

the hops entwine together." All depart, except the two mothers, who implore their children not to forget them.

Part two: Scene four. *The wedding feast.* The guests sing a song about two berries on a tree. Poor old Palagy Stanovitch laments the loss of a precious ring; the company ridicules him, and sings another song about a grey goose. Nastasia is advised of her wifely duties, and entrusted to her husband. Fetis, too, is told of his duties, both material and amorous. The guests become more tipsy and resume their singing; the marriage-broker teases the bride's father, and a guest shouts for all to "raise their voices!" A married couple is chosen to go and warm the bed, and the bridal pair discuss it—is it narrow? how cold is it? The jolly feast is described, with "nine kinds of beer," the bride is praised—"black her brows and beautiful!"—and the future homestead, with its bath and fire. The company dissolves into tipsy chatter. Those who are warming the bed go out, the couple are laid in the bed, and all depart. Fetis kisses his bride and presses her hand on his heart. He ends with a tender benediction: "My own dearest treasure, let us live in happiness, so that all may envy us."

R.M.

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# University of Edinburgh Concerts

1970-71

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET  
Miles Baster, Austin Patterson  
Victor Manton, David Edwards  
with  
Marie Dare *double bass*  
Philip Greene *clarinet*  
Susan Hall *bassoon*  
Richard Thomas *horn*

Thursday 29 October  
Reid School of Music

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Franz Schubert

Octet in F major D803

Adagio—Allegro

Andante un poco mosso

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Andante

Menuetto

Andante molto—Allegro

Interval

Howard Ferguson

Octet

Moderato

Allegro scherzoso

Andantino

Allegro feroce

The familiar description of the **Octet in F major** is Opus 166 but, as the researches of Otto Deutsch have shown, it has no chronological significance. For example the A minor string quartet, also composed in 1824, has an opus number 29. Deutsch in his catalogue gives the number 803 for the Octet, and 804 for the quartet.

It was commissioned by an amateur clarinet player, Count Ferdinand Troyer, and is thought to have had the first performance at his home. Troyer probably knew the Septet by Beethoven and wanted a work of a similar nature for his musical evenings. Both the Septet and Octet might be said to be in the style of the divertimenti of Mozart and other composers of the period, music written more for private music-making than for public performance. The three wind instruments are used with great imagination, especially the clarinet, which has many fine cantabile passages. Troyer must have been delighted with his part in the opening of the second movement.

There is much confusion regarding the tempo indication for this movement, some scores printing *Adagio*, and others *Andante un poco mosso*. The latter direction seems to be the obvious one for such a flowing melody, and in a similar type of melody in the fifth symphony, Schubert uses the term *Andante con moto*. It may be that the culprit was Joseph Helmesberger, the Viennese violinist who was the leader of a quartet playing much of the chamber music of the period.

Schubert as usual has used one of his own themes for the variations but, unlike most of the other examples, this theme is practically unknown. It is part of a duet from an early unfinished operetta called *Freunde von Salamanka*. J.F.

Howard Ferguson's Octet was completed in 1933 and like Schubert's, employs clarinet, horn, bassoon, string quartet and double bass. Also like Schubert's Octet, this piece has a divertimento-like character and displays the Irish-born composer's lyrical talent to good effect.

The four movements are closely inter-related thematically, much use being made of the whimsical clarinet melody (featuring rocking thirds and sixths both falling and rising) with which the work begins. Heralded by a descending group of three adjacent notes on the horn, the more continuously melodic second subject, a prominent feature in which is the falling fourth, rises to a passionate climax. The development is characterised by contrapuntal interplay of the various elements of the first and second themes. In the recapitulation, the order of material is slightly rearranged, the climax bars of the second theme now preceding the more reflective passage which began with the three-note descending scale.

The scherzo consists of a short exuberant passage alternating with an episode which is based on augmentation of the initial idea. This episode begins, on its first appearance, with a suave horn melody. After the reappearance of the scherzo, the quiet episode returns with its various elements reversed in order of appearance, thereby making a mirror-form of the movement as a whole. The scherzo passage vigorously concludes the movement.

A serene almost folk-song-like melody begins the slow movement. Over shimmering strings, a more animated theme on the clarinet begins with three descending notes, and is strongly reminiscent of first movement material. After an impassioned climax, an abbreviated reprise of both themes ends the movement peacefully.

The main features of the final 'Rondo' are the relentlessly driving rhythms of the opening subject and a long 'cantabile' melody on unison viola and 'cello, again reminiscent of first movement themes. After the reappearance of the opening rhythmic patterns an intense central section combines contrapuntal expansion of the second melody with a background texture of 'ostinati' based on the opening rhythms. A passionate restatement of the 'cantabile' melody leads to a passage reflecting with increasing tranquillity on the various ideas of the first movement. Despite a brisk reappearance of the 'rondo' theme, the opening melody of the work, now 'Largamente' has the last word. L.C.

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Next concert : Thursday 5 November

The Reid Orchestra

MILES BASTER

KENNETH LEIGHTON

Fricker

Prelude, Elegy and Finale for strings, opus 10

Barber

Concerto for violin and orchestra, opus 14

Mozart

Symphony no. 39 in E flat, K.543

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University of

Edinburgh

Concerts

1970-71

EVELYN SAREN

CLIFFORD HUGHES

AUDREY INNES

Thursday 12 November

Reid School of Music

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