

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
CHAMBER CONCERTS
SEASON 1966-67

NINTH CONCERT

THE
EDINBURGH QUARTET

MILES BASTER

PHILIP CLARK

AUSTIN PATTERSON

DAVID EDWARDS

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY, 1967

AT 7.30 p.m.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

1. QUARTET NO. 43 IN D MINOR, OP. 42

Haydn
(1732-1809)

Andante ed innocentemente
Minuet: Allegretto
Adagio e cantabile
Finale: Presto

This beautiful work holds a unique place in the corpus of Haydn's seventy-six quartets, and it is appropriate that it should have been the only one (apart from the last, unfinished, quartet) to be published entirely on its own instead of being incorporated in one of his generous sets of six (or occasionally three) works proffered at a time. Composed and published in 1785, two years after the appearance of the great set of Op. 33 (the 'Russian' Quartets) and only shortly before Haydn embarked on the further six of Op. 50 which continue the thematic development which they had so successfully employed, this remarkable little work stands quite apart from its environment - small in the dimensions of all its four movements, and addressing itself to making a virtue of simplicity. But this simplicity and the invention that inspires it is that of the mature master, not that of his earliest quartets. Tovey in his article in Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music (1929) devoted a whole illuminating column to an appreciation of its qualities, demonstrating from the internal evidence of the music that maturity which the date on the autograph confirms. Suffice it to add here that the B flat major *Adagio e cantabile* is one sustained and extended melody which (as Tovey says) might profitably be styled a Cavatina, and that the *Finale* takes a very concise formal (though not at all predictable) view of contrapuntal possibilities diametrically opposed to that of the thorough-going fugal finales of Opus 20.

S.T.M.N.

2. QUARTET NO. 3 (1966)

David Dorward
(b. 1933)

David Dorward was born in Angus in 1933. After taking an honours degree in English and Metaphysics at St. Andrews University, he won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music where he studied under Manuelli Frankel and John Gardner. In 1958 he was awarded the Patrons Fund Award for his overture "Cooper o' Fife" which was given its first performance in London by the Hallé Orchestra under George Weldon. In 1959 he was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Prize for his Concerto for Wind and Percussion, first performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 1961 and subsequently broadcast in the Third Programme.

This string quartet, commissioned by Glasgow University under the terms of the McEwen bequest, was completed in February, 1965, and first performed in Glasgow by the Edinburgh Quartet.

The work is in one continuous movement, falling into three main sections corresponding roughly to three movements, with a central slow movement. The composer makes considerable use of the intervals of the 2nd and augmented 4th and the opening motif played by the viola returns from time to time throughout the work. Perhaps the most arresting passages of this quartet are the declamatory cadenzas, sometimes for a single instrument and at other times for the whole ensemble. A Prestissimo fugue precedes the final utterance of the opening motif and the work closes quietly in E minor.

M.B.

I N T E R V A L

3. QUARTET IN E FLAT, OP. 127

Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Maestoso-Allegro
Adagio, ma non troppo e molto cantabile-Andante con
moto-Adagio molto espressivo-Tempo I
Scherzando vivace-Presto-Tempo I
Finale: (Allegro)-Allegro comodo

The keynote of Thomas Traherne's philosophy was "Felicity" - a word which forms the title of one of his books of poems but which sums up the whole spirit of his "Centuries of Meditation". Traherne was but a young man when he found his sure peace of mind and the power to delight in God and the whole of God's creation despite the wickedness and tragedies of mankind. Beethoven was not an old man when he entered upon the mystical joys of his last five quartets composed in 1824-26. He was only in his middle-fifties, but his musical life and indeed his personal life had covered a vast field of elemental human experience, and in the contemplative wisdom with which these wonderful visions are infused there is the supreme and radiant joy as of a second childhood.

The mysteries of this mysticism are to be found rather in the three central works of this supreme sequence of five quartets. The E flat Quartet is as it were a glorious and radiantly joyful portal to this new-found land. It opens in solemn majestic strength with a proclamation twice repeated in the course of the movement, but this is just the assurance granted to the very ecstasy of delight which throughout the whole work is to reiterate its melodies and the turn of its phrases with infinite variety but for ever content to be caught up in the fascination of a pure joyousness that nothing can dispel. Both in the first and last movements the melodies revolve with a wonderful ease of spirit, extended and repeated, whilst the moments of joyous acclaim have a superbly confident strength about them. The same infinite extensibility belongs to the glorious variations in A flat major which constitute the slow movement – perhaps the most wonderful enlargement and adornment of the wide spaces of the spiritual world which Beethoven ever attained by this means. The vitally alert Scherzo too is carried on the impetus of a short rhythmical figure reiterated time and again, now delicately light, now aggressively exuberant, but ever with a spirit of unfailing delight.

S.T.M.N.