

Next concert: Thursday 20 October (NB **McEwan Hall**)

20th CENTURY ENSEMBLE OF LONDON

BOULEZ Le Marteau sans Maître

DEBUSSY Sonata for flute, viola and harp

TAKEMITSU Stanza I

BERIO Differences

(Edinburgh University acknowledges the financial support of the Scottish Arts Council)

Tickets 70p (Students 40p) from the Edinburgh Bookshop and Music Faculty Concert Office, Nicolson Square.

PLEASE NOTE:

It is regretted that owing to alterations in the Reid Concert Hall in preparation for the arrival of the new organ, forthcoming University concerts will take place either in St Cecilia's Hall or in the McEwan Hall.

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EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1977-78

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

Miles Baster Peter Markham
Michael Beeston Christopher Gough

St Cecilia's Hall, Thursday 27 October 1977

BEETHOVEN 1770-1827

String Quartet in G major, Op.18 no. 2

Allegro

Adagio cantabile-Allegro-Adagio

Scherzo (Allegro)-Trio

Allegro molto quasi Presto

Beethoven's G major quartet was written for the most part in 1799, the year of the Septet, a work whose charm and good humour it shares. If the A major quartet, No. 5, shows Beethoven at his most Mozartian, the G major, with its earthier humour especially in the finale and its sudden changes of tonality, owes much more to Haydn's influence: but it is Beethoven's own personality which emerges most strongly even in such a relatively early work. In the mysterious E-flat major section, *sempre pianissimo*, of the development in the first movement there is even a curious foreshadowing of the corresponding point in the first movement of the Ninth Symphony.

In some ways it is the slow movement which points the contrast between the conventional and the original Beethoven most vividly. The Adagio, and more particularly its lavishly decorated *da capo*, however beautifully they may be contrived, belong to that conventional Italianate melismatic writing of the period which so irritated Vaughan Williams when he found its predictable graces lending a Victorian stuffiness to the slow movement of the Ninth Symphony. On the other hand the intrusion of a whimsical Allegro in the quartet's slow movement, picking up the gentle cadence of the Adagio only to toss it to and fro at four times the speed, is typical of Beethoven in his 'unbuttoned' mood, caring for nobody and throwing convention to the winds. M.T.

MICHAEL TIPPETT b.1905

String Quartet No. 1

Allegro

Lento Cantabile

Allegro assai

It is hardly surprising that a composer as personal as Tippett should have produced some of his finest music in the field of the string quartet. It is in this, perhaps the most intimate of musical forms, that men as vastly different as Beethoven and Dvorak, Bartok and Shostakovich have sought to express their innermost

thoughts, and it is utterly characteristic that Tippett should have turned first of all to the string quartet to seek the realisation of his own musical vision.

The First Quartet written in 1935, is the earliest work of Tippett's to have escaped his later censure: he destroyed or withdrew all his previous compositions, a symphony and two earlier string quartets amongst them. There is ample evidence in the Quartet that he had by this time found his own style. Its central movement, a 'slow lento of almost unbroken lines of lyrical song for all the instruments in harmony', is the earliest and most sustained of Tippett's characteristic cantilena-like outpourings. Its shape is that of a Pavane; its material is self-developing. The vigorous Allegro finale is a Beethovenian fugue, whose incisive additive rhythms and rhythmic counterpoint are distinctive in his works up to *The Knot Garden* (1970). It is in the impressive first movement of the Quartet, however, that he most closely approaches his formal ideal. An energetic Allegro in Sonata form, punctuated by cadenzas of intense yearning for the solo 'cello, this movement was a late addition to the Quartet. It was written in 1943, to replace two earlier movements, and its harsh mood owes much to Tippett's grim prison experience as a pacifist in the Second World War. R.McA.

INTERVAL

DVORAK 1841-1904

String Quartet in G major, op. 106

Allegro moderato

Adagio ma non troppo

Molto vivace

Andante sostenuto—Allegro con fuoco

This quartet was written at the end of 1895, after Dvorak's return from his three-year stay in America. The traces of 'New World' atmosphere to be found in the American works have disappeared; here is Dvorak's authentic style, both national and personal.

The untroubled first movement has two themes, the detached fragments at the beginning, perhaps heard in a Bohemian woodland, and a smooth-running triplet melody played first in the unexpected key of B-flat. The Adagio, also has two ideas which usually fit together; characteristically one is minor, one major, the latter a lovely cantabile melody.

In the rapid Scherzo only snatches of the theme are heard, but its Trio, slightly slower, cleverly imitates the drones of a hurdy-gurdy, the viola playing the bass note with the 'cello double stopped above; the peasant flavour is later enhanced by buzzing open violin strings.

The finale develops a bright tune, in comic-opera style, from its short slow introduction, and finally closes the circle by referring to the triplet melody from the first movement. R.M.

There will be a silver collection in aid of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal.

Next Concert: Thursday 3rd November, 7.30 St Cecilia's Hall

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EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1977-78

MICHAEL LESTER-CRIBB

piano

St Cecilia's Hall, Thursday 10 November 1977