

Preface

Hermann Schroeder (1904-1984) is known above all as a composer for the organ and of church music. With over a hundred organ works, forty masses and two hundred motets he was one of the most prominent German composers of twentieth-century church music. Less well known is the fact that he wrote numerous pieces of chamber music, including three string trios and five string quartets. His second string quartet, op. 32 was written in September/October 1952. Schroeder won the Robert Schumann Prize awarded by the city of Düsseldorf that year; the four winners to win the prize after Hans Pfitzner, Kurt Hessenberg and Hans-Werner Henze. The prize was awarded to him in recognition of his work as a whole and for his second string quartet, which was given its first performance at the concert on 24.2.1953 by the Kunze Quartet led by Alfred Kurtze, leader of the city orchestra. (Hermann Schroeder (1904-1984). *Leben und Werk unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Kirchenmusik*, Kassel 1987, p. 294ff).

This second String Quartet is notable for its neo-classical style and its formal structure. The first movement (*Molto sostenuto/Vivace*) is in very clearly defined sonata form with two contrasting subjects. The first subject (bars 1-15) a calm viola line leads into the first subject, which then enters in the first violin, accompanied by driving quaver figures on both violins. The interval that characterises this subject is the second and diminished fifth – and both these intervals (second and fifth) are used by the whole quartet.

The second subject (bars 54-65) is also characterized by the interval of a second and offers a distinct contrast in its calm unison accompaniment and subdued dynamics. This is a very early work of the composer, who also wrote a treatise on musical form and analysis (1955) and a history of music from 1946-1981 at Cologne Academy of Music (published in 1985) (see also the biography by Karlheinz Stockhausen). The first and second subjects are separated by a repeat sign, indicating a clear formal structure. The development is also clearly recognisable and begins with a new rhythmic pattern (bars 66-82) concludes the exposition and the subsequent movement begins with a new rhythmic pattern in the development, which begins *pianissimo*. The diminished fifth, taken from the first subject, is central to the following exploration of motifs.

A third example of this transference is seen in the third movement (bars 137-157) before the recapitulation (bars 152-157). This is a device that is used frequently in the work of the composer, but it is not a conventional feature of musical tradition, but it is a device that is used frequently in the work of the composer. It is used to draw the listener's attention to the beginning of the movement.

The second movement (*Andante*) is in five sections (A-B-A-C-A). Yet that is only the external form, the internal structure is highly complex and the harmonies frequently dissonant, for example in the first section, the accompaniment consists of harsh parallel seconds, to which the primary motif (G-A-B) is superimposed. The interval of a second $F\sharp/C\sharp$ (violins I and II), the fifth of the first section (bars 1-4). The harmonies at the beginning of the B section are similar to those of the first section, with the upper part in G \sharp , with the rhythmic ostinato of the two lower parts in G. The relationship between the upper part and the lower parts can thereafter be presumed, as the lower part consists of inverted seventh chords that bear no functional relationship to the upper part.

The third movement (*Allegro*) has very closely worked melodies and counterpoint where the parts move with complete total independence. Broadly arching melodic lines are so closely interwoven that the expressive power of individual lines almost bursts out of the harmonic texture. The canon between the first and second violins (bars 42-43) is no mere straightforward classical convention, but the necessary consequence of heightened rhythmic activity. The result is inevitably from the compression of the melodic line.

The fourth movement (*Allegro*) is – as often in Schroeder's music – a jolly and lively finale that brings the whole work to a joyful conclusion. The main musical theme again uses intervals of a second and a fifth, the motivic nucleus of the entire work (as the beginning, in the upper part). All three movements are thus united by common thematic material. The two violin parts play in parallel fourths, a technique frequently to be found in Schroeder's work (3rd movement, bars 1-3). In terms of form, this is a rondo in five sections with section A recurring twice (bar 53ff, bar 106ff) around fugal lines (bar 11ff, bar 63ff), playful *pizzicato* passages (bar 20ff, bar 33ff) and plenty of motor activity with syncopations and time changes.

This new edition presents the score and individual parts together in order to make this challenging and rewarding quartet accessible to string players and audiences today.

II. Streichquartett

I.

Hermann Schroeder
Werk 12

Molto sostenuto ♩ = 56-58

Violine I

Violine II

Viola
(Verhalten im Ausdruck)

Violoncello

10.

Vivace ♩ = 6-132

Sp

Sp mf espr.

trém.

f pizz.

Aufführungsdauer 18 Minuten

24.

Tr

p

mf

This system contains measures 24 through 29. It features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a supporting line. A trill (tr) is marked above the final note of measure 29. Dynamic markings include piano (*p*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*).

30.

mf espr.

arco

arco

This system contains measures 30 through 34. The treble clef staff includes the marking *mf espr.* and *arco*. The bass clef staff also includes the marking *arco*.

35.

pizz. f

pizz. f

pizz. f

This system contains measures 35 through 39. It features multiple staves with dynamic markings for *pizz. f* (pizzicato forte) and *arco* (arco).

arco

pizz.

This system contains measures 40 through 44. It features a treble clef staff with *arco* and *pizz.* markings, and a bass clef staff with *pizz.* markings. There are also some numerical markings like '2' and '2' below the notes.

PREVIEW

Low Resolution

46.

Musical score for measures 46-52. The system includes a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a double bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals. The bass clef staff contains a bass line. The double bass clef staff contains a low register line. Dynamics include *fp* and *f pizz.*

53.

Musical score for measures 53-60. The system includes a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a double bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals. The bass clef staff contains a bass line. The double bass clef staff contains a low register line. Dynamics include *p arco* and *f*.

61.

Musical score for measures 61-68. The system includes a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a double bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals. The bass clef staff contains a bass line. The double bass clef staff contains a low register line. Dynamics include *f*.

Musical score for measures 69-76. The system includes a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a double bass clef staff. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with various accidentals. The bass clef staff contains a bass line. The double bass clef staff contains a low register line. Dynamics include *cresc.*

PREVIEW

Low Resolution

74.

ff *sf* *ten.* *sf* *ten.*

80. *rit.* *a tempo*

pp *G.P.* *pp* *G.P.* *pp* *P*

arco

89.

cresc. *cresc.*

PREVIEW

Low Resolution

101.

cresc.

This system contains measures 101 through 105. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The music is characterized by dense, flowing sixteenth-note passages with frequent slurs and ties. A *cresc.* (crescendo) marking is present in the second measure of the bass staff.

106.

This system contains measures 106 through 110. The notation continues with intricate sixteenth-note patterns and slurs across all four staves.

111.

This system contains measures 111 through 115. The musical texture remains dense with sixteenth-note runs and slurs.

This system contains measures 116 through 120. The notation shows a continuation of the complex sixteenth-note passages with various slurs and ties.

PREVIEW

Low Resolution

121.

126.

131.

dim. e rit. *tranquillo*

arco

pp *arco*

pp

arco

pp