

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
CHAMBER CONCERTS

SEASON 1958-59

Fourth Concert

VIOLIN

ROBERT COOPER

VIOLA

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN

VIOLONCELLO

IAN HAMPTON

PIANOFORTE

MARY GRIERSON

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 4th DECEMBER, 1958

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME ONE SHILLING

PROGRAMME

1. PIANOFORTE TRIO IN E FLAT, Op. 1, No. 1 *Beethoven*
(1770-1827)
- Allegro
Adagio cantabile
Allegro assai
Presto

This is the most remarkable Opus 1 in the whole of classical music, containing as it does three quartets, which, although in Beethoven's first style, are completely mature works. And it is of interest that Beethoven at a much later date rewrote the third Trio as a String Quintet, in a style, as Tovey says, "quite different from that of his other transcriptions and more akin to the transcriptions of Bach."

Op. 1, No. 1, is sufficiently straight-forward to require little description. The first movement has only a short development, but balances this with a coda of almost similar length which further develops the same topics. The second movement is an eloquent and romantic Rondo: the Scherzo is akin to the Scherzo of the second Symphony, though lighter in character, and the Trio contrasts with a fine piece of "line-drawing" in the piano against quiet sustained string accompaniment. The Finale is one of the gayest Beethoven ever wrote and its initial figure gives rise to the most amusing incidents.

2. PIANOFORTE QUARTET IN G MINOR (K.478) *Mozart*
(1756-1791)
- Allegro
Andante
Allegro

It was not until his later years that Mozart wrote most of his chamber music with piano—in the period to which belong his greatest piano concertos. Of his two piano quartets this is undoubtedly the finer—Mozart, when writing in a minor key, is nearly always at his greatest. (Tovey remarks that there should have been six quartets, "but that the publisher cried off his bargain because of their difficulty.") In actual fact, only the first movement of the G minor quartet is in the minor, and it is in a mood of tragic pathos which is sharply illustrated when the second group is recapitulated in the minor and when the short

coda rises to its stormy end. Underlying the lyrical beauty of the slow movement there is a wistful and almost sad feeling. This is, however, dispersed by the happy and carefree Rondo which follows, enshrining some of Mozart's most delicious tunes.

INTERVAL

3. PIANOFORTE QUARTET IN A MAJOR, Op. 26 *Brahms*
(1833-1897)
- Allegro non troppo
Poco adagio
Scherzo—poco allegro
Allegro

This is the second of Brahms' three piano quartets: the first, in G minor, is Opus 25, and the third, in C minor, follows much later as Opus 60. In the first two piano quartets, "the forms are peculiar to Brahms, and in some respects to the works themselves. The themes, especially in the A major, quartet, have a way of grouping themselves in pairs. . . . To deal successfully with the enormous spaces these pairs of themes and their counter-statements fill to repletion, Brahms, for all the resulting length, summons up an energy which is really identical with terseness." (Tovey.)

The first movement for all its lyrical themes and moments of tenderness rises to heights of passion in the climaxes, and from the outset is obviously on the largest scale possible. The slow movement—like so many slow movements in Brahms' chamber music—is a masterpiece of romantic colour, and deploys itself in full rondo form, with lovely variants at each return of the theme. The Scherzo starts in the mood of a "Ländler", but soon transcends the possibilities of any known "Ländler": the contrasting Trio starts in full blast of canonic fury. The Finale, like that of the G Minor quartet, opens in high spirits with a theme of Hungarian character: there is an unexpected moment of solemnity at the beginning of the second theme and on its recurrence, but the movement ends with a distinct suggestion of the Czardas.

M. G.