

THE BUTLER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

The
DUCKWALL
ARTIST *Series*

BUSCH TRIO

Omri Epstein, *piano*
Mathieu van Bellen, *violin*
Ori Epstein, *cello*

Wednesday, November 5, 2025
7:30 P.M.
Eidson-Duckwall Recital Hall

PROGRAM

Trio in C Major, Hob. XV:21 (1792-94)

Franz Josphe Haydn (1732-1809)

Allegro

Andante

Final: Presto

Trio for Violin, Cello, and Piano, S. 86 (1906-1911)

Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Moderato

TSIAJ: Presto

Moderato con moto

Piano Trio ("Archduke"), Op. 97

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Allegro moderato

Scherzo (Allegro)

Andante cantabile, ma però con moto

Allegro moderato

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Encounters in the world of chamber music often develop into friendships, but the reverse is far more unusual: when, from a group of school friends with a range of everyday hobbies, a chamber group emerges that reaches the highest level on the international stage. This is how the Busch Trio came into existence, establishing themselves among the leading ensembles.

'This trio is the fruit of a friendship that has existed for years', is how Omri Epstein describes the essentially spontaneous process by which the trio came into being after meeting at the Royal College of Music in London more than a decade ago. At the time, the three were aspiring soloists, but their shared passion for chamber music became their strongest bond.

It was around then that Mathieu was given the honour of playing the 'ex-Adolf Busch' G.B. Guadagnini (Turin, 1783) – the legendary violinist already a shining example for the young trio. Their choice to play on gut strings signifies a deep appreciation for the aesthetic of the early-20th-century greats.

Nowadays, the Busch Trio regularly appears on major stages and festivals throughout Europe and the US. They have been described by The Times as having '*effortless musicianship*', by The Gramophone as a '*true delight from start to finish*', and by the Süddeutsche Zeitung as '*the leading piano trio of their generation*'. The trio have been recognised for their work and recordings, receiving important accolades and awards in the Netherlands, UK, Germany, Belgium, and France.

Record label Alpha Classics has shown remarkable trust in the trio, committing them to long-term contracts early in their career. Together they have released notable recordings of the complete works of Dvorak on four CDs, the complete trios

and Trout quintet by Schubert on two CDs, as well as a recent CD of works by Ravel and Shostakovich. The future of this fruitful collaboration is the recording of the complete trios by Beethoven to be released on five CDs over the coming years.

Today the Busch Trio members live in Amsterdam and continue to maintain their extremely intensive rehearsal and performance schedule.

OMRI EPSTEIN

In recent years, Omri has established himself as a sought-after chamber musician. Born in Israel in 1986, he commenced his piano studies at the age of 7 with Sarah Tal at the Israeli Conservatory in Tel Aviv. Omri saw early success winning the Israeli Conservatory's junior and senior piano competitions and was a recipient of the prestigious America-Israel Cultural Foundation Scholarship.

After moving to the UK in 2002 to continue his studies at the Purcell School with Ronald Smith, Omri went on to win further prizes in competitions, including the 2nd Prize at the Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Artists Competition. Subsequently he played Rachmaninoff's 3rd Piano Concerto conducted by Damian Iorio, performed with the Israeli Symphony Orchestra, and broadcasted live on Israeli radio. In addition, Omri graduated from the Royal College of Music as well as the Royal Academy of Music working with Ruth Nye and Sulamita Aronovsky. He also completed an exchange programme with the Universität der Künste in Berlin.

Since 2012 Omri has been a member of the highly regarded Busch Trio with which he enjoys much success across Europe and the US. They regularly appear on leading concert stages such as the Wigmore Hall, Berlin's Konzerthaus, Brussel's BOZAR, and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw. In addition, their concerts have been broadcast on most major European radio stations, and their numerous recordings for Alpha Classics have received critical acclaim.

MATHIEU VAN BELLEN

Mathieu van Bellen is a renowned Dutch violinist, celebrated for his velvety tone and musical depth. He performs worldwide as a soloist and chamber musician and is the violinist of the internationally acclaimed Busch Trio. Alongside his performance career, he is a dedicated mentor and artistic leader.

Mathieu began his violin studies with Nico Baltussen, followed by training in the Young Talent Class of the Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Jan Repko. He continued his education at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, the Royal College of Music in London with Itzhak Rashkovsky (Bachelor), and the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin with Ulf Wallin (Master). He was also an Artist in Residence with the Busch Trio at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel in Waterloo.

He has performed in prestigious venues such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and Wigmore Hall in London and has built an extensive discography. Together with pianist Mathias Halvorsen, Mathieu arranges operas for violin and piano. Their arrangement of 'La Bohème' received critical acclaim, and their CD was named 'Chamber Music Choice of the Month' by 'BBC Music Magazine'.

Mathieu serves as concertmaster of Phion and teaches violin and chamber music at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. Additionally, he also manages MuziekHaven in Zaandam.

He is the founder and artistic director of the Scaldis Chamber Music Festival in Zeeland and the artistic director of the Reizend MuziekGezelschap.

In 2017, Mathieu was named an honorary citizen of Hulst, his hometown. He plays the historic 'ex-Adolf Busch' violin, crafted by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini in 1783, and a bow by Dominique Peccatte, instruments that enhance the warmth and expressiveness of his sound.

His musicianship, dedication to quality, and leadership make Mathieu van Bellen a prominent figure in the international classical music scene.

ORI EPSTEIN

The youngest of three musical siblings, Ori began to play the cello at the age of 6. In 2002, together with his family, they left Israel and relocated to London.

He has since studied with Miklós Perényi and Bernard Greenhouse, and completed his degrees at the Bern University of Arts in the class of Antonio Meneses. For a period of five years Ori was Artist-in-Residence at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel under the guidance of Gary Hoffman.

His achievements on the cello have been recognised by a number of prizes, including the third Prize at the Bromsgrove International Competition and first Prize at Tunbridge Wells International Competition.

Ori is the cellist of the Busch Trio, which in recent years has developed into one of the leading piano trios. Together with his brother Omri on the piano and violinist Mathieu van Bellen, the Busch Trio has regularly appeared on major stages and festivals throughout Europe and the USA. Their many years of fruitful collaboration with the Alpha Classics label have resulted in a series of four CDs covering the complete works of Antonin Dvorák for piano and strings.

In 2016 the Busch Trio were awarded the prestigious Kersjes Prijs in the Netherlands. They have carried off several other international awards since, and were winners of the 2018 Nordmetall-Ensemble Prize at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival.

The trio has performed at London's Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Bozar, as well as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and frequently appears live on NPO, France Musique, Musiq'3, WDR, NDR, and Deutschlandfunk.

For Alpha Classics, Ori recorded Édouard Lalo's Cello Concerto with Jean-Jacques Kantorow and l'Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège. In 2019 with his brother as duo partner, LINN Records published their recordings of Beethoven's Complete Sonatas and Variations to critical acclaim.

Ori plays on an 1815 Giovanni Battista Ceruti, Cremona. Considered to be one of the best-preserved examples of Ceruti's work, it is also thought to be the last cello made by him. It has been kindly lent to Ori by a private syndicate of sponsors.

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JCA LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

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