

Programme Note by Chris Darwin: please use freely for non-commercial purposes

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904) String Sextet opus 48 in A (1878)

This sextet was written at a time when Dvořák was beginning to ride high. The Czech government had given him a grant to allow him time to compose, and Brahms himself had recommended him to his own publishers Simrock. Brahms' good friend, the famous violinist Joseph Joachim led the first, private performance of this sextet, which Dvořák attended. The piece is composed in a Czech idiom with glorious melodies. Brahms whose own Hungarian Dances had been a great success, encouraged Dvořák to write Czech music. But, a couple of years later Dvořák started to compose string quartets in a more germanic style, in order to appeal to the Viennese market at a time when Czech nationalism was not going down well in Vienna.