

FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

The Da Vinci Quartet

Jerilyn Jorgensen, violin
Joo-Mee Lee, violin
Margaret Miller, viola
Katharine Knight, cello

2:30 PM, March 28, 2004

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

In cooperation with the Conservatory of Music

University of Pacific

Stockton, California



Program

Quartet in B-flat Major, K. 589

Allegro

Larghetto

Menuetto – Trio: Moderato

Allegro assai

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756-1791)

“Water’s Edge” for String Quartet

David Colson

(b. 1957)

–Intermission–

String Quartet No. 13 in G Major, Op. 106

Allegro moderato

Adagio ma non troppo

Molto vivace

Finale: Andante sostenuto – Allegro con fuoco

Antonín Dvořák

(1841-1904)



Management for The Da Vinci Quartet – DVQ Association
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www.dvq.org

The Da Vinci Quartet

The Da Vinci Quartet is a Colorado-based ensemble specializing in the performance and teaching of chamber music to a wide audience, from connoisseurs to newcomers.

Its members are artists-in-residence at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music, as well as ensemble-in-residence at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. The ensemble also serves a residency with the Colorado Springs Youth Symphony Association.



Now in its 23rd season, the string quartet's most ambitious projects have ranged from performances of the complete cycle of Beethoven quartets to the rediscovery of the treasures of early 20th century American music. The quartet's interest in the role of women in music has led to the performance of many works composed by women and music associated with the great American patroness of chamber music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

Internationally recognized as artists of the highest professional standards in the Shostakovich and Naumburg Competitions, critics have lauded their seamless ensemble sound, praising their performances as abundant in feeling and fire.

The quartet's many interdisciplinary programs for children and families are also a part of its ongoing commitment to education and to the idea that the emotional message of music may be experienced by all. The

quartet has taken its popular outreach programs to smaller communities across the U.S. as part of residency activities that also include formal concerts and university teaching.

Program Notes

Mozart—Quartet in B-flat

On the occasion of Mozart's quartet party in 1783 Vienna, when the quartets Mozart had dedicated to Haydn were played, this man Mozart so esteemed expressed to Leopold Mozart that "I declare to you before God as an honest man that your son is the greatest composer I know either personally or by hearsay; he has taste and moreover complete mastery of the art of composition." Mozart told Haydn that he had learned from him and that the quartets had cost him enormous labor. However, he went on to compose seven more of which K. 598 in B-flat Major is the second to last.

Mozart was in financial difficulties and poor health as was Constanze at this time. He was obliged to teach and one of his aristocratic pupils was Prince Karl Lichnowsky. In 1789, he took Mozart on a trip to Potsdam where Mozart was presented to King Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia. Mozart played for the king, an ardent amateur cellist. The king was interested in a set of quartets and some keyboard sonatas for his daughter. Back in Vienna, Mozart made an entry in his work book: "In June, in Vienna, a quartet for two violins, viola and cello for his Majesty the King of Prussia." This entry referred to K. 587 in D Major, and the following year he entered K. 589 in B-flat Major and K. 590 in F Major. He wrote to Puchberg, his Masonic friend who tried to keep Mozart financially solvent, that he was composing quartets for the King of

Prussia but made no mention of a commission. These three works came to be known as the "Prussian" quartets published posthumously on December 28, 1791, just three weeks after Mozart's untimely death. It is known that Constanze struggled to sell Mozart's unpublished works to meet her creditors, and these may be part of the effort she publicized as "manuscripts, very neatly written." Mozart's manuscripts by this time were works of art, with never a correction. There is no evidence that the King of Prussia received them.

These last works contain characteristics of Mozart's "Spatstil" (late) style, in Sadie's words, "a style more austere and refined, more motivic and contrapuntal, more economical in the use of material, and harmonically and texturally less rich." His melodies are less abundant and less expansive. Perhaps contact with Haydn's mature music may have been the stimulation for this development. Many "false starts" have been found for the Prussian quartets. A different style, the "concertante" style with significant use of the cello, was used in view of the fact he wanted to offer them to a King who was a cellist. In Mozart's quartets just previous to these, he had arrived at a style where each instrument was given associated melodic material. However, in the last two movements of K. 589, as in K. 590, the idea of cello prominence is not evident. Perhaps Mozart was losing hope of a financially rewarding gift.

Whatever depression Mozart was suffering does not show itself in the quartet which is full of *joie de vivre*. Though a little less capricious

than its companion in F, the G Major quartet exhibits that exhilarating sparkle and transcendental gaiety that mark Mozart's music.

The quartet opens with gentle passages in the upper strings but the cello, by moving into the treble register takes over the shower of triplets from the violins. In the *Larghetto* the "royal instrument" introduces the main theme. It then takes over the subsidiary theme presented by the violins and is given long lines of melody. The *Minuet* is sedate to begin with but alternates with vivacious parts. In the *Allegro assai*, the polyphonic style that Mozart had been developing in his work is evident.

Colson-Water's Edge

(Composer's Notes)

"*Water's Edge*' was written at the request of the Sun String Quartet, and was first performed by them in March, 1998. This work was composed in a very quick burst of about six weeks' time.



"There are essentially three types of music scattered throughout the work: the opening material, which is rather dark and melancholy, with periodic interruptions of dissonant music; fast, angular material; and the closing section of music, which used string harmonics as a backdrop for short melodic phrases that are

exchanged between the quartet members.

"Throughout the work, I attempted to use short, concise phrases and relatively simple rhythmic packages; the overall effect of which, I hope, was to compose a work of simple means."

Dvořák—Quartet No. 13 in G

Dvořák was perhaps the most important chamber music composer of the Nationalist school, and certainly one of the most prolific. Fourteen string quartets are included in this repertoire. He had learned the Classic forms of German music aided by his friend, patron and mentor, Johannes Brahms. After discovering the music of his native Bohemia, he developed his own individual musical language. From their unspoiled rhythms and melodies, he developed a combination of folkloristic idiom and a rather more personal style combined with a sense of formal structure. It was works such as the Slavonic Dances of 1878 with their rhythmic verve and local color along with stylistic polish that brought him international fame. He brought this same indigenous character to his chamber music.

Dvořák had spent from 1892 to 1895 in New York as head of the newly founded National Conservatory of Music but had declared his homesickness for his native Bohemia. He enjoyed a few months holiday on his return from America, visiting friends and his old home. In November 1895, he returned to his teaching post at the Prague Conservatory and was soon back in the musical world, visiting Vienna and his old friend, Brahms. Though invited to live there, the pleasure of returning to his home town of Vysoka was to keep him from going abroad again, and released a new outburst of creativity. By the

end of 1895, he had completed his quartet in G Major. Many find that this quartet seems to express the composer's joy and his peace of mind upon returning to his homeland.

Classical structure is strong in this quartet, displacing somewhat the folkloristic national flavor of previous work. The *Allegro moderato* and the *Adagio ma non troppo* were declared by the English musicologist Clapham, a specialist on Czech music, to be unquestionably among the greatest of Dvořák's chamber music.

The *Allegro moderato* begins with three strokes that generate running descending violin passages. The cello is given a slow eloquent passage and the other parts answer and swing into a bouncy rhythm.

The *Andante ma non troppo* is long and rich with cantabile melodies over various ostinati in the lower strings. The full solemn sustained chord that opens the movement descends and turns into a pedal in the low strings with the first haunting melody above. After a cantabile section that rises in pitch and volume the slower part returns.

The third movement, *Molto vivace*, rings with nationalistic character. The strong duple beat of *skocna*, a national dance, is in rousing contrast to the slow movement, and after a gentler trio it bursts on the scene again.

The *Finale* is ushered in by a slow descending string passage and then, quite suddenly, the lively song-like violin passages explode on the scene over a strong beat. Some *Klesmer*-like violin work is followed by slow dreamy passages.

—Notes by Dr. Catherine Roche

48th SEASON

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Da Vinci Quartet

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