

The Blue String Quartet

at the Pumphouse,

Killarney Park, Takapuna.

Friday 13th August 1993, 8pm

Programme

Haydn: String Quartet Opus 76, No.1 in G Major

Allegro con spirito

Adagio sostenuto

Menuetto & Trio

Finale: Allegro ma non troppo

Prokofieff: String Quartet No.2 in F Major, Opus 92.

Allegro sostenuto

Adagio

Allegro

Interval

Denise Hulford: *Pyramids* for String Quartet

In three movements

Beethoven: String Quartet No.16 in F Major, Opus 135

Allegretto

Vivace

Lento assai, cantante e tranquillo.

Grave, ma non troppo tratto - Allegro

Haydn - String Quartet Op.76 No.1 in G Major

Although Haydn was not necessarily the inventor of the string quartet he was certainly the first composer to create a significant body of work for the medium.

The six quartets of op.76, written in 1797, were Haydn's last completed set of quartets following the established tradition of the time in being published in sets of six. Two quartets were completed to be published as op.77 but these were the last quartets Haydn was to finish. The op.76 set was commissioned by Count Joseph Erdödy who kept the quartets to his exclusive use until they were published in 1799, with a dedication to him. Haydn was probably aware that the string quartet was entering a new phase, that it would no longer be the preserve of a small group of players and admirers; certainly op.76 follows on directly from opp.71 and 74, and makes all the more decisive the break with the 'sociable' quartets from op.33 to op.64.

Prokofieff - String Quartet No.2 in F Major Op.92

The larger part of Prokofieff's musical output was for the theatre, orchestra and piano, but his chamber music, although small in quantity, is nevertheless of considerable importance. Prokofieff wrote two String Quartets; the first in B minor (Op.50) was commissioned and composed in the United States, being first performed there in 1931. In 1933 Prokofieff returned to his native land to become a Soviet artist. He continued to tour Western Europe and he made one further trip to the USA in 1938.

During that critical period of World War II in 1941 when the German armies were advancing all too rapidly on Moscow, the Soviet government evacuated a number of its important creative artists to safer areas. Prokofieff went to Nalchik in the Caucasus. It was here during the early part of 1942 that the String Quartet in F Major, op.92 was composed. Nalchik, which is located in the Karbardino-Balkaria region is surrounded by a rich musical folklore. Prokofieff became very much interested in it and drew the thematic materials for his quartet from this little explored source.

The quartet is written in three movements. The first movement is written in the conventional sonata-allegro form, and the second movement of the quartet is a lovely slow movement based on a Caucasian love song. The final movement is wild and free, based on the weird and brilliant dance music of the people living in the mountains of the Nalchik region.

Hulford - *Pyramids* for String Quartet

Pyramids is a three movement work that dates from 1987. The work centres around a chord of C#, F#, G# and C. This chord becomes the foundation on which other chords are layered, so forming the "pyramid". The first movement begins with a slow unison passage which leads into a fugal section, the subject of which incorporates the notes of the foundation chord. The second movement restates the base notes in an atmospheric passage, and the work concludes with a rather aggressive and energetic pizzicato section. The work is designed to show to best advantage the varying qualities and timbres of stringed instruments. This performance is the New Zealand premiere of the work in its revised version.

Denise Hulford is an Auckland composer with a background in piano and singing. She completed her MMus (Hons) in composition in 1985 after studying at Auckland University with John Rimmer. Currently Hulford is serving her second term as President of the Composers Association of NZ Inc. In 1991 she accepted an appointment to the Board, becoming at the same time Company Secretary of the New Zealand Music Centre Ltd which is committed to foster and promote NZ music both nationally and internationally.

Beethoven - String Quartet No.16 in F Major, Op.135

In October of 1826 Beethoven completed his Opus 135 string quartet. It was his last completed work and was followed only by the lighter finale to op.130 in November, after which he completed nothing more before his death four months later. In fact the only works that Beethoven finished in the last three years of his life were string quartets. The op.135 quartet comes after a group of more insistently revolutionary works in the same form, for the op.135 is a work of reflection and control, not deying the eccentricities and battles of its predecessors, but seeing them with a certain detachment.

The last movement is constructed on the dialogue which Beethoven famously has his instruments pronouncing - 'Muss es sein? Es muss sein!' (Must it be? It must be!)

The Blue String Quartet is a newly formed group of four enthusiastic Auckland string players which like to perform a varied repertoire ranging from works of the classical era to the present day. The members of the quartet are:

Miranda Adams - First Violin

Miranda Adams has performed concertos with the NZSO, the Dunedin Sinfonia, the Victoria University Orchestra, and also with provincial orchestras in Nelson, Tauranga and New Plymouth. She is a National recording Artist for Radio New Zealand's Concert FM. Her experience in chamber music is extensive, and recently she performed with CadeNZa, New Zealand's specialist contemporary music group. Miranda Adams plays on a violin made recently by Adrian Studer in Nelson, NZ.

Sally Keestra - Second Violin

Sally Keestra is working as a free-lance violinist in Auckland and performs regularly with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. She graduated from Auckland University with a Degree in Music Performance.

Nigel Keay - Viola

Violist Nigel Keay graduated from Victoria University with a Music Degree in both Violin Performance and Composition. He has performed with the Dunedin Sinfonia and has performed regularly in contemporary chamber works and at the National Young Composers Workshop in Nelson. He is also a composer of chamber & orchestral works as well as an opera (*At the Hawk's Well* 1992). Nigel Keay plays on a viola made recently by Adrian Studer in Nelson, NZ.

Claudia Price - Cello

German-born cellist Claudia Price has been a member of various chamber music ensembles and has given concerto & solo recitals in England and Europe before coming to NZ in October 1992. She has been playing with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra since February and is a member of the Auckland Cello Ensemble (ACE). Claudia Price plays on a cello made recently by Paul Harrild in Newark, Great Britain.