

FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

Pacifica Quartet
Simin Ganatra, violin
Isabel Trautwein, violin
Kathryn Lockwood, viola
Brandon Vamos, cello

Sunday, February 20, 2000, 3:00 p.m.
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
University of the Pacific
Stockton, California



*This performance is underwritten by William Williams, Alberta Lewallen,
and the C. A. Webster Foundation*

Program

Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4

Allegro ma non tanto
Scherzo: Andante scherzoso quasi allegretto
Menuetto: Allegretto
Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770-1827)

String Quartet No. 1, Metamorphoses nocturnes (1953-54)

Allegro grazioso
Vivace, capriccioso
Adagio, mesto
Presto
Andante tranquillo
Tempo di Valse, moderato, con eleganza, un poco capriccioso
Allegretto, un poco gioviale
Prestissimo

Györgi Ligeti

(1923-)

—Intermission—

Quartet in G major, Op. 106 (B192)

Allegro moderato
Adagio ma non troppo
Molto vivace
Finale: Andante sostenuto; Allegro con fuoco

Antonín Dvořák

(1841-1904)



The Pacifica Quartet is represented by Melvin Kaplan Inc.
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The Pacifica Quartet

With an impressive array of awards to its credit, including the 1998 Naumburg Chamber Music Award and the 1997 Nathan Wedeen Management Award at the Concert Artists Guild Competition, the brilliant young Pacifica Quartet is earning a reputation for distinctive music-making.

From its inception, the Pacifica has enjoyed an active touring schedule, which has recently taken it as far afield as Australia and Panama, and coast-to-coast from Los Angeles and San Francisco to Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall in New York.

The Quartet has participated in numerous festivals, including Music at Gretna, the Bellingham Music Festival, the Sedona Chamber Music Festival, La Jolla Summerfest, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, which sponsored the Pacifica on a New Mexico tour in 1996.

Founded in Los Angeles in 1994, Pacifica's musicians come from Pakistan, Germany, Australia, and America. The Quartet now lives in Chicago where it serves as Resident Quartet at the University of Chicago and the Music Institute of Chicago. Its multiple and varied residency activities include concert series at both institutions.

In addition, the Quartet is involved in the Music Integration Project, an innovative educational outreach program that provides musical performances and teacher training in inner-city elementary schools.

For two years, the Pacifica was the Fellowship Quartet at the Aspen Music Festival. Last spring, the Pacifica had the honor of being selected for a two-week residency with National Public Radio's "Performance Today" in Washington, DC.

The Pacifica Quartet plays the following instruments:

Violin I—Hendrik Jacobs
(Amsterdam, 1695)

Violin II—Januarius Gagliano
(Naples, 1760)

Viola—Gaspar Borbon
(Brussels, 1690)

Cello—Gasparo de Salo
(Brescia, c. 1580)

Program Notes

Beethoven—Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4

Beethoven's Opus 18, a set of six string quartets, was the most ambitious project of his early Vienna years; begun around 1798 and composed primarily in 1798 and 1800, it was finally published in 1801. He had rejected a commission in 1795 for a quartet and it is very probable that he wished to mature his studies of counterpoint which he had begun in 1783 with Haydn and continued with Salieri, regarding a command of the polyphonic style, fugue, canon, and part-writing as essential. Though experiments occur in the last three quartets, the adherence to the tradition established by Haydn and Mozart is evident and Solomon believes they reveal Beethoven deliberately reigning in his imagination for the purpose of achieving mastery of a major medium of the high Classic tradition. Haydn usually composed his quartets in sets of six, and that Beethoven did so is an indication of both emulation and competition.

Brandenburg placed the order of composition as No. 3, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6. The last three contain experiments in the type and arrangement of movements. This happens in Quartet No. 4, the most popular of the quartets, when he displaces the *Adagio* with an *Andante scherzoso quasi Allegretto!* The tension set up from the beginning is not relieved throughout the movement. Beethoven, having chosen c minor, a key special to him, immediately pours out his passionate beautiful sound. C minor is the key of the Fifth Symphony, his last piano sonata, and was established as the key of "pathetic" sentiments in the sonata of that name.

In the opening movement, a dark-hued throbbing theme rises irregularly from the violin's lowest note to the top of its range. Powerful chords follow; a sudden hush leads to the bridge and the second theme in a different key, but derived from the first. A climactic coda follows the recapitulation in which the first theme appears more agitated than before.

The innovative second movement, the moderately paced Scherzo, has three themes; all contain a figure of three repeated notes, in polyphonic texture, with all the instruments sharing a profusion of canons and fugati. The tension is only resolved in the minuet which follows. The finale,

though in c minor like the opening movement, is a series of agreeable and entertaining sections, short and rapid, in contrast to the tragic and dramatic atmosphere of the beginning.

Ligeti—String Quartet No. 1

Ligeti states that he composed his first quartet "for the bottom drawer." "To work for one's bottom drawer was regarded as an honor," he writes, since artists were working under the strict Communist dictatorship which condemned all modern art, and cut off all contact with the West and even the Eastern bloc countries. Among proscribed books were, ironically, *Don Quixote* and *Winnie the Pooh*. Ligeti describes a culture of "closed rooms" in which the majority of artists chose "inner emigration." The official art, "Socialist Realism" was "a cheap kind of art aimed at the masses and designed to promote prescribed political propaganda." The Ramor Quartet, who were exiles themselves, performed the quartet in 1958 in Vienna after Ligeti had fled Hungary.

Bartók, Stravinsky, and Berg were Ligeti's main influences. It was Bartók's two middle quartets that inspired *Metamorphoses nocturnes*, though Ligeti knew the work only in score. Bartók had been regarded as the "great national composer" of Hungary but only two of his less dissonant works and his folk song arrangements were allowed performance in Hungary. Ligeti states that his quartet rests on total chromaticism melodically and harmonically. However, in form, it follows Viennese Classicism with the use of "periodic structure, imitation, the spinning out of the motivic material, and the techniques of breaking up the melody into short phrases which are then distributed among the different voices." He found that the attitude of Haydn and Beethoven provided him "with a moral prop against the pseudo-populist art prescribed by the Party."

Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations* were Ligeti's "secret ideal" but the quartet is not a series of variations, but rather transformations of a basic motivic cell (two major seconds displaced by a minor second). The transformations of the one cell motif form a long chain of sections, contrasting yet related, following each other generally without pause. In the *Allegro* the germ motif is heard ascending in a long scale and develops into a little melodic arabesque, then caught up in intricate

contrapuntal combinations.

Two contrasting character elements, one ethereal, the other a kind of rustic dance, confront each other, with the conflict increasing as the work proceeds. The *Vivace* becomes strident with Stravinsky-like rhythms, and then violin and cello present the ethereal element in the *Adagio*. The dance takes over in the *Presto* but the ethereal appears in the lower strings confronted by pizzicato. This element becomes sustained high trills in the *Andante*, which includes a sad little melody. The *Valse* is mockingly elegant, with rustic interruptions. During the *Allegretto* the dance seems frozen, a ticking metronome, while "jovial" strings play around it. An amorphous web of sound is created by repeated flageoletto-glissandos on all instruments. At last the original motif appears. In the *Prestissimo* after a short recitative for cello, a brutal tutti chord, sforzandissimo, is heard, some closing fragments of the motif, and then pianissimo dolente, morendo.

The volume of Ligeti's later works, which he states turned 180 degrees from his first quartet, including choral works, an opera, chamber music, and large orchestral works have made him one of the most important and influential of contemporary composers. Director Stanley Kubrick used his *Requiem* in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (apparently without the knowledge or consent of the composer!).

Dvořák—Quartet in G major, Op. 106

Smetana had created a nationalist Bohemian music but it was Dvořák that made it known throughout the world. National music was understood as the symbol of struggle for unity and liberty. Dvořák reconciled the music of his country with the grand tradition of instrumental music.

In 1895, Dvořák returned from his years in the United States, where he drew the inspiration for his great Symphony No. 9, "From the New World." The G major quartet is the fruit of some of the elated mood and creative joy of the composer on his return. On the title page he writes, "First composition after the second return from America." In a letter he says, "I am very diligent right now. I am working so easily and everything is so successful that I cannot wish for things to be better."

This time is the threshold of the composer's last creative years, and the last of his chamber works. Brahms had first championed the music of Dvořák, opening doors to publishers and performances, and even proofreading the *Slavonic Dances* which made Dvořák known. Under the influence of Brahms, he had devoted himself to the genres of the nineteenth century, chamber music, and symphony. After the quartets, Opus 105 and 106, he took leave of the "German" forms for a more total involvement with Czech fairy tale motifs and national idioms. The quartet contains both the demands of the standard strong quartet, concentration on form, clarity of form, and attention to detail, as well as Slavic melodic and rhythmic elements.

In the opening movement, two signal motifs are heard which develop into a theme; it again is transformed into motif work. A side theme offers a blossoming song and dance-like melody with Slavic intonation, presented first in B-flat then in B major. At the conclusion, a dynamic intensification leads to a climax with the main theme appearing "maestoso." As Berger states, "The overall impression is that this is the work of a brilliant musical intelligence in full command of his materials."

The *Adagio*, the most emotional part of the quartet, is formally simple with "grandioso" intensifications and rich orchestration. The single theme is an ardent, lyrical outpouring, first in major, then in minor.

The third movement is a scherzo, "Slavic," filled with folk music. Rhythmic and melodic themes use time changes and conflicting rhythmical intonations. In the trio, a melody on the shawm (an early oboe) is heard over bagpipe bases. It resolves to the main section. The form is not simple, and has been diagrammed as A (opening section), B (first trio with a pentatonic melody), A (shortened), B (a quieter trio), and return of A. Great strength and vigor alternate with lyrical beauty.

In the finale, the principal Rondo theme is heard in augmentation (*Andante Sostenuto*), and then stands out as a Slavic dance. Themes and motifs from the first movement are heard in the episodes. The exciting conclusion clarifies the passions and resolves the conflicts Dvořák has set up.

—Notes by Catherine Roche

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Presented in Cooperation with University of the Pacific and the UOP Conservatory of Music; George Buckbee, Interim Dean

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Saturday, November 6, 1999
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Reception following

The Pacifica Quartet

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

The Amadeus Trio

Sunday, April 16, 2000
3:00 PM
Reception following

All 1999-2000 concerts are presented in the Faye Spanos Concert Hall on the University of the Pacific Campus.

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