



DUDOK QUARTET AMSTERDAM

UK Premiere of New Work by Bushra El-Turk

Milton Court Concert Hall, London 17 October 2024

"The challenge as we prepare each programme is to find answers to the questions 'What is the true nature of this music and what worlds can we unveil behind the score?' This quest is our main incentive to delve further into the music. Without losing sight of our rich string quartet tradition, we always search for new formats and new perspectives." Dudok Quartet Amsterdam

Dudok Quartet Amsterdam performs the UK premiere of **Three Tributes**, a new work by composer **Bushra El-Turk**, commissioned for the quartet with the support of the **Borletti-Buitoni Trust**. Under the title **Abandoned Voices**, the concert bears the unmistakable hallmark of a Dudok Quartet programme; as well as championing the brand new, these players are dedicated to engaging their audiences with an imaginatively crafted mix of the cherished and familiar (Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* quartet) and their own inspired arrangements of pieces by Gesualdo and Messiaen.

The works of London-born composer Bushra El-Turk are defined by the integration of music and musicians from different cultural traditions and imaginative fusions of artistic genres and improvisation, an approach that prompts an unusual style of string quartet playing. Her Lebanese roots are especially inspirational in this new work which takes the form of three portraits of Levantine female singers who lived during the Nahda period, a cultural renaissance in the Arabic-speaking world that took place between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries.

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The creative spark in rehearsals between composer and players has been remarkable and they all concur that new works bear not only the weight of history but the weight of the future. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZClxUNubZlw>

The Dudok Quartet's cellist, David Faber, comments: "*Bushra asks us to interact with written expressive microtonal polyphony while adding our own inspirations as we develop the performance. The results take shape as three biographical tributes which unravel in unpredictable ways because of its improvisational elements - but always eloquently, energetically and passionately.*"

At the recent Irish premiere of *Three Tributes* critic Michael Dervan noted "*The players were persuasive in capturing the ethnic flavour of the music, in which the coup was the, at first, almost imperceptible addition of a recording of one of the singers.*" (The Irish Times, 10 July 2024)

Always loyal to their dictum "*the music we play is never old or new, but always relevant and present*" there are no limits to the breadth of repertoire the Dudoks continue to explore. Their artistry and boldness is evident in a fast-growing portfolio of critically acclaimed recordings, from concept albums to single composer collections. Their next, the second volume of Tchaikovsky's works for string quartet, will be released on Rubicon Classics on 28 February 2025.

Further press information and press tickets: **Debra Boraston**
T. +44 7989 434388 E. <mailto:debra@henrymoorestudio.co.uk>
W. www.bbtrust.com

Notes to Editors

UK premiere performance

17 October 2024 19.30hrs Milton Court Concert Hall, London EC2Y 9BH

Programme:

Olivier Messiaen (arr Dudok Quartet) *Oraison*

Bushra El Turk *Three Tributes*

Carlo Gesualdo (arr Dudok Quartet) 'Deh come invan sospiro' from *Libro Sesto Madrigali*

Franz Schubert String Quartet No 14, *Death and the Maiden*

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2024/event/dudok-quartet-abandoned-voices>

The Dudok Quartet will also perform *Three Tributes* at Oxford's Holywell Music Room on 16 February 2025 as part of the Oxford Chamber Music Society concert season

<https://oxfordchambermusic.org/booking/dudok-quartet/> and King's Hall and Winter

Garden, Ilkley on 19 February as part of the Ilkley Concert Club season

<https://ilkleyconcertclub.org.uk/2024/05/29/dudok-quartet-string-quartet/>

Watch the Dudok Quartet and Bushra El-Turk in conversation and rehearsal:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZClxUNubZlw>

Three Tributes was co-commissioned from Bushra El-Turk for the Dudok Quartet by String Quartet Biennale Amsterdam (world premiered 3 February 2024), West Cork Chamber Music Festival and Borletti-Buitoni Trust.

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DUDOK QUARTET AMSTERDAM

www.dudokquartet.com

Judith van Driel violin • Marleen Wester violin • Marie-Louise de Jong viola • David Faber cello

"For a string quartet to branch beyond mainstream repertoire requires thought and daring. The Dudok Quartet Amsterdam have both." Fiona Maddocks, The Observer, June 2023

Inception: First met as members of the Ricciotti Ensemble, a Dutch street symphony orchestra.

Name: the Quartet is named after celebrated Dutch architect Willem Marinus Dudok (1884-1974) who was from a musical family and also composed in his spare time; *"I feel deeply the common core of music and architecture: after all, they both derive their value from the right proportions."*

Repertoire: ranges from Ligeti, Shostakovich and Weinberg to Mendelssohn, Mozart, Brahms and Beethoven. The Quartet constantly explores new pathways and connections in music. They regularly perform their own arrangements of pieces including Gesualdo, des Prez, Brahms and Shostakovich.

Collaborations: recent partners have included Hilary Summers, Pieter Wispelwey, Lilli Maijala, Olga Paschenko, Hannes Minnaar, Erik Bosgraaf and James Oesi.

Performances: major European venues and festivals including Vienna Konzerthaus, Beethoven Haus Bonn, Canberra International Music Festival, De Doelen, Gergiev Festival, West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Festival Jeunes Talents, Festival Quatuors à Bordeaux and the Amsterdam String Quartet Biennale, as well as appearing regularly at Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw. The Quartet made its US debut in 2018 at the Northwestern University Winter Chamber Music Festival, with other recent highlights including a New York debut at the Park Avenue Armory and digital concerts for the Washington Library of Congress and Fontana Chamber Arts Kalamazoo. Other highlights include engagements in Milan, Mantova, Utrecht, Rotterdam and Heidelberg String Quartet Festival.

Recordings: first recording was *Métamorphoses* in 2015 on Resonus Classics, exploring themes of musical innovation through works by Ligeti, Haydn and Brahms. It was awarded Editor's Choice in Gramophone, with the Quartet praised by The Guardian for its *'lithe, lively sound and alert sense of structure and detail'*. Second highly acclaimed release, *Labyrinth*, explored the use of counterpoint in works by Mozart, Ligeti and Bach. The third, *Solitude*, (2018) featured works by Mendelssohn, Weinberg and Shostakovich curated around the theme of loss and loneliness – *'an intense listening experience that will have you on the edge of your seat'* (The Strad). For the 2-volume recording of Haydn's Opus 20 Quartets, the Dudoks researched instrumental set-up and commissioned classical bows. Its 2021 label debut with Rubicon Classics featured the complete Brahms Quartets played on gut strings and was critically acclaimed across the board with The Daily Telegraph describing the album as *'a marvel, revealing the intricate detail of these pieces with lovely clarity.'* Followed by two more on Rubicon: *Reflections with quartets* by Shostakovich and Bacewicz, and *What Remains*, with works by Roukens, Pérotin, Gesualdo, de Machaut, Reich & Messiaen. A new collaboration with Hilary Summers, Mike Fenton and Maarten Ornstein resulted in *Circus Dinogad* (Zefir Records 2023), a fusion of musical genres including baroque, renaissance, traditional and improvisation.

Commissions: The Quartet is also committed to commissioning new works and has collaborated with composers including Joey Roukens, Peter Vigh, Theo Loevendie and Bushra El-Turk.

Projects: include world premiere of Kaija Saariaho's opera *Only the Sound Remains* with Philippe Jaroussky and Dutch National Opera and a collaboration with director Rosabel Huguet re-imagining Beethoven's Op 132 String Quartet for children. Entitled *"Quartet! A card game with Beethoven"* the Quartet takes the project to venues including the Vienna Konzerthaus, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Flagey and De Doelen as part of its ongoing commitment to education and outreach work. 2024 sees the launch of their own chamber music festival (6-9 May) in the Netherlands.

<https://dudokmuziekdagen.nl>

Training: Studied at Hochschule für Musik in Cologne with the Alban Berg Quartet and later at the Dutch String Quartet Academy with Marc Danel of the Danel Quartet. Other important mentors include Eberhard Feltz, Peter Cropper (Lindsay Quartet), Luc-Marie Aguera (Quatuor Ysaÿe), Stefan Metz and, more recently, conductor Reinbert de Leeuw and violinist/conductor Shunske Sato.

Awards: 2018 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, Bordeaux International String Quartet Competition, Joseph Joachim International Chamber Music Competition Weimar and the prestigious Dutch Kersjes Prize (2014).

Instruments: generously on loan from the Dutch Musical Instrument Foundation (NMF); violins by Francesco Goffriller (1725) and Vincenzo Panormo (1810), viola by Jean Baptiste Lefèvre (1760) and cello by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume (1850). Classical and baroque bows, made by Luis Emilio Rodríguez Carrington, were commissioned with the help of a private sponsor, Stichting Eigen Muziekinstrument, Kersjes Foundation and the Borletti-Buitoni Trust.

Reinvention is at the heart of the Dudok Quartet's quest to make all music relevant in contemporary society. It is committed to crafting unique and eclectic live and recorded programmes in order to engage with its audiences in adventurous and imaginative ways and reveal new connections in music. These include its own arrangements of music way off the beaten track and not originally intended for string quartet.

BUSHRA EL-TURK

<https://www.bushraelturk.com>

Born in London, Bushra El-Turk has written over 60 works for the concert hall, stage, film, TV and live art performance. Her work is often defined by the integration of musics and musicians from different musical traditions, and the compulsion to highlight and challenge socio-cultural issues. Her works blur written and improvisational elements, forbearing the influence of her Lebanese roots all the while leaning towards the theatrical, creating works that are '...ironic...', '...arresting...' and of 'limitless imagination'.