



CASTALIAN STRING QUARTET **'Awake'**

A New String Quartet by Mark-Anthony Turnage
World Premiere at Edinburgh International Festival 18 August 2023

Awake is the title of a new chamber work by Mark Anthony Turnage, commissioned for the Castalian String Quartet by the Borletti-Buitoni Trust and Cosman Keller Art and Music Trust. The world premiere performance will take place at the Edinburgh International Festival this summer in a programme including masterworks by Beethoven and Janáček.

Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata* has been inspirationally represented in many works of music, art, drama and literature over the centuries and Turnage has picked up the threads of melancholy, passion and emotional turmoil connecting it to Tolstoy's novella of the same name and Janáček's first string quartet to inspire his own work for the Castalians.

It all starts with Beethoven: his notoriously difficult and emotional Sonata No 9 for piano and violin was originally written for, and dedicated to, a highly virtuosic young violinist of mixed race, George Bridgewater, by whom Beethoven was totally captivated and with whom he gave the first performance. A subsequent argument between the two resulted in Beethoven shutting down their friendship and re-dedicating the piece to violinist Rudolf Kreutzer, hence the sonata's nickname. Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata* provided the title and the basis of Tolstoy's infamous story of sexual jealousy in which a wife is murdered by her husband who witnesses her performing the sonata with a violinist and suspects her of infidelity and betrayal. In turn, this novella was the inspiration for Janáček's first string quartet, a musical portrayal of intimacy, eroticism and ultimate tragedy. Turnage has also referenced the lyrical narrative *Sonata Mulattica*, based on the life of Bridgetower, by Pulitzer prize-winning poet and novelist Rita Dove. He embraces all these elements to craft his own work in two movements: *Bridgewater 23* and *Shut Out*.

For its EIF debut the Castalian Quartet presents a contextual programme for the premiere of *Awake*, alongside Janáček's String Quartet No 1 'Kreutzer Sonata' and Beethoven's Quartet No 13 in B Flat Op 130 with Grosse Fugue Op 133 - both masterpieces of musical athleticism with moods of love and melancholy.

Further press information: Debra Boraston at Borletti-Buitoni Trust
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Edinburgh International Festival
The Queen's Hall, 18 August 11 am
Castalian String Quartet

Janáček String Quartet No 1 'Kreutzer Sonata'
 Mark-Anthony Turnage *Awake* (World Premiere)
 Beethoven String Quartet No 13 in B flat Op 130 with Grosse Fuge Op 133

And, of course, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3

CASTALIAN STRING QUARTET BBT Fellowship 2018

Sini Simonen violin · Daniel Roberts violin
 Ruth Gibson viola · Steffan Morris cello
<https://www.castalianstringquartet.com>



Founded: 2011

Name: derived from the Castalian Spring in the ancient city of Delphi. According to Greek mythology the nymph Castalia transformed herself into a fountain to evade Apollo's pursuit, thus creating a source of poetic inspiration for all those who drink from her waters.

Awards: first prize at 2015 Lyon International Chamber Music Competition and in 2018 received the inaugural Merito String Quartet Award and Valentin Erben Prize and a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship Award. Selected by Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) in 2016 and named Young Artist of the Year at the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards in 2019.

Collaborations: include those with pianists Stephen Hough and Cédric Tiberghien, violist Isabel Charisius and clarinettist Michael Collins.

Performances: Committed to inspiring a diverse audience for classical music, the Castalians have performed everywhere from the great concert halls to maximum security prisons and even the Colombian rainforest. Recent debuts include New York's Carnegie Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Vienna Konzerthaus, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, Paris Philharmonie and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. The Quartet performs frequently at Wigmore Hall in its home city of London and is currently 'in residence' there, as well as being the Hans Keller String Quartet in Residence at the University of Oxford. Festival engagements include those at Spoleto USA, Aldeburgh, North Norfolk, Cheltenham, East Neuk, Lockenhaus and Heidelberger Frühling, among others.

Recordings: *Between Two Worlds* (Delphian Records 2022) with music by Orlando di Lasso, Thomas Adès, Beethoven and Dowland was BBC Music Magazine's Album of the Month: "*this outstanding disc offers listeners a true philosophical journey ... a series of intricately connected works, each performed with rare beauty and originality by a quartet at the height of its powers*". In 2018 they recorded Haydn's Op.76 quartets for the Wigmore Live label.

Commissions: Recent and upcoming premieres include works by Charlotte Bray, Edmund Finnis, Mark Simpson, Simon Rowland-Jones and Mark-Anthony Turnage.

Training: Oliver Wille at the Hochschule für Musik in Hannover.

Mark-Anthony Turnage: <https://www.boosey.com/composer/Mark-Anthony+Turnage>