



What happens when the music stops?

The inspiration and entertainment that music brings us depends on the dedication of musicians. Sadly, that dedication is not always matched by the financial rewards: and if illness or accident strikes, the financial burdens on musicians can be severe enough to ruin a career, and damage a family.

The Musicians Benevolent Fund exists to help all musicians in need. We do all in our power to get them back to work or, where that is impossible, to offer unstinting practical help and care. To continue, we need the support of all music lovers.

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In tune with their needs

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St Peter's Church, Oundle - 8pm

The Hanover Harmonie

The Programme

Wind Octet in E flat

Josef Mysliveček (1737-1781)

Allegro maestoso - Larghetto un poco sostenuto - Tempo di minuetto

In the late 18th century, vast quantities of music were composed and arranged for the immensely popular *Harmonien*, but most is never heard today, and even composers such as Mysliveček, who was fêted in his own lifetime, could expect their music to drop out of circulation after their death. Mysliveček was known to his contemporaries as *Il divino Boemo*, a reference to his Bohemian nationality, and spent most of his career in Italy before travelling to Munich in 1777. His brief stay there was marked by the immense success of his oratorio, *Abramo ed Isacco*, but also by an unsuccessful operation for syphilis and the subsequent removal of his nose. This octet certainly postdates *Abramo ed Isacco*, for the *Minuet* quotes an aria from the oratorio, and was probably written for one of the *Harmonien* in Milan, where Mysliveček continued to work until his final illness took hold in 1779.

Serenade in C minor, K388

W A Mozart (1756 -1791)

Allegro - Andante - Menuetto in canone - Allegro

When Mozart moved from Salzburg to Vienna in 1781 he was understandably anxious to make an impact on the city's fashionable society, and the news that the Austrian Emperor intended to establish a *Harmonie* band naturally prompted him to compose a work for them to play. Having written a number of pieces of wind music in response to commissions in Milan and Salzburg he was no stranger to the medium and, expecting the group to be founded imminently, wrote a sextet in E flat within days. In the event, however, the Emperor delayed, and when the *Harmonie* was eventually formed in April 1782 it was as an octet with pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons. Any sextet now seemed unattractive, and by July Mozart was forced to recognise that his score would only be played if he took the time to adapt it. He therefore broke off from work on the *Haffner Symphony* to add oboe parts to his original and to write the *Serenade in C minor* for wind octet. This time Mozart left nothing to chance, and in the *Serenade* writes some of the 18th century's most profound and original wind music. His choice of a minor key is unusual, but in sheer quality the score stands head and shoulders above its competitors. Listen, for example, to the powerful opening, to the wonderful canonic *Minuet* and *Trio*, and to the virtuosic bassoon writing in the *Finale*. Here, surely, was a work which would attract attention; and yet Mozart's efforts seem once again to have been in vain for there is no evidence that the Emperor ever heard a note of it.

Suite from Il Seraglio

W A Mozart, arr. Wendt

The Emperor's disinterest in the serenade is partly explained by his new preference for transcriptions of operatic pieces rather than original pieces of *Harmoniemusik*. Undeterred, Mozart started again with the intention of arranging music from his recent opera, *Il Seraglio*, but this proved surprisingly problematic: "You have no idea how difficult it is to arrange a work of this kind for wind instruments so that it suits them and loses none of its effect", he wrote to his father. Valuable time was lost as he struggled, and by the time he completed the arrangement another had been made - and "all the profits" taken - by Johann Nepomuk Wendt, an expert arranger and one of the Emperor's two oboists.

The Performers

The Hanover Harmonie is comprised of the principal wind players of one of Britain's foremost period instrument orchestras, The Hanover Band. It revives the 18th century Viennese practice of treating the wind band, or *harmonie*, as a distinct entity within the orchestra. From about 1756 the



Emperor and the Austrian nobles kept house bands called *Harmonien*, usually made up of pairs of oboes, horns, bassoons and, after about 1770, clarinets. Joseph II kept a crack *Harmonie* for his private delectation, drawn from the principal wind players of the Imperial opera. His successor Franz II carried on this practice; it was this group which made up the wind section in Beethoven's orchestra of 1800.

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There will be a Champagne Reception prior to the performance, 7.30pm at the Church.

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