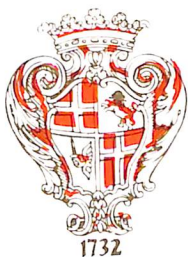
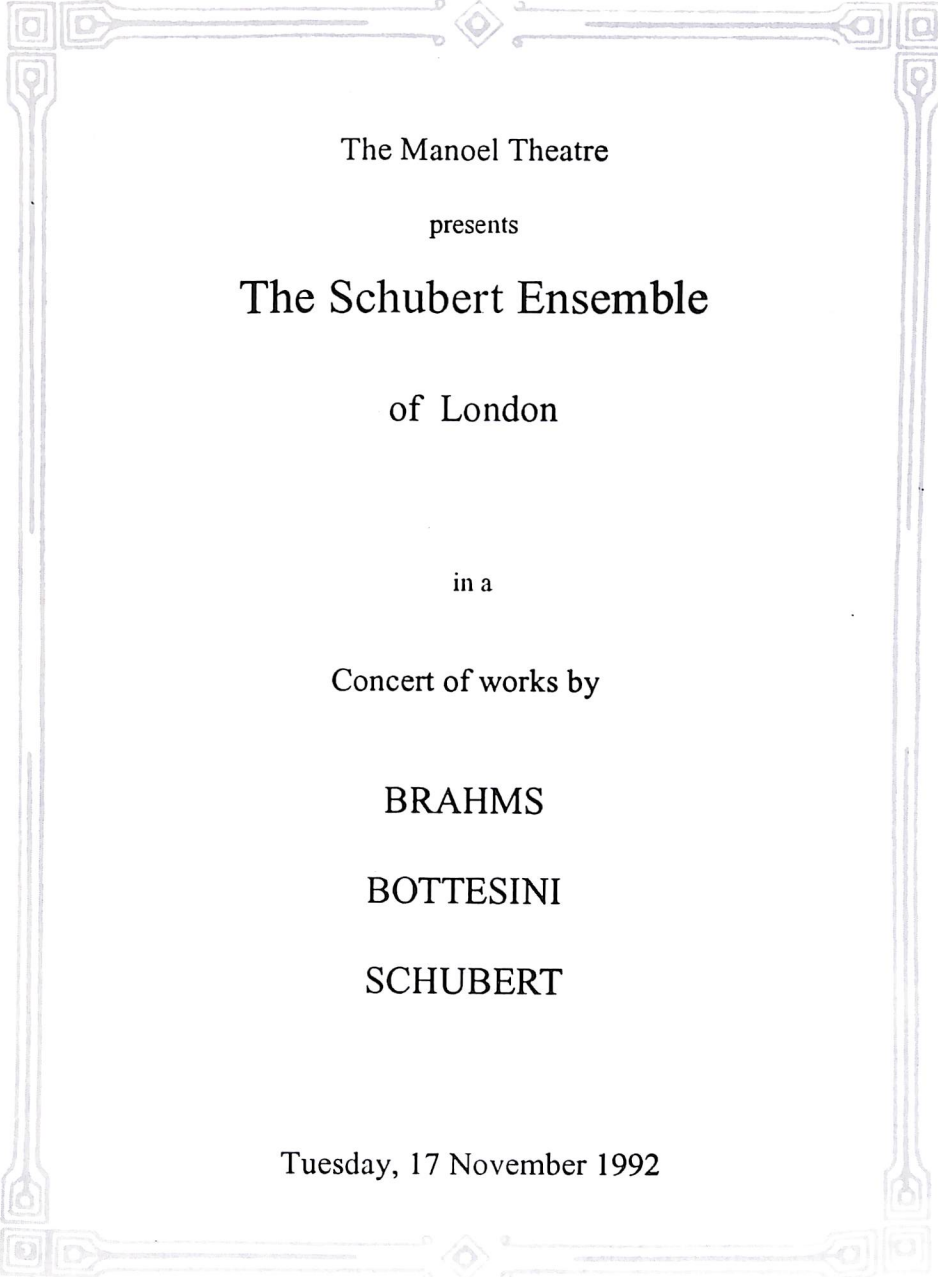

TEATRU
MANOEL

1382

1481





The Manoel Theatre

presents

The Schubert Ensemble

of London

in a

Concert of works by

BRAHMS

BOTTESINI

SCHUBERT

Tuesday, 17 November 1992



Handwritten signature in blue ink, likely 'Jane Salmon'.

William Howard
piano

Jane Salmon
cello

Douglas Paterson
viola

Majumi Seiler
violin

Peter Buckoke
double-bass

Handwritten signature in blue ink, likely 'Douglas Paterson'.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, likely 'Peter Buckoke'.

Handwritten signature in blue ink, likely 'Jane Salmon'.

PROGRAMME

Piano Quartet **Johannes Brahms**
in C minor op. 60 **(1833-1897)**
Allegro non troppo -Scherzo; allegro - Andante -
Finale; allegro comodo

Brahms wrote 3 piano quartets; the first two were composed close together in 1861-2, this one did not appear until 1875. The C minor op. 60 is a tighter composition than the earlier works. It has a much clearer texture (the balance between strings and piano works much better) and shows the economy of a mature style yet its origins date back to the time of Schumann's illness and subsequent death almost 20 years earlier. Robert and Clara Schumann had done much to encourage the younger composer but Robert had attempted suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine in 1854 and was put into a mental institution until his death in 1856.

Brahms offered little for publication at this time, he worked unsatisfactorily on several works including a symphony and a piano Quartet in C sharp minor which was tried out by Joachim in April 1856. It is impossible to know how much material is common to both piano quartets, since Brahms destroyed the mass of his unpublished material and sketches shortly before his death, but it seems likely that the slow movement of opus 60 has close affinity with the earlier work. Spech, a biographer on Brahms (1930) suggests that this movement in particular reflects the composer's struggles and his relationship with Clara and the tragedy of Schumann's illness. Certainly he wrote of the op. 60 to his publisher, many years later; "you may place a picture on the title-page, namely a head with a pistol in front of it. This will give you some idea of the music. I shall send you a photograph of myself for the purposé".

Duo concertante for violin and **Giovanni Bottestini**
double bass in A major **(1821-1889)**

Bottestini was to the double-bass what Paganini was to the violin. His virtuosity astonished his contemporaries, and he travelled Europe as a star soloist. His feats were all the more remarkable because he preferred to play the old three-string double bass, rather than the more modern four or even five-string bass.

He was also well-established as an opera compose, and there is more of a touch of the operatic in this duo, which was originally written for clarinet, double-bass and orchestras. Virtuosity is expected from a clarinet or violin, but here the double-bass proves that it is match for the treble instrument's

coloratura.. It scales the extremes of its range in its quest to impress with its mastery of figuration. The quest is not entirely relentless though. There are just enough pauses for breath to show that it has a tender heart as well as a gymnast's agility.

Interval

Quintet in A major "The Trout" D667

Franz Schubert
(1797 - 1828)

Allegro vivace - Andante - Scherzo & trio: presto

Theme & Variations: andante - allegretto

Finale: allegro giusto

Two of Schubert's greatest chamber works owe their existence to chamber musicians who wanted new works for the same combination of players, more or less as works with which they were already familiar, and which made use of groupings of instruments far less usual than the familiar string quartet or piano trio. One work which is a case in point is the Octet, written for the same combination as Beethoven's Septet, plus one. The other is this Quintet, written for the same combination of instruments as an arrangement by Hummel for piano quintet of his own septet. A standard piano quintet would have two violins, a viola and a cello as its string instruments, but Hummel made use of just one violin, with viola cello and double bass.

The work was in the repertoire of a wealthy bachelor whom Schubert met while on holiday at Steyr in 1819. He was Sylvester Paumgartner, an amateur cellist and host to various musical events. Schubert was travelling with a friend who was a baritone by profession, and it may be that they performed Schubert's song "The Trout" to Paumgartner, because he suggested that one movement of the quintet should be a set of variations on the song.

It was Paumgartner who commissioned the quintet, which Schubert completed after returning home to Vienna. Schubert sent the newly completed work to him, but it was not until after the composer's death that it surfaced again, to become the first of his great chamber works to receive recognition amongst musicians.

The Trout Quintet is not intended to be a profound intellectual exercise, but has the more immediate appeal of a Divertimento. The variations on the song "The Trout" are the fourth movement, where the song itself is introduced by the strings, and the rippling accompaniment of the original '*lied*' flows through the variations.

