

## PROGRAMME NOTE

In 2018 I wrote a series of chamber pieces expressing my sadness at leaving Scotland, where I had spent nearly half my life, and raised a family.

The pieces also represent the anticipation of new beginnings, and a new phase in my life.

The first of these, *A Farewell*, is for six violas, and the quintet *Divertimenti* is the second, followed by *A Myself* for string quartet.

I was a founding member of the London-based chamber group *Divertimenti*, and enjoyed years of happy music making with them as a viola player. To receive a commission from them some 40 years later was a great pleasure, and also a timely reminder of the friends and musicians I left behind when I moved north in 1990.

The brief was to write a companion piece for the great Schubert Quintet – to be an approachable work that would not be too daunting for groups to prepare, thus making it more likely to enter the repertoire.

To this end, I decided on a set of very short ‘divertimenti’, or diversions. This seemed an apt title for obvious reasons, but also because composing the piece represented a diversion from my forthcoming move south. They are each based on a different fragment from Burns’ beautiful ‘farewell’, ‘Ae Fond Kiss’.

At the centre of the piece is a lullaby. My three children regard themselves as Scottish, and Scotland will remain an intrinsic part of us all, however far away we may travel. The soloist is the viola.

The piece is framed by two Scottish inspired dances – the first entitled *Stamash* – which means a kind of exuberant chaos, and the last, a reel.

Preceding the lullaby is a gentle duet for two violins, inspired by dawn overlooking the summer lakes, where we had two family holidays. After the lullaby comes a quirky waltz for two cellos, reflecting the faerie lore that surrounds our former home near Aberfoyle.

The *divertimenti* may be performed separately.

*Divertimenti* was commissioned by *Divertimenti Ensemble*, and first performed by them at *Kimmeridge House*, Bournemouth University, on 31 March 2019.

## Divertimenti

## I. Stramash

Sally Beamish

Allegro  $\text{♩} = 140$ 

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello 1

Violoncello 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl. 1

Vcl. 2

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl. 1

Vcl. 2

Musical score for Violins 1-2 and Violas 1-2, measures 10-15. The score is in 2/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. The dynamics range from *mf* to *ff*. A large watermark is visible across the page.

Musical score for Violins 1-2 and Violas 1-2, measures 16-21. The score continues with complex rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *ff*. A large watermark is visible across the page.

Musical score for Violins 1-2 and Violas 1-2, measures 22-27. The score continues with complex rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *f* and *ff*. A large watermark is visible across the page.