

being now reversed). Finally there is an extended Andante in which the lyrical potentialities of the opening theme are fully exploited, leading eventually back to a triumphant version of the three-chord ostinato from the first movement. K.L.

# EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1973-74

THE JOHN CURRIE SINGERS  
and ENSEMBLE  
*Louis Carus leader*

JOHN CURRIE *conductor*

RAYMOND O'CONNELL *piano*

PATRICIA MacMAHON *soprano*

CLIFFORD HUGHES *tenor*

VICTOR CARIN *narrator*

---

*Next concert: Thursday 2 May in the Reid Concert Hall*  
CONCERT BY THE STUDENTS  
OF THE FACULTY OF MUSIC

---

Printed by THE SUMMERHALL PRESS LTD  
12a West Newington Place, Edinburgh

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 11 October 1973

SOLER 1729-83

*Congregante y Festero*

(The Churchgoer and the Musical Director)

The Spanish composer, Antonio Soler, was a musician of prodigious talent. At the age of 15 he became Master of the Chapel at Lerida; in 1752 he was appointed organist at the Escorial and shortly afterwards became Master of the Chapel there too. Though best remembered for his many keyboard sonatas which owe something to the influence of Domenico Scarlatti, Soler wrote in addition a good deal of church and chamber music, as well as dramatic music for plays by Calderón and Lope de Vega which were performed at the royal palace.

*Congregante y Festero*, for solo voices, double choir and small orchestra, is described as a 'villancico', but by the 18th century this form was very freely treated in a manner far removed from that of the *villancico* of the 16th century with its *estribillo*, *mudanza* (or *copla*), and *vuelta*. All that really survives of the classical form is the refrain structure of the central section which Soler encloses within an *Introduzione* and a fugue for chorus. Several of his *villancicos* were written for Christmas (indeed, like the English carol, the form is now primarily associated with that season in Spain). *Congregante y Festero* is a delightfully humorous and unpretentious little drama no doubt arising partly out of Soler's own experiences as a musical director. Its tone is popular and the slang of its text is appropriately matched with dancing rhythms and a hint of the crackle of castanets. M.T.

MOZART 1756-91

Piano Concerto in E flat, K.449

*Allegro vivace*

*Andantino*

*Allegro ma non troppo*

Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Verdi's *String Quartet* are a pair of excellent swallows which do not make a summer for their composers: the evolution of music through classical tonality saw the composers turn consistently towards the operatic drama direct, or towards the sonata, which is drama at one remove. But Mozart, in his preoccupation with both, seems to find no such dividing line; his blending of the two throughout his compositions gave the impetus which carried the whole sonata period forward into the nineteenth century.

K.449 completed in February 1784, occupies a special position in the sequence of the piano concertos because it leans so strongly

towards the operatic in its outer movements, standing out amongst its immediate neighbours, the concertos K.413, 414 and 415 of a year before, and K.450, 451 and 453 of a few months after. These six works draw attention to the fluency of the sonata element, changing the outward aspect of drama until it becomes no longer possible to name it as a part of the concept of Viennese concerto—it has become its essence. In this particular concerto, at least in its first movement, Mozart speaks the same thematic language as in his mature operas, so much so that the soloist arrives to find the party in full swing which has usually been respectfully awaiting his arrival.

The masterly contrasts of the first movement find their opposite when the second movement, in pursuit of a simple idea which is melody, winds its way through the asymmetrical phrases of a theme and its imaginative variation towards the end. Variation in the Finale (to Act III, one might almost say) provides the quickly running notes from which further ideas are coined after the initial theme. Quavers do not often fall silent in this movement once they have begun, but a certain syncopated moment where they do is immediately all the more eloquent for it. The work closes with a final variation in six-eight time. C.K.

MARTIN DALBY b. 1942

*Orpheus*

*Orpheus* was written for the John Currie Singers who commissioned it with funds provided by the Scottish Arts Council. It is based on a poem by Robert Lowell, a translation or rather as the poet describes it an imitation of Rilke's 'Orpheus, Euridyke, Hermes'.

The work is scored for a narrator, whose part is optional, sixteen voices and eleven instruments. The work concentrates on the dream world evoked by the poem and the impressions of Orpheus' thoughts as he precedes Euridyke and the God Hermes on their journey from the underworld. M.D.

INTERVAL

HAYDN 1732-1809

*Missa Sancti Nicolai*

*Kyrie — Gloria — Credo — Sanctus —  
Benedictus — Agnus Dei — Dona nobis pacem*

Haydn wrote this Mass, his fifth, for performance on Prince Nicolaus Esterhazy's name-day, 6 December 1772. This was the

period of the opus 20 quartets and symphonies like the *Trauer* and the *Farewell*. Not surprisingly, most of the technical *gaucheries* of the first two masses have disappeared, but after his experiment on an altogether larger scale in the *Great Organ Mass*, Haydn returns here to the *missa brevis* style. He uses the solo quartet and choir in accordance with the Austrian tradition, rather like *concertino* and *ripieno* groups in a *concerto grosso*, with few extended (and no elaborate) solos but a good deal of interplay between the two contrasted groups. With a few exceptions, such as the somewhat primitive 'Amen' fugue at the end of the *Gloria*, much of the choral writing is in a simple chordal style which despatches the text with alacrity and places reliance upon the development of orchestral figuration to secure cohesion and continuity. That less admirable feature of the *missa brevis*, the telescoping of the text, has to be heard to be believed at the opening of the *Credo* which rivals an English catch in confusion if not in humour: simultaneously we hear from the sopranos 'Credo in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem factorem Coeli et terrae', from the altos 'Credo genitum non factum consubstantialem Patri', from the tenors 'Credo Deum de Deo lumen de lumine Deum verum', and from the basses 'Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum Filium Dei unigenitum'. Austrian churches were cold in December and lengthy settings of the creed not suffered gladly.

The St Nicholas Mass strikes a mood of gentleness and serenity disturbed only occasionally by the stress of the minor tonality (in the 'Et incarnatus est' and *Agnus Dei* predictably, and rather oddly at 'in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis' in the *Gloria*). The first and last movements of the mass are set to the same music in a lilting 6/4 time, apparently influenced by the *pastorella* tradition. This feature has made the work popular in Austria at the celebration of midnight mass on Christmas Eve. M.T.

---

Next concert: Thursday 18 October

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

HAYDN Quartet in B flat, opus 76 no. 4

PETRASSI Quartet

BEETHOVEN Quartet in E flat, opus 74

---

2

# EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1973-74

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

Miles Baster Austin Patterson

Michael Beeston David Edwards

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 18 October 1973