

SAINT CECILIA'S HALL, 9 March 1971, 8pm

THE RUSSELL COLLECTION OF HARPSICHORDS

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Inaugural Concert of the 'Friends of St Cecilia's Hall'

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THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

Miles Baster  
Austin Patterson  
Victor Manton  
David Edwards  
Marie Dare *double bass*  
Leon Coates *harpsichord*  
Peter Williams *harpsichord*



DOMENICO SCARLATTI 1685-1757

Six harpsichord sonatas

C major K 420 Allegro

K 132 Cantabile

K 461 Allegro

D minor K 52 Andante moderato

K 516 Allegretto

K 517 Prestissimo

Harpsichord by Kirckman 1755, acquired by the Russell Collection in October 1970; first appearance in public since its restoration. Purchased with the aid of a government grant.

*Interval*

*Interval*

G. F. HANDEL 1685-1759

Sonata in D major, opus 1 no. 13, for violin and continuo

Affettuoso

Allegro

Larghetto

Allegro

J. S. BACH 1685-1750

Concerto in C minor, BWV 1060, for two harpsichords and strings

Allegro

Adagio

Allegro

Second harpsichord inscribed *Jacobus Kirckman Londini fecit* but signed *Robert Falkener London Fecit 1773*, whose work it seems to be; probably owned originally by General John Reid, 1721-1807, who bequeathed his instruments to Edinburgh University with effect from 1839.

UNIVERSITY OF  
EDINBURGH 20/2/71

INAUGURAL CONCERT  
of the  
FRIENDS OF ST CECILIA'S  
HALL  
Tuesday, 9th March, at 8 p.m.  
in St Cecilia's Hall  
SCARLATTI SONATAS  
HANDEL VIOLIN SONATA  
BACH CONCERTO FOR TWO  
HARPSICHORDS  
EDINBURGH QUARTET  
LEON COATES  
PETER WILLIAMS  
Tickets £1 (including  
refreshments)  
The Edinburgh Bookshop

## Friends of St Cecilia's Hall: Conrad Wilson

24.2.71

ALL music-lovers are friends of St Cecilia, but to be Friends of St Cecilia's Hall is something extra. Call it a club, a clique or a charity, its formation this spring has two admirable aims: first, to make Scotland's oldest public concert hall even more of a centre of musical activity than it has been since Edinburgh University acquired it, renovated it and transformed it into a living

museum for the Russell Collection of priceless keyboard instruments; second, to raise funds to make the collection even more outstanding than it now is.

The aims are, of course, very closely linked. The attractive elliptical hall is already used throughout the year for chamber concerts, for occasional celebrity recitals, for the university's little Bach festival in

the early summer, for poetry readings and so forth at the Edinburgh Festival.

But Peter Williams, the hall's director, thinks much more could be done. Thus the founding of the Friends, who will be offered an inaugural concert on March 9 containing Bach's C minor concerto for two harpsichords, a lecture-recital by Peggy Sampson in May, increased opportunities to examine the collection and even to arrange their own concerts. There will be an annual meeting (on St Cecilia's day, of course) and regular newsletters.

The inaugural concert will offer a chance to hear — and help pay for — the university's latest acquisition, a magnificent Kirkman harpsichord which Dr Williams was demonstrating yesterday while in the same room two of his colleagues were busy renovating another treasure: the oldest English grand piano, built in 1772 and now on permanent loan from

the Duke of Wellington. At a recital next month, Colin Kingsley will play a Haydn sonata on it.

The Kirkman cost the university £8000 — the highest price ever paid for an English harpsichord (but not frightfully dear, as Dr Williams point out, when you compare it with what the best Italian violins fetch). Such acquisitions, along with the treasures already there, are helping to make Edinburgh's one of the most famous collections in the world.

To help widen its range, however, Dr Williams would now like to obtain a good 1815 Broadwood piano, which would enable Beethoven and Schubert to be performed in authentic style at St Cecilia's. And if the Friends flourish, much else may be possible: Haydn operas, programmes of Scottish music by the Earl of Kelly and his contemporaries, perhaps a summer school

## St Cecilia's Hall

CONRAD WILSON

BACH, Handel and Domenico Scarlatti were all born in that annus mirabilis, 1685, yet are surprisingly rarely united in a single programme. What better, then, than to launch the Friends of St Cecilia's Hall with music by all three? Of the works included in last night's concert, the Bach and Handel were familiar masterpieces, as befitted the occasion, but in his choice of Scarlatti sonatas, Peter Williams permitted himself to stray a little off the beaten path.

The aim of the evening was to raise funds for the new society and to display the Russell Collection's latest acquisition, a fine Kirkman harpsichord of 1755 towards whose cost the Government has donated £4000. That leaves a further £4000 still to be raised, but if the money keeps coming in—Professor Swann was able

to announce that last night's packed house yielded more than £300—it will not be long before some other gaps in the Russell Collection can be filled and Edinburgh's musical life thereby enriched.

The programme opened with the Scarlatti, three sonatas in C major, three in D minor, and here I must make my one and only grumble. Though the intention was obviously to show off the instrument's characteristics, the six pieces (spaciously played, with the emphasis on thoughtful rather than flashing music) did make rather a long listen. For the sake of variety, it might have been better to split them into two groups, the first serving as prelude to Handel's D major violin sonata, op 1 No. 13, the other to Bach's C minor concerto for two harpsichords.

Still, they did enable Dr

Williams to explore unhurriedly the instrument's exquisite range of colour, as well as Scarlatti's range of feeling. In the Handel, one of the most life-enhancing of all his instrumental works, the violinist was Miles Baster who, with Dr Williams and David Edwards on harpsichord and cello, conveyed the spinning joyousness of the music very engagingly indeed.

The Bach was performed as a septet, with Dr Williams and Leon Coates on the hall's new and old Kirkmans (though the old one, long familiar to audiences at the Reid School of Music, has turned out to be not quite authentic after all) and with an "orchestra" consisting of the Edinburgh Quartet and the double-bassist, Marie Dare. In the small, bright-toned hall it sounded very well—an idea worth trying again.