2007/2008 SEASON

MUSIC AT MANDEL HALL

OCTOBER 2007

chicago presents

the university of

2007/2008 SEASON

chicago presents
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESENTS

Shauna Quill
Executive Director
Rebecca Levy
Manager of Audience Services & Outreach
Ian Martínez
Director of Communications
Nicole Proulx
Director of Production

OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday
10 am – 5 pm
5720 S. Woodlawn Avenue
Room 102
Chicago, Illinois 60637

CONTACT US
Phone: 773.702.8068
Fax: 773.834.5888
Email:
concert-office@uchicago.edu

Visit us online at chicagopresents.uchicago.edu. We are also on MySpace and Facebook. Visit myspace.com/uofcpresents or look for "University of Chicago Presents."

Program Design: Jess Cullinan & Lisa Lim

The University of Chicago Presents

One of Chicago's oldest and most distinguished concert series, The University of Chicago Presents (UCP) was founded in 1943 with the goal of bringing to Chicago world-renowned artists for concerts and educational programs that would attract audiences from all parts of Chicago and its surrounding suburbs. Heralded recently by the *Chicago Tribune* as "a model of what a classical concert series should be," UCP has been dedicated throughout its history to the presentation of classical music on an intimate scale at the highest level.

UCP believes that the experience it provides transforms, entertains, educates, and enlightens, inspiring a powerful sense of shared humanity. Reflecting the values of its home at The University of Chicago, UCP engages all, from the student to the Nobel Laureate, from the uninitiated to the dedicated musician, nurturing curiosity for everyone through great music making. The pursuit of excellence is central to its mission, encompassing not only the music it presents but also its relationship with its audience and community.

Artistic excellence remains the hallmark of UCP, inspiring creative decisions and patron loyalty. It is the *raison d'etre* of a series that believes great music uplifts and enhances lives. UCP chooses artists who not only have a mastery of their instrument, but who also possess a larger artistic vision, actively seeking out compelling new talent to introduce to Chicago audiences. Mandel Hall "debutantes" have become musical legends, like Igor Stravinsky and Isaac Stern. More recently, violinist Hilary Hahn, soprano Cecilia Bartoli, and pianist Piotr Anderszewski have taken their first Chicago bows in Mandel Hall.

The intimacy and glorious acoustics of the 960-seat Mandel Hall, one of the city's finest chamber music venues, and a loyal core of subscribers, cultivated over the years, create a welcoming and informed environment for the performers.

From the Executive Director…

Welcome to the 2007/2008 season of The University of Chicago Presents!

On behalf of UCP it is my pleasure to invite you, our musical friends, to enjoy a journey through a season of riches. From the spectacular Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble, to The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Brentano Quartet, and the return of our 2004 Regents Park Discovery Artist Jonathan Biss, October is full of delights for all!

The juxtaposition of Beethoven's symphonic, solo piano, and quartet repertoire with the most cutting-edge music of today is a strong theme throughout October and into November. Opportunity for comparisons between these mavericks are many and with the feature article by our own director of communications, Ian Martínez, as a starting point I hope you will express your opinion on the topic as well. We have redesigned our programs into monthly features so you'll have plenty of material on which to dwell.

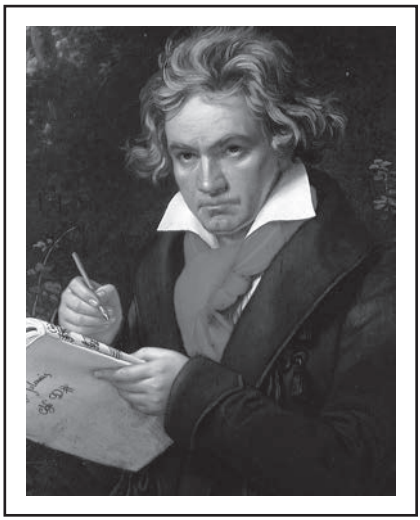
And while you discuss and discover, I hope you will remember to be eco-friendly and either recycle or keep this program book for the entire month. At the end of the year we hope our program books will provide a lovely archive of the concerts and a running commentary on musical issues for one and all.

Now, sit back and enjoy the musical offerings of the 2007/2008 season! Friendships await…

Shauna Quill
Executive Director

Timeless Beethoven…

"A temple of the most turbulent spirit that ever found expression in pure sound." On the centennial of Ludwig van Beethoven's death, the great playwright George Bernard Shaw used these words to describe the fundamental aspects of the composer that set him apart from all others. Over ten thousand people attended his funeral in 1827, and yet even today, Beethoven's influence and popularity is just as potent and relevant. In fact, despite four centuries' worth of musical exploration, contemporary artists still take delight in delivering Beethoven's message. While Beethoven could not have known the impact his expression would eventually have, it is this "turbulent spirit" that remains his most defining—and embraced—characteristic.



Numerous stories tell of how Mozart composed almost effortlessly, as though taking dictation from a higher power. Beethoven, however, is usually characterized quite differently. Known for the long walks he took to find inspiration from nature, Beethoven's compositional process was often one of intense labor, multiple revisions, and an almost endless struggle for perfection. Pianist Jonathan Biss, who recently released an all-Beethoven CD, displaying the many facets of the master composer explains, "When you listen to Beethoven, you are acutely aware of the enormous struggle that was involved for him to express himself in sound. Therefore, when you play him, you feel a tremendous sense of responsibility—to understand his emotional world, and to convey it as well as possible."

Beethoven's life is essentially the telling of a man who had the spirit and tenacity to overcome a myriad of personal conflict. His father, though a competent musician in his own right, fell into alcoholism and was especially harsh to young Ludwig. While studying abroad, Beethoven's mother died from tuberculosis, and at the age of only sixteen, he found himself having to care for his younger siblings. Add to this a string of romantic difficulties and legal disputes over the custody of his nephew, and one already has the makings of a compelling drama. These battles, however, pale by comparison to the setback most frequently associated with Beethoven—his deafness.

At the age of only thirty, Beethoven began to acknowledge he was losing his hearing—an almost tragic curse for a professional musician. Although his deafness became profound over the next decade, he never acquiesced, and it was this same indomitable spirit he carried from childhood that allowed him to triumph over adversity. As he wrote in his journal, "You shall seize Fate by the throat, it shall not overcome you."

While Beethoven's remarkable story alone makes him unique, his rebellious nature and sometimes irascible personality only added to the mystique. As one of the first successful freelance composers, Beethoven was not held to the standards usually imposed on a court composer, and as such, found the freedom to explore new boundaries. His early mentor, Joseph Haydn, one of the most revered musicians and teachers of his day, often found Beethoven difficult, due to the younger composer's arrogance and unwillingness to conform to the accepted Classical tradition. Beethoven, an innovator at heart, later confessed, "I never learned anything from Haydn."

Although his ideas pushed the musical envelope—so much so that he is generally credited with sparking Romanticism—Beethoven was a master of harmonic progression and even took delight in going against a listener's expectations. "Throughout his life, he was admired for his skill at improvisation," says Biss. "He loved surprising the audience and taking things in a different direction."

Given his ability to challenge the musical world while pouring so much of his own humanity into his works, it becomes easy to see why Beethoven has been paired with more modern composers. In recent years, ensembles such as the Philadelphia Orchestra have expanded on this idea by programming Beethoven with new works and world premieres. Drawing more specific parallels, the Boston Symphony Orchestra even dedicated ten concerts to the works of Beethoven in tandem with those of twentieth-century composer Arnold Schoenberg. Both composers, active at the turn of the century and well-trained in what preceded them, knew their own musical languages needed to move dramatically into new territory.

In the performing world, a younger generation of artists have approached Beethoven on this level and ensured that his legacy continues strong into the twenty-first century. During the month of October here at Mandel Hall, Beethoven will once again be showcased with Schoenberg, as the Brentano Quartet highlights the progression of chamber music over the past three centuries. In addition, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra under conductor Scott Yoo, will feature Beethoven alongside twentieth-century composer Richard Strauss and a contemporary work by thirty-four-year-old Dan Coleman. Over the next few months, resident ensemble Pacifica Quartet will even undertake a citywide Beethoven project, performing the entire catalog of the composer's string quartets.

Speaking of his own decision to intermingle the works of Beethoven and Leoš Janáček on his October 26 performance, Biss admits it is the diverse nature of Beethoven's works that makes them fit into a modern context. "When you look at his sonatas, you are seeing thirty-two completely different masterpieces," Biss says. "There is an amazing emotional trajectory that occurs, and it's incredible that one person could have written both pieces."

Whether he is a visionary rebel or a passionate artist whose sense of struggle calls to his listeners, Beethoven remains as much a timeless force and presence today as he was two centuries ago. The constant conflicts of humanity—love, despair, hope—run from the composer's pen and still uplift an engrossed audience separated by time and distance. The emotions Beethoven conveys are universal, and this is his perpetual gift to the world. Despite the pedestal on which he is so often placed, Beethoven was, at his very heart, a human who desired to express that very essence. For those of us fortunate enough to enjoy his efforts today, we are all able to share in that pursuit.

by Ian Martínez

academy of st. martin in the fields chamber ensemble

Friday Evening
5 October / 7:30 pm
Mandel Hall

The University of Chicago Presents • Music at Mandel Hall

Friday, October 5, 2007, 7:30 pm

Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble

Kenneth Sillito, violin
Harvey de Souza, violin
Paul Ezergailis, violin
Martin Burgess, violin
Robert Smissen, viola
Duncan Ferguson, viola
Stephen Orton, cello
John Heley, cello

PROGRAM

DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)
Sextet for Strings in A major, op. 48 (1878)
- Allegro moderato
- Dumka (Elegia): Poco Allegretto
- Furiant: Presto
- Finale: Tema con Variazioni

SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)
Two Pieces for String Octet, op. 11 (1925)
- Prelude: Adagio
- Scherzo: Allegro molto

INTERMISSION

MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)
Octet in E-flat major for Strings, op. 20 (1825)
- Allegro moderato, ma con fuoco
- Andante
- Scherzo
- Presto

The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble appears
by arrangement with David Rowe Artists, Marblehead, MA
Chandos, Philips, Hyperion recordings

About the Artists…

The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields

The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields was formed in 1959 by a group of eleven enthusiastic musicians with the aim of performing in public without a conductor. Their first three recordings led to a succession of long-term contracts, and the Academy quickly took their place among the most recorded ensembles in history. The repertoire expanded from Baroque to Mozart, Bartók, and Beethoven, so it became necessary for the principal violin, Neville Marriner, to conduct the larger orchestra.

The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble was created in 1967 to perform the larger chamber works—from quintets to octets—with players who customarily work together, instead of the usual string quartet with additional guests. Drawn from the principal players of the orchestra, the Chamber Ensemble tours as a string octet, string sextet, and in other configurations including winds. Its touring commitments are extensive, with annual visits to France, Germany, and Spain, and frequent tours to North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan.

The Ensemble's fall 2007 North American tour brings them to ten cities, including (among others) New York, Chicago, Los Alamos, and Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Contracts with Philips Classics, Hyperion, and Chandos have led to the release of over thirty CDs by the Chamber Ensemble.

Kenneth Sillito

Kenneth Sillito (violin, leader) has been artistic director of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and leader of the Chamber Ensemble since 1980, taking the ensemble to new heights. He won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music at the age of fourteen, studying with David Martin. A further scholarship took him to Rome to study with Remy Principe. On returning to England he became associate leader of the English Chamber Orchestra, subsequently becoming leader until 1973. In 1967 Kenneth Sillito founded the Gabrieli String Quartet and remained their leader until 1987, during which time the Quartet gained an international reputation. In 1971 he was honored by being made a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music.

About the Program…

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK
b. 1841 in Nelahozeves, Bohemia
d. 1904 in Prague

Sextet for Strings in A major, op. 48

Dvořák dated his manuscripts very carefully, and so we know that he wrote his Sextet for Strings in the space of only fourteen days: May 14–27, 1878. This was a crucial moment in Dvořák's career. After a long and trying apprenticeship, the thirty-seven-year-old composer found himself suddenly famous that year when his *Slavonic Dances* created an international sensation. But some of the finest musicians of the era were already alert to Dvořák's talent, and chief among these was Brahms, who had offered the unknown Czech composer his friendship, found him a publisher, and introduced him to his friends.

The importance of the connection with Brahms can hardly be overstated, for it gained Dvořák performances by some of the finest musicians of the day. The Sextet for Strings had a private performance at the Berlin home of Brahms' good friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim, and Dvořák—the son of a small-town butcher—was flabbergasted by his good fortune, writing to a friend: "after being here [in Berlin] for only a few hours I had spent so many enjoyable moments among the foremost artists, that they will certainly remain in my memory for the rest of my life."

Music for string sextets—two violins, two violas, and two cellos—is comparatively rare. Dvořák certainly knew Brahms' two sextets, composed during the previous decade, but the other two famous sextets—Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence* and Schoenberg's *Verklaerte Nacht*—were still in the future. Dvořák makes use of the resources available with six players, yet takes care to keep textures clear throughout. Longest of the four movements, the sonata-form *Allegro* moderato contrasts its flowing first melody with a rhythmically sprung second idea in the unexpected key of C-sharp minor. The development makes ingenious use of bits of rhythm from both these ideas before this amiable movement fades out on a broad restatement of the opening theme.

The real gem of this sextet is the second movement, which Dvořák marks *dumka*. The use of this old folk-form is further evidence of the composer's growing awareness of his distinctly Czech identity. Derived from Ukrainian folk music, a dumka is elegiac in character and often features sections at quite different tempos. The main theme of this movement, at a slow polka rhythm, is full of dark flashings in its melodic turns and key shifts; the two distinct contrasting episodes preserve the movement's somber character.

Dvořák marks the third movement *Furiant*, but numerous commentators have noted that it lacks the cross-rhythms and changing meters that define this old Bohemian dance form. In any case, this movement—which returns to the home key of A major—offers sparkling outer sections and a busy trio. The finale is in theme-and-variation form. Lower strings present the somber theme, and six variations follow. The final variation in fact forms an exuberant (and lengthy) coda that makes its way back to A major only in the final bars.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

b. 1906 in St. Petersburg
d. 1975 in Moscow

Two Pieces for String Octet, op. 11

When Shostakovich died in 1975, he was remembered primarily as a symphonist, but the last several decades have seen new interest in his chamber music, particularly the impressive cycle of fifteen string quartets. Shostakovich came to the string quartet relatively late in life, but as a very young man he had experimented with chamber music, composing a piano trio at seventeen and the Two Pieces for String Octet at eighteen, while he was still a conservatory student.

From this same period came Shostakovich's dazzling First Symphony (op. 10), and in fact he worked on the symphony and the Two Pieces simultaneously. The Two Pieces are in the same neo-classical manner as the symphony. Shostakovich scored this music for string octet, specifically the same double string quartet that another teenaged composer, Felix Mendelssohn, had used in his Octet.

The form can seem strange: this brilliant, bittersweet music consists of two contrasting and unrelated movements, both characterized by high energy levels.

Composed in December 1924, the *Prelude* is dominated by the powerful sequence of ominous chords heard at the very beginning. This movement is episodic, with sharply contrasting passages for muted triplets, pizzicato chords, and a virtuoso part for the first violin before closing on a quiet unison D. The *Scherzo*, written in July 1925, is much more acerbic. It, too, is episodic, though here the thematic material tends to be short and angular. The fiery main idea, announced by the first violin, rushes this movement to its sudden, powerful close.

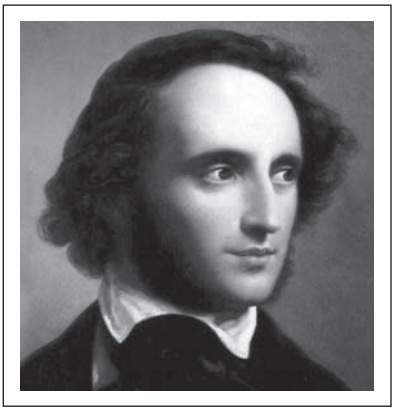
The Two Pieces for String Octet were first performed in Moscow on January 9, 1927, by the combined Glière and Stradivarius Quartets.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

b. 1809 in Hamburg
d. 1847 in Leipzig

Octet for Strings in E-flat major, op. 20

It has become a cliché with a certain kind of critic to say that Mendelssohn never fulfilled the promise of his youth. Such a charge is a pretty tough thing to say about someone who died at thirty-eight—most of us would think Mendelssohn



never made it out of his youth. And such a charge overlooks the great works Mendelssohn completed in the years just before his death: the Violin Concerto, the complete incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Elijah*. But there can be no gainsaying the fact that the young Mendelssohn was a composer whose gifts and promise rivaled—perhaps even surpassed—the young Mozart's. The child of an educated family that fully supported his talent, Mendelssohn had by age nine written works that were performed by professional groups in Berlin. At twelve he became close friends with the seventy-two-year-old Goethe, at seventeen he composed the magnificent overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and at twenty he led the performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* that was probably the key event in the revival of interest in Bach's music.

Mendelssohn completed his Octet in October 1825, when he was

sixteen. One of the finest of his early works, the Octet is remarkable for its polished technique, its sweep, and for its sheer exhilaration. Mendelssohn's decision to write for a string octet is an interesting one, for such an ensemble approaches chamber-orchestra size, and a composer must steer a careful course between orchestral sonority and true chamber music. Mendelssohn handles this problem easily. At times this music can sound orchestral, as he sets different groups of instruments against each other, but the Octet remains true chamber music–each of the eight voices is distinct and important, and even at its most dazzling and extroverted the Octet preserves the equal participation of independent voices so crucial to chamber music.

Mendelssohn marked the first movement *Allegro moderato ma con fuoco*, and certainly there is fire in the very beginning, where the first violin rises and falls back through a range of three octaves. Longest by far of the movements, the first is marked by energy, sweep, and an easy exchange between all eight voices before rising to a grand climax derived from the opening theme. By contrast, the *Andante* is based on the simple melody announced by the lower strings and quickly taken up by the four violins; this gentle melodic line becomes more animated as it develops, with accompanying voices that grow particularly restless.

The *Scherzo* is the most famous part of the Octet. Mendelssohn said that it was inspired by the closing lines of the *Walpurghisnacht* section near the end of Part I of Goethe's *Faust*, where Faust and Mephistopheles descend into the underworld; he apparently had in mind the final lines of the description of the marriage of Oberon and Titania:

Clouds go by and mists recede,
Bathed in the dawn and blended;
Sighs the wind in leaf and reed,
And all our tale is ended.

This music zips along brilliantly. Mendelssohn marked it *Allegro leggierissimo*—"as light as possible"—and it does seem like goblin music, sparkling, trilling, and swirling right up to the end, where it vanishes into thin air.

Featuring an eight-part fugato, the energetic *Presto* demonstrates the young composer's contrapuntal skill. There are many wonderful touches here: at one point sharp-eared listeners may detect a quotation, perhaps unconscious, of "And He Shall Reign" from the *Hallelujah Chorus* of Handel's *Messiah*, and near the end Mendelssohn skillfully brings back the main theme of the Scherzo as a countermelody to the finale's polyphonic complexity. It is a masterstroke in a piece of music that would be a brilliant achievement by a composer of any age.

CHICAGO CHORALE

Bruce Tammen, Artistic Director

2007-2008 SEASON

***A Cappella* Music for All Saints:**
***Requiem* by Herbert Howells**
Saturday, November 3, 8 pm
Hyde Park Union Church
Pre-concert remarks by David Bevington, 7 pm
Sponsored in part by the Nicholson Center for British Studies at the University of Chicago

G. F. Handel's *Messiah*
Sunday, December 9, 2:30 pm
Church of the Holy Family

J. S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*
Saturday, March 15, 7 pm
Church of the Holy Family
Pre-concert remarks by Martin Marty, 6 pm

Subscriptions
$50 general/$25 students
Advance individual tickets
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($20/$12 at door)

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InChoir: *Messiah*
Saturday, December 1, 9:30 am
Hyde Park Union Church

Sing side-by-side with members of Chorale and gain insight into the music from Artistic Director Bruce Tammen during a working rehearsal of Handel's *Messiah*. *Free with reservation*.

Chorale at the Monastery of the Holy Cross
Solemn Vespers for Advent
Sunday, December 2, 7:30 pm
Vigil for Peace
Saturday, May 17, 8 pm
Featuring Arnold Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erden* (Peace on Earth)
Free and open to the public, no tickets required.

Chicago Chorale gratefully acknowledges the leadership support of Bruce and Martha Clinton. Additional funding provided by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

the saint paul chamber orchestra

Sunday Afternoon
14 October / 3 pm
Mandel Hall

The University of Chicago Presents • Music at Mandel Hall

Sunday, October 14, 2007, 3 pm

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
Scott Yoo, conductor

PROGRAM

DAN COLEMAN (b. 1972) — *Long ago this radiant day* (1994–2001)

R. STRAUSS (1864–1949) — *Metamorphosen*, A Study for 23 Solo Strings, TrV 290 (1945)

INTERMISSION

BEETHOVEN (1770–1827) — Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, op. 60 (1806)

- Adagio—Allegro vivace
- Adagio
- Allegro vivace
- Allegro ma non troppo

This presentation is supported by the Performing Arts Fund, a program of the Arts Midwest funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts' American Masterpieces, which believes a great nation deserves great art, with additional contributions from General Mills Foundation, Land O'Lakes Foundation, and Illinois Arts Council.

About the Artists…

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra 2007/2008

VIOLINS
Steven Copes, concertmaster
John M. and Elizabeth W. Musser Chair
Ruggero Allifranchini, associate concertmaster
John H. and Elizabeth B. Myers Chair
Leslie Shank, assistant concertmaster
Hulings Chair
Elsa Nilsson
Brenda Manuel Mickens
Dale Barltrop, principal second violin
Thomas Kornacker, co-principal second violin
Michal Sobieski
Daria T. Adams
Nina Tso-Ning Fan

VIOLAS
Sabina Thatcher, principal
Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison Chair
Evelina Chao, assistant principal
Tamás Strasser
Position Vacant, *Alice Preves Viola Chair*

CELLOS
Ronald Thomas, principal
Bill and Hella Mears Hueg Chair
Joshua Koestenbaum, associate principal
Ruth and John Huss Chair
Sarah Lewis
Daryl Skobba

BASSES
Christopher Brown, principal
Fred Bretschger, assistant principal

FLUTES
Julia Bogorad-Kogan, principal
Alicia McQuerrey

OBOES
Kathryn Greenbank, principal
Sewell Family Chair
Thomas Tempel

CLARINETS
Timothy Paradise, principal
Philip H. and Katherine Nason Chair

BASSOONS
Charles Ullery, principal
Carole Mason Smith

HORNS
Bernhard Scully, principal
Paul Straka

TRUMPETS
Gary Bordner, principal
Lynn Erickson

KEYBOARD
Layton James, principal
Redleaf Family Chair

TIMPANI & PERCUSSION
Position Vacant

Chair of the Board
Lowell J. Noteboom

President and Managing Director
Bruce Coppock

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, beginning its forty-ninth season in September 2007, is the nation's only full-time professional chamber orchestra and is widely regarded as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. In collaboration with five Artistic Partners—Roberto Abbado, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Douglas Boyd, Nicholas McGegan, and Dawn Upshaw—the 35 virtuoso musicians present more than 150 concerts and educational programs each year, and reach over 85,500 listeners each week on 63 public radio stations. The SPCO has released 65 recordings, commissioned 110 new works, and premiered 53 additional compositions. The SPCO has earned the distinction of 12 ASCAP awards for adventurous programming. Renowned for its artistic excellence and remarkable versatility of musical styles, the SPCO tours nationally and internationally, including performances in premier venues in Europe, Asia, and South America. Launched in 1995, the SPCO's award-winning CONNECT education program reaches 6,000 students annually in 15 Minneapolis and St. Paul public schools. For more information, visit www.TheSPCO.org.

Scott Yoo

Scott Yoo is the music director of the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival in California and is currently in his thirteenth season as music director of the Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra, an ensemble he co-founded in 1993. He often collaborates with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and also continues to serve as the resident conductor for the Colorado College Summer Music Festival.

Last season, Yoo made subscription concert conducting appearances with several orchestras, including the Utah Symphony, the Florida Orchestra, the Omaha Symphony, and the Seoul Philharmonic. He returned to lead several projects with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and conducted the Orchestra of St. Luke's in the Young Concert Artists Diamond Gala concert at Lincoln Center in April 2007.

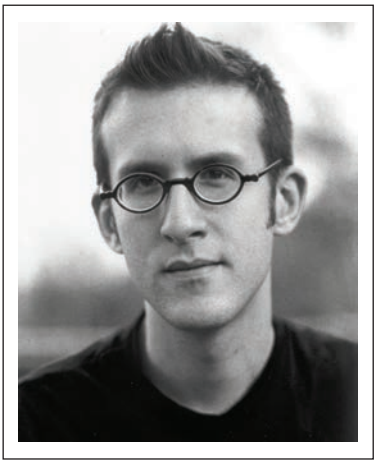
An active chamber musician, Yoo has made frequent appearances with chamber music festivals throughout the United States, including Bargemusic, Boston Chamber Music Society, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Kingston Chamber Music Festival, Laurel Music Festival, Seattle Chamber Music Festival, and Strings in the Mountains. Yoo is a 1993 graduate of Harvard University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in physics.

About the Program…

DAN COLEMAN
b. 1972 in New York, NY

Long ago this radiant day

Dan Coleman composed *Long ago this radiant day* in 1994, revising it in 2001. It is scored for fifteen solo strings divided into nine violins, three violas, two cellos, and double bass. These are the first performances of the work by the SPCO.



Now in his mid-thirties, Coleman has won an impressive array of awards, commissions and fellowships for his work. Originally from New York, his music has been performed throughout the United States. For all the success of his "classical" work, however, he is far from locked into the world of concert halls and orchestras. He orchestrates film scores, including David Mamet's *Heist* in 2001, and works as both an arranger and recording engineer for pop albums.

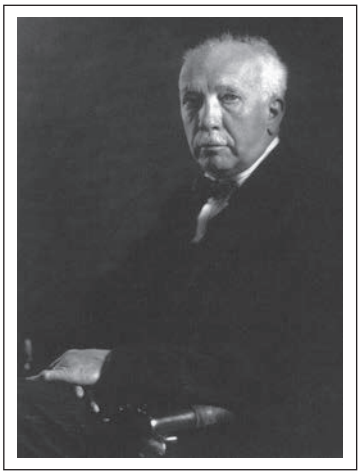
For some years, Coleman was composer-in-residence with the string ensemble Metamorphosen—this piece was written for them. Its title comes from a poem by Anna Akhmatova, "The Sentence," part of a longer poem called "Requiem." Akhmatova wrote it in 1938 at a particularly desperate time in her life. Her son had been arrested and soon would be exiled to Siberia. Her first husband was under a death sentence, while her third husband also faced a future in a Siberian labor camp. Given the context, the poem is surprisingly—if ambiguously—hopeful. It opens with Akhmatova reacting to tragedy by hardening herself, learning to survive by killing memory and turning her soul to stone. But a rustle of summer outside her window reminds her of joy and happiness, and she closes fatalistically:

I foresaw long ago this
Radiant day, deserted house.

In his program note to the piece, Coleman writes:

A musical work can undergo an analogous change of mood—progressing from dark ambiguity to ebullient clarity, and finally to a serene rest—while maintaining an essential, unchanging profile.

This work is based on motifs found in both György Ligeti's Lux Aeterna *and Benjamin Britten's Third String Quartet, pieces that deal overtly with death and loss. I was gratified when I realized my subconscious had linked the work's architecture to its emotional impetus.*



RICHARD STRAUSS
b. 1864 in Munich
d. 1949 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bavaria

***Metamorphosen*, A Study for 23 Solo Strings, TrV 290**

Richard Strauss completed *Metamorphosen* in 1945. It is scored for twenty-three solo strings divided into ten violins, five violas, five cellos, and three double basses.

This beautiful, somber music was born of destruction and horror. Strauss made his first sketches for it on the day the Munich Staatstheater was bombed in October 1943.

The burning of the Munich Court Theater, where Tristan *and* Die Meistersinger *received their first performances, where I first heard* Freischütz *seventy-three years ago, where my father sat at the first horn desk for forty-nine years — it was the greatest catastrophe of my life; there is no possible consolation, and, at my age, no hope.*

Eighteen months later, on February 13, 1945, RAF bombers dropped thousands of tons of explosives and incendiaries on Dresden. The loss of life was shocking, and the city was left in rubble and ashes. To this day, the bombing is controversial. For most of the war, Dresden had been spared on account of its history and beauty. However, so close to the end of hostilities, it was destroyed.

This meant Strauss had to endure another very personal loss: the Dresden Royal Court Theatre. He had conducted there many times and loved it for its history. Like the Munich house, it had witnessed premieres of operas by Wagner and Weber.

Despite, or perhaps because of, his depressed state, Strauss does not seem to have worked on his sketches for this piece with any

great alacrity, but the final version must have been taking shape in his head. Early in 1945, when he received a commission from Paul Sacher, the great Swiss champion of twentieth-century music, it took him only a few months to complete. Quite a feat when one considers the technical complexities of writing for twenty-three solo strings. *Metamorphosen* was published the following January.

Strauss' manuscript of this piece bears several poignant annotations that hint at his intentions. In one margin he wrote, "Trauer um München" (Mourning for Munich); on the last page, "IN MEMORIAM." Elsewhere one finds a passage from Goethe's poem "Niemand wird sich Selber kennen" (No man can truly know himself). This evidence of deep grief and loss has been linked musically to Beethoven—A veiled quotation from the funeral march of the "Eroica" Symphony and a theme from the *Adagio* sixth movement of String Quartet, op. 131, suggest that this piece grieved for no single man, but for the whole German culture in the country's darkest hour.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
b. 1770 in Bonn
d. 1827 in Vienna

Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, op. 60

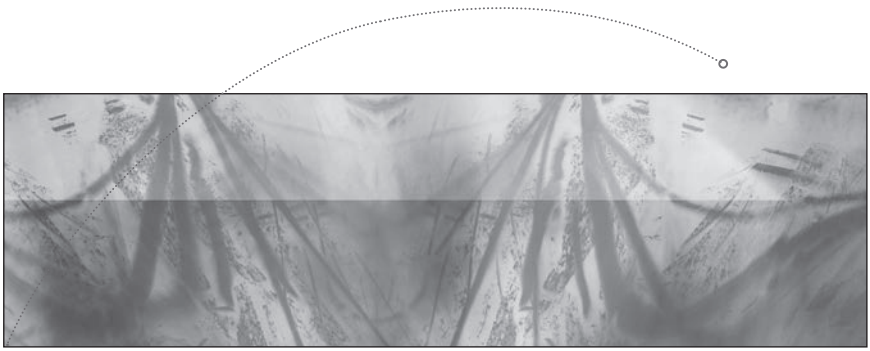
Beethoven composed the Symphony No. 4 in 1806. It is scored for flute; pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets; timpani and strings. Of Beethoven's nine symphonies, only two were commissioned—this one and the Ninth. The story goes that Beethoven met Count von Oppersdorf at a private concert given by Prince von Lichnowsky at his summer home in 1806. Lichnowsky was an ardent Beethoven supporter in Vienna, and von Oppersdorf (his cousin) was a Silesian nobleman rich enough to maintain an orchestra at his castle. So impressed was he after hearing Beethoven's Second Symphony that he commissioned a new one, and in due course, Beethoven delivered this wonderful piece.

Along the line, something seems to have gone awry. The Fourth Symphony was first performed

in March 1807, but not by von Oppersdorf's orchestra. Somehow another key patron, Prince Lobkowitz, landed the premiere. And there is a letter of March 1808, in which Beethoven tells von Oppersdorf that "your symphony" has long been ready, but he is clearly referring to the Fifth Symphony, not the Fourth. Not enough is known about this strange situation, but von Oppersdorf did not commission Beethoven again.

The Fourth Symphony is commonly viewed as a backward step from Beethoven's radical innovations in the "Eroica." True enough, it is scored for a slightly smaller orchestra (no third horn) and is shorter. But, in many other ways, it is a thoroughly forward-looking piece, encapsulating a quieter, more moonlit Romanticism than the bravura symphonies on either side of it.

Beethoven's exquisite orchestration of the slow movement is especially noteworthy—a finely spun fantasy in an exceptionally rich palate of orchestral colors that prompted one contemporary critic to write, "One might sometimes wish that the melody were not so much divided up among the various instruments." Who before Beethoven had given the bassoon a solo bar as he does here? Or the timpani? Or accompanied the very barest of clarinet solos with delicate, high-pitched pizzicato and bowed violins? Nobody. Yet this symphony wears its innovations lightly; it does not bellow, shout or demand attention. None other than Igor Stravinsky called the last movement one of the finest things Beethoven ever wrote.



brentano string quartet

with susan narucki, soprano

Friday Evening
19 October / 7:30 pm
Mandel Hall

The University of Chicago Presents • Music at Mandel Hall

Friday, October 19, 2007, 7:30 pm

The Brentano String Quartet

Mark Steinberg, violin
Nina Maria Lee, cello
Serena Canin, violin
Misha Amory, viola

with **Susan Narucki**, soprano

PROGRAM

J.S. Bach (1685–1750)
Contrapuntus XIV from *The Art of Fugue* (1750)

Schoenberg (1874–1951)
String Quartet No. 2 in F-sharp minor, op. 10 (1910)
- Allegro
- Scherzo: Molto allegro
- Theme and variations: Litanei
- Finale: Entrückung

INTERMISSION

Beethoven (1770–1827)
String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat major, op. 127 (1825)
- Maestoso—Allegro
- Adagio, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
- Scherzo: Vivace—Presto
- Finale: Allegro con moto

The Brentano String Quartet appears by arrangement with David Rowe Artists, Marblehead, MA. The Brentano String Quartet record for AEON (distributed by Harmonia Mundi USA)
www.brentanoquartet.com

About the Artists…

The Brentano String Quartet

Since its inception in 1992, the Brentano String Quartet has appeared throughout the world to popular and critical acclaim. The Quartet is named for Antonie Brentano, whom many scholars consider to be Beethoven's "Immortal Beloved," the intended recipient of his famous love confession.

Within a few years of its formation, the quartet garnered the first Cleveland Quartet Award and the Naumburg Chamber Music Award. In 1996 the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center invited them to be the inaugural members of Chamber Music Society Two, a program which has become a coveted distinction for chamber groups and individuals ever since. The Quartet made its European tour debut in 1997 and was honored in the U.K. with the Royal Philharmonic Award for Most Outstanding Debut. It regularly performs at Wigmore Hall and served as the hall's quartet-in-residence during the 2000–01 season.

In recent seasons, the foursome has traveled widely, appearing in the world's most prestigious venues, including Carnegie and Alice Tully halls in New York; Library of Congress in Washington; Concertgebouw in Amsterdam; Konzerthaus in Vienna; Suntory Hall in Tokyo; and the Sydney Opera House. The Quartet has participated in summer festivals such as Aspen, Caramoor, Music Academy of the West, the Edinburgh Festival, the Kuhmo Festival in Finland, and the Taos School of Music.

The Quartet has a strong interest in both very old and very new music and has performed works pre-dating the string quartet as a medium, among them Madrigals of Gesualdo, Fantasias of Purcell, and secular vocal works of Josquin. It has worked with the most important composers of our time, among them Elliot Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-chung, Steven Mackey, Bruce Adolphe, and György Kurtág. Brentano celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2002 by commissioning ten composers to write companion pieces for selections from Bach's *Art of Fugue*, the result of which was an electrifying and wide-ranging single concert program. The quartet has also worked with the celebrated poet Mark Strand, commissioning poetry from him to accompany works of Haydn and Webern.

The Brentano Quartet has recorded works of Haydn and Mozart for Aeon Records. In the area of newer music, the Quartet has released a disc of the music of Steven Mackey on Albany Records, and has also recorded the

music of Bruce Adolphe, Chou Wen-chung and Charles Wuorinen.

In 1998, cellist Nina Lee joined the quartet, succeeding founding member Michael Kannen. The following season, Brentano became the first Resident String Quartet at Princeton University.

Susan Narucki, soprano

Grammy Award-winning soprano Susan Narucki has been hailed for evocative performances of works both new and old. Recent appearances include performances with Pierre Boulez and the Cleveland Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony, the Schoenberg and Asko Ensembles on Great Performers at Lincoln Center, and at the Netherlands Opera. A distinguished chamber musician, she has been a guest with the Orion String Quartet, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Norfolk and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festivals, among many others. The Boston Globe recently wrote, "Susan Narucki has intelligence, wit, presence, drop-dead musicianship, and a voice you want to hear."

Nominated in the Best Classical Vocal Performance category for a 2002 Grammy, her extensive discography includes two recent releases of world premiere operas: Louis Andreissen's Writing to Vermeer and Claude Vivier's Rêves D'un Marco Polo. She can be heard on Sony Classical, Philips, Angel, Chandos, Nonesuch, Decca, Bridge, and many other labels. Soon to be released is a disc of Aaron Kernis' song cycles for Koch International.

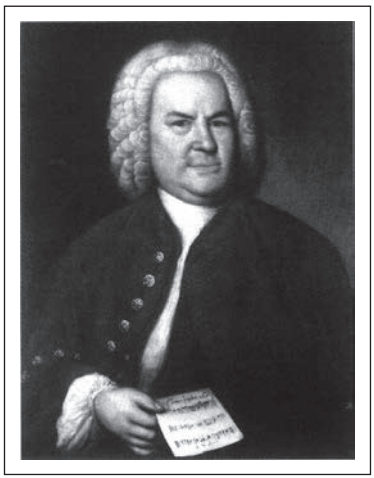
Her current season includes include engagements with James Levine and the Met Chamber Ensemble, the New York premiere of Elliott Carter's opera "What's Next?", Orchestra of Radio France at the Cite de la Musique, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Société de Musique Contemporaine du Quebec, Ojai Festival, the Cabrillo Festival with conductor Marin Alsop, with the Brentano String Quartet, at the Los Angeles Monday Evening concerts, and the world premiere of Lisa Bielawa's "Chance Encounter."

About the Program…

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
b. 1685 in Eisenach
d. 1750 in Leipzig

Contrapunctus XIV from *The Art of the Fugue*, BWV 1080

For which instruments did Bach write *The Art of the Fugue*, his monumental—and valedictory—study in the contrapuntal possibilities of one theme? Bach himself left no indication in the score, and his manuscript seemed all the more complex (and forbidding), because he wrote the various voices not just in treble and bass clef but also in alto and tenor clef. As a result, some wondered whether he intended the music to be performed at all, and others believed that this music was frankly unplayable, intended only as theoretical exercises in complex counterpoint. We know today that *The Art of the Fugue* in fact can be performed, and it has been played and recorded on such instruments as harpsichord, piano, organ, string quartet, chamber orchestra, and symphony orchestra (as well as on many unexpected instruments, such as saxophone quartet). Perhaps it is better that Bach left no indication of the instrumentation he had in mind when he conceived this music—each time we hear this music performed by different instruments, we hear it realized in quite different ways.



About 1740 Bach became interested in exploring the contrapuntal possibilities bound up within one theme. In 1747 came one of the most famous signs of this interest. On a visit to Berlin, Bach played before Frederick the Great, who in turn gave Bach a theme and asked him to extemporize a six-part fugue on it. Bach improvised a three-part fugue for Frederick on the spot, and then—back in Leipzig—took that "royal" theme through thirteen further contrapuntal extensions, which he presented to the King as *A Musical Offering*. But Bach's interest in exploring the contrapuntal possibilities of a single theme extended well beyond the famous visit to Berlin in 1747, as the *Goldberg Variations* (1742) and the canonic variations *Vom Himmel Hoch* (1747) make clear. Evidence suggests that about 1740 Bach had

begun a lengthy work consisting of a series of fugues and canons based on one theme. His work on this project continued across the decade, even during the years of his increasing blindness. Bach had prepared the first eleven fugues for publication, and after his death all of the pieces based on this one theme were gathered by his son Carl Philipp Emanuel and published in the fall of 1751 under the name *The Art of the Fugue*, a title the composer probably never heard or imagined.

This evening's program opens with the *Contrapunctus XIV*, left unfinished at the time of Bach's death in July 1750. By this time almost totally blind, he composed by dictating to an amanuensis. This fugue has provoked a great deal of interest and controversy. It was to be the culmination of this project, but it does not make use of the fundamental theme of *The Art of the Fugue*. Instead, it was to be a massive triple fugue: a lengthy working-out of the first subject, a second subject which is combined with the first as it is worked out, and a third section built in part on a subject whose notes are based on the letters of Bach's last name (B-flat/A/C/B-natural). Just at the point at which he combined these subjects, Bach—aging, weak, and blind—gave up work on this fugue and dictated the chorale *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*, which was included at this point when *The Art of the Fugue* was published in 1751. Various musicians, including Donald Francis Tovey and Ferruccio Busoni, have completed the fugue on their own, and *Contrapunctus XIV* is sometimes performed in one of these "completed" versions and sometimes with the chorale—the last music Bach wrote—as its completion. The Brentano Quartet has chosen to conclude not with any of these "completions" but exactly as Bach left the manuscript: the music trails off abruptly into silence.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
b. 1874 in Vienna
d. 1951 in Los Angeles

String Quartet No. 2 in F-sharp minor, op. 10

It took Schoenberg a long time to compose his String Quartet No. 2: he began it in March 1907 and finished it at the end of the summer of 1908. This was an extremely difficult time for the composer. Barely able to support himself as a composer, teacher, and conductor in Vienna during these years, Schoenberg was plunging deep into crises, both musically and personally. As a composer he was moving inexorably toward a break with tonality. This was uncharted territory, and if Schoenberg could find that journey exhilarating, it was also terrifying. And in the midst of this came personal catastrophe. Schoenberg and his wife, Mathilde, had been taking painting lessons

from the brilliant twenty-five-year-old Viennese painter Richard Gerstl. In the summer of 1908 Mathilde left Schoenberg and their young children and moved in with Gerstl. Their affair was brief (Mathilde came back to her husband within weeks), but its outcome was horrifying: overcome by the loss of Mathilde, the rupture with Schoenberg, and the state of his own career, Gerstl committed suicide in November 1908 by hanging himself in front of a full-length mirror and stabbing himself through the heart at the same time. The premiere of the String Quartet No. 2, which Schoenberg dedicated "To my wife," took place six weeks later, on December 21, 1908.

Created at a moment of personal crisis, Schoenberg's String Quartet No. 2 is a transitional work. If it is in many ways revolutionary music (it includes a part for soprano, who sings in the third and fourth movements), it is at the same time quite traditional: the quartet is Schoenberg's final work in a specific key, it is in the expected four movements, and these are in such classical forms as sonata-form, scherzo-and-trio, variation-form. But as we listen across the thirty-minute span of this quartet, we can virtually feel the art of music change in front of us.

The sonata-form first movement, in F-sharp minor and marked *Moderate*, is based on the flowing opening idea and a brief but surging second theme, announced by the first violin and marked very expressive on its first appearance. The writing in this movement can be quite brilliant, but after a full development and recapitulation, it draws to a quiet close.

The second movement, in D minor, is a scherzo marked *Very fast* that begins with the cello's deep pulsing Ds. The central trio section is even faster, with the first violin skittering downward in a shower of sixteenths and triplets. Along the way comes a surprise, and it is virtually a moment out of Mahler: the second violin plays the old Austrian folksong "Ach, du lieber Augustin." Some have felt that the next words in that song—"Alles ist hin" (Everything is over)—is a reference to the composer's marital crisis. Schoenberg recapitulates themes from the opening section (thought in a different order), and

the movement rushes to its sudden close.

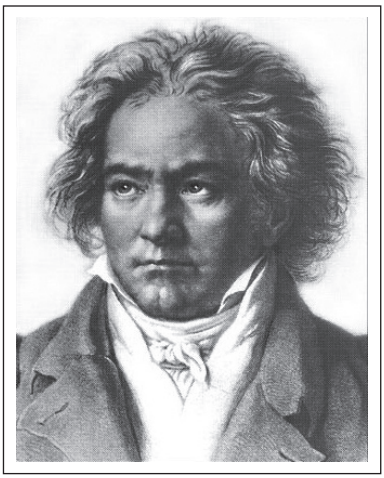
While Schoenberg was working on this quartet in 1908, he became interested in the poetry of Stefan George, and he put the quartet aside to set a number of George's poems. George (1868–1933) was a German poet, translator, and scholar, and this particular collection of poems was charged with erotic intensity and spiritual longing. Schoenberg set fifteen of these poems and published them as *The Book of the Hanging Garden*, but he also set two more, and these became the texts for the third and fourth movements of the quartet. The third movement is in theme-and-variation form, based on thematic fragments from the first two movements. It sets the poem "Litanei" (Litany) in which, from the depths of suffering, the poet pleas for release. Viola and then second violin announce the principal theme before the singer enters, and the text is set as five variations on the opening theme. This movement, which began in G-flat major, concludes in E-flat minor.

At this point occurs one of the most astonishing moments in all music. The first three movements had been in specific keys, but the finale has no key signature. Muted strings ripple upward quietly, without any clear tonal base, and this movement will have no tonal center. Schoenberg said that this introduction was meant to depict "the departure from earth to another planet," and the soprano begins to sing the George poem "Entrückung" (Remoteness) on the lines "I feel the air of a different planet." The poet here leaves earth behind, just as Schoenberg is leaving tonality behind, and the composer described the progress of this movement as "passing through clouds into thinner and thinner air, forgetting all the troubles of life on earth." This is by far the longest movement in the quartet, and at the very end, after all its harmonic freedom, the music comes to a peaceful close on a quiet chord in F-sharp major. It is one last moment of stasis, one lingering moment of tonality before Schoenberg would take music into a different order of existence altogether.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
b. 1770 in Bonn
d. 1827 in Vienna

String Quartet No. 12 in E-flat major, op. 127

When Russian prince Nikolas Galitzin wrote to Beethoven in the fall of 1822 to commission three string quartets, his request met a sympathetic response: the composer had been thinking about writing string quartets for some time and promised to have the first done within a month or two. Other projects intervened, however, and despite the Prince's frequent inquiries,



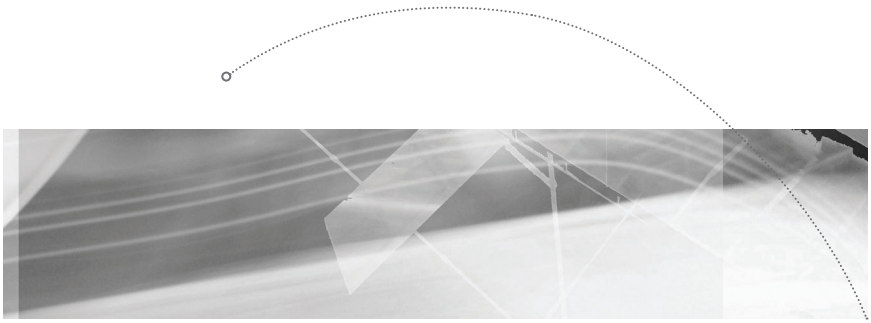
Beethoven had to complete the *Missa Solemnis*, *Diabelli Variations*, and the Ninth Symphony before he could begin work on the first of the three quartets in the summer of 1824. This quartet was not complete until February 1825. Performed immediately by the string quartet of Ignaz Schuppanzigh, the music was a failure at its premiere on March 6, 1825. Furious, Beethoven quickly had it rehearsed and performed by another quartet. He attended their rehearsals and supervised their interpretation (though deaf, he could follow their performance by watching the movement of their bows). The second performance was a great success, and this quartet was performed publicly at least ten more times in 1825—an extraordinary number of performances for a new work—and always to great acclaim.

That fact is important because it gives the lie to the popular notion that Beethoven's late quartets were far ahead of their time. Some of the late quartets may have defied quick comprehension, but this was not true of the Quartet in E-flat major. Many have noted that this is the most traditional of Beethoven's late quartets. At first glance, it has a relatively straightforward structure: a sonata-form first movement, a variation-form slow movement, a scherzo in ABA form, and a dance-finale. But to reduce this music to such simplicity is to miss the extraordinary originality beneath its appealing and gentle surface.

In the first movement, Beethoven seems to set out intentionally to blur traditional sonata form, which depends on the opposition of material. Contrast certainly seems to be implied at the beginning, which opens with a firm chordal *Maestoso*, but this *Maestoso* quickly melts into the flowing and simple main theme, marked *Allegro* (Beethoven further specifies that he wants this melody performed "tenderly" and "sweetly."). The powerful Maestoso returns twice more, each time in a different key, and then drops out of the movement altogether. Beethoven builds the movement almost exclusively out of the opening melody and an equally gentle second subject. Here is a sonata-form movement that does not drive to a powerful climax but instead remains understated throughout: the movement evaporates on a wisp of the opening *Allegro* theme.

Two softly pulsing measures lead to the main theme of the *Adagio*, a gently rocking and serene melody introduced by the first violin and repeated by the cello. There follow six melodic variations, each growing organically out of the previous one until the music achieves a kind of rhapsodic calm, and the original theme has been left far behind. Four sharp pizzicato chords introduce the scherzo, and these four chords then vanish, never to re-appear. The fugal opening section, built on a dotted figure and its inversion, leads to a brief and utterly different trio section. In E-flat minor, this trio whips past in a blistering blur: Beethoven's phrase markings here stretch over twenty measures at a time. Beethoven brings back the opening section, then offers a surprise at the ending by including a quick reminiscence of the trio just before the cadence.

The last movement has proven the most difficult for commentators, perhaps because of its apparent simplicity. Marked only *Finale*, it opens with a four-measure introduction that seemingly launches off in the wrong direction before the true main theme appears in the first violin. Of rustic simplicity, this melody has been compared to a country-dance, and the second theme—a jaunty march-tune decorated with grace notes—preserves that atmosphere. The tunes may be innocent, but Beethoven's treatment of them in this sonata-form movement is quite sophisticated, particularly in matters of modulation and harmony. Also striking is the very close, where instead of speeding ahead (the expected tempo at a close) Beethoven slows his main theme down, and the music comes to an understated conclusion.



jonathan biss

Friday Evening
26 October / 7:30 pm
Mandel Hall

The University of Chicago Presents • Music at Mandel Hall

Friday, October 26, 2007, 7:30 pm

Jonathan Biss, piano

PROGRAM

BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
Piano Sonata No. 27 in E minor, op. 90 (1814)
- Mit Lebhaftigkeit und durchaus mit Empfindung und Ausdruck
- Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorzutragen

JANÁČEK (1854–1928)
In the Mist (1912)
- Andante
- Molto adagio
- Andantino
- Presto

BEETHOVEN
Piano Sonata No. 15 in D major, op. 28, "Pastoral" (1801)
- Allegro
- Andante
- Scherzo: Allegro vivace
- Rondo: Allegro non troppo

INTERMISSION

JANÁČEK
Sonata: 1.X.1905 (1905)
- Foreboding
- Death

BEETHOVEN
Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major, op. 109 (1820)
- Vivace—Adagio espressivo
- Prestissimo
- Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung

About the Artist…

Jonathan Biss

At the age of twenty-seven, American pianist Jonathan Biss has already proven himself an accomplished and exceptional musician with a flourishing international reputation through his orchestral, recital, and chamber music performances in North America and Europe and through his EMI Classics recordings. Noted for his prodigious technique, intriguing programs, artistic maturity and versatility, Biss performs a diverse repertoire ranging from Mozart and Beethoven, through the Romantics, to Janáček and Schoenberg as well as works by contemporary composers, including commissions from Leon Kirchner and Lewis Spratlan.

Hailed as a major new performing artist since he made his New York Philharmonic debut six years ago, Biss has appeared with the foremost orchestras of the United States and Europe. He is a frequent performer at leading international music festivals and gives recitals in major music capitals both here and abroad.

In 2004 Biss made his Chicago recital debut here at Mandel Hall as that season's Regents Park Discovery Artist. An enthusiastic chamber musician, he has been a member of Chamber Music Society Two at Lincoln Center and a frequent participant at the Marlboro Music Festival.

Biss represents the third generation in a family of professional musicians that includes his grandmother, cellist Raya Garbousova, for whom Samuel Barber composed his Cello Concerto, and his parents, violinist Miriam Fried and violist/violinist Paul Biss. He studied at Indiana University with Evelyne Brancart and at The Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia with Leon Fleisher.

In April 2006 EMI Classics signed Biss to a two-year exclusive contract. His first CD under this contract, an all-Schumann recital, was released to widespread praise and reached Number 5 on the classical charts. His next recording, an all-Beethoven recital, is scheduled for release in October 2007. Biss' first commercial recording—a CD of works by Beethoven and Schumann—was issued by EMI on its "Debut" recording series in 2004.

Biss was an artist-in-residence on NPR's "Performance Today," was the first American chosen to participate in the BBC's New Generation Artist program, and has been recognized with numerous awards, including an Avery Fisher Career Grant, the 2003 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award, and most recently, the 2005 Leonard Bernstein Award.

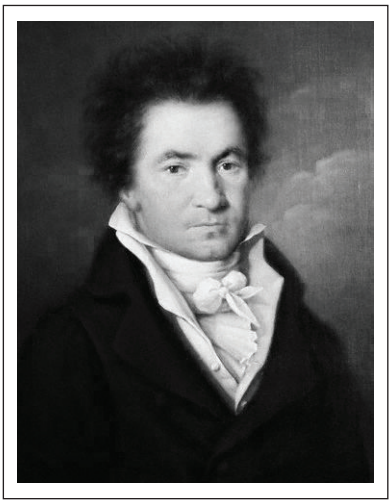
About the Program…

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
b. 1770 in Bonn
d. 1827 in Vienna

Piano Sonata No. 27 in E minor, op. 90

One of the problems of dividing Beethoven's work into three periods is that inevitably we assume that the divisions between these periods must be clearly marked. And so when Beethoven, after a fallow period lasting six years, resumed writing music at age fifty, we assume that his "late style" was a sudden development. Actually, many of the elements that define the late style—intimacy of expression, a deepened concern for lyricism, formal experimentation, an interest in fugal writing—were already evident in the music Beethoven was composing just before he entered that period of comparative silence. In particular, works like the Violin Sonata in G major of 1812 and the *Elegiac Song* of 1814 already show pronounced elements of the late style, even though chronologically they come at the close of Beethoven's heroic style.

The Sonata in E minor, composed during the summer of 1814, is another of those works that looks ahead to the directions Beethoven would explore more fully in his final years. The conflict-based sonata form of the heroic style is abandoned here, replaced by a wholly original approach to sonata structure. The sonata is in only two movements, and these are in the unexpected sequence of a fast movement followed by a slow one. The harmonic progression is also unusual, moving from E minor to the tonic major, E major, in the second movement, and the focused and terse structure of the opening movement gives way to a relaxed and flowing concluding



movement. Beethoven dedicated this sonata to an old friend, Count Moritz Lichnowsky, younger brother of the composer's longtime patron Prince Lichnowsky, who had died in April 1814 while Beethoven was beginning work on the sonata.

Also remarkable in this music is Beethoven's decision to set the movement markings in German rather than the traditional Italian. The first movement is marked *Mit Lebhaftigkeit und durchaus*

mit Empfindung und Ausdruck: "With liveliness and throughout with feeling and expression." This movement is noteworthy for its rhythmic imagination: the opening phrase is full of rests and pauses and then moments where the music suddenly flashes forward; the singing second subject arrives in syncopated octaves in the right hand. Beethoven seems intent here not on building this movement out of the collision of themes of different character but on the rhythmic possibilities built into these quite different subjects; the movement vanishes on a quiet reprise of a bit of the opening theme.

The second movement—*Nicht zu geschwind und sehr singbar vorzutragen* ("Not too fast and to be presented very lyrically")—is quite different. It is a broad rondo based on the gorgeous opening idea: Beethoven's lyric sense was growing richer even as he was sinking more deeply into deafness. There are animated episodes along the way, and some of these are extended at length: this movement is significantly longer than the opening movement. But the rondo theme always makes its welcome return, and Beethoven repeatedly reminds the pianist to play *dolce* and *teneramente* (tenderly); only rarely does this music rise to a *forte*–and then quickly retreats. The rondo theme returns for a final statement, and the sonata—inward even at its close—vanishes quietly and gracefully.

LEOŠ JANÁČEK
b. 1854 in Hukvaldy, Moravia
d. 1928 in Ostrava

In the Mist

Janáček composed *In the Mist* in 1912, when he was fifty-eight years old and serving as director of the Organ School in Brno. As a composer he was virtually unknown: a regional production of his opera *Jenůfa* in 1904 had brought him a brief moment of notice, but now he seemed doomed to live out his days as a provincial musician. Success would come to Janáček a decade later, when he fell madly in love with a married woman. That relationship would remain platonic, but it fired Janáček's creativity: during the final years of his life (when he was in his seventies!) he wrote four great operas, the *Sinfonietta*, the *Glagolitic Mass*, and two string quartets—all tremendous music, full of life, fire, and drama. But in 1912, when he wrote *In the Mist*, Janáček could have no inkling of this: he was nearing retirement, he was unknown, he was trapped in an unhappy marriage, and he feared that this would be his fate.

Some of Janáček's biographers believe that the title *In the Mist* is autobiographical and that it refers to Janáček's belief that, as a composer, he was lost "in the mist." Janáček had a fondness for enigmatic titles, and we need to be careful not to read significance into a situation where it

may not belong, but that suggestion is intriguing.

In the Mist is a suite of four brief movements. The mood here is neither bitter nor angry, but all four movements are tinged with a measure of melancholy. All four are in a general ternary form: an opening statement, a central episode in a different mood or tempo, and return (sometimes modified) to the opening material. But this music conforms to no set form, and the individual movements are episodic, mercurial in their short themes, repeated phrases, and quick changes of mood and color. The movements do not really require detailed description, but one might note how beautifully the opening *Andante* establishes the subdued mood, while the *Andantino* appears to have its roots in Eastern European folksong. The concluding movement may be marked *Presto*, but it is neither brilliant nor even particularly fast. Instead, with its frequent stops and starts, it feels ruminative and just as enigmatic as everything else in this music. After all these half-tones and indecisions, however, *In the Mist* drives to a firm conclusion.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Piano Sonata No. 15 in D major, op. 28, "Pastoral"

Beethoven believed that he had written only one piece nicknamed the "Pastoral," his Sixth Symphony of 1808. Yet among his piano sonatas there is one called the "Pastoral," though this nickname was created by a publisher in Hamburg in the 1830s, a few years after Beethoven's death. "Pastoral" is a term without precise musical meaning. In literature, it refers to a work that idealizes country life, specifically the life of the shepherd, invariably by a class that has had little contact with such a life: Marie Antoinette's playing at being a milkmaid is only one of the most egregious examples of this attitude. In music, pastoral is more elusive and difficult to define: it may appear as the sound of shepherds' pipes (Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*), as peasant dances (Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* or Haydn's *The Seasons*), or as a relaxed interlude (the Pastoral Symphony from *Handel's Messiah*).

Yet none of these characterizes Beethoven's Sonata in D major, composed in 1801. This was two

years before he revolutionized his own style with the "Eroica," and in these years, at age thirty, he was continuing to refine his command of classical form, even as—in quiet ways—he was taking that early style in unusual directions: other works composed this same year include the "Moonlight" Sonata, the "Spring" Sonata, and *The Creatures of Prometheus* ballet. The Sonata in D major is relaxed and open music, and commentators invariably seize on the opening of the last movement, with its rocking 6/8 meter, as the spot that "must" be pastoral. Beethoven would have thrown up his hands had he heard that nickname. To him, this was simply a Sonata in D major, and it may be most accurate to consider this music for itself and not try to fit it into someone else's retroactive nickname.

This sonata, the fifteenth in the sequence of Beethoven's thirty-two piano sonatas, is his last in four movements. The opening *Allegro* proceeds smoothly along a steady pulse of quarter-notes. Though the exposition is relaxed, the development is quite active, at least until the end, when Beethoven brings it to a series of pauses; the recapitulation, not literal, drives to a quiet close. Beethoven moves to D minor in the wonderful *Andante*: the right hand has the legato melodic line over a walking staccato accompaniment in the left. This is striking music, and it is matched by its middle section, which moves to D major and dances lightly along triplet rhythms. The opening material and tonality return, and all seems set for a simple ternary form when Beethoven takes off: that opening material is now extended on strange chromatic runs, and there is even a whiff of the middle section in the closing moments. Beethoven's friend Carl Czerny reported that this movement was the composer's own favorite and that he used to perform it by itself. One wishes that whoever nicknamed this sonata had, instead

of settling on something so bland as "Pastoral," found a name derived from this movement: this *Andante* is the part of the sonata that stays to haunt the mind when the music has ended.

The *Scherzo* dances quickly on the octave drops at its opening; its tiny trio section vanishes almost as it begins. The amiable rondo tune of the finale rocks along happily on its 6/8 meter, and Beethoven breaks this cheerful motion with

more extroverted passages. Some have commented that the fast coda seems out of place in such a relaxed movement, but even in this virtuoso passage the music speeds along over the same rocking 6/8 accompaniment that has underlain so much of the movement.

LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Sonata: 1.X.1905

Throughout his long life, Janáček remained a passionate Czech nationalist, committed to freeing the Czechs from German domination. On October 1, 1905, came an event that fired these passions even more deeply. When the Czechs in Brno asked for the creation of a Czech university, the Germans demonstrated against them, and the Czechs retaliated with a counter-demonstration. Troops were called in to quash the violence, and in the process a twenty-year-old Czech worker was bayoneted to death. Outraged, Janáček composed a three-movement piano sonata that he titled after the date of that violence; its subtitle has been translated variously "From the Streets" or "Street Scene."

The sonata was originally in three movements, but at a rehearsal, Janáček—apparently overcome by the quality of works on the program by other composers—stormed onto the stage, and in front of the astonished pianist, burned the last movement. After the next rehearsal, Janáček took the manuscript to the first two movements and threw them into the Vltava River. He noted: "They did not want to sink. The paper bulged and floated on the water like so many white swans." This time, though, the pianist was ready—she had made copies of these two movements and saved them. Nearly twenty years later, in 1924, Janáček agreed to their publication.

The two surviving movements are quite short, and both are unified around the same rhythmic and thematic figures. The opening *Con moto* (subtitled "Presentiment") commences with a generalized theme-shape that becomes, in the fourth measure, the germinal cell for the entire sonata. All the other themes evolve in some way from this figure. It becomes, for example, the accompaniment to the chordal second theme, and throughout the sonata it is transformed by

Janáček's fluid rhythmic sense—the music speeds ahead, holds back, and seems to be stretched or compressed as we listen. The main theme of the *Adagio* (subtitled "Death" but originally subtitled "Elegie") also grows out of the first movement's central theme. Full of a wild and wistful quality, this movement grows more animated and then subsides to an elegiac close.

One wonders what the last movement was like.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Piano Sonata No. 30 in E major, op. 109

The years 1813–21 were exceptionally trying for Beethoven. Not only was he having financial difficulties, but this was also the period of his bitter legal struggle for custody of his nephew Karl. Under these stresses, and with the added burden of ill health, Beethoven virtually ceased composing. Where the previous two decades had seen a great outpouring of music, now his creative powers flickered and were nearly extinguished. In 1817, for example, he composed almost nothing. To be sure, there was an occasional major work—the Hammerklavier Sonata occupied him throughout all of 1818—but it was not until 1820 that he put his troubles, both personal and creative, behind him and was able to marshal new energy as a composer. When this energy returned, Beethoven took on several massive new projects, beginning work on the *Missa Solemnis* and making sketches for the Ninth Symphony. By the end of May 1820, he had promised to write three piano sonatas for the Berlin publisher Adolph Martin Schlesinger. Although Beethoven claimed that he wrote these three sonatas—his final piano sonatas—"in one breath," their composition was actually spread out over a longer period than he expected when he committed himself to write them—he completed the Sonata in E major immediately, but ill health postponed the other two.

The *Vivace, ma non troppo* of the sonata opens with a smoothly flowing theme that is brought to a sudden halt after only nine bars, and Beethoven introduces his second subject at a much slower tempo: *Adagio espressivo*. But after only eight measures at the slower tempo, he returns to his opening theme and tempo. The entire movement is based not on the traditional exposition and development of themes of the classical sonata movement but on the contrast between these two radically different tempos. Also remarkable is this movement's concision: it lasts barely four minutes.

The *Prestissimo* that follows is somewhat more traditional—it is a scherzo in sonata form, full of the

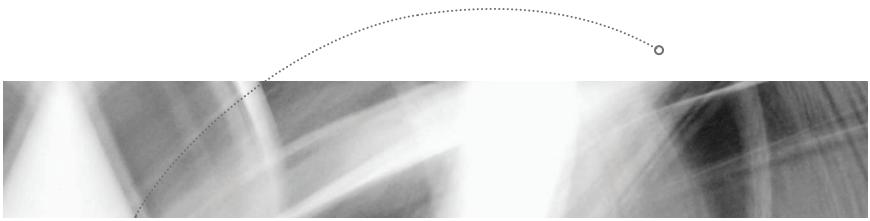
familiar Beethovenian power, with explosive accents and a rugged second theme. But once again, the surprise is how focused the music is: this movement lasts two minutes.

It was often characteristic of the music in Beethoven's heroic period that the first movements carried the emotional weight, as did the opening movements of the "Eroica" and the Fifth Symphony. But in the Sonata in E major, the opening two movements combined last barely six minutes, not even half the length of the final movement, and this final movement ultimately becomes the emotional center of the sonata.

The *Andante molto cantabile ed espressivo* is a theme and six variations, followed by a repetition of the opening theme. The form is not remarkable, but the variations themselves are. In his youth Beethoven had made much of his reputation as a virtuoso pianist, and one of his specialties had been the ability to sit at the keyboard and extemporize variations on a given theme. The variation form as he developed it in his late period is much different from the virtuoso variations he had written in his youth. This set of variations is not so much a decoration of the original theme as it is a sustained organic growth in which each variation seems to develop from what has gone before. The theme itself is of the greatest dignity, and to Beethoven's marking in Italian, *molto cantabile ed espressivo*, he further specifies in German *Gesangvoll mit innigster Empfindung*: "Singing with the deepest feeling." Curiously, Beethoven never changes keys in this movement—the theme and all six variations remain in E major—and despite the wealth of invention and the contrasts generated by the different variations, the mood remains one of the most rapt expressiveness, perfectly summarized by the restatement of the original theme at the sonata's close.

The Sonata in E major is dedicated to Maximiliana Brentano, the daughter of Antonie Brentano, whom recent scholarship has identified as Beethoven's "Immortal Beloved."

Eric Bromberger writes program notes for the Minnesota Orchestra, Washington Performing Arts Society at the Kennedy Center, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, San Francisco Performances, San Diego Symphony, and many other organizations. He is a violinist in the La Jolla Symphony Orchestra



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Scott Yoo, conductor

Friday / 19 October / 7:30 pm
Brentano String Quartet
Susan Narucki, soprano

Tuesday / 23 October / 7:30 pm
CONTEMPO
eighth blackbird
Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Millennium Park

Friday / 26 October / 7:30 pm
Jonathan Biss, piano
Discovery Encore!

Friday / 2 November / 7:30 pm
Les Violons du Roy
Bernard Labadie, conductor
Karina Gauvin, soprano

Friday / 9 November / 7:30 pm
Jennifer Koh, violin
Reiko Uchida, piano

Sunday / 11 November / 3 pm
Pacifica Quartet
Beethoven Festival
With pre-concert lecture by Dr. Philip Gossett

Saturday / 12 January / 7:30 pm
CONTEMPO double bill
eighth blackbird
Pacifica Quartet
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Friday / 18 January / 7:30 pm
Ensemble Caprice
Matthias Maute, director
Chicago debut

Saturday / 26 January / 10:30 am
Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
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Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
Jon Kimura Parker, piano

Friday / 15 February / 7:30 pm
Alice Coote, mezzo-soprano
Julius Drake, piano
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Tuesday / 19 February / 7:30 pm
Efe Baltacigil, cello
Anna Polonsky, piano
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Farewell Tour

Friday / 7 March / 7:30 pm
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Sunday / 16 March / 3 pm
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eighth blackbird
Pacifica Quartet
Tony Arnold, soprano
Chicago Cultural Center

Friday / 11 April / 7:30 pm
Belcea Quartet
Chicago recital debut

Tuesday / 22 April / 7:30 pm
Pacifica Quartet
Artist-In-Residence Concert

Friday / 25 April / 7:30 pm
Luciana Souza

Sunday / 27 April / 3 pm
Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
Douglas Boyd, conductor
Dawn Upshaw, soprano

Friday / 9 May / 7:30 pm
CONTEMPO:
Tomorrow's Music Today 1
eighth blackbird
Pacifica Quartet
Fulton Recital Hall,
University of Chicago
Free admission

Thursday / 22 May / 6:30 pm
Matt Haimovitz, cello
Oriental Institute

Friday / 23 May / 7:30 pm
CONTEMPO:
Tomorrow's Music Today 2
eighth blackbird
Pacifica Quartet
Ganz Hall, Roosevelt University

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