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STRING QUARTET

JANUARY 18, 2017

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Email: office@arizonachambermusic.org
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to tonight's concert!

Janus had two faces. No, he was not a politician. He was the Roman god of beginnings, transitions, and endings, and he was depicted with one face looking toward the past and the other looking toward the future. Janus might well be AFCM's house god tonight, because the St. Lawrence String Quartet is playing one of the earliest works in the quartet repertory, by Haydn; a work that in the great scheme of things is transitional, in which Beethoven takes stock of what Haydn had done and looks toward what the quartet might yet become; and a work that to Haydn and Beethoven would represent the far future, the Second Quartet of John Adams – which the St. Lawrence premiered just two years ago, and which incorporates fragments splintered off Beethoven's piano scores. (Fun fact: Another work Adams wrote for the St. Lawrence String Quartet, *Absolute Jest*, borrows bits of Beethoven's Op. 131 quartet, which concludes tonight's program.)

As we try to remind you with nearly every concert, great chamber music did not end with the composers of yore. Esteemed contemporary composers like Adams are writing music especially for esteemed ensembles like the St. Lawrence String Quartet, and AFCM – in partnership with sponsors from our audience – similarly commissions several new works every season. Will our commissions stand the test of time? That's for a later generation to decide. Meanwhile, we're working with you to add fascinating, approachable music to the repertory.

By the time some later generation decides whether our commissions are worth keeping on the music stands, you and I will be long gone. But we can ensure that AFCM will not follow us into oblivion. Please join me and other supporters by enrolling in the Jean-Paul Bierny Legacy Society, a group of people who include AFCM in their wills. I'm leaving the organization a bequest to provide a financial boost upon my departure. It also means that some future AFCM president will not have to come pry my money from my cold, dead hands; everything will be ready for a smooth transfer of the gift.

Enjoy the concert.



James Reel
President

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

JANUARY 18, 2017



St. Lawrence String Quartet

Geoff Nuttall, *violin*

Owen Dalby, *violin*

Lesley Robertson, *viola*

Christopher Costanza, *cello*

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

“Modern... dramatic... superb... wickedly attentive... with a hint of rock ’n roll energy” are just a few ways critics describe the musical phenomenon that is the St. Lawrence String Quartet. The SLSQ is renowned for the intensity of its performances, its breadth of repertoire, and its commitment to concert experiences that are at once intellectually exciting and emotionally alive. Highlights in 2016–2017 include performances of John Adams’ *Absolute Jest* for string quartet and orchestra with Gustavo Dudamel and the LA Philharmonic, and with Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony, as well as the European premieres of Adams’s second string quartet.

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

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

David Rowe Artists
24 Bessom St., Suite 2
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TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 20, no. 3

Allegro con spirito
Menuetto: Allegretto
Poco Adagio
Allegro di molto

JOHN ADAMS (b. 1947)

String Quartet No. 2

Allegro molto
Andantino—Energico

INTERMISSION

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

String Quartet in C-sharp Minor, Op. 131

Adagio, ma non troppo e molto espressivo
Allegro molto vivace
Allegro moderato
Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
Presto
Adagio quasi un poco andante
Allegro

This evening's concert is sponsored by the generous contributions of Jim Cushing and Boyer Rickel.

PROGRAM NOTES

HAYDN COMPOSED HIS SET of six Opus 20 string quartets in 1772, a personally unsettled year during which he sought refuge in the German “Sturm und Drang” (Storm and Stress) literary movement inspired by Goethe. Essentially a reaction to culturally dominant French rationalism, Storm and Stress literature developed with heightened passion and exuberant imagery. Haydn’s music of this time reveals supple phrases intensified by bold harmonies, dramatic pauses, and surprising thematic developments. It was rumored that Haydn, never comfortable in his marriage of convenience, had developed a new love interest at this time. The wide emotional range of the Opus 20 quartets is perhaps a reflection of both his ardor and his troubled state of mind.

One of Haydn’s few works in the minor mode, Opus 20 No. 3 has been described as one of his most intriguing quartets. Throughout the work, asymmetrical phrase lengths and numerous abrupt silences contribute to an atmosphere of restlessness. The opening Allegro con spirito develops two contrasting themes – the first jagged and turbulent, the second calm and lyrical. The two ideas are extended and led through remote modulations until their resolution at the dramatic coda.

The irregular phrase structure of the gently melancholy Menuetto (G minor) leads it far from its dance origins. A brighter trio section (E-flat major) falls at its center. The serene Poco Adagio (G major) unfolds as a three-part song. Sinuous, rising lines in the cello contribute poignancy as the movement evolves through remote harmonies. The spirited finale (G minor) evokes gypsy dance. After developments both subtle and witty, the movement fades to a pianissimo conclusion in G major.

“String quartet writing is one of the most difficult challenges a composer can take on.”

JOHN ADAMS

JOHN ADAMS’ STRING QUARTET NO. 2 was commissioned by Stanford Live, the Library of Congress, The Juilliard School, and Wigmore Hall. The St. Lawrence String Quartet worked closely with Adams as he composed the work, and the group premiered the quartet in January 2015.

Adams writes: “String quartet writing is one of the most difficult challenges a composer can take on. Unless one is an accomplished string player and writes in that medium all the time – and I don’t know many these days who do – the demands of handling this extremely volatile and transparent medium can easily be humbling. What I appreciate about my friends in the St. Lawrence is their willingness to let me literally ‘improvise’ on them as if they were a piano or a drum and I a crazy man beating away with only the roughest outlines of what I want. They will go the distance with me, allow me to try and fail, and they will indulge my seizures of doubt, frustration, and indecision, all the while providing intuitions and frequently brilliant suggestions on their own. It is no surprise then for me to reveal that both the First Quartet and *Absolute Jest* went through radical revision stages both before and after each piece’s premiere. Quartet writing for me seems to be a matter of very long-term ‘work in progress.’”

The St. Lawrence String Quartet writes: “This 2014 quartet is based on tiny fragments – ‘fractals,’ in the composer’s words – from Beethoven. The economy here is strict. The first movement, for example, is entirely based on two short phrases from the Scherzo of the late Opus 110 piano sonata in A-flat major. The transformations of harmony, cadential patterns, and rhythmic profile go way beyond manipulations of Beethoven motifs in the earlier Adams work *Absolute Jest*, written for the St. Lawrence String Quartet and orchestra.

“This new work is organized in two parts. The first movement has scherzo impetus, and it moves at the fastest pace possible for the performers to play it. The familiar Beethoven cadences and half cadences reappear throughout the movement like a homing mechanism, and each apparition is followed by a departure to an increasingly remote key and textural region.

“The second part begins *Andantino* with a gentle melody that is drawn from the opening movement of the same piano sonata. Here the original Beethoven harmonic and melodic ideas go off in unexpected directions, almost as if they were suggestions for compositional free association.

“The *Andantino* grows in range and complexity until it finally leads into the *Energico* final area, a treatment of one of the shorter *Diabelli Variations*. The particular variation features a sequence of neighbor-key *appoggiaturas*, each a half step away from the main chord. Adams amplifies this chromatic relationship without intentionally distorting it. Like its original Beethoven model, the movement is characterized by emphatic gestures, frequent use of *sforzando*, and a busy but convivial mood of hyperactivity among the four instruments.”

BEFORE THE FINAL PHASE of his creative life, Beethoven had endured a period of spiritual isolation. Because of complete deafness, desertion by earlier patrons, and family difficulties, he often lacked the will to compose. However, galvanized by commissions from both the Russian Prince Nicholas Galitzin and Schott and Sons Publishers, he began his monumental final set of string quartets in May 1824. Until November 1826, only four months before his death, Beethoven devoted all his energies to the creation of these transcendent works – each of which explores a musical universe expanded by an unprecedented fluidity of structure that allows each work to develop according to the demands of Beethoven’s vision.

Beethoven wrote his C-sharp minor Quartet, a profound and mystical work that he considered to be one of his greatest compositions, after receiving a commission from Schott. He sent them the completed score with a note: “Fourth quartet of the newest ones. Purloined and assembled from various sources, hither and yon.” His flippancy so alarmed the publishers that Beethoven soon sent a second note: “You wrote that this was to be an

original quartet, and this annoyed me. I jocularly wrote otherwise, but in fact it is brand-new.” (Beethoven was in fact meticulous about his publishing arrangements. Only six months after this exchange, he suffered his final illness and received *Last Rites*. He then directed that a letter be drafted to Schott clarifying their proprietary rights to the Opus 131 quartet.)

A glance at the work’s unusual structure – seven connected movements offering dramatic emotional contrast – shows radical differences from what he had written before. Beethoven was perhaps influenced by the growing force of the Romantic literary movement and its experimentation with the “fragment,” a text intentionally left incomplete so that the reader must actively reflect upon it. In the C-sharp minor Quartet Beethoven breaks down the concept of “movement” as an independent statement, for several of the sections are too fleeting to stand alone. Instead he shapes the work through a fluid succession of forms, often brief, to create one large, coherent statement. In actual time Opus 131 is no longer than those quartets written thirty years earlier, but is far more varied in terms of key scheme, moods, and textures.

Planning the sequence of movements doubtless represented a large part of Beethoven’s creative process. The fugal opening movement, which shares thematic material and key orientation with the finale, functions as a contemplative introduction. The rapid second movement provides a cheerful contrast. Movement III, a rhythmically free recitative, links the *Allegro vivace* to the *Andante*, a theme and variations movement remarkable for its exploration of instrumental textures. The playful *Presto* corresponds to a classical scherzo movement. Movement VI, a 28-bar *Adagio* possibly based on an old French song, offers a deeply introspective transition between the two fast movements. The powerful finale was eloquently described by Richard Wagner: “This is the fury of the world’s dance... and above the tumult the indomitable fiddler whirls us on to the abyss. To him it is nothing but a mocking fantasy; at the end darkness beckons him away, and his task is done.”

Notes by Nancy Monsman

PLANNED GIVING

HISTORY

Jean-Paul Bierny served AFCM for thirty-five years as President, and it was his vision that enabled AFCM to achieve the stellar reputation that it has today. Under his leadership, AFCM strengthened the mainstay Evening Series and launched what are now key components of AFCM's season: the innovative Piano & Friends Series, the Festival in March, and the commissioning program. In 2014, AFCM created the Jean-Paul Bierny Legacy Society to recognize those who include AFCM in their wills and estate plans. To become a member of the Society is to avow your support of the future of Arizona Friends of Chamber Music.

THE JEAN-PAUL BIERNY LEGACY SOCIETY

Visionary individuals – people who celebrate the human spirit through their passion for the arts – make a real difference in the lives of everyone in our community. When you commit a planned gift, you build AFCM's capital, the foundation which provides long-term fiscal stability and ensures AFCM can weather economic ups and downs. In addition, when you include AFCM in your estate planning, you (as the donor) and your designees qualify for significant tax savings and lifetime benefits, along with the special satisfaction of giving life to AFCM for future generations.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

By far the most common method to make a planned gift is a charitable bequest. Since the Society's inception, all the gifts have been of this type. A charitable bequest can be executed through a simple will and is relatively inexpensive to establish. You need not have a large estate to make this type of gift. One-third of the bequests AFCM has received are for less than \$10,000.

Other forms of planned giving in support of AFCM enable philanthropic individuals to make larger gifts than they could make from their income. While some planned gifts provide a life-long income to the donor, others use estate and tax planning techniques to provide for AFCM and heirs in ways that maximize the gift and minimize its impact on the donor's estate. Whether a donor uses cash, appreciated securities, real estate, artwork, partnership interests, personal property, life insurance, or a retirement plan, the benefits of funding a planned gift can make these types of charitable giving attractive to both you and AFCM.

The AFCM Fundraising Committee has professional experience in legacy giving. We will be glad to provide you with information and an expert in all aspects of planned giving to work with you and your estate lawyers, at your discretion. If you have already included AFCM in your estate plan, please notify us, so that we may welcome you to the Society, acknowledge your commitment, and honor your generosity.

Email gifts@arizonachambermusic.org or call 520-577-3769 to find out more.

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BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: PHILIP ALEJO

Q: How long have you been involved with AFCM?

Philip Alejo: I first became involved with AFCM in 2014 as a performer in the festival, and I joined the board at the invitation of Jean-Paul Bierny the following season.

Q: What is your current role?

PA: It is exciting that my work with AFCM continues to evolve. Earlier this year I became the chair of the Commissioning Committee, where I help to oversee the four commissions for this current season, as well as to connect sponsors, ensembles, and composers on future projects. Additionally, I serve as a liaison for AFCM with the University of Arizona, and I will return to the festival stage this March as a performer.

Q: What role does music play in your life?

PA: I am a voracious performer, educator, advocate, and organizer of music. I became a professional musician because I could not imagine myself doing anything else – and believe me – I tried!

Q: What instrument(s) do you play or perform?

PA: My main instrument is the double bass. I have also studied piano, viola da gamba, violin, french horn, and trumpet. Also, rare is the day that I don't sing.

Q: How did you first become interested in the chamber music form?

PA: Since there are fewer pieces in the repertoire that include the double bass, I relish the opportunity to play chamber music. When I was in school, I said yes to almost any invitation that came my way, and I met some of my best friends by playing the Prokofiev Quintet, Dvořák Quintet, and Trout Quintet.

Q: What other kinds of music do you enjoy?

PA: Blues, ranchera, jazz, bluegrass, salsa, soul, tango, to name a few...

Q: What's your day job?

PA: Faculty member, Fred Fox School of Music, University of Arizona; Artist faculty, Bay View Music Festival (MI)

Q: Where else does life take you?

PA: Some local places you might find me: hiking a mountain trail, swimming laps at the pool, drinking coffee over a book in Raging Sage's courtyard, swinging a tennis racket at Himmel Park, attempting to tame the cactus in my yard, or finding the best taco and salsa combination in Southern Arizona.

Q: What is the best part of an AFCM concert?

PA: That mere minutes from my Tucson home, I can listen to the very best chamber musicians in the world! I leave concerts feeling revitalized, and refreshed by the beauty.

Q: Is there another form of art that you identify with chamber music?

PA: While I was at Oberlin, I participated in an art rental program that loaned a Rufino Tamayo for my dorm room wall. Research led me to the great Mexican writer Octavio Paz, who called Tamayo's use of color, music, and architecture, music-made stone. I never looked at that painting again the same way, nor do I hear music and not imagine a world of color.

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The Lake Isle of Innisfree

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

POETRY CENTER

Selected for tonight's concert by Tyler Meier, Executive
Director of the University of Arizona Poetry Center.

BUY FESTIVAL TICKETS

\$120 for 5 concerts over the course of a week March 12–19, 2017.
Includes open rehearsals & master classes.

SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2017, 7:30PM

Mozart: Piano Quintet in E-Flat Major for Piano and Winds, K. 452
Janáček: String Quartet No. 2 (“Intimate Letters”)
Dutilleux: Sarabande et Cortège for Bassoon and Piano
Fauré: Piano Quartet No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 15

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017, 3:00PM

Lutosławski: Dance Preludes for Clarinet & Piano
Brahms: Piano Quartet No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 60
Villa-Lobos: Quinteto em forma de chôros
Beethoven: String Quartet No. 12 E-Flat Major, Op. 127

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017, 3:00PM

Turina: Piano Quartet in A Minor, Op. 67
Thuille: Sextet for Piano and Winds, Op. 6
Mozart: Quartet in F Major for Oboe and Strings, K. 370
Bridge: Quintet in D Minor for Piano and Strings

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017, 3:00PM

Schumann: String Quartet in A Major, Op. 41, no. 3
Tymoczko: Dectet for Winds, Strings, and Piano (World Premiere)
Copland: Duo for Flute and Piano
Schubert: Quintet in A Major for Piano and Strings (“Trout”), D. 667

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2017:

GALA DINNER AND CONCERT, 6:00PM

Dvořák: Cypresses for String Quartet
Ibert: Three Pieces for Wind Quintet
Krommer: Quartet No. 1 in C Major for Oboe and Strings
Richard Strauss (arr. Hasenöhr!): Till Eulenspiegel einmal anders!

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2017, 7:30PM

Poulenc: Sextet for Piano and Winds
Jalbert: Piano Quintet (World Premiere)
Schubert: Octet in F Major, D. 803

Festival Musicians:

Jupiter String Quartet:

Nelson Lee, *violin*

Megan Freivogel, *violin*

Liz Freivogel, *viola*

Daniel McDonough, *cello*

Carol Wincenc, *flute*

Nicholas Daniel, *oboe*

Charles Neidich, *clarinet*

William Purvis, *horn*

Benjamin Kamins, *bassoon*

Axel Strauss, *violin*

Nokuthula Ngwenyama, *viola*

Clive Greensmith, *cello*

Philip Alejo, *double bass*

Bernadette Harvey, *piano*

Piers Lane, *piano*

Pierre Jalbert, *composer*

Dmitri Tymoczko, *composer*