

# NORTHERN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

## MUSIC AND THE HOLOCAUST

WITH  
**SARAH BRANDWOOD-SPENCER**  
VIOLIN & DIRECTOR

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH  
MACCLESFIELD  
SATURDAY 14 JANUARY 7.30PM



# TONIGHT'S ORCHESTRA

## Violin

Sarah Brandwood-Spencer

## Viola

Alex Mitchell

## Cello

Alex Holladay

## Double Bass

James Manson

## Flute

Conrad Marshall

## Oboe

Jennifer Galloway

## Clarinet

Elizabeth Jordan

## Bassoon

Ben Hudson

## French Horn

Naomi Atherton

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# Northern Chamber Orchestra

## Directed by Sarah Brandwood-Spencer

### Saturday 14 January 2023

*This concert has been generously supported by Geoff Holman, in memory of Jennie.*

#### **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756 – 1791)

Flute Quartet in D major, K.285

*I. Allegro II. Adagio III. Rondo*

#### **Rudolf Karel** (1880 – 1945)

Nonet Op. 43

*I. Allegro con fuoco II. Andante III. Molto allegro*

#### **Louis Spohr** (1784 – 1859)

Nonet Op.31

*I. Allegro II. Scherzo: Allegro III. Adagio IV. Finale: Vivace*

Since her debut in Paris to an audience of 3,000, **Sarah Brandwood-Spencer** has enjoyed a busy career as a soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player. A graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, she has toured the world as principal and soloist with the European Union Chamber Orchestra, been guest associate concertmaster with the Canadian Opera Company, worked as a principal player with the prestigious Goldberg Ensemble and was a founder member, principal and soloist with the Lancashire Sinfionetta.

Sarah was a principal violinist of the Hallé Orchestra for seven years and is now enjoying a varied career as guest leader and principal player with many of the country's leading orchestras, and as a recording artist for various television, film and pop sessions. Sarah is a passionate chamber musician, and performs regularly with her colleagues in the Chagall Ensemble.



## **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756 – 1791)

Flute Quartet in D major, K.285

*I. Allegro II. Adagio III. Rondo*

In September 1777, the 21-year-old Mozart had just resigned from his position at the court of Salzburg. In search of a new venture, he travelled to Mannheim, a city known for its rich musical culture. Whilst there, Ferdinand Dejean, an amateur flautist and a surgeon of the East India Company, commissioned this quartet, which was duly completed on December 25, 1777. Like many compositions for this format (flute, violin, viola, and cello), it is written in a quatuor brillant style in which the flute takes centre stage in all three movements.

The carefree, opening Allegro is filled with optimism. The Adagio movement is one of the most beautiful compositions of the flute literature. Its dreamy melody unfolds above a pizzicato string accompaniment, and segues into a lively rondo finale.

## **Rudolf Karel** (1880 – 1945)

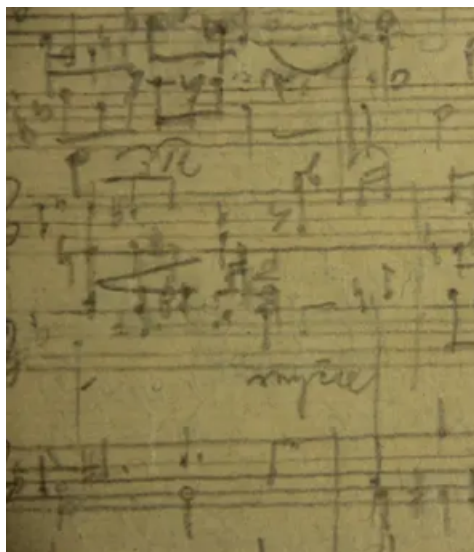
Nonet Op. 43

*I. Allegro con fuoco II. Andante III. Molto allegro*

Rudolf Karel studied with Dvořák and was one of his last students at the National Conservatoire in Prague. On completing his music training, he served in the military until 1906, when he began working as a freelance composer in Prague. His growing success saw him travel Europe, and one trip took him to the Russian town of Morkvashi on the Volga river, shortly after the Austrians had declared war on Serbia. Karel was suspected of being an Austrian spy and was summarily arrested. Following a hasty escape, he moved throughout Russia throughout the war, settling in Rostov as a music teacher.

The Bolshevik Revolution forced him to relocate, and in 1918 he travelled to the city of Irkutsk in Siberia where he joined the Czech Legion, becoming the leader of the Legionnaire Symphony Orchestra which followed the Czech army through Siberia. In 1938, he became active in the leftist resistance movement, joining the anti-Nazi group Koširk, providing support to the families of imprisoned and executed. Karel was arrested for resistance activities in 1943 and imprisoned at Pankrác and then at the Theresienstadt concentration camp in Terezín. His health suffered and his treatment by the guards and the terrible, freezing, unhygienic conditions resulted in his death in 1945 but, writing with pencil or charcoal on scraps of paper, including toilet paper, he composed several works from prison. One can only wonder at the fortitude of the sixty-five year old composer. Colleagues in the České noneto, an ensemble founded in 1924 by students of the Prague Conservatory, were able to piece together the score of the Nonet from the fragments that were smuggled out of prison, and Frantisek Hertl completed the Nonet's instrumentation for its premiere on 21 December 1945.

The opening movement, by turns impassioned and poignant, skilfully integrates the strings and wind. The reflective Andante is followed by a lively, Czech dance which concludes with a rousing Vivace. 27 January 2023 is Holocaust Memorial Day and we perform this lyrical enrichment of the nonet repertoire in remembrance.



Rudolf Karel's 'Nonet', composed in 1945 in Theresienstadt concentration camp, was etched onto toilet paper using medicinal charcoal (credit: JNF)



A sketch of Rudolf Karel in the Theresienstadt concentration camp in Terezin, from 1945.

## Louis Spohr (1784 – 1859)

### Nonet Op.31

#### *I. Allegro II. Scherzo: Allegro III. Adagio IV. Finale: Vivace*

By 1813, Spohr's considerable talents as violinist, director and composer enabled the 29-year-old to secure a plum job as kapellmeister at the Theater an der Wien. Vienna was then the centre of the musical universe – Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 was premiered there later that year – and Spohr was to come into close contact with Beethoven and other Vienna-based artists. Through a generous commission by the entrepreneur and arts patron Johann von Tost, Spohr was able to devote himself to composing many chamber music works, including his Nonet. Scored for wind quintet (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn) and strings (violin, viola, cello, bass), the Nonet is the first example of its kind. Spohr's compositional skills meant that this excursion into uncharted territory resulted in a masterful work, treating each instrument both as a soloist and as a voice in the ensemble, and combining a graciously elegant classicism with romantic harmony and rich sonorities.

The four-note motive which opens the initial Allegro opens plays a role throughout the movement, and also in the third and fourth movements. The second movement is made up of a scherzo and two trios: the violin is featured in the charming, ländler-like first trio, whereas in the contrapuntal second trio, the lead is given to the winds. A beautiful, soulful Adagio movement follows, and the work concludes with a sonata-form Finale full of vitality and humour.

# MACCLESFIELD SYNAGOGUE AND JEWISH COMMUNAL LIFE

by Basil Jeuda

*(This article appears as Chapter 2 of "Macclesfield's Jews and World War Two", a book written by local historian **Basil Jeuda** to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the opening of the Macclesfield Synagogue. The article has been reproduced here with the kind consent of Basil Jeuda.)*

Initially, a room for Jewish prayer was established in a cottage in Elizabeth Street, but, following a public meeting on 27th January 1941 attended by nearly 80 people, it was decided to form the Macclesfield Hebrew Congregation and to open a Synagogue on the first floor of a vacant commercial building at 62 Chestergate. It was one large room, and apart from Prayer, the centre of the room was used for other activities and meetings of the Congregation, such as the Jewish Study Group, the Hebrew Classes, musical soirees, and the WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organisation) Group.

The initial Executive was Jack Cohen, President, Philip Osband as Vice-President, Eric Osband, Honorary Secretary, and Harold Franklin as Honorary Treasurer. The first Service was held on 26th March 1941 under the auspices of the Manchester Jewish Ecclesiastical Authorities. A Manchester Rabbi, Dr Rudolf Weis, organised and held the religious services for the first year, and established Hebrew and Religious Classes (Talmud Torah) for young people. A few weeks later, in June 1941, the Synagogue affiliated to the London-based United Synagogue, and, in September 1941, it became part of the United Synagogue Membership Group, a group of 22 small congregations, mainly in Southern England and whose membership consisted largely of Jews evacuated from London. The Macclesfield Congregation was the only such affiliated congregation north of the Home Counties. The numbers of Jews living in Macclesfield/Bollington built up to at least 150 over the next couple of years.

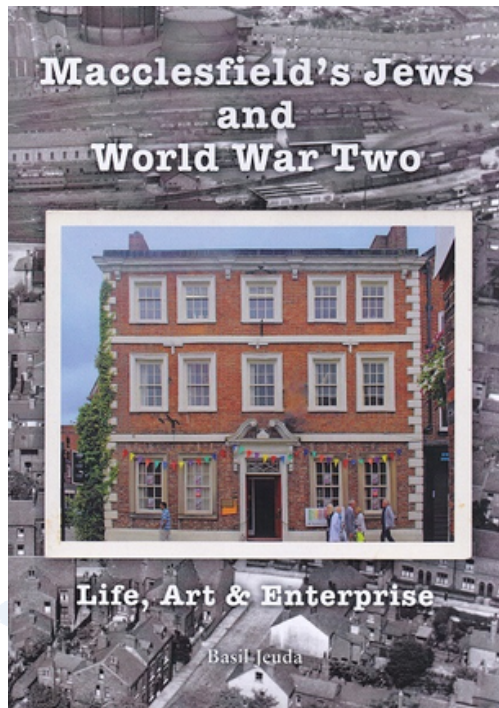
The Congregation held services in the middle floor of 62 Chestergate on Friday evenings and on Saturday mornings and the High Holy Days; the other floors were not used by the Congregation. On the right as you climbed the stairs and entered the room, was the Reading Desk (Bimah) on the right, and beyond this and up against the wall, facing east, was the Ark (Echal) in which was housed the Torah Scroll, or Sepher Torah. At the side of the Ark on the right, was the Machers' Bench on which sat the Synagogue's Wardens.

Rabbi Weis was succeeded in the spring of 1942 by Rev Irving Chazen who led the Congregation and was supported by lay readers, Jack Cohen, and Harry and Richard Franklin. He developed the Talmud Torah which had 15/20 youngsters and which met for two hours on a Sunday morning; for a while he organised a Jewish Study Circle and carried out an outreach programme to local Church groups. He also acted as a Chaplain to Jewish members of the British and American Armed Forces.



Jack Cohen was determined to provide a Jewish Way of Life for the Jewish evacuees and refugees. Typical of his enthusiasm and commitment was how he organised special (Kosher) food for the Festival of Passover, by taking a van to Manchester and bringing back supplies for the Community. Similarly, he established arrangements for a Manchester Rabbi to come every Friday to Macclesfield butchers, Dobson & Thornhill, where meat was slaughtered according to the Jewish ritual.

The Jewish Community had a busy social life – a Jewish Club and a Weekly Study Group was established in June 1942 and Bnei Akiva (Youth Group) was started in June 1943; in May 1944, the Macclesfield Branch of WIZO was established. Following the end of the War, nearly all of the Community returned to London during the following 12 months. Rev Chazen resigned in the summer of 1946, and October 1946 saw the last services at 62 Chestergate. Those Jews who remained in Macclesfield joined Synagogues in Stockport or in South Manchester, but Harold Franklin continued to organise High Holyday Services at his home at 133 Chester Road until 1953 (when he returned to London), and provided facilities at home for chickens to be Koshered. A visiting teacher came for a few years from Manchester to provide individual religious instruction to the small number of youngsters who remained, and a Macclesfield-Wilmslow Jewish Social Club was established. High Holyday Services continued, at the home of Harold Franklin at 133 Oxford Road, and these lasted until 1953 when he and his family returned to London.



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Join us for a Museum Open Day with a temporary textile exhibition, workshops and performances marking Holocaust Memorial Day 2023

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY 2023



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