

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART – born 27th January 1756

Plymouth Chamber Music Trust and the Foster Charitable Trust are delighted that the Endellion Quartet, David Walter and David Adams are celebrating Mozart’s 250th anniversary with us tonight.

And so it is. Mozart’s music, which to so many of his contemporaries still seemed to have the brittleness of clay, has long since been transformed into gold, gleaming in the light, though it takes on a lustre for each new generation. Without it each generation would be infinitely poorer.

(from the conclusion of Alfred Einstein’s ‘Mozart’)

OBOE QUARTET IN F, K 370

Allegro

Adagio

Rondeau (allegro)

Mozart composed this quartet for oboe, violin, viola and cello, K 370, in 1781. It explores not only the oboe’s capacity to produce a melting, lyrical cantabile line but also its exciting agility and sheer musical range. Sensational high Fs, two and a half octaves above middle C, occur several times in the oboe part of this piece, which is clearly designed to be performed by a player of virtuoso standard. It was indeed composed for just such a musician, the Munich oboist Friedrich Ramm, and Mozart used it as fresh evidence of his musical talents when he presented himself to Munich society in 1781. This was also the year in which he composed the opera *Idomeneo* for Munich, and finally broke with his employer, the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg.

The themes of K 370 are distinctive and classically pure. The structure of the work is homogeneous, with the oboe only occasionally being allowed to emerge from the texture in a soloistic manner. The writing here is constantly surprising: often in this piece Mozart prepares the ground for a straightforward musical progression, such as a perfect cadence, only to take the music in a different and unexpected direction.

The first movement, remarkable for its structural economy, opens with the first subject played by the oboe, a lively, carefree and finely turned melody of classical simplicity made up for the most part of perfectly balanced musical phrases. The violin shares some of the thematic material, as it does throughout the work. The second subject grows out of a linking passage that moves the music from tonic to dominant, and one is hardly aware that it has begun before it is over. The violin introduces the development with a reprise of the first subject, now in C rather than F, and the oboe weaves a soaring counter-melody to it. In the middle of this section there appears a completely new motif in long notes, each instrument entering in turn. After some tantalising ‘delaying tactics’, during which the listener is led to expect the recapitulation, Mozart introduces yet

another thematic element, a lyrical phrase appearing first on the violin and viola playing in octaves, then on the other instruments in turn. Some decorative passagework precedes a short cadenza for oboe, leading at last to an abbreviated recapitulation.

The *Adagio*, a movement of deep pathos in the key of D minor, tests the oboist with some anguished melodic leaps. The power of the composition in this movement is a testament to Mozart’s ability to produce music of great emotional depth. This slow movement is in total contrast to the outer ones. It is a serious, heart-searching aria, in which, towards the end, the oboe sings out a disconsolate cadenza.

The *Rondeau* (Mozart’s spelling) brings back the mood of cheery gaiety. It lopes along in 6/8. The first episode, in the dominant, works upon most of the musical elements of the main theme. The second, which progresses from B flat through D minor, G minor and C to the tonic key of F, contains a fleeting moment of independence for the oboe as it spins a charming song in a 4/4 rhythm against the 6/8 of the strings. The main theme returns and merges into an extended coda that reprises some of the music from the first episode. The work ends quietly but in exalted mood as the oboe floats up and away on one of those beautiful high Fs.

STRING QUINTET IN D MAJOR, K 593

Larghetto – Allegro - Larghetto

Adagio

Menuetto: Allegretto

Allegro

The String Quintet in D major, K 593, scored like the others for two violins, two violas and cello, starts with a slow introduction, opened by a brief ascending figure in the cello that recurs in at first ascending sequence, answered by the other instruments. The mood changes with a cheerful Allegro and an exuberant first subject. As the movement progresses there are motifs that had been suggested in one form or another in the introduction. The second subject key of A major allows a reappearance of the first subject, forgotten for a moment in the closing section of the exposition, which is repeated. Triplet runs, which had earlier been introduced by the first violin, play a significant part in the central development, while the final recapitulation allows changes in scoring lay-out. Here a running accompaniment figure that had earlier been entrusted to the cello is now given to the first violin, with other similar changes. The movement ends with a return to the music of the slow introduction, punctuated again by the cello arpeggio figure, before the cheerful first subject returns very briefly to bring the movement to an abrupt end.

The G major Adagio offers unexpected changes of key, as the material is developed, after its first appearance, with subtle contrasts between upper and lower instruments. Here and elsewhere in the quintet there are motivic connections with what has passed. The third movement, a Menuetto, introduces an element of imitative counterpoint that has never been far away. The Trio, in its original version, took the cello to unusual heights in the ascending arpeggios that are a feature of the second half. A revision brought the cello a sixth lower, into a more hospitable region. There are also revisions in another hand to the opening theme of the final Allegro, adapting the descending chromatic scale into a diatonic form. The scale as Mozart wrote it, with its subsequent diatonic variant, is a recurrent feature of the movement. Here too there is a place for counterpoint in more than one episode, as the music takes its rapid and energetic course.

Programme Note by Philip R Buttall

INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

Tickets for CONFIGURE 8 at the Sherwell Centre on Saturday 18 February, and for the remaining concerts in the season, will be on sale during the interval.

STRING QUINTET IN C MAJOR, K 515

Allegro

Menuetto: allegretto

Andante

Allegro

The work begins in a very Mozartian way: an arpeggio gesture (cello) with a singing answer (first violin). After a silence, these roles are reversed, and they do not wholly leave the scene until the complementary key is established, by longish chords below, and at least three different themes, on the violins, have their say like new opera characters above simple, even static, harmonies. The middle of the movement is quite another matter, with the five voices often engaged in masterly and surprising dialogue. However it is not long – about ninety seconds – before the recapitulation begins. In its ample course a bar’s silence sets off another bout of counterpoint above a repeated-note bass, and the impetus of this carries us through to a very quiet close.

The materials of the minuet and trio are simple, but treated with constant variety of scoring and sudden extensions of the length of the phrases. The *Andante* is remarkable for the dialogue, throughout its symmetrical length, of first violin and first viola, sometimes in short filling-up comments between the other’s phrases, sometimes answering at length greater flights of song. There is no ‘development’, merely a short lead back to the reprise, easily recognized by the only passage for solo violin.

The feeling of the five players constituting a happily chattering cast of a comic opera is very prevalent in the last movement. It is perhaps best described as a rondo, though the repeated notes and the rhythm of the main subject put it on the tips of everyone’s tongue, so to speak, when they are not formally singing it. The scheme is this: (A) The main subject, leading through a passage of faster notes to... (B) A series of tunes (including momentarily the main subject!) in the complementary key, leading by a silence to... (A) The main subject, this time diverging through faster notes to... (C) A short development in foreign keys, leading by violin solo to... (B) The secondary themes in the home key, and... (A) A tail piece based on the main theme. If, however, the first-time listener cannot be bothered with all the above, then it hardly really matters!

*Programme Notes from Making Music,
the National Federation of Music Societies*



SERENADE IN C MINOR (Finale), K 388 (arr. Walter)

Wind ensemble music (known in Germany as *Harmoniemusik*) was popular all over continental Europe and England from the mid-eighteenth century. At first it was developed as outdoor entertainment,

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particularly for warm summer evenings, so it might be asked why Mozart wrote his K 388 Serenade in C minor, a key the composer usually reserved for his most tragic utterances. Originally conceived in full wind octet scoring, this extraordinary work exhibits the characteristics of a *Sturm und Drang* symphony, even down to its four-movement plan.

Tonight's oboist, David Walter, has made a special arrangement for oboe and strings of the final Allegro. Here Mozart turns to a familiar Haydn device, Theme and Variations, and even comes close to borrowing a theme from the senior composer (the Finale from the Symphony No 42, also a set of variations), but treats it rather differently! Perhaps knowingly, Mozart makes a last-minute gesture to relieve any unwanted tension, and writes the final variation in the tonic major.

Programme Note by Philip R Buttall

ENDELLION STRING QUARTET

Formed in 1979, the Endellion String Quartet is renowned as one of the finest quartets in the world. Their 1987 recording of the complete string chamber music of Britten was selected as Chamber Music Recording of the Year, and was the most highly recommended version in Radio 3's Record Review, whilst their Haydn Op 54 disc was the only quartet record featured in Radio 3's Critics' Choice of Records of the Year. The Endellions have also recorded Mozart, Bartók, Dvorák, Foulds, Smetana, Walton, Bridge Schubert, Barber, Amy Beach and Tchaikovsky. In 1998 EMI released 'Arcadiana', the quartet's commission from young British composer Thomas Adès, and which subsequently awarded the "Editor's Choice" in the 1998 Gramophone Awards.

The Endellions have been Quartet in Residence at Cambridge University since October 1992, and undertook two short-term residencies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the USA. They have been Associate Quartet of the Royal Northern College of Music since 2001, and have just begun a Residency at The Venue, Leeds, the country's newest chamber hall. They have given a cycle of all the Beethoven quartets at the Wigmore Hall and many other venues, and just after the completion of their 25th Anniversary year they began, in January 2005, to record the cycle for Warner Classics, who plan to release two discs per year for four years.

DAVID WALTER (Oboe)

Born in Paris in 1958, David Walter has pursued an original career: after obtaining First Prize in oboe and chamber music at the Paris Conservatoire, he quickly gained recognition outside of France by winning five international prizes one after the other in Ancona, Prague, Munich, Belgrade and Geneva. Despite this impressive record, he did not choose to pursue a solo career and has preferred to focus on chamber music and teaching, which he deems richer in human values. David Walter was appointed the youngest-ever oboe and chamber music professor at the Paris Conservatoire at the age of 29, and has also taught at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama since 1997.

DAVID ADAMS (Viola)

Equally at home on violin and viola, David Adams is Co-Artistic Director of the Goldberg Ensemble, Associate Leader of the City of London Sinfonia and Tutor in Violin at the Royal Northern College of Music. As an orchestral leader

David has appeared with many of the UK's symphony and chamber orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Ulster Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Johns, and Britten Sinfonia. Recent engagements include appearances at the BBC Proms with the Ulster Orchestra, Edinburgh Festival with Hebrides Ensemble, and at the Corbridge Festival (Northumberland) with the Gould Piano Trio and Brodsky Quartet.

CONCERTS IN THE 2005/2006 SERIES

All at the Sherwell Centre at 7.30pm

CHAMBER ENSEMBLE OF THE KING'S CONSORT Saturday 1 October 2005

BRODSKY STRING QUARTET Saturday 29 October 2005

REBECCA JONES (*Viola*) ABIGAIL RICHARDS (*Piano*) Saturday 12 November 2005

MAGGINI STRING QUARTET Saturday 26 November 2005

ENDELLION STRING QUARTET DAVID WALTER (*Oboe*) & DAVID ADAMS (*Viola*) Saturday 28 January 2006

CONFIGURE 8 (Wind & String Octet) Saturday 18 February 2006

CALLINO STRING QUARTET Saturday 4 March 2006

BRONTE STRING QUARTET Saturday 25 March 2006

KUNGSBACKA PIANO TRIO Saturday 29 April 2006

Concert details can be found on the website:
www.plyclassical.co.uk



Plymouth Chamber Music

ENDELLION STRING QUARTET with DAVID WALTER (Oboe) & DAVID ADAMS (Viola) Andrew Watkinson (Violin) Ralph de Souza (Violin) Garfield Jackson (Viola) David Waterman (Cello)

**7.30pm Saturday 28 January 2006 at the
University of Plymouth Sherwell Centre**

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