

**Programme notes by Chris Darwin. Use freely for non-commercial purposes**

**Franz Schubert (1797-1828) Notturmo in E-flat major D.897 (1827)**

It is very likely that this posthumously-published *Adagio* was originally intended as the slow movement of Schubert's B-flat Piano Trio. Its opening theme (*illustrated*) is a slowed down version of the opening of the Trio's *Allegro moderato* first movement (*illustrated*). It is not clear why Schubert rejected it, but we are lucky that he did since the replacement *Andante* is one of those movements that you cannot imagine being without – and we do still have the *Notturmo*.



The opening section mesmerically repeats the figure of the opening bar before picking up on a different dotted figure, to give a contrasting march-like episode somewhat curiously in 3 time rather than 4. When the original episode returns the added beat, going back to 4 from 3, makes the wait for the final beat seem even longer than it did initially. Time seems to be suspended, as Schubert perhaps wished it would in this the final year of his life.