

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

Josef Haydn (1732-1809) Piano Trio in D, Hob XV:24 (1795)

Allegro

Andante

Allegro ma dolce

Haydn wrote about 45 piano trios throughout his life, starting in his early 30s and ending in 1797 when he was 65. They demonstrate well his creativity in musical structures, and his harmonic adventurousness. Charles Rosen described them as '*along with the Mozart concertos the most brilliant piano works before Beethoven.*' The emphasis on the piano is apt, since the cello very often doubles the keyboard bass, compensating for the thin tone of contemporary pianos, although the violin, particularly in the later trios, is often independent or in dialogue with the keyboard.

Though composed after Haydn had heard Beethoven's Op.1 piano trios, this D major trio maintains the overall style of Haydn's earlier trios. He wrote it towards the end of his second visit to London and is one of a set of three, that also includes the more famous '*Gypsy Rondo*' Trio, dedicated to Rebecca Schroeter. Mrs Schroeter, the daughter of a rich Scottish businessman, was the widow of the immigrant German composer Johann Schroeter, who had initially been her music teacher. She wrote to Haydn in 1791 shortly after his first arrival in London asking him for a music lesson, and fell in love for the second time with her music teacher. Unhappily married and 20 years older than Mrs Schroeter, Haydn reciprocated the affections of this '*beautiful and charming woman ... I would have married her very easily if I had been free at the time.*' Their continuing relationship ('*if he was not invited elsewhere, he usually dined with her*') was conducted with discretion and seems to have evaded the society gossip columns.