

*M. Davis
Dancer
December 1966*



1732 1960



Manoel
Theatre

ORMONA

THE MANOEL THEATRE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE

WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF

THE EMBASSY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF GERMANY

PRESENT

THE STRAUSS STRING QUARTET

IN

TWO PROGRAMMES

ON THE

11th and 12th DECEMBER, 1966 at 7.30 p.m.

PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, 11th DECEMBER

STRING QUARTET in A major op. 18/5

BEETHOVEN

Allegro, Minuet, Andante cantabile, Allegro.

Beethoven (1770-1827) wrote his first six quartets op. 18 between the years 1798 and 1801. They were dedicated to the Prince Lobkowitz, who lived in Vienna, and for whom Haydn had already written several of his quartets. They are, together with his first Symphony, Beethoven's most representative works of his first period. The fifth quartet became famous especially because of its second movement, in which each instrument leads in a different variation. Throughout the work one feels the joy and the happiness of a certain youthful carelessness. Beginning with the two violins the Minuet is especially charming, and the Trio surprises with its unusual and unexpected accents. The Finale is a masterpiece from the technical point of view. Beethoven built a movement of "quasi" symphonic character out of one single small motive. Because of its juvenile joyfulness it is one of Beethoven's most popular string-quartets.

STRING QUARTET No. 3 (1927)

BARTOK

*Prima parte: Moderato — Seconda parte: Allegro —
Ricapitolazione della prima parte: Moderato —
Coda: Allegro molto*

Together with Strawinsky and Schonberg, the Hungarian, Bela Bartok (1881-1945) had a great influence on the renewal of the music of our time. As with Beethoven, Bartok's String-quartets are the nucleus of his entire works. Each quartet rounds up a special period in which his technique and style had undergone a certain development.

The third quartet was written in 1927. In that time Bartok experimented most with special effects, such as: glissandi, pizzicati, sul ponticello (playing near the bridge), and col legno (with the wood of the bow). This style has a touch of hardness, of pitiless severity, and Bartok does away with harmonies pleasant to the ear.

This quartet, the shortest of the six, plays without a break, as one movement, but is divided into four sharply separated sections labelled; Prima parte: Moderato — Seconda parte: Allegro — Ricapitolazione della prima parte: Moderato — Coda: Allegro molto.

— INTERVAL —

STRING QUARTET in A minor op. 29

SCHUBERT

Allegro ma non troppo, Andante Minuet (Allegretto), Allegro moderato

Although the quartet in A minor is classified as opus 29, it was written fairly late in Schubert's (1797-1828) short life, in the winter of 1824. It was his fifteenth string-quartet, but the only one published during his life time.

Together with the two quartets composed later on (including the well-known quartet in D - minor "The Death and the Maiden" and the quartet in G - major), these three works confirm Schubert's qualities as a composer of string-quartets.

The quartet in A minor is mainly lyrical, filled with melancholy, yet not without grace. It has that certain floating movement which we so much enjoy by the Master of Song.

The first violin introduces the wonderful melody in the opening Allegro ma non troppo. In the second movement, Andante, Schubert uses one of his favorite themes, the same as in "Rosamunde" and in the Impromptu in B flat major, op. 142. The mysterious Menuetto, starting with a sombre tone, is enlightened by a crisp and lively Trio in A major. The Finale, also in A major leads the Quartet to a joyous and exhilarating end.

MONDAY 12th DECEMBER

STRING QUARTET in E flat major 64/6

HAYDN

Allegretto, Andante, Minuet (Allegretto) Finale: Presto

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) is said to be the father of the string-Quartet although he only adopted a form of music which had already been practised before. But he was the first really great master to attempt an individual lead for each instrument. This was the only way to allow each player to take part in the musical conversation.

The Quartet in E flat major is the last of a series of six known as opus 64. They were all composed for the wealthy merchant and patron of art Tost. Unjustly the Quartet in E flat major belongs to those works which are not frequently played. Its structure is masterly formed into a melodious and subtle unity which makes it equal with much better known quartets of the same series such as the "Lerchenquartett".

LYRIC SUITE for String Quartet (1926)

BERG

Allegretto gioviale, Andante amoroso, Allegro misterioso — Trio estatico, Adagio appassionato, Presto delirando — Tenebroso, Largo desolato

Alban Berg (1885-1935), one of the most famous pupils of Arnold Schonberg's "Viennese School", did not compose a very large number of works, but each of them is a very important masterpiece. Besides the two operas "Wozzek" and "Lulu" and the violin-concerto, the Lyric Suite surely is the most important of Berg's works. The Lyric Suite, composed in 1926, is Berg's second and last quartet. Its title describes the essentially unsymphonic character of the piece, in contrast to the pronounced symphonic character of the majority of compositions for string-quartet. In this sense Berg has consistently avoided formal procedures which might recall the sonata — form.

The work consists of six movements following a determined psychological pattern. It starts with a relaxed Allegretto gioviale. Then the tension increases by means of a denser structure, and even more so by sharper contrasts in the tempo and the character of the pieces. Basically three fast movements steadily increase in speed from the initial Allegretto gioviale, through the third movement, Allegro misterioso, up to the fifth, Presto delirando, which is the climactic "catharsis" of the work. The slow movements follow the reverse procedure, gradually slowing down. The second movement, Andante amoroso, is followed by the even slower fourth movement, Adagio appassionato, and this by the last movement, Largo desolato, which dies out in inconsolable despair.

The Lyric Suite is the first composition in which Berg uses the twelve-tone system which his master Schonberg had given birth to a few years before. The work is not entirely dodecaphonic, however, but the other passages are so similar in style and sound that the listener will hardly notice the difference.

— INTERVAL —

STRING QUARTET in G minor op. 10

DEBUSSY

*Animè et tres decidè, Assez vif et bien rythmè, Andantino, doucement expressif,
Tres moderè — Tres mouvementè et avec passion*

Debussy (1862-1918) composed his only string-quartet in 1893. At this time in France, Franck and the Schola Cantorum started a new development in music. The preference of this movement expressed itself in heavy monumental forms, and Debussy's quartet is a typical example thereof. It was first played by the Ysaye-Quartet in the Societe Nazionale. It was disapproved of by the press and the public. It was claimed to be revolutionary and chaotic. Yet it is in this opus that Debussy composed according to a strict pattern — a pattern based upon the cyclic principle taught by Franck and his disciples. Even though Debussy adapted this fixed order, he succeeded in giving it a spontaneity and naturalness free of all strictness. The listener is not aware of any thematical and scholastic constraints, on the contrary the is of absolute classical structure. This is already shown in the four movements of the quartet. In the last movement all the themes of the preceding movements are picked up. Thereby the unity of the quartet is reinforced. On the whole the quartet with all liveliness is singular among the works of Debussy, since we normally know him as a composer who prefers to wrap his inner emotions in a veil of irony.



THE STRAUSS STRING QUARTET

In 1956 the twin brothers Ulrich and Ernest Strauss (born 1929 in Saarbrücken) founded together with Helmut Hoever (born 1928 in Bonn) and Konrad Grahe (born 1925 in Frankfurt/Main) the Strauss String Quartet. The artists gave up their leading places in prominent orchestras so as to devote themselves entirely to quartet-playing. First they spent a few years studying in Basle. Then in 1962 they moved to Essen, where they are engaged as teachers at the Folkwang School of Music.

During the ten years of its existence the Strauss-Quartet has acquired an excellent reputation and has been acclaimed in Germany and in a number of European countries. In Germany it is known as one of the few outstanding ensembles of the present musical generation.

A number of modern compositions are included in the Quartet's repertoire of classical works and recording (Telefunken) and radioprogrammes have considerably contributed to the Quartet's international reputation.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

M.A.D.C. — "Tobias and the Angel" — 15th to 18th December, 1966.

BRITISH COUNCIL — "Orchestral Concert" — 22nd December, 1966.

BALLET by Miss D. Lungaro — 26th and 27th December 1966.

SEMINARY BURSARIES GROUP — "Concert" — 29th December 1966.

Ulrich Strauss
Konrad Grahe
Ernest Strauss
Helmut Hoever

