

PERTH EASTER FESTIVAL of CLASSICAL MUSIC

Sat 27 Mar - Fri 9 Apr
filmed live at Perth Concert Hall

Friday 9 April: 1pm

in co-production with



Adrian Wilson, *oboe*
Timothy Orpen, *clarinet*
David Hubbard, *bassoon*
Christopher Gough, *horn*
Susan Tomes, *piano*

Mozart: Quintet for Piano and Wind Instruments in E flat major K452

Beethoven: Quintet for Piano and Wind Instruments in E flat major Op 16

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's **Quintet in E flat major K452** was completed by the composer on 30 March 1784, and premiered shortly afterward on 1 April at Vienna's Hofburgtheater, with the composer at the piano. Nine days later, writing to his father Leopold, he expressed just how satisfied he was with the quintet and the response it had received from the audience:

"I have written two large concertos and then a quintet for oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon and pianoforte, which received extraordinary acclaim; I myself consider it to be the best I have ever composed in my life. I would wish for you to have been able to hear it! And how beautifully it was performed! To tell you the truth, I am tired from so much playing, but it is no small honour to me that my listeners never are."

By 1784, Mozart was regarded as one of the greatest pianists of his generation. Despite calling for a somewhat unorthodox ensemble, the quintet is closely related to the concertos he was composing and performing at that time — while also retaining the nuances of his chamber music style. Mozart makes inventive use of the different colours of each individual instrument, and the shades they offer in combination, to render a surprisingly diverse and creative palette of sonorities.

The opening *Largo* elegantly introduces each member of the ensemble in turn with a descending theme, before the *Allegro moderato* suddenly initiates a palpable energy. The middle movement, marked *Larghetto*, recalls the introduction, with a lyrical cantabile theme that might easily have been set as an aria in one of Mozart's operas. Over the course of this slow movement, each of the wind instruments is given the opportunity to showcase its own unique character, with the piano cast in a supporting role.

However, in the concluding *Rondo* the piano is once again foregrounded, with a series of increasingly demanding passages that would have offered Mozart a chance to demonstrate his own virtuosity. Just before the closing section, Mozart offers each instrument one final chance to shine, in what is effectively a sequence of written-out cadenzas. This leads head-first into a thrilling coda, which brings the quintet to a rousing conclusion.

It seems that Mozart's high esteem for his quintet was shared by Ludwig van Beethoven, who, sometime around 1796, composed his **Quintet in E flat major Op 16** for the same combination of instruments, in the same key. However, despite the clear allusions to Mozart's work, Beethoven's quintet always retains his own original compositional voice.

Whereas Mozart, for the most part, deploys the piano and ensemble in a complementary manner, Beethoven sets them up as two groups in clear opposition to each other. After the opening fanfare motif where the full ensemble sounds in unison, the pianist is required to perform extensive syncopated passages against the winds, with the increasingly urgent horn calls creating a sense of growing drama. The dualism between the piano and ensemble is emphasised in the *Allegro ma non troppo*, which begins with a lengthy solo passage for the piano. This tension is carried into the central movement, the opening of which could easily be heard as the slow movement of a Beethoven piano sonata.

But despite its apparent simplicity, this movement is remarkably subtle in its formal arrangement, in the way that Beethoven creates a series of variations out of a sequence of telescoping episodes that make full use of the different instruments' individual colours and become incrementally longer, making the return of the theme increasingly unlikely. The concluding *Rondo* is more extroverted with its jovial jig-like theme.

However, Beethoven plays with our expectations, frequently halting the momentum, and journeying through some darker tonal regions (at one point stating the theme in E flat minor) that offer occasional glimpses of Beethoven's mature piano concertos. However, with the recapitulation, Beethoven returns to the simple bucolic joy of the opening, playfully teasing out the ending as the two opposing forces are unified at last.

David Lee

Biographies

Adrian Wilson, oboe

Adrian has been Principal Oboe of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra since 2014.

His early studies were at the Junior Royal Academy of Music in London. During this time he was twice a finalist in the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition and was principal oboe of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. He went on to read Mathematics and Music at the University of Birmingham, followed by a Postgraduate Performance course at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he studied the oboe with George Caird and Jonathan Kelly. He returned to the RAM to learn with Douglas Boyd and Celia Nicklin, winning numerous prizes and becoming principal oboe of the European Union Youth Orchestra. In 2002 he was appointed principal oboe of Southbank Sinfonia and continued his studies with Alexei Ogrintchouk in Rotterdam and Paris.

In addition to being Principal Oboe of the RSNO, Adrian is the oboist with the flexible chamber group Ensemble 360, who appear regularly at London's Wigmore Hall and at UK music festivals. He has also been principal oboe of Ireland's RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra.

Adrian has worked as a guest principal with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Northern Sinfonia, London Mozart Players, Northern Chamber Orchestra, Psappha and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

Adrian's concerto performances include Mozart's *Oboe Concerto* and Vaughan Williams' *Oboe Concerto* with the RSNO, Donizetti's *Oboe Concertino*, Haydn's *Sinfonia Concertante* and Ennio Morricone's *Gabriel's Oboe* with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the world premiere of John Joubert's *Oboe Concerto* at the Lichfield Festival, and J S Bach's *Double Concerto for Oboe and Violin* with Bradley Creswick and Northern Sinfonia and Nicola Benedetti and Ensemble 360.

Timothy Orpen, clarinet

Timothy has been Principal Clarinet of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra since 2020.

Formerly Principal Clarinet of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Timothy is also a founder member and Principal of the Aurora Orchestra, with whom he continues to perform regularly.

Prior to joining the ROH Orchestra, Timothy spent three years as Principal Clarinet of the Royal Northern Sinfonia. Timothy has performed and broadcast concertos with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, Royal Northern Sinfonia and Aurora Orchestra, with conductors including Sir David Willcocks, Nicholas Collon and Barry Wordsworth.

As a chamber musician, Timothy has performed across the Far East, USA, Australia and Europe with artists including Lars Vogt, Anthony Marwood, Melvyn Tan and Pascal Rogé. He has also collaborated with the Klezmer group She'koyokh and given many world premieres, including pieces written for him by Luke Styles, Graham Ross and Aaron Holloway-Nahum.

Timothy is a previous overall winner of the Royal Over-Seas League competition and has been featured many times as a soloist on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. After spending his early years in Australia he studied at the Royal Academy in London and the Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe, Germany. In his spare time, he has climbed 6000-metre mountains in the Andes and Himalayas.

David Hubbard, bassoon

David has been Principal Bassoon of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra since 2004.

He grew up in Wiltshire, where he attended the local comprehensive school in Corsham. He went on to study music at the Royal College of Music in London, graduating in 1990. He then lived in Spain for 12 years, working initially with the Orquesta Filarmónica de Málaga, and later the Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla.

David has performed as a soloist with the RSNO in Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto*, Vivaldi's *E Minor and F Minor concertos* and Michael Daugherty's *Dead Elvis*. In 2011 he premiered a new concerto, *That Blessed Wood*, written for him by Rory Boyle and commissioned by Camerata Scotland. In 2014 he recorded *Der alte Brummbär* (The Old Grumbler) with the RSNO on the album *A Festival of Fučík* conducted by Neemi Järvi for Chandos.

David has guested as principal bassoon with the London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, The Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. He is a regular participant in the RSNO chamber music series, and he also performs with other chamber ensembles such as Red Note and Nordic Viola.

David is tutor of bassoon at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and at Milngavie's Douglas Academy. He regularly coaches the bassoon section of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, as well as giving masterclasses at Chetham's School of Music, Wells Cathedral School and the Royal Academy of Music Junior Department.

Christopher Gough, horn

Christopher Gough has been Principal Horn of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra since 2016.

He studied French horn and composition at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland from 2010 to 2014 and after graduating quickly gained prominence in the Scottish freelance scene, regularly performing with the RSNO, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Opera and Scottish Ballet. He guests as Principal with many of the other leading UK orchestras.

As a composer and arranger, Christopher is in high demand. Prizes include the Music for Youth Composers' Prize and the RNCM Young Composer for Brass Band, and runner-up for the Associated Board International Young Composers' Competition. Having taken a year's sabbatical from playing the horn in order to develop further his skills as a composer, in July 2020 Christopher graduated from Berklee College of Music Valencia with a Master's in scoring for film, television and videogames. On graduation, he was selected for the 'Outstanding Scholar Award', as recognition of his studies and success during the course.

Christopher's works have featured in many notable concert series, including at the St Magnus Festival, the RSNO Chamber Series, Cottier Chamber Project and annual British Horn Society conference.

He continues to write alongside a successful career as a professional French hornist.

Susan Tomes, piano

Susan Tomes has won numerous international awards as a pianist, both on the concert platform and in the recording studio, including the 2013 Cobbett Medal for distinguished service to chamber music.

She grew up in Edinburgh and was the first woman to take a degree in music at King's College, Cambridge. Her career encompasses solo, duo and chamber playing; she has been at the heart of the internationally admired ensembles Domus, the Gaudier Ensemble, and the Florestan Trio, winners of a Royal Philharmonic Society Award.

She has made over fifty CDs, many of which have become benchmark recordings. In addition to her performing career, Susan gives masterclasses, serves on competition juries across Europe and is on the faculty of the European Chamber Music Academy and of ChamberStudio in London.

She is the artistic director and pianist of Winterplay, a mini-festival of chamber music at the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh. Her most recent solo recital there was reviewed by The Scotsman 'She distils the essence of a piece of music into its purest form in the most profound and moving way.'

In August 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, she was one of the artists invited by the Edinburgh International Festival to record a concert to be broadcast on YouTube and played through speakers in the trees to an audience in Princes Street Gardens. In September 2020, she was one of the first artists to perform post-lockdown to a socially distanced live audience in London's Wigmore Hall.

Susan is the author of five acclaimed books about performance: *Beyond the Notes* (2004), *A Musician's Alphabet* (2006), *Out of Silence* (2010), *Sleeping in Temples* (2014) and *Speaking the Piano* (2018). Her books are studied on 'performance practice' courses around the English-speaking world; excerpts have been used in EFL textbooks as examples of clear English prose.

Her appeal to a diverse readership was demonstrated by her appearances at the 2016 and 2019 Edinburgh International Book Festivals, which attracted large audiences. Her sixth book, *The Piano: A History in 100 Pieces*, will be published by Yale University Press in July 2021.