

DoNEMus

Forbidden  
Music  
Regained

preview

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# Serenade

for orchestra

1935

**Robert Hanf**

The series of published scores of *Forbidden Music Regained* is a collaborative project by Donemus Publishing, the Leo Smit Foundation and the Nederlands Muziek Instituut (Dutch Institute of Music). This series is financially supported by the Investeringsfonds Muziek, an initiative by Buma/Stemra and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

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### **Forbidden Music Regained**

The series 'Forbidden Music Regained' proudly presents works by composers who were persecuted during the Second World War. Performances of these works were forbidden during the war. Many composers were imprisoned, several did not survive and others went into hiding.

After the war a new generation took over. The pre-war composers were soon forgotten and their compositions remained hidden in closets and archives or fell otherwise into oblivion. In recent decades numerous works have been rediscovered through the efforts of the Leo Smit Foundation. Some scores were found in attics, others in a garden shed and a pile of music was found by young children next to a garbage can. These compositions are of a high quality and deserve to be performed again. The diversity of styles represents the entire spectrum of the first half of the Twentieth century: romanticism, impressionism, modernism, neoclassicism, jazz, and so forth. This project aims to encourage musicians, young and old, from across the globe to perform these compositions, and for concert audiences to (once again) become acquainted with this "unheard" music.

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### Robert Hanf (1894-1944)

Bob Hanf was born in Amsterdam on November 25, 1894, to parents of German-Jewish decent, and grew up in an affluent, artistic environment. His mother was an accomplished pianist. He received his first violin lessons in the ensemble classes led by George Scager, a viola player in the Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Bob Hanf showed a great talent for drawing and he received lessons from the famous Amsterdam painter George Breitner. He became a versatile artist: drawing, painting, writing, playing the violin and composing. Nowadays the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam owns and displays several of his works. Around this time, Hanf met the writers Hendrik Marsman, Jan Spierdijk and Simon Vestdijk and introduced them to modern German writers like Franz Kafka. Hanf, himself, wrote two plays, three novels and several poems, influenced by Wedekind's anti-bourgeois morality and Kafka's surrealistic atmosphere and gloomy worldview.

In 1921, Hanf quit his studies in chemistry and architecture in Delft and moved to the attic in the family home on the Willemsparkweg in Amsterdam. At this time, he seriously began studying violin and composed his first works. He took lessons with Louis Zimmerman, concertmaster of the Concertgebouw Orchestra. Although he performed as violinist in professional orchestras, including the Arnhem Symphony Orchestra with conductor Martin Spanjaard, Hanf nevertheless decided to give up this career in 1928. Composing was better suited to his contemplative nature. He wrote works for violin, some string quartets, songs on texts by Rilke, Kafka, Morgenstern and Goethe, orchestral works and one opera. In 1941 both Hanf and composer Robert de Roos were awarded the Music Prize from the city of Amsterdam.

While in hiding in the Suikerhofje on the Prinsengracht, Hanf wrote, under the pseudonym Christiaan Philippus, a poem *Mijmeringen over de nachtzijde des levens* (Thoughts on the Dark Side of Life). This was his only work published after the war. On April 23, 1944, he was arrested in a raid by the Sicherheitsdienst and deported to Auschwitz where he was murdered on September 30, 1944.

*Leo Smit Foundation*

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### Serenade for orchestra

For the first performance of the *Serenade for orchestra* on March 12, 1937, by the 'Haarlemse Orkest Vereeniging' conducted by Frits Schuurman, Robert Hanf wrote the explanatory text in program book. After introducing himself, he noted: "His Serenade (for woodwinds, horns and string orchestra) was created in 1935. The five short movements display a clear thematic coherence, causing the composition as a whole to have a symphonic rather than suite-like character."

Critic G.J. Kalt wrote in the 'Haarlems Dagblad' the next day that the composition of Hanf met a warm reception from the audience with which the composer was quite pleased.

Robert Hanf employs a late-romantic musical language somewhat influenced by Gustav Mahler and Max Reger. Traditionally shaped melodies more than once modulate unexpectedly, while similarly in the harmony they are treated with a combination of familiar chords alongside peppered ones.

This exciting contrast makes the music highly attractive.

The five movements are: 1. Allegro, 2. Vivace, 3. Andante, 4. Allegretto and 5. Allegro. They follow one another without interruption, are entertaining and varied but nonetheless maintain a tight unity, as the two most important themes from the first movement are now and again reused, both literally and occasionally in a new rhythmic guise. The carefree and accessible *Serenade* bears witness to a lot of inspiration and sound craftsmanship.

The autograph of this composition is currently located at the Nederlands Muziek Instituut in The Hague.

*Lourens Stuijbergen*

(translation: Luc den Bakker)

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String:

2 Flutes  
2 Oboes  
2 Clarinets in B flat  
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

Percussion:

Timpani  
Snare Drum  
Bass Drum  
Cymbal  
Triangle

Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Violoncello  
Contrabass

# Serenade

voor orkest

Allegro (in vieren, maar tamelijk vlug)

Flute 1 *p*

Flute 2 *p*

Oboe 1 *p*

Oboe 2 *p*

Clarinet 1 in B $\flat$  *p*

Clarinet 2 in B $\flat$  *p*

Bassoon 1 *p*

Bassoon 2 *p*

Allegro (in vieren, maar tamelijk vlug)

Horn 1 in F *p*

Horn 2 in F

Horn 3 in F

Horn 4 in F

Timpani F / C

Percussion *pp*

Triangle *pp*

Allegro (in vieren, maar tamelijk vlug)

Violin I *pizz.* *p*

Violin II *pizz.* *p* arco *p*

Viola arco *p*

Violoncello *pizz.* *p*

Contrabass