

# Take in the fresh summer air



The Dante String Quartet and a host of top classical acts will be performing at this year's annual Dante Summer Festival in the Tamar Valley

## Philip R Buttall is ready for the Dante Summer Festival



**A**LTHOUGH the weather hasn't quite convinced us yet, this year's annual Dante Summer Festival should still bring a ray of

sunshine to the Tamar Valley.

Or at least it should from Monday to Friday, July 7-11, thanks to music by Beethoven, Elgar, Faure and Ravel.

There will also be the regular mix of open rehearsals, workshops, guided walks and children's activities.

At the heart of the week is the

Dante String Quartet, but regular concert-goers will notice that Yuko Inoue has taken over the viola role, and Oscar Parks now joins leader Kryisia Osostowicz on violin.

This year's event also includes celebrated British pianist Benjamin Frith, rising young singer-songwriter Harry Houseago, and his mother Annie, who will give a concert for young children.

The Dantes open proceedings with quartets by Haydn, Faure and Ravel at The Wharf, Tavistock on the Monday, with a festival walk along the Tamar, buffet supper and recital to include string trios by Beethoven, Borodin, Dvorak and Ysaye at The Old Chapel, Calstock on the Tuesday.

An open rehearsal at Trebulet

Chapel starts Wednesday, with Harry Houseago's afternoon folk-music workshop and evening concert in Callington, where he'll be joined by the Dantes and the festival orchestra.

Thursday starts with another open rehearsal at Trebulet, with Annie Houseago's Tin Pan Annie following at lunchtime, and an evening programme of late Beethoven, these last two events in Stoke Climsland.

The final day begins with a gentle festival walk on Whitchurch Common, followed by a cream tea in Yelverton Parish Hall.

The festival closes later that day with arguably the best programme of all, when Ben Frith joins the Dantes in a performance of Elgar's

glorious Piano Quintet in Yelverton Parish Church. There's plenty of time to decide on what you'd like to attend, and you can always pay at the door for each one.

However, reductions on individual events are available before June 30, as is an all-inclusive pass.

**I**F YOU'RE still looking for something to do tomorrow evening, then you could either enjoy A Night At The Opera with the University of Plymouth Choral Society, Ten Tors Orchestra and soloists in the Minster Church of St Andrew at 7.30pm, or pop over and catch award-winning jazz-saxophonist Gilad Atzmon and the Orient House Ensemble at Calstock's The Old School at 8pm.

## Classical review: Philip R Buttall

**Review:** Devon Baroque, Great Hall, Dartington, One performance only

**I**F YOU'RE an ensemble specialising in the Baroque, then basing an entire concert on the music of one particular North German family is like manna from heaven – and an especially large dose at that.

Bach and Sons gave Devon Baroque an ideal opportunity to combine three of Father Bach's familiar works with music from four of his offspring.

Carl Philipp Emmanuel's G major Symphony provided an ideal opening, where taut and respons-

ive playing in the outer movements was matched by sensitive and idiomatic treatment in the Poco Adagio.

If Wilhelm Friedemann's A minor Harpsichord Concerto wasn't especially distinguished in itself, it nevertheless gave director Jonathan Watts a perfect opportunity to put his instrument through its paces, while Johann Christian's Quintet provided a welcome insight into contemporary chamber music.

Johann Christoph Friedrich's D minor Sinfonia once more brought some impressive orchestral tex-



tures, but it was Father Bach's B minor Suite, in an effective chamber version, and the Double Concerto for Oboe and Violin that emerged as the out and out highlights, distinguished by some quite superb playing from Marta Gonçalves (flute), Frances Norbury (oboe) and violinist Persephone Gibbs, who also led the ensemble.

Devon Baroque has once more come up trumps with an effective mix of the known and the unknown, all superbly played in authentic fashion, and with such assured and highly-informed direction.

## Exhibitions



### Son achievement for artist Martin

A STUNNING portrait by a city artist is in a prestigious national exhibition.

Martin Brooks' drawing is being shown in the Royal Society of Portrait Painters' Open Exhibition in London.

Thousands of accomplished artists submitted work but only 200 were selected.

"It feels great. I am really chuffed," says Martin, who teaches painting and life drawing at Plymouth University.

Devon-born Martin trained at Exeter College of Art and Design and the Royal College of Art.

He lives with his wife Sam and three sons in Aveton Gifford in the South Hams.

His family played a crucial role in his success in the portrait society show.

The drawing is of his youngest son, Monty, nine. Sam pushed Martin to enter, despite him saying he wasn't ready.

"Portraits and life drawing are what I am known for and what I love most.

"I find creating a likeness of a person in just a series of brush marks both immensely challenging and incredibly rewarding," says Martin who unlike many artists, works mainly from life, not photos.

He is also known for his expertise in frescoes. That led to him doing the artistic equivalent of taking coal to Newcastle: he was a technical adviser on a fresco project in Tuscany, Italy.

**When & Where:** The Royal Society of Portrait Painters Open Exhibition, Mall Galleries, The Mall, London, until May 23