
CONCERTS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Spring - Summer 2017

Tuesday 7 March 2017

1.10pm

City of Edinburgh Methodist Church

The Edinburgh Quartet

Zoë Beyers · violin

Rebecca Smith · violin

Catherine Marwood · viola

Mark Bailey · cello

Programme of works by ANDREW CARVEL,
ANDREW BLAIR, and HAYDN.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

String Quartet in E minor

Andrew Carvel (b.1989)

After a solitary statement by the Viola, the main theme of this movement for String Quartet goes through various transformations. You'll hear it accompanied by a sparse texture of drones and harmonics; a fragmented version that falls through the quartet from Violin I to Cello; and as a soaring violin melody as the rest of the Quartet undulates below.

For years I have marvelled at String Quartets of Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, which have undoubtedly influenced my writing for strings, and form the inspiration for this work.

A.C.

Glass - for string quartet

Andrew Blair (b.1995)

(not after Philip).

Fortune is like glass - the brighter the glitter, the more easily broken.

- Publilius Syrus

A.B.

String Quartet in F Op.77, No.2

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Allegro moderato

Menuetto: Presto

Andante

Finale: Vivace assai

Having been sacked, aged seventeen, from the choir-school of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna (apparently for cutting off the pigtail of a fellow-chorister), Haydn lived a hand-to-mouth existence in the city by busking in the streets and giving occasional music lessons. His sixth-floor garret had no heating or natural light, but here he was happy and independent, free to explore his art. As he was to tell his biographer Griesinger many years later, 'when I was sitting at my old worm-eaten clavier I envied no king his lot.'

Things gradually improved. Haydn became valet-accompanist to Porpora, a well-known opera composer of the time. Up until then, Haydn had had little time to learn music theory, but his daily work for Porpora gave him a much-needed crash course on the finer points of composition. Next he was signed up as Kapellmeister for Count Morzin, for whom he wrote his first symphony. Finally his big break came – employment by the fabulously wealthy Prince Esterházy. The Prince was wealthy in the way Bill Gates is wealthy. Not content with one palace at Eisenstadt, complete with formal gardens, its own theatre and two hundred guest-rooms, the prince built another. Even bigger. Esterházy Palace became Haydn's home for the next thirty years.

The palace's isolated setting in Hungarian marshland in the middle of nowhere minimised outside musical influences. This, combined with having at his disposal an orchestra of the finest musicians money could buy, allowed Haydn's creativity free reign. During this period, in addition to arranging concerts or opera performances on an almost daily basis, he wrote more than eighty symphonies, approximately fifty piano sonatas, over forty piano trios and nearly sixty string quartets as well as many other works including concertos, church music and operas. Furthermore, he laboured his way through the composition of nearly one hundred and thirty works for the baryton, the prince's instrument of choice. Composing for such an 'ungrateful instrument . . . an admirable expedient in a desert' (Dr Burney) – a kind of six-string cello with a battery of sympathetic strings – must have been the bane of Haydn's life.

With Prince Esterházy's death in 1790, the terms of Haydn's contract were considerably eased. Allowed now to travel, he discovered for the first time how celebrated he had become across the whole of Europe. He visited London and was fêted. For the next ten years new commissions flooded in – symphonies, chamber works, opera, oratorio. Eventually, however, the strain on Haydn began to tell.

The String Quartet Op 77, No.2 is the last quartet he was to complete. Written in 1799 and dedicated to Beethoven's patron Prince Lobkowitz, the first movement shows a purity of line whose clarity shimmers in light and shade by turn. Its principal theme breathes serenity. The *minuet* which follows might easily be called a *scherzo* for its rhythmic brilliance and playfulness. The slow movement is a grave *andante* which features a cadenza-type series of embellishments from the first violin. After a restrained opening, the fire and spirit of the concluding *presto* hurtles the music ever-forward to a most exhilarating finish.

Ron Butlin

www.ronbutlin.co.uk

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS:

Friday 10 March

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

Kevin Duggan (organ)

ANON. Estampe

ANON. Aquila altera

TALLIS Ecce tempus idoneum

GIBBONS Fantazia of foure parts

FRESCOBALDI Toccata sesta

BUXTEHUDE Præludium in G minor *manualiter*

J.S. BACH Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr BWV 664

ZACH Fugue in A minor

KUCHAR Pastorella

SAWA Fuga-bolero

Admission Free

Saturday 11 March

7.30pm

Reid Concert Hall, Bristo Square

Edinburgh University String Orchestra

Derrick Morgan (conductor)

Natalie Kulina (violin solo)

GRIEG Holberg Suite

DE LOBO The Last Samba in Moscow (2016) – World Premiere

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS Concerto Grosso

HAYDN Violin Concerto No.4 in G major

JANACEK Suite for Orchestra

£10/£5 (students and U of E staff). Tickets available on the door.

Saturday 11 March

7.45pm.

St. Giles Cathedral

Edinburgh University Renaissance Singers

Noel O'Regan (director)

Fiftieth Anniversary Concert

Music by ANERIO, LOBO, MONTEVERDI, PALESTRINA and VICTORIA

£8/£5 (concessions). Tickets available on the door.