

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
CHAMBER CONCERTS

SEASON 1957—58

*First Concert*

THE VEGH QUARTET

SANDOR VEGH

GEORGES JANZER

SANDOR ZÖLTY

PAUL SZABO

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
THURSDAY, 10th OCTOBER, 1957  
AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME ONE SHILLING

## PROGRAMME

QUARTET IN F MAJOR Op. 77, No. 2.

Haydn  
(1732-1809)

Allegro moderato

Menuetto : Presto ma non troppo

Andante

Finale : Vivace assai

This, the last of Haydn's seventy-six quartets (or eighty-three if we include the 'Seven Last Words') is by many adjudged the greatest. Indeed Tovey proclaimed it as "Haydn's greatest instrumental composition, with two of the last symphonies to bracket with it." The two quartets of Op. 77, which followed close upon the completion of the great six of Op. 76, were composed in 1799 and dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz.

The amplitude of the first movement is ordained in the melodious easy swing of its first subject, from which, as so often in Haydn, is engendered the second subject with only the most gentle re-fashioning. But the scene in which these are set is wide enough to embrace expansive stretches of alert *Tutti* and of contrapuntal interplay.

Many of Haydn's late minuets are indeed *Scherzi* of an avowedly presto type—far more deserving to be named as such than the movements of his much earlier Op. 33 set, known variously as the Russian Quartets or *Gli Scherzi*. Here the spikey humour of the Menuetto is, in a somewhat Schubertian manner, offset by a most profoundly moving and melodious trio section very quietly sustained in the rich colouring of D flat major. The next departure from the basic key (F major) is into D major for the slow movement, producing an even more striking change of colour. Here is an Elysian realm of song, extended, repeated and enriched, caressed and adorned by winged lines above, moving almost without intermission upon the steady untroubled tread of its first simple bass line.

With one strong chord the Finale restores the key of F, and thereafter in the most exuberant high spirits exercises its limbs and the whole rhythmical verve of its body in a tour de force of syncopation and contrapuntal dexterity.

QUARTET—SATZ IN C MINOR

Schubert  
(1797-1828)

Allegro assai

Of a projected quartet in C minor which Schubert began to compose in December 1820 he completed only this first movement and the first forty-two bars of the slow movement (an Andante in A flat major). Presumably because this was not developing to his satisfaction he abandoned the work just as two years later he abandoned the B minor (Unfinished) Symphony after roughing out the greater part of its third movement.

This quartet movement, as has rightly been said, is Schubert's first instrumental masterpiece. It separates his later chamber music from his many youthful quartets which had been written primarily for home consumption i.e. for music making in the family circle. Here his imagination and his invention find their full scope in the language of his maturity, and with perfect mastery. There is a deeply disturbed and agitated emotional mood counter-balanced by visions of serene beauty poised on the brink between joy and sorrow. Here too we find the characteristic contrasts of keys and that instantaneous magical change of colouring which Schubert so often brings through the use of the flat submediant.

The work was first published in 1868.

### INTERVAL

QUARTET IN C MAJOR Op. 59, No. 3

Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Introduzione : Andante con moto—Allegro vivace

Andante con moto quasi Allegretto

Menuetto : Gracioso—

Allegro molto

The whole character of this spacious and predominantly optimistic quartet derives, I think, from the kind of question raised at the outset in its remarkable slow introduction. The use of a comparatively short slow introduction to a main allegro movement, somewhat rarely employed by Mozart, became a standard procedure with Haydn in his later symphonies; but if it ever aimed further than an enlargement upon one's pleasurable anticipation of breaking away into the main matter in hand it was to strike a

severely contrasting mood which would provide a foil to offset all that succeeded, as for example in Haydn's 'London' Symphony in D (No. 104) or in Mozart's so-called 'Dissonance—quartet' in C. Beethoven used the device fairly frequently, and in one instance, the *Sonata pathétique*, with a much closer degree of integration and with considerable extension of its impact upon the formal structure as a whole. Here for the first time in his quartets he uses the device, but to achieve a quite unique effect. For this introduction conveys the idea of pure indetermination and vacuum. But where Lear claimed that nothing comes of nothing, Beethoven resolves his vacuum with two syllables which immediately define key and rhythm from which all else flows expansively. If the freedom of the introduction is that of unoccupied void, the freedom of the allegro which emerges is that of a spirit exulting in the space which it can command. The very figurations of scale, arpeggio, trill and the harmonic formulae are those we associate normally with the final jubilations of a movement rather than with its primary exposition.

The Andante in A minor prolongs a strain of lyrical melancholy that has remarkably close affinity to Schubert, not only in its essential character but also by reason of its extended murmuring cadences and the sudden illuminations of major tonality which shine upon its happier phrases.

The Minuet flows with easy grace, and its florid scales find even more scope for rearing great roomy stretches of simple harmonic grandeur in the F major Trio section. The whole serves as a spacious prelude to the ensuing finale—a fugue disposed as a sonata-form movement, or (as some might prefer to describe it) a sonata-movement which proclaims itself a fugue but with all rights reserved for its own vested interests in tonalities, tuttis, second subject, etc. The concession it makes is that the highly infectious drive of the fugue subject shall be maintained *in moto perpetuo* even when contrapuntal considerations have for a while gone by the board. In the development this raises a great arc upon a single string of each instrument in turn. But in all this thrilling scene of commotion perhaps the greatest joy is reserved for the second violin who serenely reiterates a simple motif of two notes borrowed from the countersubject which has enhanced the way from the recapitulation.

S.T.M.N.