

WILLIAM AND ADELINE CROFT MEMORIAL FUND
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MUSICIANS FROM MARLBORO

ALEXI KENNEY, VIOLIN

ROBIN SCOTT, VIOLIN

SHUANGSHUANG LIU, VIOLA

PETER STUMPF, CELLO

ZOLTÁN FEJÉRVÁRI, PIANO

Wednesday, March 22, 2017 ~ 8:00 pm
Coolidge Auditorium
Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building

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Pre-Concert Conversation with the Artists

6:30 pm, Whittall Pavilion (Free, No Tickets Required)

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**The Library of Congress
Coolidge Auditorium
Wednesday, March 22, 2017 — 8:00 pm**

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Program

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

String Quartet in G minor, op. 74, no. 3, Hob. III:74
("The Rider") (1793)

Allegro

Largo assai

Menuet: Allegretto

Finale: Allegro con brio

ANTON WEBERN (1883-1945)

String Quartet (1905)

INTERMISSION

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Piano Quartet in A major, op. 26 (1857-1861)

Allegro non troppo

Poco adagio

Scherzo: Poco allegro

Finale: Allegro

About the Program

JOSEPH HAYDN, String Quartet in G minor, op. 74, no. 3, Hob. III:74 ("The Rider")

Haydn's first triumph in London ended in July 1792, and it took little effort for the venture's impresario, Johann Peter Salomon, to exact a promise from the lionized composer to return for another series of performances several months hence. The sixty-year-old Haydn spent the intervening time at home in Vienna, recouping his strength after the rigors of the London trip, composing, teaching a few pupils (including Beethoven), and attending to domestic matters, most pressingly seeing to the demand for new quarters of his shrewish wife (whom he referred to, privately, as the "House-Dragon"). Anna Maria had discovered a house in the Viennese suburb of Gumpendorf that she thought would be just perfect, she explained to her husband, when she was a widow. Haydn was understandably reluctant to see the place, but he found it pleasing and bought it the next year. It was the home in which, in 1809, a decade after Anna Maria, he died.

One of the greatest successes of Haydn's London venture was the performance of several of his string quartets by Salomon, whose abilities as an impresario were matched by his virtuosity on the violin. Such public presentations of chamber works were still novel at the time, and their enthusiastic reception made it easy for Salomon to convince Haydn to create a half-dozen additional quartets for his projected visit in 1794-1795. Though composed for Salomon's concerts, the new quartets were formally commissioned by Count Anton von Apponyi, who had come to know Haydn and his music when he married one of the scions of the Esterházy clan, the composer's employer for a half-century. Apponyi was an active patron of the arts in Vienna (he was a subscriber to Beethoven's op. 1 piano trios), owner of a fine collection of paintings, a good violinist, and a founder and president of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, the city's principal concert-giving organization. The six quartets, divided into two sets as op. 71 and op. 74 when they were published in London in 1795, were dedicated to Apponyi. Salomon had played them to great acclaim at his Hanover Square Rooms concerts the preceding year.

The most popular of the six quartets is the op. 74, no. 3 in G minor, known as "The Rider" because of the galloping rhythms in its outer movements. The piece was a special favorite of Haydn—he signed the autograph books of several English admirers with the opening measures of the *Largo*—and it was one of the great successes of his 1794 London season. A gruff unison introduction opens the work. The cello initiates the dark-hued main subject, which is taken up by the other instruments before acquiring the galloping triplet rhythm that energizes much of the movement. The second theme, a dance-like strain reminiscent of the Polish mazurka, turns to brighter harmonic regions. The development section treats motives from the introduction and the second subject. A full recapitulation of the exposition's themes

rounds out the movement. The hymnal *Largo* is simple in form—A (major)—B (minor)—A (decorated)—but profound in expression, “one of Haydn’s most solemn utterances,” according to his biographer Rosemary Hughes. This music found considerable favor among the composer’s contemporaries, and it appeared in at least five piano arrangements during his lifetime. The cheerful elegance of the *Menuet* is balanced formally and expressively by the movement’s somber minor-mode central trio. The sonata-form finale, filled with rushing figurations, unsettling syncopations and dramatic contrasts, is a harbinger of the dawning Romantic age.



ANTON WEBERN, *String Quartet*

Webern entered the University of Vienna in 1902 not as a student of composition but rather to study historical musicology under the guidance of the renowned scholar Guido Adler. Webern pursued his interests on several fronts during the next two years—some piano and violin lessons, assimilation of the city’s wealth of music (he was especially struck by Gustav Mahler’s new production of Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* at the Vienna Court Opera), and sufficient academic work to earn a doctorate for his edition of the *Choralis Constantinus* of the Renaissance master Heinrich Isaac—but his greatest ambition was to compose. He produced a number of songs and chamber works during that time, as well as an ambitious symphonic piece titled *Im Sommerwind* (“In the Summer Wind”) inspired by Bruno Wille’s impressionistic poem of the same name, an idyllic description of a summer’s day in the fields and woods. By the spring of 1904, Webern had determined to indulge his penchant for creative work by finding a composition teacher, so he traveled to Berlin for an interview with Hans Pfitzner, then one of Germany’s leading composers and pedagogues. During the course of the audience, however, Pfitzner dispensed some disparaging remarks about two of his chief rivals—and two of Webern’s greatest heroes—Strauss and Mahler, and the young musician became so angry that he bolted from his chair and stomped out of the room.

Soon after returning to Vienna from Berlin, Webern spotted a newspaper advertisement announcing private composition lessons with Arnold Schoenberg, one of the young Turks of turn-of-the-20th-century music, whose *Pelleas und Melisande* and *Verklärte Nacht* (“Transfigured Night”) had greatly impressed him. Though Schoenberg was only nine years his senior and lacked the usual academic credentials, Webern, sometime in the early autumn of 1904, became the first of his students. This little band of iconoclasts, which would soon rock the very foundations of Western music, quickly grew to include Alban Berg, Erwin Stein and Egon Wellesz. Schoenberg’s pedagogical method was challengingly different from the hoary university disciplines to which Webern had earlier been exposed. “He preaches the use neither of old artistic devices nor of new ones,” Webern noted. “Before all else, Schoenberg demands that the pupil should not write just any notes to comply

with a school formula, but that he should perform these exercises out of a necessity for expression... Thus Schoenberg educates through the creative process. With the greatest energy he searches out the pupil's personality, seeking to deepen it, to help it break through... This is an education in utter truthfulness to oneself."

Webern's voyage of inner discovery under Schoenberg's guidance produced an amazing amount of music during the early years of his apprenticeship—Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer's superb study of the composer lists no fewer than fifty separate items that date from the time of his meeting with Schoenberg until his formal op. 1, the *Passacaglia for Orchestra* of 1908. The catalog of those endeavors, most never published, includes piano pieces, chorale settings, sketches for orchestra and chamber works, but perhaps the most important category is devoted to string quartet movements, at least a dozen of them, the most notable of which are the String Quartet and the *Langsamer Satz* ("Slow Movement") of 1905.

At the head of his score for the 1905 string quartet Webern noted that the work's inspiration was a powerful triptych titled *Life–Nature–Death* by the Tyrolean-Italian painter Giovanni Segantini (1858-1899) depicting symbolic Alpine scenes of spring, summer and winter. "I long for an artist in music such as Segantini was in painting," Webern wrote in November 1904. "His music would have to be a music that a man writes in solitude, far away from all the turmoil of the world, in contemplation of the glaciers, of eternal ice and snow, of the somber mountain giants. It would have to be like Segantini's pictures." The string quartet was apparently Webern's attempt to scale such exalted creative heights himself, since he prefaced his score with a visionary quotation from the German religious mystic Jacobus Boehme (1575-1624): "The sense of Triumph that prevailed within my Spirit I cannot write nor tell; it can with naught be compared, save only where in the midst of Death, Life is born, like unto the Resurrection of the Dead. In this Light did my Mind forthwith penetrate all Things; and in all living creatures, even in Weeds and Grass, did perceive God, who He may be and how He may be and what His Will is."

Though written in a fluid, often tonally ambiguous harmonic idiom reminiscent of Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* of 1899, Webern's quartet describes an expressive trajectory familiar from many Romantic instrumental pieces—the venerable Beethovenian "struggle to victory," the overcoming of a state of uncertainty and apprehension with music that is optimistic and life-affirming. The quartet encompasses a number of continuous sections that create two large structural chapters. The first chapter is based on three distinct motives: a three-note cell (comprising intervals of a half-step down and a major third up) whose performance instruction — "gloomy and severe"—indicates the mood of the work's beginning; an animated melody initiated by the viola (with a distinguishing quintuplet figure as its opening gesture); and a bold arching phrase (marked to be played "with the greatest energy") that begins with two strong ensemble chords. These three ideas, singly and together, are developed with ingenuity and considerable contrapuntal skill in the quartet's first formal chapter. They build to a passionate climax, after which the music falls silent and then

proceeds through some tentative, broken phrases before turning to a peaceful theme in a lilting meter that is to be played “with fervent and completely gentle expression.” The quartet’s second chapter maintains this halcyon mood to the end, pausing briefly just before the final measures to recall the three-note cell from the opening in a peaceful transformation.



JOHANNES BRAHMS, Piano Quartet in A major, op. 26

Finished compositions did not come easily for Brahms, and he made numerous attempts to satisfy himself with a chamber piece before he allowed the publication of his Piano Trio, op. 8, in 1854. (He destroyed at least three earlier efforts in that form.) The following year, he turned to writing quartets for piano, violin, viola and cello, a genre whose only precedents were the two by Mozart and a single specimen by Schumann. Work on the quartets did not go smoothly, however, and he laid one (in C minor, eventually op. 60) aside for almost twenty years, and tinkered with the other two for the next half-dozen years in Hamburg and at his part-time post as music director for the court Lippe-Detmold, midway between Frankfurt and Hamburg.

Brahms was principally based in Hamburg during those years, usually staying with his parents, but in 1860, when he was 27 years old and eager to find the quiet and privacy to work on his compositions, he rented spacious rooms (“a quite charming flat with a garden,” he said) in the suburb of Hamm from one Frau Dr. Elisabeth Rössing, a neighbor of two members of the local women’s choir he was then directing. Hamm was to be his home for the next two years, and there he completed the *Variations on a Theme of Schumann* for Piano Duet (op. 23), *Handel Variations* (op. 24) and piano quartets in G minor (op. 25) and A major (op. 26). Brahms dedicated the A major quartet to his hospitable landlady.

“The first movement of the op. 26 quartet is so lyrical,” according to Ivor Keys in his study of Brahms’ chamber music, “that there are very few bars without hummable melodic content.” The main theme, initiated by the piano alone, provides the two motives from which the movement is largely spun: a gently insistent triplet figuration whose top notes alternate between two adjacent neighboring tones; and a smoothly flowing eighth-note phrase that springs out of a brief pause. The strings join together to echo the piano’s phrases, establishing the dichotomy of keyboard balanced against the string group that obtains throughout much of the work. The expressive intensity of the transition, heightened by unison string writing, quiets for the formal second theme, an expansive piano melody grown from the earlier flowing phrase (whose accompaniment is derived from the main subject’s triplet figures). A chromatically descending motive and a strain with dotted rhythms (again often accompanied by triplets) provide the exposition’s closing material. All of the principal themes figure in the harmonically adventurous development section. The events of the exposition are recounted, with appropriate adjustments as to key, in the recapitulation.

The *Adagio* is one of Brahms' most luxuriantly beautiful inspirations, an homage in both its transcendent Romantic spirit and specific elements of its technique to his mentor and champion, Robert Schumann, who died in 1856, just before Brahms began sketching this work. An arching melody (incorporating, like the first movement, both duple and triple rhythmic divisions) serves as the principal theme and formal reference point of this chamber-music nocturne, in which two intervening episodes, each introduced by sweeping arpeggios from the piano, provide structural balance and emotional contrast. The third movement is an ample and amiable affair, more gentle in demeanor than the designation *Scherzo* commonly suggests; the central minor-mode trio is built of sterner stuff. The vigorous finale is a spacious sonata form with a slight Gypsy tint whose abundance of themes Brahms juxtaposed and wove together with consummate mastery of mood and structure.

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About the Artists

Musicians from Marlboro, the touring extension of the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont, offers exceptional young professional musicians together with seasoned artists in varied chamber music programs. Each program is built around a work performed in a previous summer that Artistic Director Mitsuko Uchida and her colleagues felt was exceptional and should be shared with a wider audience. The resulting ensembles offer audiences the chance to both discover seldom-heard masterworks and enjoy fresh interpretations of chamber music favorites.

The Musicians from Marlboro touring program has introduced to American audiences many of today's leading solo and chamber music artists early in their careers, and in the process has offered these artists valuable performing experience and exposure. The list includes pianists Jonathan Biss, Yefim Bronfman, Jeremy Denk, Richard Goode, Murray Perahia, András Schiff, and Peter Serkin. It has also been a platform for artists who subsequently formed or joined such noted ensembles as the Beaux Arts, Eroica, and Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trios and the Brentano, Emerson, Guarneri, Johannes, Juilliard, Orion, St. Lawrence, and Tokyo String Quartets.

Celebrating its 52nd season in the 2016-2017 concert season, Musicians from Marlboro offers audiences across North America a sample of the spirited music-making that is characteristic of Marlboro, prompting *The Washington Post* to describe Musicians from Marlboro as "a virtual guarantee of musical excellence." And according to *The Chicago Sun-Times*, "the secret is a sense of joy...apparent from the very first note."

Alexi Kenney, violin, has been praised by *The New York Times* for “immediately drawing listeners in with his beautifully phrased and delicate playing.” Recent highlights include solo recitals at Jordan Hall and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and concerto engagements with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, Santa Fe Symphony, Santa Maria Philharmonic, and the NEC Philharmonia at Symphony Hall in Boston. He also released his debut album on CAG Records, featuring works by Schumann, Enescu and Westhoff—all works Kenney performed in his Carnegie Hall debut recital. He has also given recitals at the Kennedy Center, Napa’s Festival del Sole, Chicago’s Dame Myra Hess series and the Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, and has been featured on NPR’s *From the Top*. Winner of the 2013 CAG Victor Elmaleh Competition at the age of 19, Kenney was also the recipient of top prizes at the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition, the Mondavi Center Competition and the 2013 Kronberg Academy master classes. Born in Palo Alto, California, he is an Artist Diploma candidate at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studies with Donald Weilerstein and Miriam Fried.



Robin Scott, violin, has built a varied career as a soloist, chamber musician, and concertmaster. He won first prizes in the California International Young Artists Competition and the WAMSO Young Artist Competition in Minnesota and second prizes in the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition, the Irving M. Klein International String Competition, and the Stulberg International String Competition. Scott has given numerous recitals and performances throughout the United States and abroad in venues such as Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall and the Schubert Club in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He is the first violinist of the GRAMMY Award-winning Ying Quartet, quartet-in-residence at the Eastman School of Music. An avid and passionate chamber musician, he has performed at the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, Boston’s Jordan Hall, the Morgan Library, and other venues. Festival appearances include the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia’s Steans Institute for Young Artists, Yellow Barn, Kneisel Hall, and the Saratoga and Chesapeake Chamber Music Festivals. From 2011 to 2013, he was artist-in-residence and concertmaster of the Montgomery Symphony. A native of Indiana, he received his Bachelor of Music at the New England Conservatory and earned his Artist Diploma at Indiana University, where he was a student of Miriam Fried.



Shuangshuang Liu, viola, joined the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in the fall of 2014. She has performed as a soloist with the American Symphony Orchestra as well as the Albany Symphony. As a chamber musician, she has appeared at the Ravinia Festival, Aspen Music Festival's advanced quartet program, Music from Angel Fire, and Kneisel Hall. Liu has also been a member of the New York String Orchestra Seminar. A founding member of the Chimeng String Quartet, she won the silver medal in the 2010 Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, and as a soloist, she won third prize in the 2013 Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition. She earned an Artist Diploma from the Curtis Institute of Music, where she was a student of Michael Tree and Roberto Díaz. She also studied with Ira Weller, Michael Tree, and Steven Tenenbom at Bard College, where she earned her bachelor's in Music Performance and Social Studies.



Peter Stumpf, cello, is a professor of cello at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Prior to his appointment, he was the principal cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for nine years following a 12 year tenure as associate principal cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has served on the cello faculties at the New England Conservatory and the University of Southern California. At the age of 16, he began his professional career, winning a position in the cello section of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. He received a bachelor's degree from the Curtis Institute of Music and an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music. A dedicated chamber music musician, he is a member of the Johannes String Quartet and has performed with the chamber music societies of Boston, Philadelphia, and the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles and is a participant at the Marlboro and Santa Fe chamber music festivals. The Johannes Quartet has collaborated with the Guarneri Quartet on tour including commissions from composers William Bolcom and Esa-Pekka Salonen.



Zoltán Fejérvári, piano, has performed as a soloist with the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Hungarian National Orchestra, and the Concerto Budapest Orchestra, among others, under such conductors as Zoltán Kocsis and Iván Fischer. He has collaborated with the Keller Quartet, the Kodály Quartet and Budapest Strings, and has participated at the Kronberg Chamber Music Connects the World program, as well as the "Open Chamber Music" at Prussia Cove. Fejérvári was the second prize winner at the 2010 Manchester International Concerto Competition for Young Pianists, and his recording of Liszt's *Malédiction* with the Budapest Chamber Symphony was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque in 2013. His teachers have included Dénes Várjon, András Kemenes, Dmitri Bashkirov, and Rita Wagner, and he has participated in master classes given by András Schiff.

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More than a century ago museum founder Charles Lang Freer shared with the nation his goal to facilitate the appreciation of world cultures through art. Through his extensive travels across Asia and his own refined sense of connoisseurship, Freer acquired one of the country's first collections of art from China, Japan, South Asia, and the Islamic world. His noble undertaking of sharing Asian and American art with diverse audiences remains as important today as it was decades ago. For its part, the Sackler Gallery is home to Dr. Arthur Sackler's incomparable collection of Asian art. It not only contains some of the most important ancient Chinese jades and bronzes in the world, but it also presents engaging international exhibitions, intriguing recent acquisitions, and surprising displays of contemporary Asian art.

We invite you to the Freer | Sackler in mid-October, when both the Freer and Sackler galleries reopen after months of behind-the-scenes renovations. Be among the first to enjoy the revitalized Freer | Sackler, where Asia meets America.

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