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# ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

AND

**INON BARNATAN, PIANO**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

## HAYDN DISCOVERY

Joseph Haydn has long been considered the father of the string quartet, yet his music is sometimes regarded as an opening act; a pleasant prelude to the main course of a concert program. In Haydn Discovery, Geoff Nuttall and the St. Lawrence String Quartet will reveal Haydn's genius, first deconstructing this masterpiece via "active listening," then offering a full performance.

**FRANZ JOSEPH  
HAYDN**  
(1732-1809)

### **String Quartet in C Major, Op. 33, no. 3 ("The Bird")**

Allegro moderato  
Scherzo: Allegretto  
Adagio ma non troppo  
Finale: Rondo - Presto

## INTERMISSION

**DMITRI  
SHOSTAKOVICH**  
(1906-1975)

### **Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op. 57**

Prelude: Lento  
Fugue: Adagio  
Scherzo: Allegretto  
Intermezzo: Lento  
Finale: Allegretto



**GEOFF NUTTALL**  
violin

**OWEN DALBY**  
violin

**LESLEY ROBERTSON**  
viola

**CHRISTOPHER  
COSTANZA**  
cello

## ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

"Modern...dramatic...superb...wickedly attentive...with a hint of rock 'n roll energy..." are just a few ways critics describe the musical phenomenon that is the St. Lawrence String Quartet. The SLSQ is renowned for the intensity of its performances, its breadth of repertoire, and its commitment to concert experiences that are at once intellectually exciting and emotionally alive.

Especially dedicated to the music of Haydn, the quartet is recording his groundbreaking set of six Op. 20 quartets in high-definition video for a free, universal release online in the 2018-19 season. According to *The New Yorker*, "...no other North American quartet plays the music of Haydn with more intelligence, expressivity, and force..." Also fiercely committed to collaboration with living composers, the SLSQ's fruitful partnership with John Adams, Jonathan Berger, Osvaldo Golijov, and many others has yielded some of the finest additions to the quartet literature in recent years.

Established in Toronto in 1989, the SLSQ quickly earned acclaim at top international chamber music competitions and was soon playing hundreds of concerts per year world-wide. They established an ongoing residency at Spoleto Festival USA, made prize-winning recordings for EMI of music by Schumann, Tchaikovsky, and Golijov, and earned two Grammy nominations and a host of other prizes before being appointed ensemble-in-residence at Stanford University in 1999.

At Stanford, the SLSQ is at the forefront of intellectual life on campus. The SLSQ directs the music department's chamber music program and frequently collaborates with other departments including the Schools of Law, Medicine, Business, and Education. The quartet performs regularly at Stanford Live, hosts an annual chamber music seminar, and runs the Emerging String Quartet Program through which they mentor the next generation of young quartets. In the words of Alex Ross of *The New Yorker*: "The St. Lawrence are remarkable not simply for the quality of their music making, exalted as it is, but for the joy they take in the act of connection."

The St. Lawrence String Quartet appears by arrangement with David Rowe Artists, [www.davidroweartists.com](http://www.davidroweartists.com). St. Lawrence String recordings can be heard on EMI Classics and ArtistShare, [www.artistshare.com](http://www.artistshare.com). The St. Lawrence String Quartet is Ensemble-in-Residence at Stanford University. For more information, visit [www.slsq.com](http://www.slsq.com).

## INON BARNATAN

"One of the most admired pianists of his generation" (*New York Times*), Inon Barnatan is celebrated for his poetic sensibility, musical intelligence, and consummate artistry. He is the recipient of both a prestigious 2009 Avery Fisher Career Grant and Lincoln Center's 2015 Martin E. Segal Award, which recognizes "young artists of exceptional accomplishment." He was recently named the new Music Director of the La Jolla Music Society Summerfest, beginning in 2019.

A regular soloist with many of the world's foremost orchestras and conductors, the Israeli pianist recently completed his third and final season as the inaugural Artist-in-Association of the New York Philharmonic. After his recent debuts with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and Chicago, Baltimore, and Seattle Symphonies, he opened the season with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, followed by recent debuts with both the London and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestras.

In recital this season, Barnatan returns to venues including New York's 92nd Street Y and London's Wigmore Hall



**INON BARNATAN**  
piano

and Southbank Centre, besides making Carnegie Hall appearances with soprano Renée Fleming and his regular duo partner, cellist Alisa Weilerstein. A sought-after chamber musician, he is a former member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's CMS Two program, and makes regular CMS appearances. His passion for contemporary music has seen him commission and perform many works by living composers, including premieres of pieces by Thomas Adès, Sebastian Currier, Avner Dorman, Alan Fletcher, Joseph Hallman, Alasdair Nicolson, Andrew Norman, and Matthias Pintscher.

"A born Schubertian" (*Gramophone*), Barnatan's critically acclaimed discography includes Avie and Bridge recordings of the Austrian composer's solo piano works, as well as *Darkness Visible*, which scored a coveted place on the *New York Times* "Best of 2012" list. His most recent album release is a live recording of Messiaen's 90-minute masterpiece *Des canyons aux étoiles* ("From the Canyons to the Stars"), in which he played the formidable solo piano part at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. His 2015 Decca Classics release, *Rachmaninov & Chopin: Cello Sonatas* with Alisa Weilerstein, earned rave reviews on both sides of the Atlantic.

## NOTES

Program Notes © Elizabeth Bergman

### HAYDN: STRING QUARTET IN C MAJOR, OP. 33, NO. 3 ("THE BIRD")

#### IN BRIEF

**BORN:** March 31, 1732, Rohrau, Austria

**DIED:** May 31, 1809, Rohrau, Austria

#### MOST RECENT FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

**PERFORMANCE:** Tonight marks the first performance of this work on our series.

**ESTIMATED DURATION:** 20 minutes (without discussion)

The string quartet as we now know it originated in the 1750s as one type of work within a broad category of chamber music dubbed *divertimento*. A catch-all term, *divertimento* points to the function of the music rather than any of its particular characteristics. Such chamber pieces were performed as entertainment at elite parties or by musically inclined amateurs at home. The string quartet

proper—the name itself along with the musical features of the genre—became common throughout Europe only in the 1780s.

Over the course of those three decades, from 1750 to 1780, a major compositional shift took place. The lowest of the four parts in a *divertimento*, generally played by the cello, emerged as a full-fledged participant in the musical texture, rather than just the accompaniment to the upper strings. As each part became more independent and assertive, the string quartet grew to be less about a single melody with underlying support and more about the idea of a conversation among four interlocutors.

The solo style remained important, but not in the sense that any one part dominated. Musical textures and groupings were newly flexible and mutable. Melody (in the first violin) plus accompaniment (by the other three instruments) was just one of many possible textures. Thus the string quartet distinguished itself from the *divertimento* tradition, the symphonic style, which relies on families of instruments grouped together, and the concerto genre, which highlights a single, virtuosic soloist.

A landmark in the history of the string quartet came in 1781 when Haydn published his Six String Quartets, Op. 33. The composer boldly—and justly—proclaimed his works as having been composed in a "completely new and special manner." What was so new and special? Two things: one new, the other special. New to chamber music was the use of counterpoint, the perfect technique to showcase the independence of the four lines. Counterpoint involves distinct and separate strands of music woven together, each being integral to the whole. Long associated with formal composition and music for the church, counterpoint infused the string quartet with a new seriousness.

Yet Op. 33 also includes elements of a more "popular" style of broad and enduring appeal. What is special here is the incorporation of the *galant*, an idiom featuring balanced melodies and phrases as well as lilting, dance-inspired rhythms. The *galant* style defines music by Haydn and Mozart in the 1770s and 1780s. Indeed, it epitomizes the Classical style.

The Quartet Op. 33, no. 3, whose quicksilver grace-notes inspired its nickname, “The Bird,” emphasizes the popular *galant* style while still incorporating some of the sophisticated elements new to the string quartet as a serious genre. Although Haydn here eschews fugal writing, favoring a more carefree, accessible approach, he sets the first movement as a sonata-allegro, the most elevated formal design of the Classical era. Furthermore, the various voices find a fresh balance among each other.

The chirping grace notes in the first movement become a recurring motif, and snippets of melodic ideas migrate through all four instruments. Thus the texture is not simply melody and accompaniment; each voice matters. A parity of parts is emphasized throughout, sometimes subtly, even while the first violin emerges as the first among equals. In works like this, Haydn helped to establish the string quartet as representing the Enlightenment ideal of egalitarianism, musically as well as politically.

A gracious, brief scherzando movement replaces the conventional minuet and sounds almost like a hymn, at least until the twittering birds return in the violins. The Adagio is likewise song-like, but the ensuing carefree rondo (begun *attacca*, without pause) recalls a rollicking country dance. Moments in the minor mode lend some drama to the fleet-footed finale.

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SHOSTAKOVICH:  
PIANO QUINTET IN  
G MINOR, OP. 57

**IN BRIEF**

**BORN:** September 25, 1906, St. Petersburg, Russia

**DIED:** August 9, 1975, Moscow, Russia

**PREMIERE:** November 23, 1940 at the Moscow Conservatory, with Shostakovich himself at the piano.

**MOST RECENT FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC**

**PERFORMANCE:** Tonight marks the first performance of this work on our series.

**ESTIMATED DURATION:** 32 minutes

The Soviet cultural climate during the 1930s and 1940s under Stalin was inhospitable at best, deadly at worst. Because censors closely scrutinized music with words, composer Dmitri Shostakovich turned in 1938 to writing chamber music. Two years earlier, his opera *Lady Macbeth* had been

denounced in an infamous article titled “Muddle Instead of Music,” and although his position of prominence in Soviet musical life was never truly threatened, the composer chose to avoid both opera and ballet. Instrumental music was more likely to elude the attention of Soviet committees charged with enforcing aesthetic and political standards.

Happily for Shostakovich, audiences and reviewers alike hailed his Piano Quintet, Op. 57. Even before its official premiere in November 1940 with the Beethoven Quartet in Moscow and the composer at the piano, the piece was applauded by bureaucrats in Leningrad charged with adjudicating the prestigious Lenin Prize, which the Quintet went on to win.

In turning to so-called “absolute” music, seemingly free of political implications, Shostakovich embraced the European masters of the 18th and 19th centuries. He looked back to both Bach and Beethoven for inspiration. The impassioned Prelude might be heard to invoke (simply by texture and affect) the opening of Beethoven’s “Pathétique” Sonata with its wrenching chords and filigreed lines. But the agony quickly dissipates as the texture thins to a Mozartian lucidity. All Shostakovich, however, are the unexpected melodic switchbacks, the “wrong” notes in the harmonies, and angular string lines moving in tense and twisting unisons.

The remarkably long fugue (note the baroque pairing here of a prelude and fugue) features a hesitant, halting subject in the first violin that sounds almost folksy. Shostakovich’s signature style is owing to his ability to combine idioms and styles. In the Fugue, academic counterpoint melds with folk fiddle playing. As the musical lines accrue, subject and countersubject overlapping, the music grows ever more poignant.

The piano part shines in the delightful Scherzo, which recalls moments of Shostakovich’s concerti in the driving unisons, long yet tangled lines, and rhythmic energy. The melodies are exceptionally memorable, and unsurprisingly, this movement was repeated—along with the equally



Program Notes  
*Continued*

accessible Intermezzo and Finale—as encores after the joyously successful premiere.

Following the premiere, Shostakovich visited a friend, writer Marietta Shaginyan. “Shostakovich came to me very pale, very excited,” she recorded in her diary. He tried to explain his reaction to the premiere: “I have been so shaken by the success of the Quintet. . . . I have been wandering the streets of Moscow—my soul filled with bliss. And the traces of this bliss still glimmer inside of me, awakening feelings of joy, even exultation, within me.”

The Quintet remains one of the composer’s most beloved and frequently performed works.

## MUSIC WITH FRIENDS

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 6:00 PM**

**Ensemble Faucheux**

**Syntax Physic Opera**

**554 S. Broadway, Denver**



Join us for a free concert at Denver’s Syntax Physic Opera with Ensemble Faucheux. Classical and contemporary works will come together with guided conversation, reflecting upon the upcoming concert with the Calidore Quartet. Ensemble Faucheux features CSO violist Catherine Beeson performing with Robyn Julyan (violin), Ben Tomkins (violin), and Heidi Mausbach (cello).

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE  
UPCOMING “MUSIC WITH  
FRIENDS” PERFORMANCES:**

Tuesday, January 8, 2019  
Tuesday, February 26, 2019  
Tuesday, May 7, 2019  
Visit our website for complete  
program information.

## MUSIC IN THE GALLERIES

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1:00 and 2:00 PM**

**Sharon Park, violin**

**Zachary Reaves, cello**

**Clyfford Still Museum**

**1250 Bannock Street, Denver**



Join us for “Music in the Galleries” featuring Sharon Park, violin, and Zachary Reaves, cello, performing a diverse repertoire of works by Maurice Ravel, Rebecca Clarke, Handel-Halvorsen, and a Colorado premiere of a work by American composer, Spencer Topel. Ms. Park performs with the Boulder Philharmonic and Central City Opera and holds degrees from the New England Conservatory, Juilliard, and CU-Boulder. Cellist Zachary Reaves is a founding member of the award-winning Altius Quartet. He earned degrees from Southern Methodist University and CU-Boulder.

Music is free with admission to the galleries. As a part of this partnership, the museum has offered FCM patrons \$5 half price tickets (if purchased in advance) to enter the museum on performance days. Link is available on our website. *Note: Seating is limited and available on a first come, first served basis.*

**SAVE THE DATE FOR  
THESE UPCOMING  
“MUSIC IN THE  
GALLERIES”  
PERFORMANCES:**

Sunday, January 13, 2019  
Sunday, March 10, 2019  
Sunday, May 12, 2019  
Visit our website for complete  
program information.



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## GOOD VIBRATIONS: FREE FAMILY CONCERT

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2:00 - 3:30 PM**

**Lamont Percussion Ensemble**

**Denver School of the Arts  
7111 Montview Blvd., Denver**

Join us for a family-friendly musical afternoon featuring the Lamont Percussion Ensemble, whose program will include West African/North Indian hand drumming, a piece for marimba and vibraphone, and Steve Reich’s “Clapping Music.”

We’ll have refreshments and hands-on activities in the lobby following this interactive program — fun for all ages!

**Free to the public**

Question? Call 303-388-9839 or email  
**friendsofchambermusic@comcast.net**

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## CHAMBER SERIES

**William Hagen, violin and  
Orion Weiss, piano**

Monday, October 1, 2018

**Calidore String Quartet**

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

**Mark Padmore, tenor, and  
Paul Lewis, piano**

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

**Tafelmusik**

Wednesday, March 6, 2019

**Tetzlaff-Tetzlaff-Vogt Trio**

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

**Emerson String Quartet**

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

*All Chamber and Piano Series  
concerts begin at 7:30 pm at Gates  
Hall, 2344 E. Iliff Avenue, Denver*

## PIANO SERIES

**Anna Polonsky and  
Orion Weiss, piano**

Wednesday, December 5, 2018

**Sir András Schiff, piano**

Wednesday, February 20, 2019

**Piotr Anderszewski, piano**

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**"Good Vibrations"**

**Free Family Concert**

**Lamont Percussion Ensemble**

Sunday, October 21, 2018, 2:00 PM

Denver School of the Arts

7111 Montview Blvd., Denver

**"Music with Friends"**

**Ensemble Fauchaux**

Tuesday, October 30, 2018, 6:00 PM

Syntax Physic Opera

554 S. Broadway, Denver

**"Music in the Galleries"**

**Clay Quartet**

Sunday, November 11, 2018,

1:00 & 2:00 PM

Clyfford Still Museum

1250 Bannock St., Denver

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