

LIVE Music on Sundays
in Dunfermline

Season 2024–25 Concert 5

Sinfonia Chamber Players



7:30pm

16 February 2025

Viewfield Baptist Church

**Chamber
Music
Scotland**

This concert is promoted by Dunfermline Arts Guild with financial assistance from Creative Scotland provided through Chamber Music Scotland.



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Sinfonia Chamber Players

Richard Gratwick and Hannah Gordon (violins) Tim Espin (viola)
Sam Coe ('cello) Neil Mantle and Alistair Gurr (horns)

Neil Mantle MBE founded Scottish Sinfonia in 1970 and has remained their conductor ever since. He studied horn at the Royal Academy of Music and subsequently at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and maintained a successful freelance career for many years. For our concert tonight, originally entitled “Neil Mantle and Friends”, Neil is bringing a horn-playing colleague and four string players, all of whom are principals with Scottish Sinfonia.

The **Beethoven** Sextet is an early work, written in 1794–5 but not published until 1810, but no information regarding the circumstances of its composition and the players involved has come down to us. Beethoven makes extreme demands upon the two horn players, covering the entire range of the instrument's compass.

Thomas Dunhill composed his Quintet in 1899–1900 whilst on the staff of Eton College. It was premiered in June 1900 by Hale Hambleton., but astonishingly, the manuscript score lay forgotten for over a century until it was performed in 2003, with publication following a decade later. Tonight we are performing the first and second movements.

Franz Hoffmann was born in 1920, penning his first compositions fourteen years later, and entering the Nuremberg Conservatory in 1935, studying piano and violin. He served in the army, and was drafted to the Eastern Front in 1944, where he was seriously injured, spending a long time in hospital in Königsberg. He was on board the ship *Steuben* when it was torpedoed on 9 February 1945, and is assumed to have died then.

The next work is an arrangement by Michael Haydn (brother of the more famous Joseph) of the slow movement of Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 3, but why he carried out this is unknown. Much of the arrangement is the same as the original, but Haydn departs from Mozart's text in several places. Rather as if much of a hearing was recalled but not all. Altogether an intriguing mystery!

Theodore Dubois was a French composer, organist and music teacher, active in the latter part of the 19th century. His delightful Cavatine was written for horn and piano, but it occurred to Neil that the texture was well suited to string accompaniment.

Mozart's 'Musical Joke' dates from June 1787 although, like the Beethoven Sextet, little is known about the circumstances of its composition. What is clear is that Mozart hugely enjoyed making fun of his less-gifted colleagues by committing various musical 'faux pas'. Where he falls down is that, no matter how hard he tries to be mediocre, his genius cannot fail to shine through!

PROGRAMME

Sextet in Eb major for Two Horns and String Quartet Opus 81b
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Allegro con brio
Adagio
Rondo – Allegro

Quintet in F minor Opus 6 “*Nitor in Adversum*” (I strive in adversity)
Thomas Dunhill (1877–1946)

Allegro
Andantino

Quintet in A minor Franz Hoffmann (1920–1945)
Peacefully Moving, *then*
In Lively Movement

15-minute INTERVAL

Coffee/tea will be available during the interval

You will find toilets at the top of the entrance staircase
(disabled and ladies) and the bottom of the staircase (men)

Romanze in Ab major (after Mozart) Michael Haydn (1737–1806)

Cavatine Theodore Dubois (1837–1924)
(arr. Neil Mantle)

Ein Musicalische Spass (A Musical Joke) K522
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1991)

Allegro
Menuetto – Maestoso
Adagio Cantabile
Presto