

Friendship through Music!



EDO Cork 2026

**Sunday
27th September
2026
5pm**



Children's Hospices Across Scotland

European Doctors Orchestra

The European Doctors Orchestra was founded in 2004 by a plastic surgeon, Miklos Pohl, and GP, Michael Lasserson, and the first concert was held in Blackheath Halls, Greenwich, London. Our purpose is to raise money for health-related or children's charities, to spread the joy and appreciation of music as widely as we can, and to create a nurturing space for doctors from all over Europe to enjoy a restorative weekend playing music and socialising.

We are now a full symphony orchestra with 100 players, have played over 40 concerts, and have nearly 500 present or past players who come from 23 different countries. We have supported 28 charities and raised over £250,000. The doctors pay for their own accommodation, travel and a registration fee that covers all expenses including the cost of the concert. The cost of your ticket today goes directly to our chosen charity, Children's Hospices Across Scotland.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to Glasgow, to this wonderful concert venue and to the European Doctors Orchestra (EDO). I have been lucky enough to play with the EDO for nearly 20 years, and I think I am not alone in celebrating the importance of EDO and the wonderful experience of being part of this amazing group of people. Yes, we try and play music to the highest standard of which we are capable, and yes, we always raise money for great country-specific charities, and yes, we get to visit great places all over Europe. But the most important thing we do is connect. We connect with each other, through the act of making music together, but also in conversations and friendships. And we connect with you, our audience. And in these increasingly tricky times of division and crisis, this seems to me to be the most important thing we can do. Connect and celebrate the best of being human together. Enjoy!

Dave Thomson , Chair of EDO

More than a Hospice: giving families the choice they deserve

Every week in Scotland, families face the devastating reality of being told that their child has a life-shortening condition. In an instant, life changes forever. Hospital appointments become routine, uncertainty becomes constant, and precious time together takes on a new meaning. At Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS), we believe that no family should face this journey alone.

For more than 30 years, CHAS has

provided unwavering care to babies, children, and young people with life-shortening conditions, as well as the families who love them. Through our hospices at Rachel House in Kinross and Robin House in Balloch, our CHAS at Home service, and partnerships with NHS teams across Scotland, we help families make the most of every moment. We provide expert medical care alongside emotional support to ensure that families receive the support they need, wherever and

whenever they need it.

However, children's palliative care is changing. Advances in medicine mean that many children are living longer with increasingly complex conditions. Over the last decade, the number of children living with life-shortening conditions has increased significantly, creating growing demand for specialist care and support. At the same time, families are telling us that they want greater flexibility, greater support closer to home, and greater choice over how and where their child receives care.

That is why CHAS has launched the More Than a Hospice Appeal, our ambitious £20 million appeal to transform the future of children's hospice care in Scotland. The appeal will fund the rebuilding of Rachel House, the renewal of Robin House, and investment in new services that bring expert hospice care into homes, hospitals, and communities across Scotland. But this appeal is about so much more than buildings, it is reimagining how care is delivered so that every family has access to the support that is right for them.

At the heart of the appeal is a simple but powerful belief: choice matters.

Every family is different, and every child's journey is unique. Some families want the reassurance of hospice care. Others wish to spend as much time as possible at home, surrounded by familiar comforts, friends and family. Some children will need support in hospital settings, while others may benefit from specialist care delivered in their

local community. The More Than a Hospice Appeal is helping to make these choices possible by expanding home-based care, strengthening partnerships with NHS services, creating hospice support within hospitals, and ensuring specialist advice is available throughout Scotland. That is why the More Than a Hospice Appeal is so vital. It is about building a future where every family has genuine choice, wherever they live in Scotland, and where no one faces the death of their child alone.

By supporting this appeal, you are helping to create a future in which families can decide what matters most to them. You are helping to ensure children can live well, make joyful memories, and experience the best possible quality of life. And when the time comes, you are helping families choose where and how they spend those final precious moments together, supported with dignity, compassion, and expert care.

We are incredibly grateful to the European Doctors Orchestra for choosing to support CHAS through this wonderful concert. By sharing their extraordinary talent and passion for music, they are helping raise awareness and vital funds for the More Than a Hospice Appeal. Their generosity and commitment will help ensure that more families across Scotland have the care, support, and choice they deserve. Thank you to every musician, supporter, and audience member for helping us rewrite the future of children's palliative care.

Programme

Dvořák Slavonic Dances Op. 46, Nos. 1 and 8

Brahms Double Concerto for Violin and Cello Op. 102

Interval

Dvořák Symphony No. 7 Op. 70

Gordon Bragg, Conductor

Gordon Bragg has an extremely diverse musical life as a violinist, conductor, and pianist, performing regularly throughout Scotland and the UK. Gordon is Sub-principal Second Violin of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, performing across the UK and touring worldwide.

Gordon is also in demand as a conductor. Following studies in Manchester and Zürich, Gordon has conducted the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Bayerische Kammerphilharmonie and Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and led a critically acclaimed performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* with Scottish Ballet at the Edinburgh International Festival. With SCO, Gordon has conducted at the St. Magnus Festival as well as conducting various works for the SCO's digital seasons.

Gordon's first formal musical education was at the Junior Department of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where he won the Conservatoire prizes for violin and piano. He graduated in violin performance from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with first class honours and participated in

masterclasses with members of the Amadeus and Takacs quartets, as well as taking part in an Erasmus exchange to the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. Gordon was Concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and member of the European Union Youth Orchestra, as well as playing with the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester under Claudio Abbado.



Soloists

Afonso Fesch, violin

Born in Porto, Portuguese violinist Afonso Fesch has built a prolific career as a chamber musician, soloist, and orchestral player across Europe. A passionate advocate for chamber music, Afonso has performed both as a soloist and chamber musician alongside distinguished artists such as Guy Braunstein, Giuliano Carmignola, Thomas Demenga, Yoel Gamzou, Otto Tausk, François Benda, Silvia Simonescu, Roland Glassl, Pascal Siffert, Diemut Poppen, Anton Kernjak, Raphaël Oleg, and Ivry Gitlis, among many others. As a soloist, he has appeared with leading ensembles including the Hamburger Symphoniker, Staatsorchester Kassel, Basel Sinfonieorchester, Porto



Symphony Orchestra at Casa da Música, International Mahler Orchestra, Harbin Symphony Orchestra, and the Stuttgarter Philharmoniker. He has also held concertmaster roles with several notable ensembles, including the International Mahler Orchestra, Ensemble Musique des Lumières, and has frequently appeared as a guest concertmaster with other orchestras and ensembles. He is currently Principal First Violin of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Alexandre Foster, cello

The Canadian cellist Alexandre Foster, based in Basel, has been recognised both for his refined approach to music-making and his high versatility of playing. As a Baroque and a modern cellist, he has, over the years, performed with leading artists of both fields in some of the most prestigious halls of Europe. He is also a founding member of the prizewinning Calvino Trio, and he also plays in the baroque ensemble, Les Passions de l'Âme.

His extensive discography includes the first recording of Beethoven's piano quartets on period instruments (Dynamik), and the complete recording of Biber's *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi), which received worldwide critical acclaim. His latest recording of music for solo



cello (Veress, Wyttenbach, Holliger, Moser, Ligeti, Kurtág, Demenga), with the participation of Heinz Holliger, has been praised for the eclecticism of the repertoire and for the interpretation. He is also very much in demand as a teacher.

After working more than four years at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart and at the Hochschule der Künste in Bern, he is now teaching at the Musik-Akademie der Stadt Basel. He is regularly invited to Masterclasses across Europe.

Programme notes

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904): Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, Nos. 1 and 8 (1878)

Dvořák was a relatively late developer as a composer. His early musical career was spent as a piano teacher and violist in the Provisional Theatre Orchestra, the precursor to the National Theatre Orchestra of Prague. In this ensemble, he played for conductors including Smetana and Wagner, absorbing copious opera scores from the very heart of the orchestra, including the premiere of Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*. This experience very likely shaped his own compositional voice and outlook, balancing rich lyricism, high drama, and an ardent enthusiasm for the development of a Czech musical identity.

The dawn of his compositional success came through the Austrian State Stipendium for Composition, for which he first successfully applied in 1874. He won the award again in 1876 and 1877. The jury at this latter competition included Johannes Brahms and the stern critic Eduard Hanslick. Both were impressed. Brahms was so visibly overcome that he recommended Dvořák to his own publisher, Simrock, affording the younger composer the financial security to focus on composition alone. The first publication to emerge from this relationship was a highly successful set of *Moravian Duets* for piano. In a letter back to Brahms, Simrock wrote of his enchantment by the 'Strange folk-like quality, national poetic sensibility and sensual attraction' of this dance-inspired music.

Sensing an opportunity, Simrock invited some more dance music. What followed was the set of eight *Slavonic Dances* Opus 46, later to be followed by a second set (Opus 72) in 1886. This arrangement was artistically valuable to the young composer, offering him the opportunity to begin his lifelong efforts to define that elusive Czech musical identity. Writing back to Simrock, he insisted that 'An artist has his country, in which he must have firm faith and an ardent heart'.

The obvious inspiration for the *Slavonic Dances* was Brahms' popular set of *Hungarian Dances*. Both works were originally scored for piano duet and subsequently became familiar in orchestral versions. In pitching the music at a level readily accessible to amateur pianists, this strategy shrewdly optimised their chances of popularity in the pre-recording era. Both works are full of rhythmic energy and memorable tunes in short phrases. Importantly, however, where Brahms drew extensively on pre-existing Hungarian and Romani melodies, all of the music in Dvořák's set was entirely new. While it was inspired by the music he had encountered in the provinces, there were no direct quotations. This would later also be his approach when preparing his *New World Symphony* (No. 9), where the music evokes, rather than quotes, Native American and African-American themes and idioms.

As Simrock predicted, the *Slavonic*

Dances were immediately popular. The critic Louis Ehlert in the Berlin *Nationalzeitung* could barely contain his excitement: 'I was sitting one day in very bad humour... when suddenly two works by a composer totally unknown to me immediately engrossed my fullest attention: Slavonic Dances... by Antonín Dvořák... He has published, as yet, very little, but is reputed to have a great quantity of compositions ready, including quartets and symphonies... I consider the Slavonic Dances to be a work which will make its triumphant way through the world just as Brahms' Hungarian Dances did. But there is no question here of imitation; his dances are not in the least Brahmsian. Divine providence flows through this music; there is not a trace of artificiality or constraint'.

It is often suggested that Dvořák's fee of 300 Marks from Simrock was derisory. Though difficult to compare directly, this was likely equivalent to several months of industrial wages. Although it was no doubt shrewd of

Simrock to offer a one-off fee rather than any royalty agreement, this was not pocket change for an as-yet unknown provincial composer. In 1885, when Simrock requested a further set of Slavonic Dances, Dvořák was more circumspect in his response, replying 'Excuse me, please, I am not in the mood for merry music like this... It is very difficult to do the same thing twice'. Happily, he would prove amenable to persuasion.

The music itself is relatively simple, designed to be absorbed as the earworms of the day. Each is in the style of a regional folk dance, including two each of the Furiant (numbers 1 and 8, performed here), Sousedská and Skočná, plus a Dumka and a Polka. The Furiant is a Bohemian dance for pairs, defined by its quick pulse and three-against-two rhythms – the same principle later used by Leonard Bernstein in America from *West Side Story*, and by Dvořák himself in the scherzos of his sixth and seventh symphonies.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897): Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra Op. 102 ('Double Concerto') (1887)

1. Allegro
2. Andante
3. Vivace non troppo

The most famous image of Brahms as the rotund, grey-bearded elder statesman of symphonic music belies the second most famous image of the German composer, in which a fresher-face stares thoughtfully into the distance. This duality between conservative and progressive is a repeated theme in biographies

of Brahms. Nonetheless, it is the former which remains inescapably the most familiar image, the final heir to a symphonic tradition passed from Haydn to Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. At the same time, his unwavering respect for 'pure' or 'absolute' music put him at odds with the likes of Liszt and Wagner, whose radical new soundworlds seemed always to have some deeper meaning or subject matter. Despite this, Brahms was not wholly opposed

to 'new' music. He was conflicted in his opposition to, and simultaneous admiration of, Wagner, and he treasured his manuscript score of *Tannhäuser*.

The Double Concerto neatly exemplifies this duality between conservative and progressive. The presence of two soloists is unusual for a concerto, and in what would prove to be Brahms' final word in orchestral composition, he subtly subverts and adapts the traditional forms and characteristics which would have been expected of him.

The story of the Double Concerto begins with Joseph Joachim, the greatest violinist of the day. Though only two years older than Brahms, Joachim was already famous by the time the pair met in 1853, his career launched aged just twelve by a legendary performance of Beethoven's Violin Concerto, conducted by Felix Mendelssohn. After the first meeting, Joachim became friend and mentor to Brahms, encouraging him to travel to Düsseldorf to meet Robert and Clara Schumann. This meeting and Robert's enthusiastic sponsorship would later launch Brahms' career in earnest, and even after Robert's premature death, Clara was a devoted friend to Brahms. Accordingly, Brahms and Joachim forged a decades-long friendship, a relationship which would see the gestation of the Violin Concerto, dedicated to Joachim. The relationship was for many years a convivial and mutually beneficial one, the dashing young composer benefitting greatly from Joachim's promotion of his work.

Things changed abruptly around 1880

when Joachim became convinced that his wife, the contralto Amalie Schneeweiss, was having an affair with Brahms' publisher, Fritz Simrock. As the marriage disintegrated, Brahms wrote privately to Amalie to express his support for her in the face of his friend's behaviour: 'With no thought have I ever acknowledged that your husband might be in the right... I hardly need to say that, even earlier than you did, I became aware of the unfortunate character trait with which Joachim so inexcusably tortures himself and others'. When Amalie produced this letter in court as character support, Joachim was of course incensed at the apparent betrayal, the letter seemingly a terminal event in the pair's relationship. The two barely spoke for seven years.

There was no sign of a thaw in the relationship until 1887, when Brahms wrote to Simrock about 'My latest piece of folly, which is a concerto for violin and cello! Owing to the relations between myself and Joachim I tried to give up the job, but it was no use'. The now rotund and bearded composer sent Joachim his ideas for the concerto, an olive branch which Joachim accepted. Clara Schumann recorded in her diary that 'This concerto is a work of reconciliation – Joachim and Brahms have spoken to each other again for the first time in years'.

The concerto was premiered in Cologne, with Joachim on violin and their friend Robert Hausmann on cello. Public and critical reception was warm rather than ecstatic. The work

was perceived as austere, lacking the displays of virtuosic fireworks which perhaps had been expected. Even Clara Schumann was unimpressed, noting that it lacked 'The warmth and freshness which are so often found to be in his works'. Brahms' other great friend, the pioneering Viennese surgeon and amateur musician Theodor Billroth, damningly described it as 'Tedious and wearisome, a really senile production'.

As well as being radical in instrumentation, the concerto only loosely obeys the established rules of the genre. Unusually, after the orchestra bursts into the room with a brief introduction, the soloists are given an early cadenza-like passage. The opening movement eventually settles into broadly conventional form. Two contrasting figures compete unconvincingly for dominance, one stormily anguished and the other softly smiling in the winds. There is dialogue aplenty between the individual soloists and with the orchestra, with occasional glimpses of watery autumnal sunshine between

more stormy conditions elsewhere. Commentators have also heard a variation on Joachim's old musical motto, F-A-E (frei aber einsam — 'free [single] but lonely'), familiar from the collaborative 'F-A-E Sonata' of 1853. Whether Brahms deliberately encodes the motto here, adapted to A-E-F, is impossible to prove, but in a concerto conceived as an act of reconciliation, the association is irresistible.

The slow movement opens with a two-note horn call, before a touchingly innocent and reverential unison theme emerges. This is chamber music dressed as orchestral music, with a profound sense of intimacy between the two soloists and with the orchestra, ultimately reaching a serene close. The finale, a modified rondo, carries a distinctively folksy, plausibly Hungarian, air in its livelier passages. The agitated main theme blusters into life in the orchestra before being tossed around between soloists and orchestra. The coda returns to autumnal hues; here, perhaps, is the music of an old man who has made amends.

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904): Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70 (1885)

1. Allegro maestoso
2. Poco adagio
3. Scherzo: Vivace – poco meno mosso
4. Finale: Allegro

Most of Dvořák's best-loved works – the later symphonies and the Slavonic Dances among them – are characterised by extraordinary melodic generosity and an often-sunny disposition. The seventh symphony,

widely cited as the composer's greatest in technical terms, is cut from a different cloth. The outlook here is sombre, and its impeccably crafted musical development is born of remarkably simple melodic and rhythmic cells. At the time of its composition, Dvořák had only recently heard Brahms' autumnal third symphony, a work which he greatly admired. His response was to write a work which would prove to be very

much in the manner of Brahms' as-yet-unwritten fourth symphony; both may claim to be their respective composer's 'Tragic' symphony.

What drove Dvořák to write such a serious work? Biographers have proposed personal grief, including the death of his mother (to whom he was devoted) two years earlier, but the evidence is circumstantial. More immediately, Dvořák was grappling with his increasingly prominent position as both an international composer and a Czech national figure. Should he be writing music to please audiences at the heart of the Habsburg Empire, or should he be writing authentically Bohemian music? What was his role as an eminent artist in Czech political struggles? The answer, of course, could be some, all or none of these factors; this is symphonic writing at its purest, resulting in a perfectly proportioned work built upon the foundations of meticulously developed themes and rhythms. The precise meaning of the note at the top of the slow movement – 'From the sad years' – therefore remains cryptic.

Work began on the symphony in December 1884 following Dvořák's election as an Honorary Member of London's Royal Philharmonic Society earlier in the year. Dvořák was surely conscious of the long shadows of Beethoven's ninth symphony, which had also been commissioned by the RPS. His ambition that the seventh 'Must be capable of stirring the world, and may God grant that it will!' bears much in common with Beethoven's ninth, as does the choice of D minor, a soundworld inextricably associated

with the dark grandeur of Beethoven 9, Mozart's Requiem and Brahms' first piano concerto. More optimistically, Great Britain was a place with fond associations for Dvořák: his *Stabat Mater* had recently been rapturously received, and he wrote that 'I am convinced that England offers me a new and certainly happier future, and one which I hope may benefit our entire Czech art. The English are a fine people[!], enthusiastic about music, and it is well known that they remain loyal to those whose art they have enjoyed. God grant that it may be so with me.'

The first movement was quickly sketched, with the composer able to think of little else, followed by the remainder of the symphony by March 1885. Despite another ugly tussle with Simrock, who resisted using Dvořák's Czech first name and a Czech title on the publication, Dvořák was delighted with the premiere at St James's Hall in London, which proved an overwhelming success. The great musicologist Donald Tovey would later write of it as 'Along with the four Brahms symphonies and Schubert's Ninth... among the greatest and purest examples in this art form since Beethoven'.

The soundscape of the first movement is almost entirely grounded in the sombre foundations of D minor. The opening theme is uncommonly economical, spanning just four notes on the keyboard above a droning D in the lower voices. Of this first theme, the composer recalled 'The first subject of my new symphony flashed into my mind on the arrival of the festive train bringing our

countrymen from Pest'. Dvořák was an unrepentant railway enthusiast, prone to memorising timetables so that he might sit on a platform to observe a particular locomotive, but this particular train was also symbolic for other reasons. It was carrying several hundred Hungarians and Hungarian Czechs to Prague with a cultural-political agenda, stopping for nationalistic rallies in many towns and cities on the route. Some listeners have therefore heard the rhythms of a steam locomotive in this first theme. It is followed, however, by a far more lyrical second theme, which sings with Brahmsian nostalgia and wistfulness. Unusually, it is this elegant second theme which begins the movement's development passage, but the music is almost always dark and turbulent. Ultimately, after the various themes are stormily tossed around, dissected and reconstructed in many and various ways, the coda is heralded by a cello figure which is strikingly reminiscent of the storm in the opening bars of Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* (1856). Rather than careering into the buffers with full-throttle tragedy (as Brahms would later do in the first movement of his fourth symphony), Dvořák instead reels the music back from the brink, and the movement's last bars dissolve into terse darkness.

The slow movement, with its 'From the sad years' subheading, is neither a heart-on-sleeve slow movement nor a summer idyll, as it is sometimes treated. 'What is in my mind', wrote Dvořák, 'is Love, God and my Fatherland'. There is no mention of his family bereavements, though there

are musical allusions to Brahms' third symphony. The movement opens with a prayer-like wind chorale, which later reappears in fragile form for solo oboe. Elsewhere there are flashes of darkness and nostalgia, though there is always a sense of movement and direction in the music, searching without success for resolution. The scherzo continues this search for the light via a light-footed Czech folkdance, the *Furiant*, characterised by the alternation or superimposition of two-against-three rhythmic groupings. Set against the repeated dance figure is a sweepingly elegant counter melody, though even in the more lyrical trio, there is never really an optimism that genuine respite will be found.

We reach the finale facing a monumental uphill struggle to achieve any sort of darkness-into-light triumph, or even some sense of resolution. Gustav Mahler's 'Tragic' symphony, his sixth (1904), offers an intriguing later parallel to Dvořák's seventh, above all in a finale which seems to tussle relentlessly between darkness and light. Both begin with a shadowy introduction; Dvořák's leaps an octave upwards before plunging downward into shadowy chromaticism. Eventually the main theme of the movement is reached via a gunshot from the timpani. A more lyrical second subject offers another perspective; is this perhaps the route out of the dark? This seems plausible as the lyrical theme is giddily taken up by the whole orchestra with increasingly breathless haste. As the music thunders into its last paragraphs, though, the destination

remains unclear. Not for Dvořák was the easy cliché of a darkness-to-light narrative, though nor was an outright tragic ending: even when we reach the

final key change, to D major – just five bars from the end – the mood remains brilliantly ambiguous.

Rohan Shotton

Brahms and the Company Greatness Keeps: Mentors, Sponsors and Critical Friends in Music and Medicine

In the early evening of Friday 5 November in Vienna in 1875, the city's leading Professor of Surgery finishes his operating list at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus. He hurries home to his handsome townhouse in Alser Straße 20, just a few minutes away. Professor Theodor Billroth is smartly attired and urbane, one of the pre-eminent figures in surgery in the late nineteenth century as pioneer of abdominal surgical technique. Outside his house, he meets the portly, scruffily bearded figure of Johannes Brahms, carrying a thick folder of pages. The two greet one another with warm conviviality. Before long, the two are joined by the Hellmesberger Quartet for a rehearsal in Billroth's drawing room of Brahms' recently completed Piano Quartet, Opus 60. The surgeon is an accomplished amateur pianist and violinist, but to Brahms he is also a trusted friend and critical listener, capable of hearing new works with open ears and providing highly valued feedback.

At the University, Billroth was also a celebrated and influential teacher, his lecture theatres packed and his educational methods widely praised for their immersive residency-based postgraduate training. Only a few days previously, Brahms had written to Billroth to confirm arrangements

for the rehearsal, but also to thank him for a copy of his new book, *Über das Lehren und Lernen der medicinischen Wissenschaften an den Universitäten der deutschen Nation* (On the Teaching and Learning of the Medical Sciences in the Universities of the German Nation). This treatise on medical education was, perhaps surprisingly, warmly received by Brahms, who responded 'For your book, my very best thanks. For a passionate reader this is, however, a dangerous sort of book. You keep on reading it with care, even though it no longer concerns you'. More broadly, Billroth was uniquely willing to publish his own successes and failures, morbidities and mortalities in a manner highly reminiscent of modern-day clinical audit. Decades before Alexander Fleming, he seems likely to have stumbled across the curious ability of *Penicillium* mould to inhibit bacterial growth.

What did the two friends offer each other? Billroth was not merely a wealthy Brahms fan but a trusted critic and intellectual equal, with whom Brahms could reflect on aesthetics and music theory. In turn, Brahms offered Billroth a realisation that 'Technique and specific artistic beauty are bound inseparably', as Billroth reflected after a two-hour conversation in 1893.

Their friendship flourished over many years; in 1873, Brahms dedicated his two Opus 51 String Quartets to the surgeon, after whom they were nicknamed 'Billroth 1 and Billroth 2'. With neat symmetry, two of Billroth's pioneering procedures would go on to acquire precisely the same nicknames: 'Billroth 1' (1881) was the first successful partial gastrectomy for gastric cancer, combined with gastroduodenostomy, and 'Billroth 2' (1885) was the first distal gastrectomy with gastrojejunostomy. Few surgeons have two eponymous operations and Brahms quartets. Brahms was a stringent self-critic, destroying much of his own work throughout his life, especially during his final illness (probably pancreatic cancer). Billroth was therefore highly valued: intellectually ferocious and sufficiently musically educated to understand composition, but also sufficiently removed from the musical world to be able to listen and comment objectively.

In Billroth, Brahms saw a respected equal, both giants in seemingly disparate fields and yet able to collaborate. Brahms was also a generous and effective mentor and sponsor, though. As you can read in the Slavonic Dances notes, the launchpad of Dvořák's career was the Austrian State Stipendium in 1877. Although Dvořák was already a prolific composer, his breakthrough in Vienna was the result of this prize putting him directly before Brahms. Leading the panel, Johannes Brahms quickly identified Dvořák's talents, but then did something far more significant than simply awarding the

prize. He is often cited as an early mentor of the Czech composer, and though Brahms undoubtedly offered musical advice and encouragement, this was not his most consequential contribution. More pragmatically, Brahms' key intervention was closer to sponsorship than mentorship. Lending the considerable weight of his own reputation, Brahms recommended Dvořák to his own publisher, Simrock, generously opening a door which would prove to be the touchpaper for Dvořák's career. This was a relationship which transferred opportunity as much as it did knowledge.

This distinction remains relevant. Where mentors may advise or dispense knowledge and guidance, sponsors additionally use their own position and networks to create opportunities for others. Brahms seems to have done both, but the most important of his contributions to Dvořák's career was very likely the latter. Dvořák went on to prepare the highly successful Slavonic Dances in the mould of Brahms' Hungarian Dances. By the time he wrote the seventh symphony, he was no longer an obscure protégé but a major European composer with an unmistakably individual voice. The parallel in medical training will be familiar to many.

At the start of Brahms' career, he benefitted greatly from the friendship and mentorship of the great violinist, Joseph Joachim. Before Brahms could open doors for others, others had to open doors for him. Without Joachim facilitating Brahms' meeting with the Schumanns, Johannes would not have

benefitted from Robert Schumann's enthusiastic advocacy. Brahms and Joachim would ultimately develop a decades-long friendship, artistic equals at the pinnacle of European musical life. Their musical collaboration is most evident in Brahms' Violin Concerto, for which he sought extensive technical advice from Joachim on writing for the violin, even allowing Joachim to provide the first movement cadenza. As we will learn in the story of the Double Concerto, however, this friendship wavered. When, during an ugly divorce, Joachim came to suspect Brahms of siding with his wife, the two parted company into a seven-year estrangement. The Double Concerto would prove to be the first olive branch of reconciliation in repairing this relationship.

Seen together, these relationships are strikingly different. With Billroth, Brahms was willing to invite criticism of unfinished works by a trusted friend from outside his own discipline. With Dvořák, he could use his own acquired authority to invest in, and create opportunities for, a younger colleague. With Joachim, he initially benefitted from advocacy himself, then built a friendship within his own discipline which would eventually prove robust enough to survive serious fracture.

Above all, though, these relationships reflect the fallacy of our view of excellence as the product of individuals, rather than a communal endeavour. This is common to the great figures of both music and medicine, both of which commemorate apparently exceptional individuals in the operation, discovery or composition attached to a familiar name. Yet these individuals are the products of complex interplay between opportunities, networks, and friendships. They depend upon colleagues prepared to listen carefully and criticise honestly, seniors prepared to recognise ability and open doors, and peers with whom disagreement need not extinguish friendship. Contemporary medical practice formally recognises an obligation to teach and train, enshrined in professional guidance in the United Kingdom. Yet Brahms' relationships with Billroth, Dvořák and Joachim suggest that excellence demands something beyond these regulatory duties: an obligation to seek and accept criticism, to recognise and nurture talent, and to foster new relationships across disciplines and international boundaries.

Rohan Shotton

Players

Violin			
Arthur	Doyle (Leader)	Renal Medicine	Scotland
Chris	Aldren	Ear, Nose and Throat Surgery	United Kingdom
Thomas	Barrie	Ophthalmic Surgery	Scotland
Christoph	Becker	General Practice	Germany
João	Bicho	Medical Student	Portugal
Martina	Buerge	Anaesthetics and ICU	United Kingdom
Matthew	Chan	Emergency Medicine / HealthTech	United Kingdom
Emma	de Sousa	General Surgery	Ireland
Caroline	Fielding	Clinical Microbiology	Ireland
Jade	Gabillot	General Surgery resident	France
Sara	Giletta	Geriatric Medicine	Ireland
Sarra	Griti	Internal Medicine	Scotland
Tina	Ha	Orthopaedics and Trauma	United Kingdom
Anne-Mair	Hammond-Jones	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Elaine	Jolly	Nephrology	United Kingdom
Anne-Katrin	Kantzer	Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Paediatrics	Sweden
Wayne	Maxwell	Dermatology	United Kingdom
Dominic J.	Müller	Cardiology	Switzerland
Isabelle	Pouleur	General Practice	Switzerland
Alanah	Proctor	Infectious Diseases & Microbiology	Scotland
Darina	Sloan	Psychiatry	Ireland
Paula	Starritt	General Practice	Scotland
Gaëlle	Tisserand	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	France
Outi	Valkonen	Clinical Neurophysiology	Finland
Marieke	Van Bussel	General Practice	United Kingdom
Matthias	Wein	Cardiology	Deutschland
Theda	Wessel	Paediatric Endocrinology	Germany
Angelika	Wieck	Perinatal Psychiatry	United Kingdom

Viola			
Dan	Agranoff	Infectious Diseases	United Kingdom
Amy	Edwards	Neurology	United Kingdom
Louise	Houghton	General Practice (retired)	United Kingdom
Michele	Mohajer	Obstetrics and Fetal Medicine	United Kingdom
Eva	Müller-Stucki	Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Fertility Specialist	Switzerland
Harriet	Nel	General Practice	Guernsey
Ken	Paterson	Internal Medicine/Diabetes Mellitus	Scotland
Samantha	Ross	General Practice	Scotland
Romanie	Ruggier	Neuroanaesthetist	United Kingdom
Linda	Thörneby	Ophthalmology	Sweden
Sonia	Tiboni	Paediatric Surgeon	United Kingdom
Luke	Turley	General Practice	Guernsey
Cello			
Audrey	Atlan	General Practice	France
Frances	Barton	General Practice	United Kingdom
Sarah	Arthur	General Practice	Scotland
Anna	Cowham	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Susanne	Erk	Psychiatry	Germany
Sarah	Hare	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Katherine	Haworth	Psychiatry	United Kingdom
Sean	Knox	Pharmaceutical Medicine	Switzerland
Lynden Guy	Nicely	Neurosurgery	United Kingdom
Julian	Ogilvie	Medical Administration	United Kingdom
Ashvini	Ramoutar	Forensic Psychiatry	United Kingdom
Betsan	Rolles	General Practice	Wales
Double Bass			
Vincent	Kehoe	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Klara Sophie	Kieffer	Psychiatry	Switzerland
Rolf	Knapp	Paediatrics	Germany
Eberhard	Neumann-von Meding	Gynaecology and Obstetrics	Germany

James	Robb	Paediatric Orthopaedics	Scotland
Nicole	Wagner	Gynaecology and Obstetrics	Germany
Flute			
Špela	Baznik	Emergency Medicine	Slovenia
Ewa	Szemryk	General Practice	Poland
Oboe			
Alfred	Pollard	Radiology	United Kingdom
Alison	Riley	General Practice	United Kingdom
Clarinet			
Benedicte	Pran Wiik	General Practice	Norway
Alastair	Watson	Gastroenterology	United Kingdom
Bassoon			
Stephanie	Dancer	Microbiology	Scotland
Kevin	O'Sullivan	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Horn			
Tobias	Breyer	Interventional Neuroradiology	Germany
Fanny	Dufour	General Practice	France
Frank	Edenborough	Adult Cystic Fibrosis Medicine	United Kingdom
Heinz	Zimmerman	Surgery	Switzerland
Trumpet			
Daniel	Burchette	Orthopaedics and Trauma	United Kingdom
Neil	Roberts	Anaesthetics	United Kingdom
Trombone			
Petr	Machac	Orthopaedics and Trauma	Czech Republic
Robin	Schwerdtfeger	Fetal Medicine	Germany
Britta	Wicke	Anaesthetics	Germany
Percussion			
Arthur	Giffard	General Practice	France
Paul	Hartel	Pathology	Ireland
Rohan	Shotton	Medical Oncology	United Kingdom
Harp			
Mathilde	Granjon	Paediatrics	France

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