

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 1997-8



**The Bochmann
Quartet**

Burford School

Wednesday, April 29th 1998



ST MARY'S CHURCH CHIPPING NORTON

SATURDAY 9th MAY 1998
at 7.30pm

MONTEVERDI VESPERS

CAROLYN SAMPSON	SOPRANO	ANDREW FRIEDHOF	TENOR
NICOLA JENKIN	SOPRANO	ANDREW CARWOOD	TENOR
ASHLEY STAFFORD	ALTO	JONATHAN ARNOLD	BASS
		ROBERT RICE	BASS

COTSWOLD BAROQUE PLAYERS

LEADER: HENRIETTA WAYNE
With HIS MAJESTY'S SAGBUTTS AND CORNETTS
and members of the OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH CHAMBER CHOIR
CONDUCTOR - PETER HUNT

RESERVED TICKETS: £9.50 and £7.50 (concessions £1- but not on door) from THE PLAYERS, HIGH STREET, CHIPPING NORTON or JUDITH TINSLEY (01993 832041) or from Choral Society Members

Supported by Southern Arts, WODC, NFMS

The Cotswold Chamber Orchestra

leader Kate Bailey
Conducted by Brian Etheridge

Mendelssohn

Scottish Symphony
The Fair Melusina Overture

Mozart

Haffner Serenade

Sunday June 14th 7.30pm
Burford Parish Church

Tickets reserved at £10 and £8 (students
£5 and £4) from the Burford Gallery
(telephone 01993 822305)

THEATRE

CHIPPING NORTON
Chamber Classics

Sunday 21st June: 3pm

The Bochmann Quartet

Handel	Concerto Grosso op.6
Telemann	Largo & Allegro for viola and strings
Vivaldi	Concerto for 2 violins
Vivaldi	Autumn & Winter
Mozart	Divertimento in D

Tickets £8.50, concs. £7.50,
schools tickets £2

Box Office: 01608 642350

PROGRAMME

Quartet in D minor op.76 no.2 (the "Fifths")

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Allegro

Andante o più tosto allegretto

Menuetto

Finale - Vivace assai

By 1797, when this quartet was written, Haydn had become the Grand Old Man of musical Vienna: an honorary citizen, Kapellmeister, the object of respectful enquiry by biographers and publishers. His 108 symphonies were behind him, and 59 string quartets; although he continued to compose up to the end of the century his late works are in the main vocal: masses and oratorios. It was only in the string quartet form that he continued to write instrumental music, and the six "Erdödy" quartets were to be succeeded by only three others, and one of those unfinished.



The "Fifths" quartet, so called from the wonderfully dark opening theme, written in sets of fifths, shows Haydn as total master of the medium. He wrote to a friend "I am very tired, but if one of my themes brings joy I shall go on composing". This work certainly brings joy and sparkle and much else.

Quartet in E flat (the "Harp")

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Poco Adagio - Allegro
Adagio ma non troppo
Presto
Allegretto con Variazione

Beethoven wrote this quartet soon after completing the fifth symphony, with which it is possible to note some affinity, especially in the third movement. The year was 1809, in which Haydn died, and Napoleon first bombarded, and then occupied, Vienna. Beethoven is said to have taken refuge from the howitzers in a cellar, with pillows over his head. All in all, it was a pretty miserable time for the composer. Most of his friends, like the court, had fled from the city, and he was denied his visits to the surrounding countryside, which normally gave him so much pleasure and inspiration. His creativity does not seem to have suffered, however, and as well as the *Emperor Concerto* he wrote a number of smaller-scale pieces of which this quartet is one.

The piece gets its name from the *pizzicato* figure in the first movement, which appears after a slow introduction worthy of the late quartets. Thereafter the mood is warm, and remains so in the lyrical slow movement. It rises to boiling in the frantic *presto* movement, which rushes on with unstoppable energy until it suddenly gives way without a break to the variations in the last movement. These are alternately energetic and serene, and are followed by a cheerful coda which ends with a Haydnesque exit: maybe Beethoven's personal way of paying tribute to his master a few months after Haydn's death.

The piece, like the six quartets op.18 ten years earlier, was dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz, an enthusiastic patron of both Haydn and Beethoven, at least until reduced financial circumstances dictated otherwise. Arts patronage is, and was ever, thus.

INTERVAL

Quartet in C minor op.51 no.1

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro
Romanze, poco Adagio
Allegretto molto moderato e comodo
Finale, Allegro

Brahms left only three string quartets and delayed publication of this, the first, until 1873. Twenty years before, when Brahms was only 20, Schumann had written "This is he that should come," meaning that he saw in Brahms a worthy heir to Beethoven. This prediction had produced in Brahms a ruthlessly self-critical attitude towards his own work, particularly in the fields of the symphony and the string quartet: those areas in which Beethoven was supreme. He wrote about 20 other string quartets before the C minor of op.51: none of which passed his rigorous self-set standards. The two op.51 quartets, therefore, are not the first he wrote but rather the first he chose to let posterity hear. What we have lost we shall never know.



Brahms aged 44

In June 1869 Clara Schumann recorded in her diary that she had heard two "lovely" quartet movements by Brahms, one of which was not quite to her taste. She may have let her opinion be known to Brahms; in any event the op.51 quartets were held back for further amendment. Not until 1873 and two further try-outs did the composer put the two works resignedly in his publisher's hands.

Both were dedicated to his friend Dr. Theodor Billroth, a Viennese surgeon and talented amateur string-player; rather oddly, not to his closer friend, the violinist Joachim, particularly when the works feature thematically the musical mottoes which the two used at the height of their friendship - Joachim's F A E, representing "Frei aber einsam" (Free but lonely), and Brahms's F A F, "Frei aber froh" (Free but happy). Brahms's biographer Kalbeck expressed the not unlikely theory that the composer withheld the Joachim dedication in a fit of ill-temper.

The opening movement opens with Joachim's F A E motto (eventually fused with Brahms's F A F in the coda) and develops this in a complex contrapuntal treatment. The slow movement, though rich and imaginative, is based on a very simple ABA structure. The third movement is hardly a *scherzo*: Brahms is still in a solemn mood, and only the *pizzicati* in the trio bring light relief.. The finale (in sonata-rondo form) has echoes of the previous movements throughout, and very sonorous and moving they are.

The Bochmann String Quartet

Michael Bochmann - violin
Helen Roberts - viola

Mark Messenger - violin
Peter Adams - cello

Originally founded in 1977 the Bochmann Quartet has been renowned for its performances of chamber music and its broadcasts throughout the world and it is now recognised as one of Britain's leading chamber ensembles.

Reformed in 1990, the Quartet had immediate success with their new CDs. Their interpretation of Janacek's *Intimate Letters* and Martinu's *Quartet No.2* for Pickwick was selected as 'Critic's Choice' in the Daily Telegraph. Their playing in Schubert's *Octet* was again 'Critic's Choice' on a separate occasion.

In 1994 the Quartet gave the first ever public concert at the British Museum. Their television, radio and festival appearances have led to a number of new concert series being set in motion.

They commissioned George Nicholson to write his *3rd String Quartet* in 1995, funded by the Arts Council, with performances in the Universities of Keele, Sheffield and Nottingham. In the autumn of 1996 it was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and later recorded on CD.

In 1997 *Dreams 42* was specially written for them by John Dankworth and first performed at the opening of Kidderminster Library.

They have recently also recorded Bridge's *3rd Quartet*, Bush's *Dialectic* and Wesley's *Quartet in E Flat* for Redcliffe Recordings.

The Quartet has a committed involvement in music education, particularly for young people. This has led to a residency for several years at the Higher Education College in Worcester, the instigation of public masterclasses and workshops in various venues and intensive courses for postgraduate students and young professionals.

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS

The Lenthall Concerts have been going since 1992. The number of concerts per year, and the audiences for them, have risen steadily during this time, and the standard of music presented speaks for itself.

We are immensely grateful for the support we get, in terms of sponsorship, grants and the provision of facilities, and of the help which individuals give in running the concerts. But we would like more, and it seems time for us to constitute ourselves formally as a Society in order to tap into the benefits which bodies such as local authorities, Southern Arts and the National Federation of Music Societies offer.

To do this we need to adopt a constitution and appoint some officers, and we propose to do this at a meeting on

Wednesday, May 27th, at 7.30pm

at Burford School

Everyone who supports the concerts is invited to this meeting, which will be as short and painless as we can make it. Existing subscribers will be sent an agenda and a draft of the constitution by post before the event.

Please come!

The Lenthall Concerts thank Burford School and Community College, for continuing to provide the venue and facilities free of charge.

Coming Next

The first Lenthall concert of the 98-99 season will be in October. The brochure for the season will be published in late summer and will be sent to all who are on the current mailing list. If you would like to be, or would like to check whether you already are, please refer to a steward.

If you have any queries about the forthcoming season, please telephone Christopher Yapp on 01367 860588; or fax (01367 860619) or e-mail (100067,2013@compuserve.com)