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THE DINA KOSTON AND ROGER SHAPIRO FUND
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**ST. LAWRENCE
STRING QUARTET**

Friday, January 23, 2015 ~ 8 pm
Coolidge Auditorium
Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building

THE DINA KOSTON AND ROGER SHAPIRO FUND FOR NEW MUSIC

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The Library of Congress
Coolidge Auditorium
Friday, January 23, 2015 — 8 pm

THE DINA KOSTON AND ROGER SHAPIRO FUND
FOR NEW MUSIC IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

GEOFF NUTTALL & MARK FEWER, VIOLINS

LESLEY ROBERTSON, VIOLA

CHRISTOPHER COSTANZA, CELLO



Program

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

String Quartet in E-flat major, op. 33, no. 2, H.III: 38 ("The Joke")
(1781)

Allegro moderato, cantabile

Scherzo. Allegro—Trio

Largo sostenuto

Finale. Presto—Adagio—Presto

JOHN ADAMS (b. 1947)

Second Quartet (2014)—*Washington, DC Premiere*

Allegro molto

Andantino

*Commissioned by Stanford Live, Carnegie Hall, the Dina Koston and Roger Shapiro
Fund for New Music in the Library of Congress, The Juilliard School and Wigmore Hall*

INTERMISSION

ANTONÍN DVORÁK (1841-1904)

String Quartet in C major, op. 61 (1881)

Allegro

Poco adagio e molto cantabile

Scherzo. Allegro vivo—Trio

Finale. Vivace



About the Program

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN, *String Quartet in E-flat major, op. 33, no. 2, H.III: 38 ("The Joke")*

"...a boisterous and even hilarious outlet..."
—H.C. Robbins Landon on "*The Joke*"¹

"The Joke" is one of six quartets that comprise the op. 33 series, composed in 1781 and published in 1782. They were conceived while Haydn was in the last decade of his service to the Esterházy court, though he had recently obtained clearance to work on independent projects beyond of his formal duties.² This group of quartets is frequently referred to by three different nicknames: *Gli scherzi* (referring to the employment of scherzo movements rather than minuets), "The Russian Quartets" (referring to Haydn's dedication of the quartets to Paul, Grand Duke of Russia—later named Tsar Paul I), and lastly, "Jungfernquartette" ("The Maiden Quartets," referring to the image of a young lady on the cover of an early edition of the sheet music). These quartets were Haydn's return to the genre after a hiatus of approximately ten years since completing the op. 20 series.

Haydn marketed the op. 33 quartets as having been composed in "a new, quite special way..." in his correspondence to his subscribers and publishers.³ This claim of novelty incites contention between musicologists. The most overt facet of the quartets that is generally considered unusual is Haydn's decision to use scherzos instead of minuets as one of the inner movements. Hans Keller calls the op. 33 quartets the "anti-minuets," perhaps an attempt to infuse some jest into music scholarship.⁴ Haydn guru H.C. Robbins Landon (whose collection resides at the Library of Congress Music Division) gave a poignant analysis: "...upon examination this [use of scherzos] turns out to be a novelty in word

1 H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works Vol. 2 Haydn at Eszterháza 1766-1790* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 579.

2 James Webster, "Haydn, Joseph—Haydn's Career" in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/article/grove/music/44593>>.

3 Floyd Grave and Margaret Grave, *The String Quartets of Joseph Haydn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 199.

4 Hans Keller, *The Great Haydn Quartets: Their Interpretation* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1986), 64.

only: the movements hardly differ from the previous minuet movements."⁵ While this type of banter can be quite entertaining, the conflicting positions are symbolic of the subjectivity that is inherent in all musical analysis. With that said, the broad take away from the op. 33 quartets is that they display Haydn in full command of his compositional voice, particularly at this middle point of his career in which he had solidified his version of what we retrospectively call "Classical style."

Haydn's E-flat major quartet from the op. 33 cycle is notable for its use of humor, which earned it the popular nickname of "The Joke." While Haydn's brand of comedy lacks the punch of late-night TV or stand-up, he plays with humor by messing with the listener's expectations. He inserts unexpected rests and false starts among thematic statements throughout the movements in a defiant challenge to any sense of regularity. Furthermore, there is a certain tinge of joviality that is expressed through certain motives and the accompaniments that support them. The following analysis will explore Haydn's application of humor throughout the E-flat major quartet.

The first movement of "The Joke," marked *Allegro moderato, cantabile*, is arranged in a standard sonata form. Five of the quartets in the op. 33 set contain only one movement arranged in sonata form, which differs from Haydn's early quartets that frequently contain multiple movements with that basic structure. The first thematic phrase is four bars long and the melody, played by the first violin, can be subdivided into four micro-motives. Haydn uses this phrase in its entirety (and its sub-components individually) as the thematic and rhythmic foundation of the movement. He even repeats the phrase identically within the first twelve bars. The exposition is repeated, as are the development, recapitulation and coda (together as a group). In the development section, which passes through C minor, Haydn spreads out the melodic and principal motivic material throughout all four voices, whereas the first violin was effectively acting as a soloist in the exposition. The cello plays a quick jumping motive from the original theme, passing it off to the first violin. Another motive transitions into the viola and the voices gradually pass the different figures around. Haydn expresses humor here by removing emphasis from the downbeat and instituting quick pick-up-note figures in many of the accompanimental motives. While these tricks surely will not cause anyone to crack-up with laughter, they do have the effect of creating a light, dance-like mood. Haydn offers us a standard recapitulation, although he begins the section with a false start—a statement of the original theme shifted down a minor-third from the E-flat tonic statement (beginning in bar 58). He repeats the phrase again, this time beginning on B-flat and rising to E-flat, and confirms the actual start of the recapitulation. The first violin has a high figure towards the end of the movement that sounds like hushed laughter. Haydn offers a short coda, marked *mezzo voce*, after a rather tame authentic cadence.

In the *Scherzo* movement, which continues in E-flat major, Haydn indicates a tempo of *Allegro*. While the first violin gets to play most of the thematic material, and the viola and cello don't do much more than support the harmony, the movement is succinctly delightful. The first thematic line could easily fit into a comic opera and the sudden shifts between *forte* and *piano* dynamics create a sense of "je ne sais quoi." The opening phrase is repeated and gives way to a secondary thematic phrase whose melodic profile is based

on the running eighth-note figure from the opening. Here, however, the running lines are passed through all four voices. Haydn asks for the secondary theme and opening phrase to repeat before launching into the trio. Here the bubbly character of the movement shifts to a more mischievous, nimble and curious mood. This is accomplished in part through a series of slurs that Haydn includes in the first violin's new melody. These markings indicate that the intervals should be played with a gentle slide between pitches, known as *portamento*. The second violin pursues a relatively docile counter melody while the viola and cello are again relegated to harmonic support. Haydn's stratification of the voices gives a sense that this music is inspired by dance, specifically the Austrian and Central European *Ländler* (lederhosen and dirndls not included). Floyd and Margaret Grave offer arguably the best description of this movement available in music scholarship. They postulate that the combined high- and low-brow styles in the *Scherzo* establish a "sound-picture of a tipsy village fiddler, totally engrossed in his song..."⁶ As in all standard *Scherzo* movements, the first section is revisited (without internal repeats) after the trio concludes.

Haydn does not manage to find much humor in the third movement, *Largo sostenuto*, unless you find the fact that the viola introduces the theme comical. What he offers instead is a warm and reverent expression of a delicate theme rooted in the key of B-flat major. The viola and cello open the movement as a duo, handing off center stage to the violins after they complete the phrase. Underneath the violins the cello introduces a transition motive of roving sixteenth-notes that will be used to indicate moments of phrase-transition throughout the movement. It appears next in bar sixteen in the second violin, right before the second thematic group is introduced. The second theme is marked by a syncopated, pulsing figure played *forte* and sudden *pianissimo* and *piano* whispers. The first violin incorporates the sixteenth-note transition figure into an extended line that runs counter to the return of the first theme in a second violin and viola duet. Haydn offers another repeat of the second theme prior to launching into the final statement of the first theme, performed in a duet between the violins. In this closing section the viola incessantly plays an expanded version of the transition motive. A short coda section serves to gently reaffirm the closing authentic cadence.

For those who are not previously familiar with "The Joke," rest assured that the fourth movement is the high-point of the comedy. These program notes will refrain from offering a spoiler about the biggest surprise in the quartet, but you should expect the unexpected in the *Finale*. Haydn sets the movement in rondo form and sticks to tradition by closing the quartet in the home key of E-flat major. He marks the tempo *Presto*, which forces the opening theme in the first violin to launch into seemingly perpetual motion. The second theme emerges from the same rhythmic and melodic impetuses as the first theme—quick-step, cyclical and repeated eighth-note motives. The two thematic figures alternate back and forth. If you are not inspired or engaged by slightly varied statements of the themes and their accompaniments, then Haydn's joke might be on your attention span. After the third extended repetition of the first thematic group Haydn suddenly slows to an *Adagio* section that resembles something he would compose as the introduction section of a first movement in a symphony. He quickly returns to the faster *Presto* tempo. Now that you're at the edge of your seat, get ready for a surprise. The joke is on you, in the most pleasant and collegial way possible!

6 Grave and Grave, 202.

JOHN ADAMS, Second Quartet

John Adams' Second Quartet is the result of a co-commission between five distinguished institutions: the Dina Koston and Roger Shapiro Fund for New Music in the Library of Congress, Wigmore Hall, Stanford Live, Carnegie Hall, and The Juilliard School. It was composed in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, which premiered the quartet on January 18, 2015 at Stanford's Bing Concert Hall. This evening's performance of the Second Quartet is the work's second public performance and its Washington, DC premiere. Upcoming performances will occur in Philadelphia, Toronto, Montreal, Oberlin and San Antonio. Adams completed the score on November 10, 2014 in Berkeley, California.

The St. Lawrence String Quartet has enjoyed a long-term collaboration with John Adams, who has now composed three works specifically for the ensemble, beginning with his String Quartet (2008). The St. Lawrence performed the Washington, DC premiere of the quartet at the Library of Congress on December 4, 2009.⁷ In 2012 Adams composed *Absolute Jest* for string quartet and orchestra. Commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony for its centennial, *Absolute Jest* was premiered on March 15, 2012 by the St. Lawrence and the San Francisco Symphony with Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. The Second Quartet is the third collaboration between Adams and the St. Lawrence. Adams' other compositions for string quartet include *John's Book of Alleged Dances* (1994), a work for string quartet and pre-recorded audio (composed for the Kronos Quartet) and *Fellow Traveler* (2007), an unpublished work composed for the fiftieth birthday of theatrical director and designer Peter Sellars. Adams and Sellars have worked together on numerous occasions, including the creation and conception of *Doctor Atomic* (2004-2005), *El Niño* (1999-2000), and *The Gospel According to the Other Mary* (2012).

From the composer:

"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 instrumental medium can easily be humbling, if not downright humiliating. 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 of 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.'" —*John Adams*⁸

7 Adams' First Quartet was most recently performed at the Library of Congress by the Attacca Quartet on May 22, 2013.

8 John Adams, "Remarks on the Second Quartet," *Boosey & Hawkes* <<http://www.boosey.com/ctf/music/John-Adams-Second-Quartet/101262>>.

Two movements comprise the Second Quartet, an *Allegro molto* and *Andantino*. The *Allegro molto* is set in a fast duple meter that should be felt as one beat per bar (whole note = 78). The cello enters first and establishes an important pedal point of C for the opening. Adams uses a short motive (of a descending figure on C-B-flat-A-flat-G-F-E) from the second movement of Beethoven's Sonata in A-flat major, op. 110 (1821) as the motivic basis of this section. No single voice plays this figure in full at the outset, however the first violin plays the first four pitches, while the F is heard in sequence from the cello. Richard Scheinin's review of the Second Quartet's world premiere at Stanford remarks that "He [Adams] pumps it [the motive] through a droning groove that the St. Lawrence dug down into with vehemence, with such insistent fiddling that the group sounded something like a folk-music string band gone bananas."⁹ The following identifiable thematic group is also based on a motive from the second movement of op. 110. As the music develops throughout the movement there are times when the resemblance of these key motives is so transformed that their relevance may be a stretch. What becomes interesting is the process of hearing how each motive evolves in contour, pitch, harmony, texture, and pulse.

In the *Andantino* Adams employs a wider variety of textures than in the first movement. He begins with a mellow slower pace and a calm melody, this time beginning in a triple meter (3/4). According to Adams' publisher Boosey & Hawkes, this movement draws from Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*, op. 120.¹⁰ The opening rhythmic motive contains two sub-components: repeated sixteenth-notes and a separate series of three notes—a dotted-eighth-note, and a sixteenth-note that is tied to another eighth. These figures are shifted around and modified in much of the movement, however they provide underlying consistency.

Adams' contributions to American music were recognized with the John Adams Residency at the Library of Congress in 2013. This week-long series of events included performances by the International Contemporary Ensemble with Adams conducting, the Attacca Quartet, violinist Jennifer Koh, pianist Reiko Uchida, and the U.S. Army Blues. The McKim Fund in the Library of Congress commissioned Adams' *Road Movies* (1995), which was premiered by violinist Robin Lorentz and pianist Vicki Ray at a Library of Congress concert at the Kennedy Center. *Road Movies* has been recorded by violinists Leila Josefowicz and Jennifer Koh. The Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress commissioned Adams' *Eros Piano* for piano and orchestra (1989). It was first performed by the London Sinfonietta with Paul Crossley on piano and Adams conducting. Manuscripts for all of Adams' Library of Congress commissions are housed in the Music Division.



9 Richard Scheinin, "Review: John Adams and St. Lawrence Quartet," *San Jose Mercury News*, January 19, 2015 <http://www.mercurynews.com/music/ci_27350415/review-john-adams-and-st-lawrence-quartet>.

10 Boosey & Hawkes, "Adams, John: Second Quartet Programme Note," Boosey & Hawkes, Inc. <<http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/John-Adams-Second-Quartet/101262>>.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK, *String Quartet in C major, op. 61*

"Dvořák had a well-nigh inexhaustible fund of melody—melody succinct and characteristic, always striking in rhythm, never banal, and tinged with enough quaintness to make it unlike that of anyone else." —*The Art of Dvořák*¹¹

Antonín Dvořák's op. 61 string quartet was completed in the autumn of 1881. Originally intended for a December 1881 premiere in Vienna, the performance was canceled due to a fire that occurred at the city's Ringtheater.¹² Dvořák composed the quartet for the Hellmesberger Quartet, led by Austrian violinist and conductor Josef Hellmesberger (1828-1893). Prior to completing the quartet Dvořák dedicated his work to Hellmesberger. Curiously, in November 1881 Dvořák admitted in a letter to Alois Göbl—a friend—that he had yet to finish composing the quartet: "I see in the papers that on December 15th Hellmesberger is to perform my new quartet that does not yet exist. There is nothing left for me to do but compose it."¹³ The first public performance was ultimately given on November 2, 1882 in Berlin by the Joachim Quartet: Joseph Joachim (violin), Heinrich de Alma (violin), Emanuel Wirth (viola), and Hugo Dechert (cello).¹⁴

In 1881 Dvořák was working diligently on his third "heroic opera," *Dimitrij* (1881-1882), with a libretto by Marie Červinková-Riegrová. By summer time he decided to take a break from the project. It was during this period that he produced the op. 61 quartet and incidental music to the play *Josef Kajetán Tyl*, op. 62 (1881-1882).¹⁵ His most recent full string quartet had been op. 51 (E-flat major) from 1879, though he had composed one independent string quartet movement (in F major) in early 1881. After op. 61 he did not complete another string quartet until 1893, the op. 96 "American" quartet in F major.¹⁶ While op. 61 falls chronologically within what Stephen Heffling calls Dvořák's "Nationalist Period" (1875-1892), the op. 61 quartet is a stylistic outlier. The quartet stands out amongst the composer's chamber repertoire because it steers largely clear of Czech and American folk influence. It is instead an homage to the Viennese Classical style of string quartet composition, and an example of Johannes Brahms' influence on his Czech colleague.¹⁷

Dvořák's style in the *Allegro* movement is defined by three themes and the principal rhythmic motive (a slurred eighth-note triplet, dotted-eighth and *staccato* sixteenth-note). He omits a formal introduction section and begins immediately with the first theme. The lyrical melody, which is kept to just four bars, is played by the first violin. A climax comes in the third bar, as the rhythmic motive settles on the fifth scale degree. Dvořák accents this downbeat in the first statement of the theme to establish the peak of the phrase, but subsequently omits the instruction (selectively). This marking indicates that the

11 Daniel Gregory Mason, ed., *Masters in Music: A Monthly Magazine: Dvořák* Vol. IV Part 2 (Boston: Bates and Guild Co. Publishing, 1904), 55.

12 Jarmil Burghauser, *Antonín Dvořák Thematic Catalogue* (Prague: Bärenreiter Editio Supraphon, 1996), 211.

13 Paul Stefan, *Anton Dvořák*, transl. Y.W. Vance (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 118-119.

14 Burghauser, 210.

15 Gervase Hughes, *Dvořák: His Life and Music* (London: Cassell, 1967), 95-96.

16 Burghauser, 209.

17 Stephen Heffling, *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 331. Brahms helped Dvořák's career develop by offering friendship, professional contacts and references, particularly in the publishing world.

rhythmic motive builds harmonic tension and an emphasis should go on its resolution. The full rhythmic motive is eventually played by all four instruments, in thematic, accompaniment, and transition settings. Dvořák further fragments the rhythmic motive by using the triplet as a sub-motive throughout the movement. This constant appearance of a triplet creates a recurring sense of burgeoning energy and propulsion, no matter if supporting the first theme, which is light and refined, or engaging with the second theme, which is a bit more mysterious and quizzical. A third thematic group comes in the closing section of the exposition. Dvořák offers a hint of folk music infused into the otherwise stately melodic material. In the score he marks a repeat of the exposition section, though it is not observed by all performers.

A rather engaging development section follows the exposition. It is the most interesting and complex portion of the movement because Dvořák explores the more extreme potential of the thematic and rhythmic material. He begins the section by subtly spreading out the voices, having them pass the sound to one another. Repeating note configurations are very present in the beginning of the development. The music builds with a gradual crescendo into a brawny section filled with wide leaps and dozens of *ffz* (*forzando*) markings, meaning "forced." This moment creates either an image of a heavy ship crashing into large waves on the sea (like the maritime imagery in Mendelssohn's Overture to *The Hebrides*, op. 26) or a really active river cruise on the Vltava (Moldau) (which runs through Prague). The recapitulation section offers expected repetitions of the main themes, but refuses to settle harmonically until going through a sequence of closing sections that sound like a mix between a romantic opera death scene and curtain call music. The very last phrase group hammers home C major, beginning with expansive chords that are accentuated by fleeting solo thematic statements and gradually fluttering into a *pianississimo* series of wafting C major chords.

The *Poco adagio e molto cantabile* lives up to its claims—the music is somewhat slow and very songlike. Dvořák again makes use of three thematic groups. The first theme, which is the basis of the opening section of the movement, is in F major. As the music progresses the violins engage in call-and-response patter with the theme. The viola and cello are busily providing atmospheric support that is heavily dependent upon triplets. In this movement Dvořák uses many modified triplets, in which the triplets begin with a rest. This weakens the principal beats and removes much of the rhythmic predictability. A *stringendo* ("gradually quickening") transition section shifts the harmony from a solid F major, through A-flat major, and comfortably into D-flat major for the introduction of the second theme. This time the theme, which is quite mellifluous and marked *espressivo* ("expressive"), is introduced by the second violin during a duet with the viola. The cello offers some *pizzicato* ("plucked") outlining of the harmony, but remains tertiary until expanding its presence when the first violin rejoins with a melodic elaboration of the second theme.

Eventually the first violin sings a simple version of the theme while the second violin and viola play a translucent-sounding machination within the principal chords. Dvořák transitions the music to A-flat major as a segue to the third theme. The final two bars of the transition find the first violin playing a solo of repeated notes, similar to transition figures from the first movement. Dvořák makes the third theme the least elaborate—it

could also be considered a closing thematic group. It begins in A major and quickly shifts to C major to connect to the upcoming repetition of the F major (tonic) opening thematic material. In the closing moments the second theme returns, almost as a short coda to reemphasize F major as the final harmonic resting place.

Gervase Hughes considers the *Scherzo. Allegro vivo—Trio* to be the most Schubertian part of Dvořák's op. 61 quartet, as a contrast to the first two movements that might be perceived as heavily influenced by Beethoven.¹⁸ Dvořák sets the scherzo section in A minor and has the viola introduce the principal theme, which is based on the same rhythmic motive discussed as critical to the first movement (eighth-note triplet slurred with a dotted-eighth and sixteenth). This rhythmic impulse, when employed in a scherzo dance-like setting, is much more light-footed than its setting in the first movement, which is warm, expansive and heavier. The opening section repeats and is followed by a transformed statement of the opening theme, this time with the first violin leading at the outset. Constant shifts between *pizzicato* and *arco* ("bowed") playing create a varied and engaging texture. A third section begins with quiet roving quarter-note slurs in the first violin, cello and viola. This gradually intensifies through rushing rhythmic sequences and high trills in the middle two voices. The music continues to develop and stays firmly in and around A minor. Dvořák asks the trio to maintain the same tempo, though the meter is shifted from 3/4 to 2/4. The character changes to a dance in a two-step mode. Dvořák changes the key to the parallel major, A major. *Dolce* ("sweet/sweetly") is prescribed for the new melody that is played by the first violin. The tune flips the previous main rhythmic motive; it begins on a quarter note that slurs into a descending dotted figure—thus turning the music on its head.

In the *Finale. Vivace* Dvořák continues the ebullient energy of the trio, even going a step further with the faster tempo. He sets the movement in the quartet's home key of C major. After the initial expression of the principal theme in the first violin, the viola is given some time in the sun with the theme. At that point the violin offers semi-extreme arpeggiations that reach into its upper register. One of the transition figures that Dvořák uses in this movement is a hemiola figure which evokes the sounds of Eastern European folk music. He uses it sparingly, combined with crescendos and *forzando* markings to spice up the flavor of the movement. Hughes refers to this movement as being inspired by "Slavonic Dance," which is well within the realm of possibility. The best approach to listening to this movement is grasping onto all of the thematic and motivic ideas that have permeated the first three movements, as well as the principal theme of the final movement, and hearing how Dvořák splices bits of all those ideas together. The different melodic and rhythmic ideas act as seeds that germinate in every different context that Dvořák offers. The movement draws to a close with a section marked *grandioso* ("grandiose") that leads into a serene, endearing meditation in the first violin, and culminates with a quick repeat of the opening theme.

Nicholas Alexander Brown
Music Specialist
Library of Congress, Music Division

About the Artists

Established in 1989, the **St. Lawrence String Quartet** has developed an undisputed reputation as a truly world-class chamber ensemble. The quartet performs over 120 concerts annually worldwide and calls Stanford University home, where the group is ensemble-in-residence. The St. Lawrence continues to build its reputation for imaginative and spontaneous music-making, through an energetic commitment to the great established quartet literature as well as the championing of new works by such composers as John Adams, Osvaldo Golijov, Ezequiel Viñao, and Jonathan Berger.

The St. Lawrence maintains a busy touring schedule. This evening's concert is the quartet's final performance of a three-part series at the Library of Congress, during which the quartet has performed on Stradivari and Guarneri instruments from the Library's prized collection. This season, the quartet performs and gives master classes around North America, with visits to Houston, Toronto, Philadelphia, Oberlin, Durham, and many other cities. During the summer season, the St. Lawrence is proud to continue its long association with the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina.

Since 1998 the St. Lawrence has held the position of ensemble-in-residence at Stanford University. This residency includes working with music students as well as extensive collaborations with other faculty and departments using music to explore a myriad of topics. Recent collaborations have involved the School of Medicine, School of Education, and the Law School. In addition to their appointment at Stanford, the St. Lawrence members are visiting artists at the University of Toronto. The ensemble's passion for opening up musical arenas to players and listeners alike is evident in their annual summer chamber music seminar at Stanford and their many forays into the depths of musical meaning with the preeminent music educator Robert Kapilow.

Lesley Robertson and Geoff Nuttall are founding members of the group, and hail from Edmonton, Alberta, and London, Ontario, respectively. Christopher Costanza is from Utica, New York, and joined the group in 2003. Mark Fewer, a native of Newfoundland, began his first season with the quartet in 2014, succeeding violinist Scott St. John. All four members of the quartet live and teach at Stanford, in the Bay Area of California.

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