

The *sounds* of SUMMER

With the music festival season almost upon us, DAVID KETTLE finds out where some of the string world's top names are to be found over the next three months

AUSTRALIA

Australian Festival of Chamber Music

26 JULY–3 AUGUST
WWW.AFCM.COM.AU

Townsville, north Queensland, is the setting for one of the southern hemisphere's most prestigious chamber music events, which this year hosts US cellist Zuill Bailey, UK violist Philip Dukes and the Goldner and Australian quartets among its many string musicians. There are celebrations of Schubert, Hindemith and Britten, and a beach concert at Radical Bay on Magnetic Island.

AUSTRIA

Salzburg Festival

19 JULY–1 SEPTEMBER
WWW.SALZBURGERFESTSPIELE.AT

Salzburg might be famous for its lavish opera and theatre productions, but there's no shortage of string music this year. High-profile visitors include Pinchas Zukerman in Mozart's Third Violin Concerto and Christian Tetzlaff in the Austrian premiere of Birtwistle's 2010 Violin Concerto, and concerts from the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra are complemented by the Simón Bolívar Quartet in Ginastera, Ravel and Birtwistle. Staying with quartets, the Minguet plays Debussy, Webern, Hosokawa and Takemitsu, and the Hagen foursome offers a complete Beethoven cycle.

Schloss Laudon Chamber Music Festival

20–25 AUGUST
WWW.SCHLOSSLAUDONFESTIVAL.AT

The Baroque water palace of Laudon on the outskirts of Vienna is the fairy-tale setting for five days of chamber music from the Aron Quartet and Trio van Beethoven. The programmes blend lesser-known 20th-century music – Krenek, Wellesz, Milhaud, Bruno Walter – with established classics by Dvořák, Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Debussy.

CANADA

Montreal Chamber Music Festival

9 MAY–1 JUNE
WWW.FESTIVALMONTREAL.ORG

Quartets take centre stage in Montreal this year, with two all-Saint-Saëns concerts from the Fine Arts Quartet and the debut performance by the Emerson Quartet with its new cellist Paul Watkins – playing Haydn, Bartók and Beethoven. Elsewhere, Colin Carr gives a cello recital that contrasts Schubert, Rachmaninoff and Kodály, and there's a performance of the complete Bach violin concertos with soloists Rachel Barton Pine and Elizabeth Wallfish.

FRANCE

Colmar International Festival

2–14 JULY
WWW.FESTIVAL-COLMAR.COM

With Russian conductor and violinist Vladimir Spivakov as artistic director,



RENE GAËNS

it's no surprise that string music plays a major role in this wide-ranging festival near the Franco-German border. Spivakov is joined by Vadim Gluzman for an all-violin concerto concert (Bach, Bruch and Beethoven); Gautier Capuçon plays the Saint-Saëns First Cello Concerto; and violinist Arabella Steinbacher performs the Mendelssohn Concerto. An attractive lunchtime concert series includes music from Renaud Capuçon, Marie-Elisabeth Hecker, the Aviv Quartet and Gluzman, and a late-night concert in Colmar Synagogue features works by Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Bloch in performances by the Jerusalem Trio and the Asasello Quartet.

Some concerts at the Moritzburg Festival in Germany take place in the Baroque Moritzburg Castle itself



Festival Pablo Casals

26 JULY–13 AUGUST

WWW.PRADES-FESTIVAL-CASALS.COM

Prades's Casals Festival, founded by the great Catalan cellist in 1950, invites fine chamber musicians to the French Pyrenees for an eclectic selection of concerts. The Fine Arts Quartet plays a major role, giving two concerts that contrast Haydn and Grieg with Shostakovich and Stravinsky. The Talich Quartet performs Mozart, Schubert and Penderecki (who will be in attendance), and an all-Beethoven concert features a chamber performance of his 'Pastoral' Symphony by an ensemble of 13 festival musicians.

GERMANY Dresden Music Festival

11 MAY–2 JUNE

WWW.MUSIKFESTSPIELE.COM

Cellist Jan Vogler's wide-ranging festival takes a British empire theme, with UK performers including Nicola Benedetti playing MacMillan and Elgar, and the Doric Quartet in Haydn, Brett Dean and Dvořák. Elsewhere, Vogler himself performs Bloch's *Schelomo* with the New York Philharmonic, and he's also the soloist in Strauss's *Don Quixote* with the German Symphony Orchestra Berlin. There are visits from Joshua Bell, the Takács Quartet, Jordi Savall and Tabea Zimmermann (see page 32), plus an

evening mixing classical, folk, jazz and improvisation from Viktoria Mullova and Matthew Barley.

Moritzburg Festival

10–25 AUGUST

WWW.MORITZBURGFESTIVAL.DE

Jan Vogler is a busy man: alongside Dresden, his second German festival celebrates its 20th anniversary this year with a look back over the highlights of the past two decades. Young musicians gather to form the festival orchestra, and string performers include Midori, Nicola Benedetti, Nils Mönkemeyer, Nicolas Altstaedt and, of course, Vogler himself. >

IRELAND

West Cork Chamber Music Festival

28 JUNE–6 JULY
 WWW.WESTCORKMUSIC.IE/
 CHAMBERMUSICFESTIVAL

The Casals, Jupiter, RTÉ Vanbrugh, Danel and Bernadel quartets all flock to Bantry, southern Ireland, this summer, along with soloists including Pekka Kuusisto, Brett Dean, Barnabás Kelemen, Marc Coppey, Leonard Elschenbroich and Vadim Gluzman. It's a strong line-up, and they come together for mixed programmes of chamber music with a Baltic flavour and a clear Britten focus. In addition, four young quartets work with emerging composers in a Young Composers Forum, and there's an exhibition of contemporary violin and bow making from Ireland and elsewhere.

NORWAY

Bergen International Festival

22 MAY–5 JUNE
 WWW.FIB.NO

Alongside theatre, dance and exhibitions, Norwegian music and musicians feature strongly in the picturesque fjord city's festival. Violinist Arve Tellefsen performs music by Ole Bull in Bull's own home on the island of Lysøen; top Norwegian soloists Truls Mørk, Vilde Frang and Christian Ihle Hadland form a trio to play Beethoven, Ravel and Dvořák; and fiddlers Ragnhild Hemsing and Eldbjørg Hemsing join string ensemble the Trondheim Soloists in *Sprang*, a new folk-classical work by Lasse Thoresen. And, not surprisingly in the city of his birth, Grieg features strongly: the Kreutzer Quartet with pianist Roderick Chadwick performs Michael Finnissy's completion of his unfinished Piano Quintet, and UK violinist Peter Sheppard Skaerved gives a wide-ranging recital in Grieg's Bergen villa.

Lofoten International Chamber Music Festival

8–13 JULY
 WWW.LOFOTENFESTIVAL.COM

The rugged scenery of the Lofoten archipelago is as much a draw as the music making in this chamber music festival in far-flung northern Norway. Visiting musicians include



Akiko Suwanai can be heard at the Lofoten International Chamber Music Festival

KIRITAKA SHIN

the Orion and Engegård quartets, as well as violinist Akiko Suwanai and cellist Timothy Eddy, and the repertoire – performed by ensembles made up of festival participants – includes Schumann, Dvořák, Taneyev and Tchaikovsky.

Trondheim Chamber Music Festival

23–29 SEPTEMBER
 WWW.KAMFEST.NO

The Pavel Haas Quartet is the resident ensemble in this respected chamber music festival in central Norway, and other visiting artists include violist Thomas Riebl, cellist Louise Hopkins and violinists Marianne Thorsen and Levon Chilingirian. Taking place simultaneously is the Trondheim International Chamber Music Competition, which this year focuses on string quartets.

ROMANIA

George Enescu Festival

1–28 SEPTEMBER
 WWW.FESTIVALEENESCU.RO

The festival's connected violin and cello competitions might have been cancelled for financial reasons, but there's still much to tempt string enthusiasts to Bucharest in September. Visiting performers include Maxim Vengerov, Vadim Repin, Hilary Hahn and Christian Tetzlaff, and there are lots of Romanian performers playing plenty of Enescu. Husband and wife Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth team up for the Brahms 'Double' Concerto with the Romanian Youth Orchestra, and Viktoria Mullova gives an all-Bach programme with Accademia Bizantina.

SWITZERLAND

Allegra Allegri

15–21 SEPTEMBER
 WWW.ALLEGRA-ALLEGRI.CH

The Allegra Quartet takes up residence for a week in the idyllic Engadin valley in south-east Switzerland to play a complete cycle of Beethoven quartets in five local churches, with transport or guided walks offered between them. Visitors also have the chance to attend open rehearsals by the quartet and lectures on the music.

Lucerne Festival

16 AUGUST–15 SEPTEMBER
 WWW.LUCERNEFESTIVAL.CH

In line with the 2013 festival's theme of revolution, contemporary music for string quartet plays a prominent role ▶



The Ebène Quartet performs at the Lucerne Festival

JULIEN MIGNON

this year, with the Jack and Diotima quartets performing Lachenmann, Xenakis, Boulez and Nono. Elsewhere, Ray Chen gives a recital of Bach, Prokofiev and Stravinsky, and the Ébène Quartet joins pianist Mitsuko Uchida for Haydn, Mendelssohn and Franck.

Menuhin Festival Gstaad

18 JULY–7 SEPTEMBER

WWW.MENUHINFESTIVALGSTAAD.CH

As befits a festival founded by the great violinist back in 1957, string music is at the heart of the Menuhin Festival Gstaad, with performances by Vilde Frang, Viktoria Mullova, Sol Gabetta and Ning Feng among the many highlights. Violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja gives what promises to be an unforgettable concert at 3,000m on the Diablerets glacier, performing Bach and a world premiere by Venezuelan composer Jorge Sánchez-Chiong. There's also a string academy for young players, and concerts by players from the Yehudi Menuhin School, celebrating its 50th anniversary.



Vilde Frang is among the violinists performing at the Menuhin Festival Gstaad

Verbier Festival

19 JULY–4 AUGUST

WWW.VERBIERFESTIVAL.COM

Lisa Batiashvili, Yuri Bashmet, Maxim Vengerov, Leonidas Kavakos, Gautier Capuçon, Janine Jansen, Mischa Maisky, the Ébène Quartet: seemingly anyone who's anyone in string music can be found among the Verbier Festival's starry line-up of performers, often coming together for chamber music groups unlikely to be heard anywhere else. Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Boris Kuschnir, Antoine Tamestit and Gary Hoffmann join forces to play an all-Russian programme, for example, and more than 20 top names gather for a special concert to celebrate the festival's 20th anniversary.

TURKEY

Istanbul Music Festival

4–29 JUNE

HTTP://MUZIK.IKSV.ORG

As well as showcasing Turkish string talent – for example, violinist Veriko Çumburidze playing Waxman's *Carmen Fantasy* in the opening concert, and the Arkas Trio in Schubert and Brahms – the Istanbul Music Festival brings plenty of international players to the city that straddles Europe and Asia. Gautier Capuçon performs a recital, Vadim Repin performs the Sibelius Concerto and Shlomo Mintz plays Bach. Maxim Vengerov joins the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic Orchestra in the Dvořák Concerto, and Sol Gabetta performs a new cello concerto, *Klabutne*, by Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks. For folk fans, gypsy violinist Roby Lakatos teams up with Turkish fiddler Cihat Aşkın for a late-night concert exploring both folk styles.

UK

Aldeburgh Festival

7–23 JUNE

WWW.ALDEBURGH.CO.UK

In Britten's centenary year, the music festival he established in 1948 focuses more closely than ever on his music, with performances of it by the Arditti and Vertavo quartets, as well as from cellist Valérie Aimard with her brother, current Aldeburgh artistic director and pianist Pierre-Laurent. Elsewhere, composer Julian Anderson unveils his new quartet *Light Music* with the Ardittis, two concerts from the Quatuor Mosaïques mix Purcell, Haydn, Schubert and Beethoven, and there's an all-Dowland afternoon with viol consort Phantasm.

City of London Festival

23 JUNE–26 JULY

WWW.COLF.ORG

Linking to the festival's 2013 theme of conflict and resolution, the Brodsky Quartet premieres the song cycle *Trees, Walls, Cities*, by eight composers from eight different countries, with soprano Loré Lixenberg. There are also performances by Alina Ibragimova, Philip Higham, Max Baillie, the Britten Sinfonia, Nash Ensemble and Fidelio Trio.



The Istanbul Music Festival welcomes cellist Gautier Capuçon for a recital

Edinburgh International Festival

9 AUGUST–1 SEPTEMBER

WWW.EIF.CO.UK

Edinburgh has a technological theme this year, looking at how culture and technology have interacted down the centuries. String-wise, the period-instrument Chiaroscuro Quartet play Mozart and Schubert, Midori contrasts Bach and 21st-century music, and cellist Peter Gregson unveils a new piece that requires audience interaction. Elsewhere, there are visits by the Arditti and Ébène quartets, informal café concerts showcasing exceptional young string players, and performances by Frank Peter Zimmermann and Pinchas Zukerman.

Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music

10–18 MAY

WWW.LUFTHANSASFESTIVAL.ORG.UK

String highlights in London's premier early music festival include former Arditti Quartet violist Garth Knox (see page 16) performing contemporary and Baroque music on viola d'amore, and two contrasting takes on the seasons: violinist Pavlo Beznosiuk playing seasonal suites by 17th-century English composer Christopher Simpson, and Enrico Onofri and the Imaginarium Ensemble in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. >

Mendelssohn on Mull

1–6 JULY
WWW.MENDELSSOHNONMULL.COM

Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Mendelssohn on Mull invites young professional musicians to the scenic Scottish island for an intensive week of rehearsal and performance. After mentoring by seasoned chamber players, they join together to give free performances at historic venues in Mull, Iona and Oban, from tiny Creich Church to the grand and imposing Duart Castle.

Ulverston International Music Festival

31 MAY–9 JUNE
WWW.ULVERSTONMUSICFESTIVAL.CO.UK

Set in a lesser-known corner of the Lake District, Ulverston offers plenty for string lovers in early June. Alongside traditional English music and dance, violinists Jack Liebeck and Ruth Rogers, violist Sarah-Jane Bradley and cellist Thomas Carroll gather for a chamber recital, and cellist Steven Isserlis offers a typically wide-ranging programme of Bach, Ravel, Bridge, Saint-Saëns and Bloch. For theatre enthusiasts, violinist David Le Page takes part in a dramatised story of a gypsy violinist.

**USA
California
Music@Menlo**

18 JULY–10 AUGUST
WWW.MUSICATMENLO.ORG

Benjamin Beilman, Paul Neubauer, Laurence Lesser and the Danish and Orion quartets are among the many string players heading for David Finckel and Wu Han's chamber music festival in the San Francisco Bay Area, which has a Bach theme this year. Among many highlights, Soovin Kim gives a solo-violin recital ranging from Biber to Salonen, Colin Carr contrasts cello works by Bach and Kodály, and violinist Jorja Fleezanis explores spiritual music by Bach, Mozart and Messiaen.

**Connecticut
Norfolk Chamber Music Festival**

22 JUNE–17 AUGUST
WWW.NORFOLKMUSIC.ORG

Concerts in Yale School of Music's summer programme take place on

Friday and Saturday evenings, and there's an impressive line-up of string quartets. Alongside the Brentano, Keller, Jasper and Artis ensembles, the Emersons play Haydn, Britten and Beethoven, and the Tokyo Quartet gives its very last concert, performing Haydn, Bartók and Debussy.

**Maine
Bowdoin International Music Festival**

26 JUNE–2 AUGUST
WWW.BOWDOINFESTIVAL.ORG

Daily concerts involving performers from more than 30 countries feature such eminent figures as the Ying and Shanghai quartets, the Naumburg Trio, violinists Ilya Kaler and Mikhail Kopelman, and cellist Steven Doane.

Portland Chamber Music Festival

8–17 AUGUST
WWW.PCMF.ORG

The informal concerts at the University of Southern Maine's Portland campus attract a broad range of performers including violinists Jennifer Elowitch and Frank Huang, violist Jessica Thompson, cellists Michael Kannen and Marc Johnson, and bassist David Allen Moore. With a strong focus on new music, repertoire ranges from Bach and Vivaldi through to Thomas Adès.

**New Mexico
Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival**

14 JULY–19 AUGUST
WWW.SFCMF.ORG

There's a strong string focus to composer Marc Neikrug's festival in the New Mexico state capital, with visiting quartets and soloists coming together in a wide range of music. Neikrug's own Quartet no.4 sits alongside Nancarrow's Third Quartet in a concert from the Flux Quartet, and the Johannes Quartet contrasts Dutilleux and Brahms. An all-Bach recital brings together cellist Joseph Johnson and violist Choong-Jin Chang, and the festival's string players – including

Daniel Hope and Benjamin Beilman – join forces for Stravinsky's Concerto for String Orchestra.

**New York
New Directions Cello Festival**

7–9 JUNE
HTTP://NEWDIRECTIONSCELLO.ORG

Ithaca College hosts a broad range of inspirational non-classical cello performances, workshops and jam sessions. This year's guest musicians include San Francisco-based cellist and composer Alex Kelly, folk cellist and singer Ben Sollee, rock improvising cellist Rushad Eggleston, avant-garde vocalist and cellist Laura Moody and jazz cellist Daniel Levin.

**Vermont
Marlboro Music**

13 JULY–11 AUGUST
WWW.MARLBOROMUSIC.ORG

There's no way of knowing what you might hear in Marlboro until just a week or so before the concerts. But its reputation guarantees that listeners flock to the rural Vermont town from all over the globe. Some of the world's finest international artists gather there to work with exceptional young musicians, and the performers come together for weekend chamber music concerts in which they reveal the fruits of their rehearsals. ■



Violist Sarah-Jane Bradley visits the Ulverston International Music Festival this June

HANVA CHALAVARINNA