



P R E S E N T S

Daedalus Quartet



Photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Min-Young Kim, *violin*

Matilda Kaul, *violin*

Thomas Kraines, *cello*

Jessica Thompson, *viola*

Sunday, February 2, 2020
3:00 p.m.

John H. Williams Theatre
Tulsa Performing Arts Center

The Daedalus Quartet's concert weekend is underwritten by Amanda and Kenneth Lawrence.

Daedalus Quartet

Praised by *The New Yorker* as “a fresh and vital young participant in what is a golden age of American string quartets,” the Daedalus Quartet has established itself as a leader among the new generation of string ensembles. Since winning the top prize in the Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2001, the Daedalus Quartet has impressed critics and listeners alike with the security, technical finish, interpretive unity, and sheer gusto of its performances. The *New York Times* has praised the Daedalus Quartet’s “insightful and vibrant” Haydn, the “impressive intensity” of their Beethoven, their “luminous” Berg, and the “riveting focus” of their Dutilleux. The *Washington Post* in turn has acclaimed their performance of Mendelssohn for its “rockets of blistering virtuosity,” while the *Houston Chronicle* has described the “silvery beauty” of their Schubert and the “magic that hushed the audience” when they played Ravel, the *Boston Globe* the “finesse and fury” of their Shostakovich, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* the “thrilling revelation” of their Hindemith, and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* the “tremendous emotional power” of their Brahms.

Since its founding the Daedalus Quartet has performed in many of the world’s leading musical venues; in the United States and Canada these include Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center (Great Performers series), the Library of Congress, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., and Boston’s Gardner Museum, as well as on major series in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. Abroad the ensemble has been heard in such famed locations as the Musikverein in Vienna, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Cité de la Musique in Paris, and in leading venues in Japan.

The Daedalus Quartet has won plaudits for its adventurous exploration of contemporary music, most notably the compositions of Elliott Carter, George Perle, György Kurtág and György Ligeti. Among the works the ensemble has premiered are Huck Hodge’s *The Topography of Desire*, commissioned by the Fromm Foundation; David Horne’s *Flight from the Labyrinth*, commissioned for the Quartet by the Caramoor Festival; Lawrence Dillon’s *String Quartet No. 4*, commissioned by the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts; and Fred Lerdahl’s *Third String Quartet*, commissioned by Chamber Music America, as

well as Lerdahl’s *Chaconne*, commissioned by New Music USA.

The Quartet has also collaborated with some of the world’s finest instrumentalists: these include pianists Marc-André Hamelin, Simone Dinnerstein, Awadagin Pratt, Joyce Yang, Soyeon Kate Lee, and Benjamin Hochman; clarinetists Paquito D’Rivera, Ricardo Morales, Romie deGuise-Langlois, and Alexander Fiterstein; jazz bassist John Patitucci; and violists Roger Tapping, Nokuthula Ngwenyama, and Donald Weilerstein.

To date the Quartet has forged associations with some of America’s leading classical music and educational institutions: Carnegie Hall, through its European Concert Hall Organization (ECHO) Rising Stars program; and Lincoln Center, which appointed the Daedalus Quartet as the Chamber Music Society Two (now the Bowers Program) quartet for 2005-07. The Daedalus Quartet has served as quartet-in-residence at the University of Pennsylvania since 2006. In 2007, the Quartet was awarded Lincoln Center’s Martin E. Segal Award. The Quartet won Chamber Music America’s Guarneri String Quartet Award, which funded a three-year residency in Suffolk County, Long Island from 2007 to 2010.

Recently, the Daedalus Quartet recorded Fred Lerdahl’s *Chaconne*, which will be released by Bridge Records as part of a disc of Lerdahl’s collected works, and Vivian Fung’s *Frenetic Memories* (with clarinetist Romie deGuise-Langlois), written for the group. The Quartet’s other recordings include the music of Joan Tower, Lawrence Dillon, Ursula Mamlok, Kai-Young Chan, and Brian Buch. *Strad* magazine praised the Quartet’s “exemplary intonation and balance.” The Quartet’s debut recording, music of Stravinsky, Sibelius, and Ravel, was released by Bridge Records in 2006. A Bridge recording of the Haydn’s complete “Sun” Quartets, Op. 20, was released on two CDs in July 2010.

The award-winning members of the Daedalus Quartet hold degrees from the Juilliard School, Curtis Institute, Cleveland Institute, and Harvard University. For more information on the group and its activities, visit their website, www.daedalusquartet.com.

Program

String Quartet No. 1 in F Major, Op 18, No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven
(German, 1770–1827)

Allegro con brio (“Quickly, with panache”)

Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato (“Slowly, affectingly and passionately”)

Scherzo: Allegro molto (“Very quickly”)

Allegro (“Quickly”)

Dig the Say

Vijay Iyer
(American, born 1971)

carry the ball

this thing together – up from the ground

to live tomorrow

INTERMISSION

String Quartet No. 3

George Rochberg
(American, 1918–2005)

*Part A: Introduzione: Fantasia –
March*

Part B: Variations

Part C: March –

Finale: Scherzos and Serenades

We ask that the audience please hold their applause until after the last movement of each work.

Today’s concert is preceded by a lecture by Bruce Sorrell, Executive Director of Chamber Music Tulsa.

Chamber Music Tulsa’s concerts and educational outreaches are presented with the assistance of the Oklahoma Arts Council and Arts Alliance Tulsa.



About the Program

by Jason S. Heilman, Ph.D., © 2020

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born December 17, 1770, in Bonn, Germany

Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

String Quartet No. 1 in F Major, Op. 18, No 1

Composed ca. 1798; approximately 28 minutes

When Ludwig van Beethoven moved from his hometown of Bonn to Vienna in 1792, it was initially for the chance to hone his compositional skills under the tutelage of Joseph Haydn. Unfortunately, Beethoven's expectations of receiving "the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydn" were dashed when he found the elder composer to be a pedantic and detached teacher. In 1795, Beethoven broke off all contact after Haydn savaged his Opus 1 piano trios, calling them unfit for publication. Yet for three years, Beethoven avoided publishing any music in Haydn's preferred genres, thus averting any direct comparisons between master and student. This changed when Beethoven was commissioned to write his first string quartets by Prince Lobkowitz, one of Vienna's foremost arts patrons. Beethoven must have known that Lobkowitz had commissioned six quartets from Haydn that same year (though Haydn would only complete two, publishing them as his Opus 77). Comparisons would have been unavoidable, but Beethoven jumped at his chance to beat Haydn at his own game. Over the next two years, he fulfilled the commission, publishing the six quartets together in 1801 as his Opus 18.

In the eighteenth century, music publishers did not consider string quartets substantial enough to be published individually. Instead, they were printed in sets of six, much as Baroque concertos were a century earlier. Beethoven would later break this mold, releasing his last seven quartets as freestanding works, but at the beginning of his career, he was still bound by tradition. At the same time, however, this tradition offered composers the chance to display the full range of their skills over a set of diverse works. Beethoven did not disappoint: although the Opus 18 quartets show the influence of Haydn and Mozart, each one has its own character. Together, they point to the very different direction Beethoven would later take.

Assembling six quartets into a set was an art form in itself; the composer had only a limited opportunity to appeal to a potential buyer, so the choice of the first quartet was crucial. This is why Beethoven's First String Quartet is not, in fact, the first quartet he composed. Instead, we believe that this quartet, in the key of F major, was probably composed second, but it ended up as No. 1 on the basis of its overall strength. The *allegro con brio* first movement opens with an attention-grabbing gesture: a simple turn-based motive in the unison strings. This settles into a propulsive melody, which eventually segues into a leaping second theme. In the development, Beethoven links

the short opening motive into insistent, repeating chains, prefiguring what he would do with his Fifth Symphony nearly a decade later. The coda boldly introduces a new theme, also based on the opening rhythmic gesture. The *adagio affettuoso ed appassionato* second movement was reportedly inspired by the tomb scene at the end of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Starting from a mournful melody in the first violin, answered by the second violin and viola, this affecting movement builds to an intense climax, then fades. The fleet-footed scherzo that follows dispels the gloomy mood and injects a measure of wit. For the *allegro* finale, Beethoven borrowed from himself, re-composing a theme from his earlier C-minor String Trio (Op. 9, No. 3). This spinning melody recurs throughout the movement, bringing the quartet to an ebullient conclusion.

Vijay Iyer

Born October 26, 1971, in Albany, New York, U.S.A.

Dig the Say

Composed in 2012; 8 minutes

One of the most versatile musicians active today, pianist and composer Vijay Iyer has earned a formidable array of accolades – primarily as a jazz artist, but increasingly in other genres as well. Born to Indian immigrants in upstate New York, Iyer learned the violin from age three, but largely taught himself to play the piano. After earning a bachelor's degree in mathematics and physics from Yale University, he started a Ph.D. in physics at the University of California, Berkeley, but when his musical career began to take off, he switched to an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in music cognition, which he completed in 1998. A 2013 MacArthur Fellow, Iyer has been the Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts at Harvard University since 2014.

Since making his recording debut in 1995, Iyer has released more than twenty original jazz albums. He has also composed works for a wide variety of classical artists, including the American Composers Orchestra, Brentano Quartet, Imani Winds, cellist Matt Haimovitz, and violinist Jennifer Koh. After working with the members of Brooklyn Rider on one of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble recordings, Iyer was asked to compose a new piece for their 2013 album, *Brooklyn Rider Almanac*. The *Almanac* project invited thirteen composers to write short quartets inspired by their musical heroes, and for Iyer, the choice was an easy one:

"When I was asked by Brooklyn Rider to choose an artist who had inspired me, James Brown instantly came to mind. His groove-based music features complex polyphony, expressive virtuosity, and a ritual-like intensity. His vocals were electrifying, his lyrics pointedly political, his dance moves revolutionary, his sense

of style larger than life, his cultural impact immeasurably huge. Like many, I have studied his music. Of course, it's best to enjoy it with your body and soul, but there is also much to learn from analyzing his music's interlocking bass, drums, guitar, horn, and vocal parts. Each song has its own vivid and distinct identity, beginning with the intricacies in the rhythm section. The groove underlying 'Super Bad' is different from the beat for 'Payback,' neither of which is the same as the rhythms of 'Give it up or Turn it Loose.'

"So I humbly offer this small tribute to this musical giant. The title *Dig the Say* and section subtitles come from the lyrics to his song, 'I Don't Want Nobody to Give Me Nothin' (Just Open Up the Door, I'll Get it Myself)'."

George Rochberg

Born July 5, 1918, in Paterson, New Jersey, U.S.A.

Died May 29, 2005, in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

String Quartet No. 3

Composed in 1971; 48 minutes

After the Second World War, a musical orthodoxy quickly concretized among the rising generation of Western European and American composers. In Germany, the Nazis had methodically suppressed the atonal music of Arnold Schoenberg and his contemporaries, labeling it "degenerate," while promoting more traditionalist composers like Carl Orff and Richard Strauss. In response, the postwar generation wholeheartedly embraced a particularly dissonant and studied form of atonality – serialism – which seemed to resonate with the new atomic age, while regarding more tonal music as suspect by association. When the Soviet Union also started denouncing atonal music as "bourgeois" and "cosmopolitan," a minor cultural front in the Cold War was opened. By the 1950s, American composers felt immense pressure from all sides to toe the party line of extreme modernism. Those who refused found their career options severely limited.

Yet it was precisely this orthodoxy that American composer George Rochberg found himself challenging, for reasons that were entirely personal. The son of Ukrainian immigrants, Rochberg learned the piano from an early age. He supported his studies at the Mannes College of Music, where his teachers included future Cleveland Orchestra music director George Szell, by playing in dance bands all over New York. After serving as an infantryman in Europe during World War II, he resumed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia under composers Rosario Scalero and Gian Carlo Menotti.

Rochberg was then thrust into the atonal music scene of the 1950s and quickly became one of its leading lights. His Second Symphony, premiered by George Szell's Cleveland Orchestra in 1959, garnered particular acclaim for the deft way Rochberg was able to weave a large-scale orchestral work out of the astringent twelve-tone serialist

aesthetic. The following year, he was appointed to the music faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught until his retirement in 1983.

Yet despite this success, Rochberg was already beginning to feel constrained by the limitations of serialism, which prescribed a regimented, almost mathematical formula for creating melodies and counterpoint. The end of his modernist phase came with the death of his teenaged son, Paul, from a brain tumor in 1964, which left Rochberg unable to compose. Eventually, he came to the realization that this was due to the limitations of the abstract and impersonal modernist style, which gave him no avenue to express the profound grief he had been feeling. Instead, Rochberg began to gravitate toward the emotionally charged romantic style of the late nineteenth century – the very music his contemporaries regarded as suspect – and began incorporating tonal harmonies and lush instrumental timbres into his works. This was at the time considered a radical break with the musical mainstream, but now, Rochberg's rebellion seems to prefigure the fracturing of the musical avant-garde into the myriad unique and personal styles we know today.

Although Rochberg went on to compose four more symphonies, an opera, and numerous chamber pieces, the pivotal work in his neo-romantic style was his 1971 Third String Quartet, which has come to be regarded as one of the most important American quartets of the late twentieth century. Rochberg cast his Third Quartet in five movements, which were arranged into three large sections. The first section (Part A) opens with piercing fanfare-like figures announcing that Rochberg had not abandoned dissonance altogether. Instead, in the free-form *Introduzione*, he tethers these dissonant outbursts to tranquil, more tonally grounded melodies. This is followed immediately by the short second movement: an intensely rhythmic *March* with echoes of Bartók. The central third movement (Part B) is a serene and thoroughly romantic set of variations on a theme of Rochberg's own invention. On the advice of a friend, he later re-cast this movement as a standalone piece for orchestra, which he called his *Transcendental Variations*. The final section (Part C) opens with another *March*, which juxtaposes driving, Bartókian rhythms inspired by the previous march with a more subdued, almost ironic marching tune. This segues into the finale, which, per Rochberg's indication, alternates between *Scherzos and Serenades*. The opening scherzo bristles with a nervous, pizzicato energy, which is eventually contrasted by an almost Mozartian serenade shockingly (for the 1970s) set in the key of D major. This gradually segues into music that strongly recalls the sentimental finale of Gustav Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Another fleeting scherzo evokes the style of a baroque fugue, only to dissipate into an extended return of the Mahlerian mood. This music is ultimately dispelled by the sudden return of the harsh fanfare motives that opened the quartet, which gradually intensify to close the piece as it began.

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