

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

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) Concertino for String Quartet (1920)

In the summer of 1920 Stravinsky was living in the Bretagne fishing village of Carantec just east of Roscoff, a place “*full of conventional middle-class trippers, who can't afford to go to Deauville.*” Summer in Carantec was a bridge between Switzerland and his future home in Paris under the patronage of Coco Chanel. While in Carantec, Stravinsky composed his Concertino for String Quartet to a commission from the Flonzaley Quartet. This ensemble was the creation of New York banker Edward De Coppet, whose support allowed the players to devote themselves entirely to rehearsing and performing, initially just for his family but later, as their reputation increased, in public. They spent the winter in New York and the summer at Flonzaley, the De Copett house in Lausanne. Nice work!

The Concertino itself is a short, 6-minute piece in free sonata form, playing on the harmonic tension of the opening: a rising scale in C-major on the first violin and cello against one in B major on the viola. The first violin is *concertante* with a cadenza-like central section and a heavily double-stopped central slower section.