

*An Evening Concert**with HARMONIE MUSIK**in the Connaught Hall on Monday 23 May 1994*

HARMONIE MUSIC drives its title from the 18th century term normally reserved for a wind octet which could as the occasion demanded be expanded or contracted. This evening's concert, presented by John Ware, Principal Director of Music, Royal Marines, was performed by an ensemble comprising oboes, clarinets, horns, bassoons, a cello and a bass.

The declared aim of this group is to perform works of a more serious nature and to gain for these pieces a wider audience than has hitherto been the case. This evening's performance represented their first and hopefully not their last appearance in Dover.

The choice of two lesser known works by major composers which are but rarely performed added a further piquancy to an enchanting evening and I am quite sure that most of those attending will be seeking to include these works in their musical collections.

The programme of music consisted of the Serenade in D Minor Opus 44 by Dvorak and the Serenade No. 10 in B Flat "Gran Partita" by Mozart.

The Serenade in D Minor was first performed in 1878 and drew superlative acclaim from the critics. Described as a good humoured work containing much of Slavonic origin, it includes a scherzo for the opening and closing sections of the Minuetto and passages of great intensity and drama in the Andante.

I, personally, found it a most seductive piece excellently and sensitively presented and well worthy of the 1878 critic's view that "only a master writes music like this" and "only a poet, by God's grace, has such inspiration."

Mozart's Serenade in B Flat "Gran Partita" was written for thirteen instruments and is the largest work which Mozart wrote for wind ensembles, lasting longer than many of his symphonies and making great demands upon the players. I am happy to report that they were fully up to the task and performed a beautiful and powerful piece to a very high standard indeed.

It is with regret therefore that I have to recall that the concert was supported by an audience of only forty-five people, which says little for Dover's ambition to present itself as a centre of excellence and perhaps less for its wish to retain the Royal Marines' School of Music in Deal. Lt.Colonel Ware was awarded the O.B.E. in 1993 and he and the Band of the Royal Marines played an important part in the musical presentations of the 50th anniversary of D-Day. I understand that he is shortly to retire and I would have hoped that we had been able to have given him a more fitting recollection of Dover's support and acclaim on this delightful evening.

John Potter