

**Programme notes by Chris Darwin. Please use freely for non-profit activities**

**Josef Haydn (1732-1809) String Quartet in D, Op 64 no 5 'The Lark' (1790)**

*Allegro moderato*

*Adagio cantabile*

*Menuetto. Allegretto*

*Finale. Vivace*

This quartet is one of Haydn's 12 "Tost" quartets. From 1783 to 1788 the Hungarian Johann Tost was principal second violin in the Esterházy orchestra of which Haydn was music director. When Tost left Esterházy in 1788 to freelance in Paris, Haydn entrusted 6 quartets to him with a view to finding a publisher. Tost was successful, and they were published in Paris in two sets of three as Op 54 and 55. A later set of six, Op 64, were written in 1790, the year that Haydn first visited London. Around this time Tost returned from Paris, married the housekeeper at Esterházy (of whom Haydn was also fond) and used her money to set up a successful cloth business in Vienna. There in 1791 he also found a publisher for the Op 64 set, which Haydn gratefully dedicated to him. Tost continued to play the violin and commission chamber works, especially from Spohr, whose performances in aristocratic homes provided an entrée for his cloth business; incidentally he is possibly also the dedicatee ("*composto per un amatore ongarese*") of the last two of Mozart's two-violin string quintets.

Haydn was notably economical with the material out of which he composed his quartets – many of his movements are based on only a single theme. 'The Lark' is more diverse, but nonetheless there are interesting links between the different movements. For example, the first movement's (*Allegro moderato*) innocuous opening phrase F# - G - F# - E - D on the second violin carries the germ not only of the first violin's soaring song that it announces, but it also provides the notes, a fifth higher (C# - D - C# - B - A), of the violin's equally beautiful melody in the *Adagio* second movement. Later, and less obviously, its last three notes provide the skeleton for the *Menuetto's* theme.

**Allegro moderato**

F# G F# E D

**Adagio cantabile**

C# D C# B A

*dolce*

**Menuetto**

F# E D

*f*

The last movement, which gives the quartet its alternative sobriquet 'The Hornpipe', is relentlessly energetic - its semiquavers run continuously until the last few bars.

Incidentally, have a look at the second violin's accompaniment at the opening. Seen that before anywhere? Clever old Haydn.

**Finale. Vivace**

Violin 1

Violin 2

*p*

F# G F#