**Brass Quartet No 1**

My first Brass Quartet was written in 1968, immediately after I finished my studies at the Royal Academy of Music, and was in response to a request from my then publisher, R Smith & Co, to write some chamber music for brass band instruments. It is scored for two cornets, horn and euphonium. In the same year I also wrote another quartet (No. 2) which is scored for the more unusual combination of two horns, baritone, and tuba.

The First Quartet is really a miniature in terms of length, lasting less than six minutes. However, it packs a lot of punch in its two connected movements, a *Prelude* and a *Capriccio*. The *Prelude* is lyrical in style and opens with a rising figure (covering a major seventh) on euphonium answered by muted cornets. These ideas form the material for the movement which is arch shape in structure. The opening returns, immediately followed by a transition passage which leads directly into the turbulent *Capriccio*. This is rather Bartokian in style (I was very influenced by Bartok in my student days and had closely studied his six string quartets), in the manner of a Hungarian dance in 5/8 time. The constantly changing metric patterns give the music a rather disruptive quality, but also an opportunity for the players to show their virtuoso abilities.

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