

PROGRAMME NOTE

March Watercolour – The Kingfisher – Low Water – All Night a Music. Like a Needle Sewing

I lived for seven years by Endrick Water. My cellist husband fished there. The river's moods, swayed by the weather and seasons, were a daily background to our lives. *The River* poems, by Ted Hughes, written from an angler's perspective, caught my imagination because of their depth and colour, and the many vivid sound images. When Robert Cohen and I first discussed ideas for a new concerto, he suggested a piece in variation form. Suddenly I realised that a stretch of river is the embodiment of 'variation form' – the same, but constantly changing. This idea, together with the inspiration of Robert's particularly colourful virtuosity, were the starting point of the concerto. It is in four movements, the first three running without a break. Each describes a different aspect of the river, reflecting the four poems and each develops from the same material in a different way.

Sally Beamish

*River is dedicated to Robert Cohen, and was commissioned by
Robert Cohen and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.*

*The composer gratefully acknowledges financial assistance from the Scottish Arts Council
towards the preparation of performing material.*

First performance:

14 October 1997, Barbican Centre, London

Robert Cohen (Cello)

Academy of St Martin in the Fields

Sir Neville Mariner (Conductor)

CELLO CONCERTO No. 1

for Robert Cohen

Sally Beamish

I. March Watercolour

Andante ♩ = 68

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. The top staves are for Flutes (1, 2), Oboes (1, 2), and Clarinets in A (1, 2). Below these are Bassoons (1, 2), Horns in F (1, 2), and Trumpets in C (1, 2). The percussion part is indicated by a drum symbol. The string section includes Solo Cello, 1st Violin, 2nd Violin, Viola, Cello, and Contra Bass. The Solo Cello part features a prominent melodic line with trills and dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, and *mf*. The woodwinds play a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and slurs. The score is marked with dynamics like *f*, *mf*, and *ff*, and includes articulations like *tr* (trill) and *cresc.* (crescendo). The tempo is Andante with a metronome marking of ♩ = 68.

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Flutes
1
2

Oboes
1
2

Clarinets in A
1
2

Bassoons
1
2

Horns in F
1
2

Trumpets in C
1
2

Percussion

Solo Cello

1st Violin

2nd Violin

Viola

Cello

Contra Bass

f *mf* *ff* *f* *mf* *ff* *f*

fp *f* *f* *mf* *ff* *f*

mf *ff*

mp *mp*