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University of
Edinburgh
Concerts

1970-71

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

Miles Baster, Austin Patterson
Victor Manton, David Edwards

DOUGLAS BERTRAM, *horn*

KERR BORTHWICK *horn*

THURSDAY 13 May

Reid School of Music

602
MOZART 1756—1791

Divertimento in E flat major
for Violin, Viola and Violoncello,
K.563

Allegro

Adagio

Menuetto, Allegro

Andante

Menuetto, Allegretto

Allegro

Interval

Divertimento No. 17 in D major for two
Violins, Viola, Bass and two Horns,
K.334

Allegro

Andante (Thema mit Variationen)

Menuetto

Adagio

Menuetto (two trios)

Rondo—Allegro

It has often been observed that in the late Mozart something of the passion, the daemonic element that characterised the earlier music is missing. In its place come a radiance and a tender melancholy, and also a certain expansiveness.

This quality of expansiveness is immediately evident in the six-movement **E flat Major String Trio** of September 1788. Mozart styled it *Divertimento*: the title signifies here not an open-air piece but a chamber-music work whose large proportions perhaps give some indication that the composer was aiming at something truly out-of-the-ordinary, a summing-up of all that he had to say through this combination of instruments. The combination itself seems to have inspired him to extract the maximum of expressiveness from limited resources. The furthest reach of this expressiveness is attained in the Adagio, the soaring lyricism of which is all the more effective

after the serious and incisive quality of the main theme and canonic development of the first movement.

The simplicity of the two minuets, the second with its Ländler-like trio and long coda, throws the Andante theme and variations into strong relief. The theme itself, which has been seen as an 'ennobled' version of a Tyrolean folk-tune, is not remarkable for any particular melodic feature, apart from its unusual length, but is presented in a bare two-part texture which makes the flowing three-part writing that follows much more effective and unusual. The movement proceeds by means of a double variation scheme; each part of the theme is varied afresh when it is repeated, the first part and repetition in each case forming a complete variation.

The theme of the Rondo-finale has been claimed as a reminiscence of both Mozart's *Mailed* and the folk-song *O Strassburg*. However this may be, the movement has a fluidity and a graceful laziness which make it unique even among Mozart's finales.

Perhaps in summing up this work we might use Nietzsche's words, and agree that there is no better example of Mozart's 'courtesy of heart, his longing for the elegant, the amorous, the tripping, and the tearful'. N.M.

Divertimenti, serenades and cassations conform to the same main type, but differ widely in detail and particularly in instrumentation, which is often determined by the occasion of the performance. In the **Divertimento in D major for string quartet and two horns**, the role of the wind instruments is not prominent, but they effectively bind certain passages together with sustained notes, and their occasional solo passages provide a welcome change of colour in a six-movement work. By using a relatively small number of instruments, Mozart is able to approach the more intimate and serious music found in the string quartets; this is particularly so in the first Andante where the key of D minor once again inspires him to some of his most profound thoughts.

Mozart had recently returned to Salzburg after a long tour as a travelling virtuoso and composer during which he had visited both Mannheim and Paris. It was an unhappy journey because of an unsuccessful love affair with Aloysia Weber, and the

death of his mother who was accompanying him on his travels. The latter event caused his father to recall him to his native Salzburg, a place for which he never failed to express a dislike, though he produced there some of his most carefree compositions. K.334 was composed in the summer of 1779.

Allegro: This is a fairly straightforward sonata movement in which the two main thematic ideas, dominated by the violins, are both blithe and happy. The development is almost all new material including a lengthy new theme in F major, and the recapitulation follows a formal pattern.

Andante: This is probably the most inspired movement, and most closely approaches the depth of true chamber music. In variations I, II and VI the first violin reaches ever-increasing heights of virtuosity, yet the accompanying parts never seem to lose their identity. In variation III, the melody is heard in canon between the first violin and the bass with a syncopated accompaniment. The horns come into prominence in variation IV, accompanied by ornate flourishes and delicate scale passages from the upper strings. Over the original simple harmonic bass, the theme in variation V is transformed and ornamented by the violins, concluding with a four-part contrapuntal texture. The coda to variation VI, and to the movement, is derived from the original theme.

Menuetto I: This has become one of the most popular movements of its type with its graceful and lilting theme doubled in octaves with delicate chordal accompaniment. The second section, in contrast, is of a more sustained and lyrical nature. The first violin is prominent in the trio section, but although the writing is florid, it remains lyrical rather than virtuosic.

Adagio: The underlying pulse of the fourth movement in A major gives the impression of a graceful march, over which is woven an intensely expressive and personal melody, almost continuous from the opening of the movement to the close.

Menuetto II (2 Trios): The second minuet, less graceful than the first, is more akin to the 'Ländler'. Nobody will fail to hear the startling interrupted cadence which precedes the little canonic passage in the second section. The two trios are in the tonic minor and the relative minor respectively, and here

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gain the individual instruments have an independence that puts this work on a higher level than some others of the same name.

Rondo—Allegro: Any seriousness in previous movements is immediately swept away by the straightforward charm and Mozartean sweetness of the Finale. The lower instruments here take a secondary role, and the endearing qualities of this movement leave us with an impression of the spontaneity and freshness of the whole work. W.P.W.

BACH AT ST CECILIA'S HALL,

Sunday, May 30, 8.30,

MUSIC for TWO FLUTES and STRINGS

Richard Adeney
David Nicholson

Sunday, June 6, 8.30,

MUSIC for SOPRANO, FLUTE and STRINGS

Montserrat Alavedra

Friday, June 11, 8 p.m.,

48 PRELUDES and FUGUES 1-16

Colin Tilney

Saturday, June 12, 8 p.m.

48 PRELUDES and FUGUES 17-32

Christopher Hogwood,

Sunday, June 13, 8.30,

48 PRELUDES and FUGUES 33-48

Peter Williams

LECTURES at 7 p.m. on May 30,
June 6 (Hans Gal) and June 13
(Christopher Longuet-Higgins).

BUFFET SUPPER between
Lecture and Concert, May 30,
June 6, June 13

Tickets—The Edinburgh Bookshop and
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Concert 60p

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