

# BADKEBITES

Issue 04 - 13 December 2011

The Badke Quartet:  
(from left to right)  
Lana Trotovsšek,  
Jonathan Byers, Jon  
Thorne & Emma  
Parker.

Photographer: Tas  
Kyprianou



The fourth edition of **BadkeBites** is at last upon us! As many of you will be aware we've had a year of change since we last wrote to you. A real mix of both sad and happy times. Towards the end of last year we said goodbye to our first violinist Heather Höhmann which was particularly sad because Heather, Emma and Jonny had been founder members of the Quartet, way back in 2002. We've had a wonderful eight years of playing, learning, developing and travelling together - a real joy for all of us. Thank you Heather for all the great music-making and fantastic memories. Our very best wishes to you for the future.

After a very lengthy audition and trial process, during which

we were fortunate to play with so many excellent musicians, we knew from the first moment we played with her that Lana Trotovsšek was the one! You can read much more about Lana on page two.

We've had a busy year so far and were fortunate enough to be invited back to Britten Pears for a two week Aldeburgh residency, which was a brilliant way to kick off our fresh start!

A return to London's Kings Place saw Jonny take another drive to work in his narrowboat where we premièred a new quartet written for us by Irish composer Ian Wilson, and performed quartets by Haydn, Janáček and Dvořák to a full London Chamber Music Society audience.

The summer was non-stop for us with appearances at several festivals. We were delighted to be re-invited to the incredible Queille Festival near Toulouse at the end of May. A very special weekend was had by all.

Next stop was the St. Magnus Festival in the Orkney Islands followed by two weeks at the Aix-en-Provence Festival where we worked alongside the Jerusalem Quartet and Andras Keller. The second year of our chamber music course in Vitoria-Gastiez, Spain was lots of fun, with students of a remarkably high standard.

We hope you enjoy BadkeBites 4th issue and hope to see you at a concert soon!

[www.badkequartet.co.uk](http://www.badkequartet.co.uk)



## Jonny's Cello Investment Trust

By Jonathan Byers

So last summer came the sad day when we had to hand back the incredible Stradivarius and Gaglianos the Royal Academy of Music had been so kind to loan us for the past few years. It was a real privilege to perform on such fine instruments and they really helped us in the early years of our career.

Our problem is, firstly, finding suitable instruments that will carry us through the coming years of quartet life, and secondly, working out how to finance such inevitably valuable items!

After what feels like many, many years of searching, and trying out hundreds of different cellos all over the world, I have at last fallen in love with one! For 20 years it has been played by the Principal Cello of the London Symphony Orchestra in some incredible recordings and concert halls all over the world.

It's an Italian cello made in the north of the country around the 1730s, and is being sold through J&A Beare's of London. It's a fantastic opportunity for me to secure the use of this fine cello for the rest of my playing career.

Sadly for potential performers, these wonderful instruments have increased in value far beyond what today's players can afford. It's rare for modern day players to own their instrument outright. The market for fine old Italian instruments hasn't dipped since 1945, making them very secure investments.

Thanks to Nigel Brown OBE and his Stradivari Trust, an investment syndicate has been set up to oversee the purchase of this cello exclusively for my use. The Trust has helped the purchase of instruments for players such as Steven Isserlis, Lawrence Power and Nigel Kennedy, to name but a few. I'm well over three quarters of the way there, but urgently need a handful more investors to secure the cello by the end of January. Contributors to the Trust gain from any price escalation, as the musician pays an increased price for 'shares' in the instrument as the value of the instrument rises.

If you, or someone you know might be interested, please phone or email and I will send out the Cello Trust proposal document for your perusal or [click here](#). Jonny can be contacted on +44 (0)7980 816368 or email him at [jonny@badkequartet.co.uk](mailto:jonny@badkequartet.co.uk)

## Forthcoming concerts and events

28th January - Tewkesbury

29th January - Cancer Research Charity Concert, Chapel of King's College, London

2nd February - Newport

5th February - Cavatina Family Concert, London

12th February - Concert in West Road, Cambridge, Stradivari Trust - Nigel Brown OBE

26th February - Conway Hall, London

13th-19th March - Tour of Scotland (St. Andrews, Kirkcaldy, Dundee, Linlithgow, Aberdeen - see website for more details)

22nd March - Imperial College, London

Check our website for details of all our future concerts and for details of a big fundraising concert in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support in 2012 with oboist Rosie Jenkins and pianist Simon Lane.

For bookings or further information please contact our agent Laura Tear:

Laura Tear Artist Management  
Phone: +44 (0)20 8293 9911  
Mobile: +44 (0)7515 252 885  
Email: [info@lauratearmanagement.com](mailto:info@lauratearmanagement.com)  
Web: [www.badkequartet.co.uk](http://www.badkequartet.co.uk)

## Lana's first few months

By Lana Trotovšek

I'm originally from Ljubljana in Slovenia. Before moving to London in 2005, I studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg with Ruggiero Ricci and then went on to Trinity College of Music and the Royal College of Music. Aside from my solo playing, I've been violinist of the Greenwich Piano Trio for the past five years.

When the Quartet approached me and asked me to audition for the 1st violin job, I was really excited. We met in a practice room at the Royal College of Music and from the very first moment we played together (some Mozart and Ravel) I think we all knew that it was going to be very special. It was like a whole new dimension of music had just opened up for me. When asked what my plans were for my future, I told them that I was sort of 'waiting for something to fall out of the sky'. It seems that the Quartet was that thing! Having not really played many quartets before, suddenly a whole new world of incredible repertoire lies in front of me!

Alongside all my work with the Quartet, this season is very busy for me, with several Trio concerts in Portugal and Belgrade. I'll also be performing Penderecki's 2nd Violin Concerto with Penderecki himself conducting!

## Badke 10 Year Anniversary!

By Jonny Byers

So 2012 will be the tenth year of Badke Quartet concerts since our formation back in October 2002 at the Royal Academy of Music. There'll be many events throughout the year and I hope you'll come and help us celebrate, not least for the launch of the new Badke Festival next September.

It's been a real roller coaster ride over the past decade; so many concerts, travels, ups and downs, a couple of changes of personnel, and some amusing stories but we're so happy to be performing more than ever and to be supported by so many wonderful people. We hope that we can repay some of the tremendous and generous support we've been given throughout the ten years with some superb concerts and fun events.

We'll be re-uniting with some great artists with whom we've collaborated with in the past, and visiting some favourites both old and new from the repertoire.

We'll write to you with full details early next year so you can book us into your diaries for September 2012. If any promoters are interested in helping us celebrate our anniversary year, do get in touch as the diary is getting filled up rather quickly!



# A summer of sunshine, long drives and the small matter of a wedding!

By Emma Parker

It's lucky for us that Jon is such a keen car enthusiast! We're now on our fourth Badke Bus, and thanks to Jon it's running like a dream. Having spent rather a lot of time in it this summer, it's good that it's comfortable too! We set off on a Friday morning in June and drove to the lovely village of Corbridge in Northumbria where Jon originally hales from, and performed in a wonderful church dating from the Saxon times. The next morning we drove even further north, through Scotland, and caught the ferry over to the spectacular Orkney Islands. What a place! We were very busy performing in several concerts, including an excellent piece by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, which Max himself came to hear. A real honour to meet the composer. He has based the piece entitled *A Sad Pavan for these Distracted Times* on a keyboard piece of the same name by Thomas Tomkins which was written just after the execution of Charles I. In the end we got our resident programme note writer David Byers (none other than Jonny's father) to transcribe the original keyboard work for string quartet to let the audience see what material Max had to work with in writing his own version. It turned out to be a real success!

After St Magnus lay yet another long drive ahead of us in the Badke Bus – this time all the way down to Aix-en-Provence in France. We'd been invited to take part in the Festival d'Aix which is one of the best festivals in Europe. We gave several concerts and we had masterclasses with David Alberman (ex-Arditti Quartet), Andras Keller and the Jerusalem Quartet. Once we'd sampled the local rosé it was down to some really hard work. We rationed our time in the swimming pool (!) and all took turns to cook the evening meal – just like a good marriage!



The Badkes rehearse before a live broadcast from the Aix-en-Provence Festival in July.

Our final performance from Aix of Shostakovich's Tenth Quartet was chosen to be broadcast live on French TV and online via the Arte network. We've made a short DVD of the concert, so if any promoters would like to be sent a copy, please do ask Laura Tear and she'll whisk one out to you. It will be available to view on both our website and Facebook page shortly.



The cross-legged Badke Quartet in Aix-en-Provence.

After the end of our course in Vitoria, Spain, we finally earned ourselves a well deserved break.

The Autumn season began with concerts in Kelso, Adderbury, some fun children's concerts with Cavatina Chamber Music Trust in London and also a great performance of Shostakovich's Piano Quintet with pianist (and my husband) Simon Lane at his festival in Bromley.



Fitting in the wedding plans around Quartet was quite a task, but we managed it and we tied the knot in Pitzhanger Manor in Ealing on Saturday 26 November. I thought I'd give the rest of the Quartet the day off to really enjoy things, so we were very lucky to have superstar soprano Lucy Crowe and pianist Tom Poster to perform during the ceremony! We hired a huge pub nearby for the reception and made it look really special with lots of decorations. It really was the best day of my life.

Now that things are wrapping up for Christmas, we can jet off to New York for our honeymoon on Boxing Day. We can't wait!

I'm so excited that 2012 will be such a special year with not one, but two anniversaries to celebrate - ten years of Badke Quartet and one year of marriage!

Hope to see you in the New Year. Do keep checking our website and Facebook page for details of when you can see us perform.