

HANDEL 1685-1759

*Mi palpita il cor*

This cantata with two arias in contrasting styles, each one preceded by a recitative is one of a large number of Italian chamber cantatas written at various times throughout the composer's career. The obbligato melody was originally designed for flute. L.C.

---

*Next concert: Thursday 14 November*

THE REID ORCHESTRA  
KENNETH LEIGHTON conductor  
MILES BASTER violin

BEETHOVEN Overture, *Coriolan*  
KENNETH LEIGHTON Violin Concerto, opus 12  
KURT WEILL Symphony No. 2

---

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

EDINBURGH  
UNIVERSITY  
CONCERTS

1974-75

THE SCOTTISH PIANO QUARTET

WIGHT HENDERSON *piano*  
LOUIS CARUS *violin*  
JAMES DURRANT *viola*  
GILLIAN THOMAS *cello*  
*with*  
PAUL MARRION *bass*

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 21 November 1974

HUMMEL 1778–1837

Piano Quintet in E-flat minor, opus 87

*Allegro e risoluto assai*

*Menuetto (Allegro con fuoco)*

*Largo*

*Finale (Allegro agitato)*

Time has swept most of Hummel's music into oblivion. The virtues of the E-flat mass and other works, so glowingly extolled by his contemporary Edward Holmes, now seem faded. His piano sonatas, once a corner-stone of piano pedagogy, gather dust in second-hand shops or feed the voracious appetite of a waste shredder. This is a pity for those virtues, if faded, were nevertheless real; a group that assembles to devour Schubert's *Trout* Quintet could do much worse than whet its appetite with Hummel's opus 87.

Hummel was renowned as a keyboard player and all of his considerable output of chamber music with piano places greatest emphasis on his own instrument: Beethoven's death blow to the 'accompanied sonata' went unheeded by many virtuoso composers. In the Quintet echoes and pre-echoes abound. Surely the finale of Haydn's opus 17, no. 4 (which can be heard here on 28 November) was in Hummel's mind when he wrote the opening phrase, and Haydn's vivid tonal juxtapositions left their imprint too. As the first movement gets under way the Mendelssohn of the early piano quartets comes to mind and we may recall that Mendelssohn thought highly enough of Hummel to refashion his piano trio in D minor on lines suggested by the older composer. The jaunty second subject is operatic and Weberish, the use of three tonal centres in the exposition, E-flat, A, and F-sharp, perhaps Schubertian. In the brief *Largo* the piano flirts with the decorative Bellinian style of Field, Glinka, and early Chopin.

Is the ardour of the finale feigned, the singing middle episode with its string solos mere strutting and posturing? At least Hummel's artificialities are elegantly contrived. Profundity is not necessarily an ingredient of a masterpiece which is what Cobbett roundly declared this Quintet to be. M.T.

LEIGHTON b.1929

Quartet in One Movement (Contrasts and Variants), opus 63

This work was commissioned by the Richards Piano Quartet with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain, and

completed during the spring of 1972. The first performance took place in the Purcell Room later in the same year.

Although played without a break the music can be divided into a number of clearly defined sections:

(1) A slow lyrical and fairly contrapuntal presentation of the basic material, characterised above all by piled up seconds and leaping sevenths. Here the textural contrast between piano and strings is evident in the different dynamic levels on which they function. e.g. strings *ff* appassionato, and piano obstinately quiet and calm.

(2) A more passionate section and a more chromatic development of the material, with piano leading off with an elaborate single line, and accompanied by string chords pizzicato. Later this conflict in the texture is reversed, with long lines on strings and brief exclamations on the piano.

(3) A short restatement of the initial idea, but with the fresh textural element of muted strings. The seconds are now piled up much higher.

(4) An *Allegro Violente* in which the built up whole tones tend to become semitones.

(5) A waltz, again using mainly plucked strings. The music is here to be played with irony and even bitterness.

(6) A *Presto* section which leads to the climax of the work and also the most radical point of contrast between piano and strings. Here the pianist plays quite independently of the strings, as if improvising, while the strings quietly fade from the scene.

(7) Out of this confusion a new piling up of seconds emerges very softly, and leads to the final section—slow and hymn-like, though not without elements of the dance.

The work is thus a series of continuous variations, and in its texture attempts to find fresh ways of exploiting the contrast between piano and strings. K.L.

---

INTERVAL

---

FAURÉ 1845-1924

Piano Quartet in C minor, opus 15

*Allegro molto moderato*

*Scherzo—Allegro vivo*

*Adagio*

*Allegro molto*

In the history of music publishing a sprat has quite often been set to catch a mackerel. One of the more successful catches was made when the Paris firm of Hamelle offered to publish the young composer's second chamber work. The Berceuse for violin and piano, slight as it was, must have made them realise the sales potential of Fauré's talent, so they persuaded him to sell outright his quartet of 1876-80 and the 'morceau de salon' for violin, just as Breitkopf had gained his violin sonata in A major opus 13 in 1875, the work with which Saint-Saens claimed for his former pupil a place in the front rank of his French contemporaries. Ironically, these three works, from which Fauré was to have no hope of further financial reward, have most often represented his name in concert programmes ever since.

Music can be based upon Germanic formal principles, yet consistently declare itself French. Fauré's instrumental scherzos and his quick piano pieces often have this in common, that they are sunlit; the nocturnal flights of fancy often heard from the German romantic composers are quite remote from them. Another parting of the ways is most clear at the outset of the last movement, where the opening theme even resembles Brahms' start to the finale of his trio opus 8. But the continuation, Fauré's harmonic language of the whole quartet and his characteristic handling of phrase-lengths, could only come from the hand of a true 'musicien français'.  
C.K.

---

*Next concert: Thursday 28 November*

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

HAYDN Quartet opus 17, no. 4 in C minor

DVORAK Terzetto

BERWALD Quartet in E flat

---

EDINBURGH  
UNIVERSITY  
CONCERTS

1974-75

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

Miles Baster Austin Patterson  
Michael Beeston David Edwards

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 28 November 1974