

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1976-77

Reid Memorial Concert

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

COLIN KINGSLEY *piano*
DAVID NICHOLSON *flute*
MICHAEL TILMOUTH *harpsichord*

St Cecilia's Hall, Thursday 17 February 1977

Forthcoming events:

Please note that there will be no Reid Concert during the week of the University Opera Club's production of *Les Indes Galantes*, in the George Square Theatre, 9-12 February.

Saturday 12 February, 8.00, St Cecilia's Hall

LECTURE-RECITAL

by KETIL HAUGSAND (Oslo)

'What can the player and maker of harpsichords teach each other?'

Sponsored by Northern Scholars Committee

Admission Free

Thursday 17 February, 7.30, St Cecilia's Hall

REID MEMORIAL CONCERT

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

COLIN KINGSLEY *piano*

DAVID NICHOLSON *flute*

MICHAEL TILMOUTH *harpsichord*

GENERAL REID Sonata for flute and continuo

DONALDSON Piano Sonata

J. G. SCHETKY String Quartet in G minor, opus 6, no. 2

SAMUEL WESLEY Variations on *Jessey o' Dunblane*

MOZART String Quartet in D minor, K421

Admission Free

J. G. C. SCHETKY 1740-1824

String Quartet in G minor, opus 6, no. 2

Allegro con moto

Largo

Allegretto

GENERAL JOHN REID 1721-1807

Sonata no. 2 for flute and continuo

Allegro moderato

Largo affettuoso

Presto

JOHN DONALDSON c 1790-1865

Piano Sonata in G minor

Allegro moderato, ma molto energetico (sic.)

Adagio con espressione e molto legato

Rondo: Allegro molto

INTERVAL

'SIGNOR PASTORELLI' 1766-1837

Variations on *Jessey o' Dunblane*

W. A. MOZART 1756-1791

String Quartet in D minor, K421

Allegro moderato

Andante

Menuetto (Allegretto)-Trio

Allegretto ma non troppo

Since every Tom, Dick and Harry has his centenary celebration nowadays there is no good reason why Schetky should not have one too, and a Reid Memorial Concert with a backward glance at Edinburgh's musical history is as good a place as any to fit it in. Schetky, a cellist and composer, came from Darmstadt and was one of several Germans and Italians who settled in Edinburgh in the 18th century profiting from the belief here that music that is good is foreign. It is said that the stench from the middens almost

drove him back to Darmstadt the day he arrived but the compensating excellence of the local beer, a drink of which he was a dedicated connoisseur, seduced him into permanent residence.

Shared tastes of this kind earned him the friendship of Burns, whose 'Clarinda, mistress of my soul' he set; professional duty brought him to the University to direct the choir that lustily saluted 'The stone we've seen first plac'd by Napier's hand' at the laying of the foundation stone of Old College in 1789, and to St Cecilia's Hall where the Edinburgh Musical Society was flourishing in its elegant new concert room. His six string quartets Op. 6, published two hundred years ago in 1777 with a curious preface 'On the Performance of Concert Music', were perhaps first heard here. Like many string quartets of that time (including even the English editions of Haydn's early quartets) the cello part is figured for a supporting harpsichord continuo.

The flute sonata by General Reid comes from his second set of solos published about 1762 and written with the help of James Oswald, a fellow member of a secret society of musical London Scots called 'The Temple of Apollo'. General Reid deserves our gratitude for making the building of the Reid School of Music possible and endowing the Chair and Concerts which bear his name. But we should remember John Donaldson too, the fourth Reid Professor, for braving the wrath of his fellow professors in 1851 and preserving the Reid Bequest from their depredations.

From about 1811 Donaldson had been a highly successful piano teacher in Glasgow where he presumably wrote the G minor sonata published in 1822-3 and dedicated to Clementi. He had, however, set his sights on the fair city. In 1824 he moved to Edinburgh and, mindless of the examples of Schütz and Handel, read law and was actually called to the Scottish Bar two years later. But advocacy had only temporary charms. He hankered after a more harmonious pursuit and applied for the Reid Chair on its creation in 1838 and again, unsuccessfully, in 1841 and 1843. His persistence was rewarded at last in 1845 when, armed with a testimonial from Moscheles (who thought highly of this very G minor sonata), he even triumphed over Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Ironically, litigious activities over the Reid Bequest embroiled him immediately but we may be thankful that the University made what some came to see as a great mistake in appointing a lawyer to the Chair of Music, one whose greatest achievement was to rescue the funds to build the 'music class-room in Park Place'—the Reid Concert Hall. It may be that his time was so wholly spent in this matter that he had little left for composition. At any rate, of his works only the piano sonata, recently brought

to light by David Johnson, seems to survive. It is written for a $5\frac{1}{2}$ octave piano; the first movement suggests that the composer knew Beethoven's opus 90 and some of the passage work hints at a knowledge of Weber.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie!
The sports o' the city seem'd foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I could ca' my dear lassie,
Till charm'd wi' sweet Jessie, the Flow'r o' Dumblane.

After such musical flow'rs o' Edinburgh, 'Signor Pastorelli' appropriately directs us to the rural scene and sweet *Jessey the Flow'r o' Dumblane*. But alas! these four variations and finale are city bred too for 'Signor Pastorelli' is none other than Samuel Wesley in a shepherd's smock, joining the long line of composers who have found that a Scots tune, real or faked (or even Irish as in Glinka's 'Variations on a Scottish Air, *The Last Rose of Summer*') never failed to appeal to a non-Scottish audience. Tannahill's poem on the imaginary Jessie was published in 1808 and in the setting by R. A. Smith became rapidly popular. Wesley's variations have been transcribed from a manuscript in the library of the Royal College of Music.

Mozart's masterly quartet in D minor has nothing whatever that is Scottish about it. Had the composer been asked to provide a rubric for the Trio he would presumably have labelled it *alla zoppa* or *in stile lombardo*.

M. T./D. J.

We are grateful to Sir William Murray of Ochertyre in whose collection the unique copy of Donaldson's sonata is preserved and to Mr John Barnes for the loan for this concert of a recently restored square piano with Viennese action built in 1820 by Geiser of Rastat.

Forthcoming events:

LECTURE-RECITAL *Friday 18 February, 3.00*
by HUGH WOOD and SUSAN McGAW

The sources, characteristics and techniques of Debussy's style.

Admission Free

Thursday 22 February, 7.30

CONCERT BY STUDENTS OF THE MUSIC FACULTY

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EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1976-77

STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY
OF MUSIC

Reid Concert Hall, Tuesday 22 February 1977