

DoNE Mus

DoNE Mus
Forbidden
Music
Regained
preview

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Strijksextet

not dated

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.

Donemus is grateful to Eleonore Pameijer and Lourens Stuifbergen for the tireless efforts and expertise they dedicated to this project.

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), composers (who dare to perform these compositions) and/or concert audiences to (once again) become acquainted with this "unheard" music.

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www.leosmitfoundation.org
www.nederlandsmuziekinstituut.nl



Special thanks to Andre Bodin and Sebastiaan van Eck.

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Printed in the Netherlands

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Stichting Donemus Beheer, Rijswijk, The Netherlands

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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 Pijpsegracht, 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 25, 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

String Sextet

As musical line-ups go, the string sextet is relatively rare in classical music. Usually it consists of two violins, two violas and two cellos. Famous string sextets include those by Dvořák and Brahms, *Souvenir de Florence* by Tchaikovsky and the original version of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*.

With such illustrious examples in mind, a composer must gather the necessary courage to add his own string sextet to the series. It is therefore not impossible that a special occasion lay at the origin of this composition.

In his *String Sextet* 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. Hanf does not lose track of standard forms but enriches them with new elements. All these exciting contrasts make his music highly attractive.

The *String Sextet in e minor* by Robert Hanf has four movements: 1. Molto Allegro; 2. Moderato; 3. Allegro (non troppo); 4. Poco Adagio – Allegro Vivace.

The first movement contains a passionate main theme and a joyous counter theme. After a development of the motives from the main theme, at the end both themes reappear in opposite order. In soft hues the second movement opens with the fugue-like design of a longwinded theme. A short new theme appears fortissimo in the first violin extensively, and leads to a great climax. Subsequently the soft opening is repeated with variations that even include a combination with the new theme.

The third movement is a lively minuet in A-B-form, in which additionally the beginning of the fugue theme from the second movement plays a role.

Finally, in the fourth movement, a slow introduction precedes a lilting rondo with a refrain which is repeated several times with variations. Both in the introduction and in the actual rondo Hanf uses the main theme from the first movement, but in the rondo this theme is stripped of its original rhythmic pattern, causing the music to sound more carefree. The final measures contain a triumphant fanfare in which the joyous counter theme from the first movement makes a jubilant reappearance.

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

Lourens Stuijbergen

(translation: Luc den Bakker)

Scoring:

2 Violins
2 Violas
2 Violoncellos

Strijksextet

in e kl. t.

Robert Jan

(1942 - 2014)

Molto Allegro

I

Violin 1 *f*

Violin 2 *f*

Viola 1 *f*

Viola 2 *f*

Violoncello 1 *f*

Violoncello 2 *f*

7 1 *espr.*

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *sf*

Vla. 1 *sf*

Vc. 1 *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Vc. 2 *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

pizz.

14 2

Vln. 1 *f*

Vln. 2 *f*

Vla. 1 *p cresc.* *f*

Vla. 2 *cresc.* *f*

Vc. 1 *f* *arco*

Vc. 2 *f*