

THE FIRM  
2011

concert five

Since his awkward youthful composition with piano accompaniment on the song “Zu Straßburg auf der Shanz” Mahler’s music has sympathized with the social outcasts who vainly stretch out their hands to the collective. “Ich soll dich bitttern um Pardon, und ich bekommm’ doch meinen Lohn! Das Weiss ich schon” (Though I should ask your pardon I shall get my desserts, I know full well). Mahler’s music is subjective not as his expression, but in that he puts it in the mouth of a deserter. All are last words. The man to be executed deafeningly utters what he has to say, without anyone hearing.

*Adorno*

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear (northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of the performance area.

## The Firm

presents

**Marianna Grynchuk, piano**

with the

**Langbein String Quartet**

**Lachlan Bramble, violin**

**Michael Milton, violin**

**Rosie McGowran, viola**

**David Sharp, cello**

**Benjamin Betelli**

**Scherzo**

**Luke Altmann**

**Nocturne no.5**

**Quentin Grant**

**Dances from Kalischt**

**short interval**

**Raymond Chapman Smith Divertimento no.4**

**Gustav Mahler**

**Piano Quartet in a minor**

**Benjamin Betelli**

**Scherzo (2011)**  
for piano quintet

**Allegro con brio**

This scherzo for piano quintet includes more 'popular/jazz' influences with the minor/major 3rd commonly used by George Gershwin and the inclusion of Latin samba rhythms. The form still draws on classical structures, however modulations and key changes are not planned in the same way as a classical sonata and are more similar to a pop song (e.g rising a tone). This 'classical meets pop' approach should give a new experience to classical listeners. At the same time, I would like to see people who don't necessarily listen to classical music find something in this piece.



**Luke Altmann**

**Nocturne no.5 (2011)**  
for string quartet

*The Black Swan of Trespass* (Nocturne No.5) is a companion piece to *Prelude to New York*, written in 2006, which wishfully stretches the thin film of its limited harmonic material around a ten-minute volume of time like a soap bubble of unsustainable dimensions.



Quentin Grant

**Dances from Kalischt (2011)**

for piano quintet

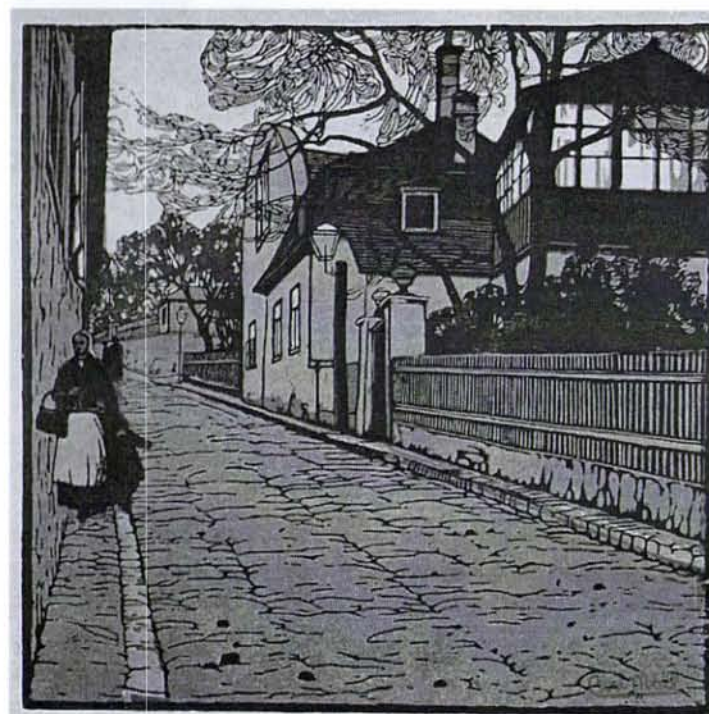
- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| I. Nigun       | <i>con brio</i>       |
| II. Khosidl    | <i>leggiero</i>       |
| III. Kolomeike | <i>con moto</i>       |
| IV. Kujawiak   | <i>sentimentabile</i> |
| V. Schleifer   | <i>leggiero</i>       |

*Through the hills and the thick, verdant forest the river ran, and down the valley with its farm houses and barns and animals and slowly labouring peasants. Then it spread its banks and became wide, shallow and mild as it came to the village.*

*. . . . On the stone bridge the rabbi and the priest were in deep conversation. The topic was the brewery and the wild and sometimes violent monthly village dances that were held in the barn behind it. The priest was fervently railing against the dances, feeling that they were the work of devilish forces, while the rabbi was much more good-humoured about them, and defended their right-to-be with a gentle smile. But the priest would not be swayed, and the more gently the rabbi defended the monthly dance, the more angrier the priest grew, till he was flustered and hot and shouting at the top of his voice. The rabbi, deciding enough was enough, quietly bid the other good day and walked away. As he walked he began whistling one of the many dance tunes that the brewer's son could be frequently heard playing on his violin in the village square on warm evenings. The tune reminded him of his youth, of the village girls he kissed and held, of the smell of the hay and the excitement of the full moon. Suddenly he felt giddy and happy, and made a silent thanks to music, to the brewer's son, to the village band and their dancers – how empty life would be, he thought, without their magical gifts.*



*Mahler's birth house, Kalischt, Bohemia*



Raymond Chapman Smith

**Divertimento no.4 (2011)**  
for string quartet

- I. *Andantino*
- II. *Vivace assai*
- III. *Adagietto*
- IV. *Allegretto*
- V. *Presto*



**Gustav Mahler Piano Quartet in a minor (1876)**

**Nicht zu schnell**

Born in Kalischt (Kalište), Bohemia, July 7, 1860  
Died in Vienna, May 18, 1911



Gustav Mahler began studying at the Vienna Conservatory as a 15 year old during the 1875-76 academic year, and remained there for three years while still enrolled as a high-school student at the Iglau Gymnasium. He distinguished himself as a pianist at the Conservatory, and was clearly being groomed for a career as a concert performer, but the young Mahler soon turned to composition as his primary subject, taking classes in harmony from Robert Fuchs and counterpoint with Franz Krenn. Mahler was also a devotee of Bruckner's music, and attended Bruckner's university lectures in Vienna without ever formally becoming a pupil. He was enamored with Wagner's music, and was also a friend of Hugo Wolf during his time at the Conservatory. Mahler's first compositions, which date from these early student years at the Conservatory, are almost entirely chamber works. Most of them are lost, and there is some confusion about the

nature of these lost works—many scholars believe, for example, that the lost Piano Quintet listed as Mahler's graduation piece, and for which he was awarded a prize, is actually the Piano Quartet in A minor, entered wrongly in the Conservatory's own records. Adding to the confusion is the fact that Mahler started many works during his student days, but finished few of them, explaining to his friend and confidante at the Conservatory Natalie Bauer-Lechner, that he always found himself attracted to a newer style before finishing a work.

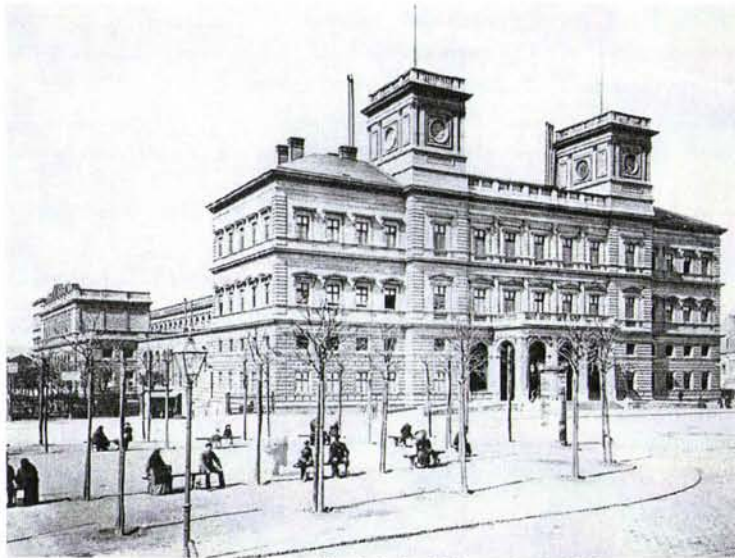
As a student composition, indeed the first composition that appears in Mahler's works list, the Piano Quartet in A minor displays a certain tentative confidence. Tentative because there was still so much for the young composer to discover, and confident because he had already assimilated an extraordinary amount of compositional technique during his first year of formal music instruction; he had come to the Conservatory essentially self-taught. The sonata structure of this one movement (sketches for a second movement Scherzo survive, but are incomplete) demonstrates a sympathetic knowledge not only of 19th-century form and compositional style, but also the techniques of the great piano masters: Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, and Brahms. While the key of A minor would later symbolize for Mahler the "unconscious anticipation of things to come" (it is, for example, the key of his dramatic and sentimental Sixth Symphony), it seems to have no obvious symbolic or referential significance in this work. The opening of the piece introduces a Brahms-like main theme of careful balance and lyricism. Mahler introduces a change of tempo for the second key area—one of the several unusual elements that mark this work as more than merely a competent student exercise. The development section demonstrates his disciplined skill in motivic development. As the change of tempo returns in the recapitulation, Mahler pairs it with an unexpected harmonic excursion to the remote key of F-sharp minor, and before the melancholy conclusion he includes a mini-cadenza for violin. Devices such as these enliven the conventional formal plan.



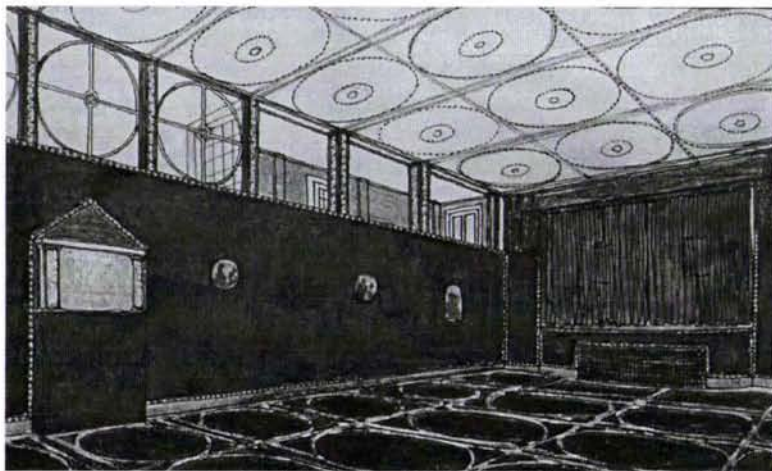
*Mahler c. 1880*



*Mahler Piano Quartet, opening bars*



*Westbahnhof, Vienna, built 1880*



*Theatre design by Josef Hoffmann (Mahler's designer), 1906*



You are warmly invited to join us after the  
concert for complimentary drinks and a  
selection of Tortes by Gabriele.

**Forthcoming concert:**

8pm Monday, 28 November 2011

**Robert MacFarlane** *tenor*

**Leigh Harrold** *piano*

SCHUBERT  
*Schwanengesang*

BEETHOVEN  
*An die ferne Geliebte*

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