

LUNCHTIME RECITAL

THURSDAY 18TH JUNE 2026

RUDDOCK HALL, 13.10

STRING QUARTET

VIOLIN: LI WAN, CLARICE NGO;

VIOLA: SIYUAN OU; 'CELLO: ESMEE RAGHAVAN

MING JIANG – *piano*

JOSH WEI – *'cello*

AIDAN ZHANG – *piano*

PIANO ACCOMPANIST: **HAOYANG SUN**

Quartet no. 3, op. 73

i. Allegretto

SHOSTAKOVICH

Ballade No. 4

CHOPIN

Adagio and Allegro op.70

SCHUMANN

Piano Sonata op.5

i. Allegro; Intermezzo

MEDTNER

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975): String Quartet No. 3 (1946)

i. Allegretto

Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 3 was dedicated to the Beethoven Quartet, who premiered it on 16 December 1946. He had composed it earlier that year, between May and August, while staying at his summer home. Shostakovich originally planned to give each movement a subtitle, framing it as a 'war quartet'. The first movement, for example, was labelled 'Calm unawareness of the future cataclysm.' However, these subtitles were withdrawn almost immediately with no explanation; perhaps an attempt to avoid drawing unwanted attention from Soviet authorities, who kept many of his works, including this one, away from the public eye. This idea of calm is furthered in a letter dated 22 April 1950 to the composer and teacher Edison Denisov, where Shostakovich wrote in the postscript:

“Today or tomorrow I will send you my Sixth Symphony and the Third Quartet in addition. I consider the Third Quartet to be one of my most successful compositions. If you watch it, then keep in mind that the first part should not be performed dashingly, but gently.”

Esmee Raghavan, Lower Fifths

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849): Ballade No.4 (1842)

Frédéric Chopin was a man of extraordinary emotional intensity, delicate health, and agonizing perfectionism. His long-time partner, the novelist George Sand, famously chronicled his creative torment, describing how Chopin would lock himself in his room for days on end - weeping, pacing, breaking his pens, and altering a single bar of music a hundred times, only to ultimately return to his very first draft.

He was also profoundly anxious and harboured a lifelong taphophobia: the fear of being buried alive. Because of this, his final deathbed wish was to have his heart surgically removed before burial. While his body rests in Paris, his heart was smuggled back to his beloved homeland and remains preserved in alcohol inside a pillar at the Holy Cross Church in Warsaw.

The Ballade No. 4 in F minor is widely celebrated as the absolute pinnacle of Chopin's genius, merging intense psychological depth with monumental technical complexity. Written during a period where Chopin was deeply immersed in studying the complex, interwoven tapestries of J.S. Bach's fugues, this piece represents the ultimate marriage of Romantic passion and Baroque structural mastery.

Ming Jiang, Divisions

Robert Schumann (1810-1856): *Adagio and Allegro*, op. 70 (1849)

Adagio and Allegro is one of Robert Schumann's most celebrated chamber works for horn and piano. It was originally titled *Romanze and Allegro*, but Schumann later revised the name to *Adagio and Allegro*. The piece explores a wide emotional spectrum, beginning with a deeply expressive and lyrical Adagio, followed by a vibrant and passionate Allegro. This contrast highlights both the singing quality and technical agility of the instrument. Schumann composed this work in response to the emerging development of the valve horn (Ventilhorn), an innovation that expanded the instrument's chromatic possibilities and expressive range. The piece was well received, leading Schumann to create alternative versions for violin and 'cello, further contributing to its enduring popularity in the chamber repertoire.

Josh Wei, Upper Fouths

Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951): Piano Sonata (1949) op. 5

i. Allegro; Intermezzo

Nikolai Medtner was a Russian pianist and composer. Although less well known than his some of his contemporaries, he is regarded as one of the most significant composers for the piano of the twentieth century and was greatly admired by Rachmaninoff.

Composed in 1903, the first movement of Medtner's sonata no.1 op.5 is a substantial sonata-form movement that demonstrates the composer's early mastery of large-scale structure. The movement is built from a small number of closely related themes that are developed and transformed throughout. While influenced by the late-Romantic tradition, the music already displays the contrapuntal writing, polyrhythms, and motivic development.

Aidan Zhang, Fourths

LI WAN is 15 years old and has been playing the violin since the age of 6. She was taught by Lucy Akehurst for 6 years, where she achieved violin grade 8 distinction in Year 7, and now she studies under Peter Campbell-Kelly. She has led the school symphony orchestra and has performed in multiple musical ensembles. Apart from music, Li is currently studying for her GCSEs and enjoys playing hockey and doing baking.

CLARICE NGO is 13 years old and she studies violin, piano and oboe. Clarice loves chamber and orchestral music alongside solo performances; and she is a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain (NYO) and violin principal of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) Youth. Aside from her music studies, Clarice also loves doing ballet and fundraising for charities. Clarice loved music from a very young age; and music is an important part of her everyday wellbeing.

SIYUAN OU has been immersed in music since she was 5 years old: she played the piano and began learning the viola in year 3 under the guidance of Carol Millward then under Sam Mason in year 5 during COVID. Keen to learn more, she picked up the violin at the start of year 6, quickly achieving a grade 8 distinction in under a year.

Although she can play these 3 instruments, her heart remains with the viola, having grown her interest in it through playing in various orchestras such as the BSSO, CBSO Youth Orchestra and in NCO projects, NCO U12, U13 and Main orchestras which sadly came to an end this year. She continues to be active in progressing her orchestral abilities through NYO inspire programmes, having been part of the NYO Inspire Tour across Devon to share her love for music with other young people.

However, her journey of viola doesn't stop there, as she is now excitedly preparing to take her LTCL viola exam in July!

Outside of musical participation, Siyuan excels at chess and frequently attends chess tournaments, playing for both herself and for county, as well as aiming to play for England.

ESMEE RAGHAVAN has been playing the cello for nine years, beginning their musical journey at primary school before progressing beyond the classroom as their abilities developed. They currently study at Birmingham Junior Conservatoire under Elaine Ackers and are playing at a post-Grade 8 level. Alongside their cello studies, Esmee has played the piano since the age of five and has also reached post-Grade 8 standard there, studying with Salome Chitaia. More recently, they expanded their instrumental studies by taking up the oboe and have recently completed their Grade 7 under Laura Ashton at Birmingham Junior Conservatoire.

They have performed with the National Children's Orchestra, both in the Under-13s Orchestra and Main Orchestra and have also played with the National Youth String Orchestra, NYO Inspire, and the English Symphony Orchestra. They were invited to attend Cadenza, a summer course run by John Thwaites, Head of Keyboard Studies at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, where they were tutored by renowned cellists including Laura van der Heijden. Beyond performance, Esmee also enjoys composition and other creative activities, such as art. Looking ahead, they hope to audition for the National Youth Orchestra and continue developing as a musician.

MING JIANG is 16 years old and started studying the piano when he was 6 years old. He is taught by Mike Adams. He did his DipABRSM in 2021 for the piano alongside with the guitar where he was taught by John Gerighty. He also began studying the cello at the age of 7 with Mark Walkem, he passed grade 8 with distinction 5 years later. He also played the trombone. Now he receives tuition from Emma Barron. Outside of music, Ming enjoys playing rugby and aspires to go to Oxford to read medicine.

JOSH WEI is 19 years of age and started learning the 'cello at the age of 6. He currently goes to the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire learning the 'cello under Nicholas Trygstad and he also has led the conservatoire's 'cello section in their chamber and symphony orchestras. Josh was also part of NCO's main orchestra where he led the cello section. In school Josh, in year 10, is in his year's rugby A team. Josh has made his concerto debut this year and has played with the National Youth Orchestra.

AIDAN ZHANG is 17 years old and he studies piano with Robert Markham. Aidan attained Grade 8 distinction in piano, cello (under Elaine Heinen) and violin (under Sam Mason) when he was at Bluecoat School. He achieved the LTCL Licentiate Diploma in piano performance when he was 12 and has won several music competitions. Aidan made his concerto debut in 2023, performing Mozart's piano concerto No. 24, and has since performed Beethoven's piano concerto No. 3 and Tchaikovsky's piano concerto No. 1 which he is performing in Symphony Hall next year with KES/KEHS Symphony Orchestra. Outside of music, Aidan plays badminton.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

SUMMER JAZZ CONCERT

Sunday 21 June 2026, 16.30 | Ruddock Hall | £10.00 adults, £5.00 conc.

The KES/KEHS Big Band hosts another summer's evening of jazz, featuring soloists from both schools and professional guest musicians.

Tickets available to parents and members of the school community from Thursday 4 June 2026; on general sale from Thursday 11 June 2026.

PERFORMERS' PLATFORM

Tuesday 23 June 2026, 18.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

A short concert of solo performances and chamber music given by advanced musicians from both schools.

STEINWAY JAZZ NIGHT 2

Monday 29 June 2026, 17.00 | Ruddock Hall | £5.00 adults, £2.50 conc.

A concert of solo and group jazz performances given by musicians from both schools.

Tickets available from Thursday 18 June 2026

SYNDICATE CONCERT

Friday 3 July 2026, 19.00 | Ruddock Hall

A concert devised and performed by members of the sixth forms from both schools.

For information on these and other concerts, visit **www.ruddockpac.co.uk**.
If you have a query or need to book an accessible space, please contact the Box Office
by email: **ruddockpac@keschools.org.uk**.