

THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH CONCERT SERIES SPRING · SUMMER 2011

Concerts at The University

Tuesday 18 January 2011

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

The Edinburgh Quartet

Tristan Gurney · violin

Philip Burrin · violin

Michael Beeston · viola

Mark Bailey · cello

with

Maximiliano Martin · clarinet

**Programme of works by PATRICK STEPHEN-SAMUELS
and BRAHMS.**



Clarinet Quintet (1973)

Patrick Stephen-Samuels (b.1940)

Patrick Stephen-Samuels wrote his Clarinet Quintet for the Stroud Festival as a prize-winning competition entry, first performed by Thea King and the Georgian Quartet. Back in those days he was young and rebellious and refused to supply the festival with programme notes. This is what he told them:

"As far as I am concerned programme notes are redundant; if the audience can't follow and enjoy it without it being explained to them, there is no point to it. It has a beginning, middle and an end, and they follow each other in that order."

Stroud refused to print that, and so they wrote their own notes, but of course he never kept them. Ironically, since then Patrick Stephen-Samuels has written programme notes for countless other composers' works, but has managed to keep a zero score for notes on his own pieces.

Quintet in B minor for clarinet and strings, Op. 115

Johannes Brahms (1883-1897)

- (i) Allegro
- (ii) Adagio
- (iii) Andantino - Presto non assai
- (iv) Con moto

Brahms wrote his clarinet quintet in 1891, having been inspired by the playing of the clarinetist Richard Muhfeld. Like Mozart, Brahms was late in his career. However, he had achieved a greater age, and the works which now ensued were of a wonderful mellowness and maturity. The two sonatas for clarinet quintet are all works of importance. In the case of the quintet, the influence of Hungarian and Gypsy music can be felt in the warm writing for the strings and in the impassioned and extraordinary near-improvisations of the slow movement.

The first movement is in 6/8. The violins, in thirds and then sixths, boldly announce a two-bar motif which takes a major part in the whole movement. It consists of a dotted crotchet followed by 6 semiquavers, and seems to be in D major. The next two bars of crotchets followed by quavers, often used by Brahms, turn the key into B minor. The clarinet enters softly at bar five with a stretched version of the first two bars. Development follows to bar 14, when the viola and cello re-introduce the counter-melody. Arpeggios are much featured up to bar 25,

when staccato chords suddenly appear. These are followed by 4 bars featuring semiquaver triplets. The exposition soon relaxes into longer, quaver based elements. The development is a rich amalgam of these varied elements. A short coda restates the first four bars and this long movement flows peacefully to an end.

The slow movement in 3/4 and in B major gives the clarinet a beautiful crotchet theme above a syncopated yet flowing accompaniment from the muted strings. A key change to two sharps gives the clarinet a prominent part for ten bars; the tempo slows down in 4/4 time, giving further opportunities to the clarinet in passages which are soon taken up by the strings. The tension builds with tempo and the key changes, ending with a restatement of the original theme, leading to a calm conclusion.

A sense of relief comes with the beautiful theme of the third movement. The music alternates between D major and B minor, and is 4/4 time. A quicker passage soon intervenes, based on the andantino theme, much modified and in 2/4. This staccato, rhythmic subject develops to a climax and then falls away at the end with a reminder of the andantino theme.

A set of variations on a simple theme forms the basis of the last movement, and yet again the key changes between D major B minor. Tempo changes also occur, and a coda using the very first theme of the allegro brings the movement and the work to a satisfying, controlled conclusion.

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

After its formation, the Edinburgh Quartet quickly became established as one of Britain's foremost chamber ensembles, appearing regularly at prestigious venues across the country including London's Wigmore Hall and The South Bank Centre. It achieved international recognition after winning the Contemporary Prize at the Evian-les-Bains String Quartet Competition and has since toured extensively across Europe, the Far East, North and South America and the Middle East. The Quartet has made numerous BBC TV and BBC Radio 3 broadcasts and can also be heard on Classic FM.

Now embarking on in its sixth decade, the Quartet is one of the longest running chamber ensembles in the UK with a busier performing schedule than ever before. The Quartet is resident at Glasgow University and Napier University and also collaborates with Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities.

Spanish clarinettist **Maximiliano Martín** is rapidly establishing himself as one of the most exciting and charismatic musicians of his generation.

Maximiliano was born in La Orotava (Tenerife) and studied at the Conservatorio Superior de Musica in Tenerife, Barcelona School of Music and later at the Royal College of Music in London where he held the prestigious Wilkins-Mackerras Scholarship, graduated with distinction and received the Frederick Thurston and Golden Jubilee Prizes. His teachers have included Joan Enric Lluna, Richard Hosford and Robert Hill.

After being appointed Principal Clarinet of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in 2002 and winning the Young Artists Platform Competition in the same year, Maxi has since made debuts at the Wigmore Hall London, Queen's Hall Edinburgh, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Bridgewater Hall Manchester, St Davids Hall Cardiff, Perth Concert Hall, St George's Bristol, Brighton, Bedford, Newbury and East Neuk Festivals and overseas at the Tallin Festival, Palau de la Musica Catalana and Teatro Monumental in Madrid.

As a soloist Maxi has performed all the major concertos with orchestras such as the SCO, European Union Chamber Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de Tenerife and Macedonian Philharmonic under the baton of Brügggen, Manze, Antonini, Swensen, McGegan, Canev, Grazioli, Markovic and de Ridder. In the field of chamber music he has enjoyed collaborations with London Winds, Hebrides Ensemble, Moonwinds Ensemble, London Conchord Ensemble, Doric String Quartet and with other artists such as Maurice Bourgue, Sergio Azzolini, Alexander Janiczek, Pekka Kuusisto, Artur Pizarro, Christian Zacharias, Paul Lewis, Joan Enric Lluna, Peter Hill, Richard Watkins, Scott Mitchell, Michael Collins, Alexander Melnikov, Paul Meyer, Juho Pohjonen, Caroline Widmann and Radovan Vlatkovic.

FORTHCOMING CONCERT:

Friday 21 January, 1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

John Kitchen · organ

Chaconnes and Passacaglias

BUXTEHUDE Ciacona in C minor BuxWV 159

COUPERIN Passacaille in G minor

Chaconne in G minor

PURCELL A New Ground

LULLY arr. d'ANGLEBERT Chaconne de Phaeton

RAISON Trio en passacaille

J. S. BACH Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor BWV 582

ADMISSION FREE