

## ENSEMBLE 360

Premieres on Friday 14 May 3.00pm  
Filmed in the Crucible Studio, Sheffield

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**BENJAMIN NABARRO** violin  
**CLAUDIA AJMONE-MARSAN** violin  
**RUTH GIBSON** viola  
**GEMMA ROSEFIELD** cello

**BEETHOVEN** Grosse Fuge

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**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)**  
**Grosse Fuge Op.133**

Ouverture: Allegro – Meno mosso e moderato –  
Allegretto; Fuga: Allegro – Meno mosso e moderato –  
Allegro molto e con brio – Allegro

The Grosse Fuge ('Great Fugue') was originally composed as the finale of his String Quartet Op.130, and first performed as part of this Quartet on 21 March 1826 at a concert in Vienna given by Ignaz Schuppanzigh's quartet. Reaction was mostly hostile and bewildered: the critic for the 'Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung' called it 'incomprehensible' and likened its 'host of dissonances' to a 'Babel-like confusion'. Beethoven himself castigated the players: 'Why didn't they encore the Fugue? That alone should have been repeated! Cattle! Asses!'

The publisher Matthias Artaria persuaded Beethoven to write a new finale for Op.130 and to issue the Grosse Fuge as a separate work. This appeared in print months after Beethoven's death with a dedication to Archduke Rudolph. The Fugue was described as 'tantôt libre, tantôt recherchée' – partly free and partly the result of study. It took a century for the work to be appreciated and understood.

Among its most enthusiastic advocates was Stravinsky, who wrote the the Fugue 'enlarges the meaning of Beethoven more than any other work ... the music defies familiarity by being new and different every time. Beethoven is exploring a region beyond the other late quartets.'

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## ENSEMBLE 360

Ensemble 360 has gained an enviable reputation across the UK not only for the quality and integrity of its playing, but also for its ability to communicate the music to a range of different audiences. Formed in 2005, 11 musicians of international standing came together to take up residency in Sheffield with Music in the Round, establishing a versatile group of five string players, five wind players and a pianist. The musicians believe that concerts should be informal, friendly and relaxed occasions, and perform 'in the round' wherever possible. Critical acclaim has greeted all the group's CDs to date: Mozart and Spohr (ASV Gold), Beethoven and Poulenc (Nimbus Alliance).

Ensemble 360 has performed at many of the leading festivals and venues in England, including Wigmore Hall, National Centre for Early Music, Bath and Buxton International Music Festivals. It appears regularly on BBC Radio 3 and at a number of small-scale venues nationally with Music in the Round. Ensemble 360 is at the heart of chamber music in South Yorkshire, appearing regularly in Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster as part of Music in the Round's concert series, and is central to the nine-day Sheffield Chamber Music Festival in May each year.

Outside Ensemble 360 many of the musicians have highly successful careers, performing with groups including the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, English National Opera, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Camerata Bern, Manchester Camerata and Nash Ensemble.

## MUSIC IN THE ROUND

Music in the Round is the leading national promoter of chamber music. For over 35 years we have been bringing people and music closer together through our friendly and informative style of 'in the round' performances, touring to numerous venues around the country as well as presenting two concert series and the Sheffield Chamber Music Festival each year at our home venue, the Crucible Studio. Our concerts are characterised by passion, excellence and proximity, and even in these challenging times of a global pandemic we have been striving to connect people through music by presenting socially-distanced live concerts and creating films featuring our musicians to enjoy online.

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SHEFFIELD CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Sheffield Chamber Music Festival is the highlight of the year for all of us, so although it's online again, we have put everything into creating a digital event that everyone can come together to enjoy, across Sheffield, South Yorkshire, the UK, and even the world!

Your generosity in the last year has made it possible for us to continue with our aim to bring people closer to music. It is thanks to you, our Friends, supporters and audiences, that we are able to bring you such a full Festival programme this May.

We are not charging for any of the events, but we are relying on your generosity to keep us going. For over a year now, musicians have been unable to work properly and earn a decent living. After facing such a challenging time for so long they need us more than ever. Any support that you give us makes a difference to them. **Please donate as you feel: every single gift makes a difference.**

Music in the Round is a registered charity no. 326811