

west | cork | music

**SHOSTAKOVICH**  
Quartet Cycle

**CARDUCCI**  
**QUARTET**

BANTRY HOUSE

FRIDAY 24 TO SUNDAY 26 OCT, 2025





## The Collision of Art and Power

This year is the 50th anniversary of the death of Dmitri Shostakovich, one of the great composers of the Twentieth Century, whose music trod the dangerous tightrope between the revelation of truth and terror at the consequences. His cycle of fifteen overwhelming quartets contain the intimate thoughts of a composer, who lived through one of the most oppressive dictatorships of the Twentieth Century. That time has come round again and, worldwide, art and power collide again.

The Carducci Quartet will play the complete cycle in Bantry House on the October Bank Holiday week-end, 24-26 October. There will be five concerts amounting to just over 6 hours of music. For over a decade the Carducci have been playing these fifteen quartets, composed over 35 years from the Stalinist Purges in the Thirties, to the Nazi invasion and the siege of Leningrad, the post-war crushing of artistic independence, the death of Stalin and the brief Thaw followed by the decades of the Cold War and the stifling bureaucratic rule whose sole aim was to crush dissent. In these brutal times great artists found a way to speak.

The great Russian film director, Grigori Kozintsev, another survivor who spoke the secret language, wrote: 'In Shostakovich's music, I hear a virulent hatred of cruelty, of the cult of power, of the persecution of truth.'

Traditionally the quartets are played in chronological order, which makes sense for an audience attending all five concerts, but those coming to just one or two concerts would get a one-sided experience. So instead the Carducci Quartet will present five thematic concerts.

The story goes that Shostakovich loved chandeliers fitted with real candles. He enjoyed preparing them: making sure each candle stood at a true vertical, setting a match to the wicks in advance and then blowing them out so they would be easier to relight when the big moment came. So perhaps he would approve our candlelit celebration of his fifteen great string quartets.

## FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER

*The music of our being is transformed by some into real music, which, over the decades, if strong and true and pure enough to drown out the noise of time, is itself transformed into the whisper of history.*

Julian Barnes *The Noise of Time*

### 1. OPENING CONCERT BANTRY HOUSE 20.00

#### *The whisper of history*

The opening C major Quartet is a gentle and reflective work unlike all that will follow. Shostakovich was lucky to be alive, he had a young daughter, here he sets the scene for the deeply personal nature of this miraculous series of quartets. The Fourteenth is from a lifetime later, he was crippled with polio and in permanent pain but against all expectation creates this quietly happy and radiantly beautiful work. The F minor Eleventh casts seven epigrammatically short movements in one unbroken flow in memory of the second violin of the Quartet that premiered almost all his quartets a truly magical epitaph despite the wicked cuckoo-clock Humoreske. The A major Second Quartet is the last of his War works, millions have died in fighting the Nazi invasion, among them his greatest friend.

**Quartet No.1 in C major Op.49** [1938] *Images of childhood*

**Quartet No.14 in F sharp major Op.142** [1973] *A radiant beauty*

**Quartet No.11 in F minor Op.122** [1966] *A farewell for a fellow musician*

**Quartet No.2 in A major** [1944] *A lament for the millions*

Admission €45/35/25/15

Concert ends 22.00



## SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER

### 2. AFTERNOON CONCERT BANTRY HOUSE 16.00

#### *A secret language*

The desk drawer that hides what cannot be spoken is a familiar place in any dictatorship where speaking truth to power was a death sentence. The D major Fourth starts innocently but gradually darkens as it moves past the sorrow of the times into the increasingly subversive last movements, bursting into unmistakable anguish and fury in the terrifying Finale. Similarly the Fifth, not heard in public until the brief Thaw following Stalin's death, was composed in the aftermath of his great solo piano homage to Bach and, unusually, achieves moments of radiant peace.

**Quartet No.4 in D major Op.83** [1949] *Instead of an opera*

**Quartet No.5 in B flat Op.92** [1952] *Untainted by the sorrow of the times*

Admission €25/20/15/10

Concert ends 17.00

### 3. EVENING CONCERT BANTRY HOUSE 20.00

#### *Conversations with his wives*

This concert celebrates Shostakovich's three wives. His Sixth Quartet celebrates his honeymoon with his second wife, Margarita. The Seventh is a brief gem of a quartet, written for what would have been the 50th birthday of Nina, his first wife and mother of his children. The Ninth Quartet, celebrating Irina his third wife, has everything, quiet mystery, tongue-in-cheek rhythms, hymn-like moments of serenity, wild dances leaping from sublime to absurd, outbursts of extreme brutality, an operatic recitative, an explosive Finale with a magnificent, hard-driven cliff-edge finish. The Tenth was dedicated to his friend and fellow quartet composer, Moisei Weinberg, but the Passacaglia and the Armenian hurdy gurdy in the Finale were for Nina.

**Quartet No.6 in G major Op.101** [1956] *Honeymoon in Paris*

**Quartet No.7 in F-sharp minor Op.108** [1960] *Remembering Nina*

**Quartet No.9 in E-flat major Op.117** [1964] *Celebrating Irina*

**Quartet No.10 in A-flat major Op.118** [1964] *Passacaglia for Nina*

Admission €45/35/25/15

Concert ends 22.00





## SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER

### 4. AFTERNOON CONCERT BANTRY HOUSE 16.00

#### *Like a wounded bird*

When Shostakovich heard the Third Quartet played twenty years later, he sat quite still in silence like a wounded bird, tears streaming down his face. Back in 1946, it was immediately banned for flying too close to the sun. Perhaps his greatest quartet. The Twelfth in contrast is a strange, elusive work as though the ailing composer is trying to find a new path, triumphantly succeeding in the final Allegretto.

**Quartet No.3 in F major Op.73** [1946]

**Quartet No.12 in D-flat major Op.133** [1968]

Admission €25/20/15/10

Concert ends 17.00

### 5. FINALE BANTRY HOUSE 20.00

#### *The epitome of the tragedy and terror of our times*

The Eighth Quartet is Shostakovich's most popular and most performed Quartet, famous for its obsession with his musical DSCH motto. Officially dedicated to the victims of Fascism, it is an outcry at the brutal savagery of dictators everywhere, both then and again now. Originally Shostakovich, tongue in cheek, described his Thirteenth Quartet as a short lyrical quartet with a joke middle. It was written immediately after he completed the score for Grigori Kozintsev's film of King Lear. Death circles all around the six slow movements of his last and Fifteenth Quartet, where, despite its reputation for desolation, the music glows with an otherworldly inner light.

**Quartet No.8 in C minor Op.110** [1960] *DSCH*

**Quartet No.13 in B-flat minor Op.138** [1970] *King Lear*

**Quartet No.15 in E-flat minor Op.144** [1974] *Elegy*

Admission €45/35/25/15

Concert ends 22.00



## Carducci Quartet

**Matthew Denton, Michelle Fleming** [violins]

**Eoin Schmidt-Martin** [viola]

**Emma Denton** [cello]

Described by The Strad as presenting “a masterclass in unanimity of musical purpose, in which severity could melt seamlessly into charm, and drama into geniality”. Carducci Quartet was founded in 1997 and the current line-up has been together for twenty years, a rarity these days. The Quartet members include Cork musicians Michelle Fleming and Eoin Schmidt-Martin.

The music of Shostakovich has always been a particular point of focus for the quartet. In 2016, they took home a Royal Philharmonic Society Award for their project, Shostakovich15, the cycle of Shostakovich’s 15 Quartets

performed across the UK, North, and South America, with a marathon one-day cycle hosted by Shakespeare’s Globe, London. Since then they have recorded eight of the fifteen quartets.

In 2015 they curated projects around Philip Glass and Steve Reich as part of the Royal Philharmonic Society Award winning ‘Minimalism Unwrapped’ at Kings Place in London. Their recording of the Philip Glass Quartets, for Naxos, has reached over 21 million plays on Spotify. The quartet will be marking both composers’ 90th birthdays with a major project across the 26/27 season.

Upcoming highlights include ‘Intimate Portraits’: a series of 5 concerts presenting the complete Shostakovich quartets at the Barbican Centre, as well as returns to the Two Moors and Leicester Festivals, London’s Wigmore Hall and Bantry.

# West Cork Music Festivals 2026

## West Cork Chamber Music Festival 26 June – 5 July 2026

Invited artists  
Calidore Quartet  
Attacca Quartet  
Novo Quartet  
Delta Piano Trio  
Concerto 1700  
Ana Vieira Leite  
Ensemble Diderot  
Diana Tischenko  
Charlotte Spruit  
Mairéad Hickey  
Katherina Dain  
Sam Armstrong

## West Cork Literary Festival 10 July – 17 July 2026

Artistic Director  
Eimear O’Herlihy

## Masters of Tradition 19 August – 23 August 2026

Artistic Director  
Martin Hayes

## October Festival 23 October – 25 October 2026

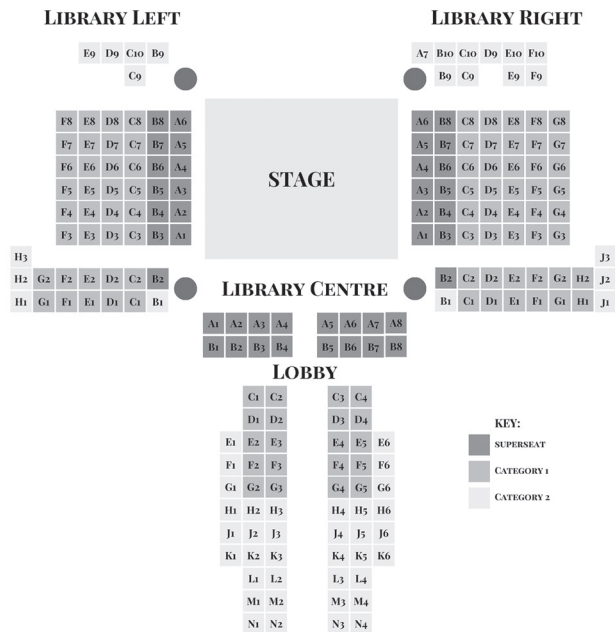
# West Cork Music Team

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BANTRY HOUSE OCTOBER SEATING PLAN



BOOKING

General Booking opens  
FRIDAY 27 JUNE

Box Office:

MONDAY-FRIDAY 10.00-17.00  
[www.westcorkmusic.ie](http://www.westcorkmusic.ie)

Tel: +353 [0] 27 52788

Email: [info@westcorkmusic.ie](mailto:info@westcorkmusic.ie)

Post: West Cork Music, 13 Glengarriff Road, Bantry, Co.  
Cork, Ireland, P75 HW72



Conditions of Sale

- Once purchased, tickets cannot be exchanged or refunded
- Refunds will only be given in the case of a cancelled concert
- Student discounts are available

Accessibility

There is no wheelchair accessibility at Bantry House. If you have mobility issues please contact the Box Office to pre-book parking.

Event start and finish times

All events will start at the times stated, so please arrive well before the stated start time. All finish times in the brochure are approximations.

Every effort is made to ensure that the programme will proceed as advertised. However, West Cork Music accepts no responsibility for any changes made due to circumstances beyond its control.

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SHOSTAKOVICH CYCLE 2025  
BOOKING FORM

	Super Seats	Cat 1	Cat 2	Student
	€	€	€	€
<b>DISCOUNT SAVERS (-10%)</b>				
<b>Festival Pass [All events]</b>	€ 166.50	€ 130.50	€ 94.50	€ 58.50
Qty				
<b>FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER</b>				
<b>1. Opening Concert 20.00</b>	€ 45.00	€ 35.00	€ 25.00	€ 15.00
Qty				
<b>SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER</b>				
<b>2. Afternoon Concert 16.00</b>	€ 25.00	€ 20.00	€15.00	€ 10.00
Qty				
<b>3. Evening Concert 20.00</b>	€ 45.00	€ 35.00	€ 25.00	€ 15.00
Qty				
<b>SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER</b>				
Qty				
<b>4. Afternoon Concert 16.00</b>	€ 25.00	€ 20.00	€ 15.00	€ 10.00
Qty				
<b>5. Evening Concert 20.00</b>	€ 45.00	€ 35.00	€ 25.00	€ 15.00
Qty				

Booking Fee	€5 .00
Post Tickets + €1.50	
GRAND TOTAL	

Detach & Post to West Cork Music  
Where postage is requested tickets  
will be posted closer to the Festival.

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