

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
CHAMBER CONCERTS

SEASON 1963-64

*Fifth Concert*

PIANOFORTE

CHRISTINE GOUGH

VIOLONCELLO

CHRISTOPHER GOUGH

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 5th DECEMBER, 1963

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

## PROGRAMME

1. SONATA in E minor, Op. 14, No. 5

*Vivaldi*  
(1680-1743)

Largo  
Allegro  
Adagio  
Allegro

Apart from composing 454 concertos, 23 *sinfonie*, numerous operas and a quantity of sacred music, Vivaldi wrote 75 sonatas of various kinds, among which is the set of six for 'cello and continuo of which this is one. These sonatas were engraved in Paris and announced in the *Mercure de France* in December 1740, and may have been composed not long before this.

2. SONATA in C, Op. 102, No. 1

*Beethoven*  
(1770-1827)

Andante—Allegro vivace  
Adagio—Allegro vivace

Beethoven's last two sonatas for piano and 'cello were written with the 'cellist of the Schuppanzich Quartet, Joseph Linke, in mind, while the latter was spending the summer of 1815 with the Erdödys. Both sonatas were dedicated to Countess von Erdödy. For the fourth time Beethoven avoided writing an independent slow movement in a 'cello sonata, and only in the companion Sonata in D did he depart from this practice and give us one of his superb Adagios.

In its quicker sections the C major Sonata is brusque and laconic, in marked contrast with the breadth and sustained lyricism of the E minor Piano Sonata, Op. 90, written in the previous year. In fact it is in these 'cello sonatas that we may notice some of the earliest and clearest signs of the dawning of a new epoch in Beethoven's creative work, which had already been foreshadowed so unexpectedly five years earlier in the F minor String Quartet, Op. 95. There are some signs of capriciousness, notably in the avoidance of the tonic key for the first Allegro, after the introduction has made it plain to all what this key is, and secondly in the almost Haydnesque yet certainly Beethovenian humour of the second Allegro. The meditative Adagio is linked to this by a brief reminder of the serene mood of the beginning of the work.

3. SONATA

*Debussy*  
(1862-1918)

Prologue: Lent  
Sérénade: Modérément animé—Vivace  
Finale: Animé

It was Debussy's intention to compose six sonatas for various instruments and to dedicate them to his wife Emma. In 1915 he wrote the 'Cello and Piano Sonata and the Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp, and two years later he completed the Violin Sonata, but that was all. At one time the 'Cello Sonata was to have been entitled "Pierrot fâché avec la lune", so that it was conceived as yet another of the innumerable musical works from the time of Vecchi to the present day the inspiration of which springs from the *commedia dell'arte*.

The style of the work is rather more improvisatory than was customary for Debussy, but nevertheless a strong thread of logic may be discerned running through it. In the Prologue two motifs are used in alteration, a resolute Aeolian theme heard at the outset, and a timid melodic phrase that follows shortly afterwards. Possibly the composer sketched these themes with Pierrot and his Columbine in mind. The Sérénade is sung with increasing ardour to the accompaniment of a mandolin. It leads directly into the final movement, which possesses considerable verve, and here, as also earlier in the work, Debussy exploits the sonorities of the two instruments with remarkable originality.

---

### INTERVAL

---

4. SONATA in F

*Brahms*  
(1833-1897)

Allegro vivace  
Adagio affettuoso  
Allegro passionato  
Allegro molto

While Brahms stayed at Thun during the summers of 1886-88 he composed his 2nd 'Cello Sonata, two violin sonatas, the Trio in C minor, the Double Concerto and some of his finest songs. These were unusually fruitful periods. It seems possible in some of these works to recognize in some degree the effect of the profound impression made on the composer by the view from his windows

that faced onto the lake of the majestic snow-enshrouded Blümlisalp, and perhaps also the even grander views to be seen from a few miles away.

This may well help to account for the lofty lyricism of the 'Cello Sonata's deeply-felt Adagio, as well as the passionate intensity of its first movement, a movement of dramatic contrasts, the most unexpected of which is due to the transformation of the 'cello's initial theme into a tranquil succession of slowly moving chords immediately before the recapitulation. For the Adagio Brahms shifts from F to the remote key of F sharp major (more properly G flat), a key relationship which after all is only a short step further than that used in similar circumstances by Haydn. In the last bars there is a wonderful synthesis of the main ideas and of the theme of the F minor middle section of this beautiful movement.

As in the fugue finale of the earlier E minor Sonata the writing for the 'cello in the scherzo does not show the instrument to best advantage, although it will not be denied that the movement has splendid vitality, and incidentally owes a little to the finale of the 3rd Symphony. Elsewhere in the sonata Brahms writes for the 'cello with far greater assurance than before, although without always making sufficient allowance for the fact that when a 'cello is pitted against a concert grand the contest is a grossly unequal one. A rondo brings the work to a cheerful conclusion.

5. VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF ROSSINI

*Martini*  
(1890-1959)

This is a characteristic example of the work of this Czech composer who left his homeland to live in Paris, who escaped from France during the Nazi occupation in order to seek refuge in New York, and who finally settled in Switzerland. The Variations were written at the suggestion of Piatigorsky, who was endeavouring to do what he could to build up a new repertory for his instrument. The work was composed in 1942, and consists of the light-hearted theme, four variations and a short coda.

J.C.