


FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

The Colorado String Quartet

Julie Rosenfeld, violin
Deborah Redding, violin
Hugo Bollschweiler, viola
Diane Chaplin, cello

Sunday, January 16, 2000, 3:00 p.m.
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
University of the Pacific
Stockton, California

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This performance is underwritten by a grant from Baskin  *Robbins.*

Program

Quartet in g minor, Op. 20, No. 3 (HobIII/33)

Allegro con spirito
Menuetto (Allegretto)
Poco adagio
Allegro molto

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 74 ("Harp")

Poco adagio—Allegro
Adagio ma non troppo
Presto
Allegretto con variazioni

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

—*Intermission*—

Quartet No. 5 in B-flat major, Op. 92

Allegro non troppo
Andante
Moderato

Dmitry Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

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The Colorado Quartet appears by arrangement with
Arts Management Group, Inc.
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The Colorado Quartet

In a ten-day period in 1983, The Colorado Quartet made history by winning two of chamber music's highest honors, the Naumburg Chamber Music Award and First Prize at the Banff International String Quartet Competition. Since then, the ensemble has won critical acclaim on four continents and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music.

Each of the artists has a separate career as soloist, guest artist, orchestral musician, recording artist, and teacher. They are founders and artistic directors of the Soundfest Chamber Music Festival and Institute of String Quartets in Falmouth, MA, and have held residencies at numerous universities, colleges, conservatories, and music schools.

The Colorado Quartet appears regularly in major halls around the world as well as in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Seattle, and other cities. It also is featured on radio and television in America, England, and Canada and on television in The Netherlands, Norway, Puerto Rico, Peru, and Mexico.

Just last year, the quartet toured more than twenty countries. They have performed at Carnegie Hall and on the Great Performers Series at Lincoln Center in New York, at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and at festivals in Scandinavia, the Czech Republic, and at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico.

A *Los Angeles Times* critic called a recent concert "a spectacularly accomplished performance...light, with a flawlessly balanced ensemble as well as strong individual presences."

Program Notes

Time measured in centuries is part of the general consciousness at this point and it is fitting that the Colorado quartet brings a program representative of three centuries. Haydn's Opus 20, representing some of his most outstanding chamber music, was composed in 1772, a culmination of eighteenth century developments. Beethoven's work comes from his "middle" period, the year 1809. He is leading music into the nineteenth century with this work which represents a new point of individuality and intensification over his earlier quartet, the idiom he

inherited from Haydn and Mozart. Shostakovich is considered the greatest symphonist of the mid-twentieth century and his fifteen quartets show a similar range of the private emotions found in the personal anguish of his later symphonic works.

Franz Joseph Haydn – Quartet in g minor, Op. 20, No. 3 (HobIII/33)

The quartet in g minor was the first of six quartets composed in 1772 and nicknamed the "Sun" quartets because of an illustration of a sun used to decorate the publication. They represent one of Haydn's most outstanding series of chamber music, composed when he was forty years old. The original manuscripts were bound by Brahms, who greatly admired Haydn, and who then donated them to the Friends of Music in Vienna. It is this set of quartets that so greatly impressed Mozart and inspired his set of six quartets, eventually performed at Mozart's home in Vienna with the participation of Haydn and in the presence of Mozart's father.

At this time, a period when the "Sturm und Drang" (storm and stress) movement was present in German art, new trends became prominent, with strikingly expressive character. Around 1770, in Haydn's "third" period, the tendency was to yield somewhat to elegant entertainment. Haydn's work here shows a new growth in craftsmanship. However, nobody knows just what were his influences, what external forces inspired him. One stimulation to new development could have been a fellow composer in Vienna, named Gassman, who showed Haydn some works by Handel and other scores. As a result, three of the quartets (but not the g minor) have finales in fugal style. The style is carried over in polyphonic texture that gives greater importance to each instrument of the quartet, rather than the earlier concept of an accompanied first violin that is assigned the melodic material. Haydn's own work in other media, the symphony and the baryton trio, probably contributed just as much to the remarkable development in the string quartet. Haydn had composed a long series of baryton trios so that his master, Prince Esterhazy, who played that instrument, could participate in music making. Themes and motifs now become more personal;

there is increased harmonic tension and greater expressiveness, especially in the slow movements, with rhythmic emphasis in the quick movements.

The g minor is perhaps the most significant of the series, for Haydn was at his best at the beginning of a series. The opening movement presents a certain "visionary ecstasy" and the mature sonata form, which is the great achievement of the age. The second movement, though a *Menuetto*, has a dramatic force created within miniature proportions. The Trio in E flat is dancing and playful, a lovely contrast. The *Finale* is an exciting sonata form, rich in contrasts that are worthy of an opening movement.

Ludwig van Beethoven - Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 74 ("Harp")

Beethoven, besides being of a strongly philosophical and logical bent, had a gift for dramatic expression far above the ordinary. The string quartet was suited to the logical unfolding of musical lines being without the components for padding and expanded coloristic effects. The sonata form developed from the use of conflict between keys and the development of themes: conflict to resolution. With Beethoven, you have the opportunity for drama and philosophy in music. He toiled to use these resources to the maximum as he did in the quartets of his Middle Period, works composed between 1804 and 1810, published as Opus 59, Opus 74, and Opus 95. The Opus 59 quartets are the most famous, dedicated to Prince Razumovsky, the Russian ambassador in Vienna.

In Opus 59, besides the use of musical dialectic and drama, Beethoven integrated polyphonic effects gleaned from Baroque sources. The latter influence is demonstrated in Opus 74 as well. However, a shift of emphasis is evident between the two. Kerman points out that Beethoven's enthusiasm and high daring begin to be tempered by ever-increasing technical virtuosity—though more powerful, smoother, and safer than before.

Opus 74, the "Harp," so nicknamed because of the striking pizzicato arpeggios in the opening *Allegro*, was composed in the "invasion" year, 1809. Napoleonic conquests unsettled Beethoven and left him in a somber mood, troubling his productivity. His other notable work of this year was the

Fifth Piano Concerto. However, Opus 74 is an "open, unproblematic, lucid work of consolidation, lyrical and communicative." It was dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz, a favorite patron.

The Razumovsky quartets were high intensity, but with this quartet, Beethoven turns away from sonata principles (of logic and drama) and offers a détente. As such it points to his final quartets, masterpieces of the 1820's.

The first movement is in sonata form, but without daring modulations into other keys. The *Presto* is a dashing exercise in the scherzo manner. The finale is in variation form, subtly inflected. The most significant change is in the A-flat major slow movement, purely lyrical in character. It is built on three increasingly opulent statements of a *cantabile* theme, separated by an episode. Each repetition is played an octave lower than its predecessor.

Dmitry Shostakovich - Quartet No. 5 in B-flat major, Op. 92

Shostakovich, an "eclectic progressive," was the first Soviet composer to be educated and to compose entirely under the Soviet regime. As Schmarz, his biographer, points out, his loyalty to his government and country was unquestioned in spite of savage attacks at three points in his career. It was his high sense of civic duty and his belief that music should be accessible to his fellow citizens, attuned to their needs and responses, that led him to achieve an output of astonishing variety and quality. He composed film scores and stage music, ballets, vocal music, including one controversial but now well-regarded opera, violin and cello concertos, piano music, fifteen symphonies, and, of course, fifteen string quartets. He was the recipient of numerous awards in his own country and abroad including doctorates from Oxford and Northwestern University. Neither political attacks nor honors compromised his independence and integrity as an artist of the widest scope, and all of his music, whether reaching forward to atonality, astringent dissonance, and abstraction, or conservatively to tonality, lyricism, and architectural form, bears the stamp of his unique personality. Three basic strands are evident: high-spirited

humor, introspective meditation that in his later years was deeply melancholic, and declamatory grandeur. He succeeded in working within the tenets of social realism but expanded its possibilities and musical vocabulary.

Shostakovich's first and most often played symphonies, often epic, were descriptive or contemplative of war; other works were protests for the victims of fascism and war. His first five quartets were written before the death of Stalin in 1953, after which a liberalization of policy took place, and his fourth and fifth only appeared a few months after that date.

A brutal attack from the Soviet authorities appeared in 1948, prompted it is believed because no auspicious, pompous compositions had appeared to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917. The Fifth Quartet (1949) was born in that climate, so it is a living monument to the resolve of Shostakovich at the time.

The music is tough and uncompromising. The opening *Allegro* has a massive symphonic sound starting with a dissonant repeated short motif in lower strings. He uses the technique of reiterated motifs with a driving rhythm supported at times by reiterated single pitches. A contrasting second theme is more lyrical, supported by busy work in the other strings.

A high, sustained F on the first violin provides the link to the second movement, in which two themes of slightly different tempi alternate. The plaintive theme given by the high strings is supported by heavy pizzicati in lower strings. The mood of unrelieved melancholy and pathos is sustained by polyphonic texture, voices widely separated at times.

A sustained chord leads into the *Finale* when the second violin intones a wistful melody, seeming to belong to the preceding movement. A more confident sounding waltz-like theme appears and reappears, with contrasting episodes in which themes from all three movements are pitted against each other. The tempo subsides into an *Andante* and the introductory theme subsides into a more or less resigned serenity.

—Notes by Catherine Roche

FORTY-FOURTH SEASON

1999-2000

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Saturday, November 6, 1999
8:00 pm

The Aulos Ensemble

Saturday, December 4, 1999
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The Colorado Quartet

Sunday, January 16, 2000
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Reception following

The Pacifica Quartet

Sunday, February 20, 2000
3:00 pm
Dinner following

The Amadeus Trio

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3:00 pm
Reception following

*All 1999-2000 concerts are presented in
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University of the Pacific Campus.*

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