera Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, John Wilson Orchestra and the Irish Chamber Orchestra. He has played Principal Viola with the European Union Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland. In 2016, David was appointed to the viola section of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

He has performed at the West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Music in Drumcliffe and the Interlaken Classics Festival. He has collaborated with the Ficino Ensemble, Musici Ireland and the Vanbrugh Quartet. As violist with the Shandon String Trio he undertook a Chamber Studio mentorship under Richard Lester at Kings Place, London, last year.

He has participated in masterclasses with Yuri Bashmet, Nobuko Imai, Bruno Giuranna, Maxim Rysanov, Lawrence Power and with members of the Alban Berg, Vanbrugh, Pacifica, Artemis, Vogler, Danel, Danish and Casals Quartets.