

Programme notes by Chris Darwin: use freely for non-commercial purposes

Edmund Finnis (b.1984) String Quartet No.1 'Aloysius' (2018)

Born in Oxford, Edmund Finnis has an association with Lewes: as a young man, he worked as an amanuensis for Lewes-based composer Jonathan Harvey.

Since 2015 he has been a Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music. His output is eclectic, ranging from intimate chamber music to works for large orchestra and choirs, and from film music to immersive electronic pieces. More intimately he has written a series of solo works written for some of the most prominent musicians of the younger generation. Cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason has performed *Preludes* (2021) in solo recital tours of the USA and Europe. Pianist Víkingur Ólafsson gave the first performances of the piano cycle *Mirror Images* (2021) in London, Lucerne and Essen. And saxophonist Jess Gillam performed *A Spiral Ascending* (2020) in fifteen major concert halls across Europe as part of her ECHO Rising Stars tour.

Tonight's quartet was co-commissioned by the Italian wine maker Alois Lageder and the Aldeburgh Festival and is dedicated to the Lageder family. Alois and Veronika Lageder, invite a young composer of international importance to their South Tyrolean estate every year to write a commissioned work which is then premiered in their Renaissance palace, Casòn Hirschprunn, in Magrè. Maybe a Sussex winery would like to emulate the Lageders?

Edmund Finnis writes:

"This quartet is in five movements. While composing the piece I had in my mind: the shape of a valley; the image of clouds forming and dissipating; lines becoming interwoven and energy being passed around between four individuals; a sense of sounds breathing. The fourth movement is a reflection on the hymn 'Christe, qui lux es et dies' by William Byrd." © *Edmund Finnis*

The work lasts about 17 minutes.