



*International
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Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Guarneri String Quartet

ARNOLD STEINHARDT, *Violinist* MICHAEL TREE, *Violist*
JOHN DALLEY, *Violinist* DAVID SOYER, *Cellist*

WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 2, 1985 AT 8:00
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Third concert of the complete Beethoven quartet cycle

Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4

Allegro ma non tanto
Scherzo
Menuetto
Allegro

Quartet in F major, Op. 18, No. 1

Allegro con brio
Adagio
Scherzo
Allegro

INTERMISSION

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

RCA Red Seal Records

This evening's program is the third of six being presented in Ann Arbor over three successive seasons, in which the Guarneri Quartet performs the complete cycle of Beethoven's string quartets.

PROGRAM NOTES

by JEREMY YUDKIN

Quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4

Beethoven's Opus 18 consists of six string quartets which were written mostly in 1799, though they were not published until 1801. This was a successful and contented period for the young composer, who was not yet troubled by any signs of his impending tragic deafness and was achieving a respected reputation as a pianist and composer in musical and aristocratic circles in Vienna.

A composer writing in this medium at that time could not fail to have been constantly aware of the great masterpieces of eighteenth-century quartet literature that had been produced by Mozart and Haydn. And yet, Beethoven was never a slavish imitator. The Opus 18 quartets are familiar in their formal and structural perfection, but the stamp of the young lion is on them. As John N. Burk writes so expressively: "Certainly no one, not even Beethoven, could have borrowed that elegant investiture of a closing century and worn it with the consummate grace of those two (Mozart and Haydn), who had made it so completely a part of their natures. The brocaded coat, already slightly outmoded, does not encase these broader shoulders quite so comfortably."

The fourth of the Opus 18 quartets, in C minor, is broadly conceived and consistently projected in its overall harmonic structure. The opening movement is a grand sweep of melody and rhythm, with the flowing and graceful theme punctuated by noble chordal gestures. Moments of elegant delicacy lend contrast, while the latter part of the movement provides an opportunity for the composer to play conjuring tricks with the major and minor versions of the key.

The second movement pretends to be a strict fugue but dissolves into witty games, lilting dances, and mock-serious drama. The delicate articulation and gentle endings compound the delight.

Richness of sound, dense harmonic action, and rhythmic shifts characterize the Minuet. The central Trio section is in the major mode (the only part of the whole quartet that is not in C minor) and sounds like an outdoor country dance. The score contains explicit directions to play the repeat of the Minuet at a faster tempo, which adds a sense of urgency to its return.

The final movement is a rondo with a breathless gypsy fiddler's tune, cadenced by stamping chords and melodramatic pauses. The music falls into clear-cut sections marked by repeats, and the high spirits are continued through shared fragments of melody, an accelerated version of the tune, pregnant pauses, and the whirling ending.

Quartet in F major, Op. 18, No. 1

Beethoven's struggling perfectionism can nowhere be seen more clearly than in the eleven pages of one of his sketchbooks which he covered in developing and honing the opening motif of the first movement of Op. 18, No. 1. This motif is the gritty seed around which the pearl-like *Allegro con brio* is tautly constructed.

The *Adagio* opens with hushed chords which provide an accompaniment to the expressive violin melody. The passionate development is not without its hints of tragedy, and soaring arabesques lend urgency to the powerful declamation.

A perky elegance pervades the *Scherzo* which contains pre-echos of the rhythmic subtleties Beethoven exploited to such an extent in his later quartets.

The final movement is a joyous rondo, but its progress is marked by some decidedly unexpected key-shifts, contrapuntal passages, and singing interludes.

Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131

Among the late quartets of Beethoven, which in themselves constitute the most consistently inspired body of work in the genre, Op. 131 marks Beethoven's furthest remove from tradition and the fullest expression of his uncompromising genius. The work is in seven continuous movements, whose combined impact is of such profundity and complexity that words can provide only the sketchiest road map for the journey.

The opening fugue unfolds with serious and inevitable intent, moving between high points of sonorous fullness and thinly-scored intertwined melody. The movement fades onto a single note and an extended *Allegro* is brought forth, whose sure-footed impulse is made briefly insecure by the occasional hesitancy of articulation and tempo. Its ending is epigrammatic and leads straight into a wordless recitative punctuated by strong chords and uncertain questions.

The central movement and apex of the quartet is a long slow movement, *Andante*, in the form of a theme and variations. Wagner, who wrote extensively on this quartet, called the theme "the blessed incarnation of innocence." If so, it is an innocence born of the deepest spiritual experience. The six variations are studies in the most extreme and yet thoroughly relevant contrasts, providing a strictly comprehensible yet profound exploration of the wondrous inner essence and hidden qualities of the original theme. A series of undecided solo essays and trills leads to a coda that stops and starts, touches on the theme, hesitates.

In a grimly demonic manner the *Scherzo* plunges out into rhythmic flight, but again restraints are imposed. Strangely fragmented sections, high-flying popular melodies, glassy bowing techniques create an atmosphere of surreal and disturbing fantasy. Three repeated chords lead into the singing, contemplative, and deeply moving *Adagio*. Its poignant brevity is swept away by the indomitable energy of the final *Allegro*. Even the power of this movement is not allowed full rein without wrenching cross-rhythms, melodic interludes, and chasms of silence. An almost grotesque slowing of the tempo precedes the hammering three final chords.

About the Artists

This season the Guarneri String Quartet enters its third decade with, remarkably, the same members that made its New York debut on February 28, 1965. The Quartet celebrated its twentieth anniversary in a gala program on February 27, 1985, in New York's Carnegie Hall, assisted by pianist Peter Serkin in Dvořák's Piano Quintet in A — the same pianist who had played the same work with the ensemble in its first professional engagement, on Nantucket Island in the summer of 1964. Following this gala twentieth anniversary concert, the *New York Times* reviewer concluded: "It was another in a long string of splendid Guarneri concerts, proving that happy marriages do exist, even among string quartets."

The Quartet's Anniversary Season of one hundred concerts included its nineteenth tour of Europe and another transcontinental tour of the United States and Canada. In New York, the Quartet continued its annual series, begun in 1975, "Guarneri and Friends," at Alice Tully Hall and at both the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the 92nd Street YM-YWHA.

The Guarneri Quartet has made three tours of Australia, has toured Japan and New Zealand, and has been heard at the major international music festivals. It has been featured on television and radio specials, documentaries, and educational presentations both in North America and abroad, and it is the subject of a book entitled *Quartet*. In 1982 Mayor Edward Koch presented the Quartet with the New York City Seal of Recognition, an honor awarded for the first time.

In addition to performing, Quartet members serve on the faculties of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the University of Maryland. Annual residencies at the University of South Florida began in 1972 and, in 1976, that university awarded the Quartet honorary doctorates in music. The Quartet was similarly honored with honorary doctorates by the State University of New York (Binghamton) in 1983.

Among the Guarneri's recordings, several of which have won international awards, are collaborations with such artists as Arthur Rubinstein, Pinchas Zukerman, and Boris Kroyt and Mischa Schneider of the Budapest Quartet. All members of the Guarneri have had major solo careers and continue to appear as soloists or in musical collaborations with others. Each has recorded as soloist on a variety of labels.

Arnold Steinhardt, a winner of the Leventritt Award, made his solo debut at the age of fourteen with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and has appeared as soloist with the orchestras of Philadelphia, New York, and Cleveland. John Dalley made his concert debut at age fourteen. He has toured widely throughout Europe and Russia and, prior to joining the Quartet, served on the faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory and was Artist-in-Residence at the University of Illinois. Michael Tree, noted both as violist and violinist, made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of twenty and has made solo appearances with the Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Los Angeles Orchestras, and at the Spoleto Festival. David Soyer, following a solo debut at the age of seventeen with The Philadelphia Orchestra, distinguished himself with the Bach Aria Group, the Marlboro Trio, the Guilet Quartet, and the New Music String Quartet.

This evening's concert is the nineteenth Ann Arbor performance by the Guarneri String Quartet, over a period of almost fifteen years. The Quartet returns in February to give the fourth concert in its current presentation of the complete Beethoven string quartet cycle.

The Quartet's Instruments

Arnold Steinhardt	violin	Lorenzo Storioni (Cremona)
John Dalley	violin	Nicolas Lupot (Paris 1810)
Michael Tree	viola	Dominicus Busan (Venice 1750)
David Soyer	cello	Andrea Guarneri (Cremona 1669)

Coming Concerts — 1985-86 Season

- KALIDOSKOPIO OF GREECE Sun. Oct. 6
 FRANÇOIS-RENÉ DUCHABLE, *Pianist* Thurs. Oct. 10
 HANOVER BAND OF LONDON Sat. Oct. 12
 FINE ARTS STRING QUARTET Tues. Oct. 15
 with RAPHAEL HILLYER, *Violist*
 NATHAN MILSTEIN, *Violinist* Thurs. Oct. 24
 ATERBALLETO Fri., Sat. Oct. 25, 26
 WESTERN OPERA THEATER Sun. Oct. 27
 Mozart's *Don Giovanni*
 MUNICH PHILHARMONIC / LORIN MAAZEL Tues. Oct. 29
 FOLK BALLET OF YUGOSLAVIA Thurs. Oct. 31
 CLEVELAND OCTET Sun. Nov. 3
 CARLOS MONTOYA, *Flamenco Guitarist* Sat. Nov. 9
 VIENNA SYMPHONY / WOLFGANG SAWALISCH Wed. Nov. 13
 NEW PHILADELPHIA STRING QUARTET Sun. Nov. 24
 with RICHARD WOODHAMS, *Oboist*; YOHEVED KAPLINSKY, *Pianist*
 SHURA CHERKASSKY, *Pianist* Tues. Nov. 26
 Handel's *Messiah* / DONALD BRYANT Fri.-Sun. Dec. 6-8
 PITTSBURGH BALLET, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Fri.-Sun. Dec. 13-15
 JESSYE NORMAN, *Soprano* Wed. Jan. 8
 CRACOW PHILHARMONIC Sat. Jan. 11
 KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI, *Conductor*; YO-YO MA, *Cellist*
 THE ENGLISH CONCERT / TREVOR PINNOCK Wed. Jan. 15
 DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Sun. Feb. 2
 GUNTHER HERBIG, *Conductor*; HEINRICH SCHIFF, *Cellist*
 MURRAY LOUIS DANCE COMPANY and
 DAVE BRUBECK JAZZ QUARTET Wed. Feb. 5
 ANDRÉ WATTS, *Pianist* Fri. Feb. 7
 THE SONGMAKERS' ALMANAC Sun. Feb. 9
 MICHALA PETRI, *Recorder* Thurs. Feb. 13
 GUARNERI STRING QUARTET Tues. Feb. 18
 SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY / HERBERT BLOMSTEDT Tues. Mar. 11
 BERLIN BALLET Wed., Thurs. Mar. 12, 13
 BEAUX ARTS TRIO Sun. Mar. 16
 FACULTY ARTISTS CONCERT (free admission) Sun. Mar. 23
 LEWITZKY DANCE COMPANY Mon., Tues. Mar. 24, 25
 RUGGIERO RICCI, *Violinist* Wed. Mar. 26
 ST. PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Tues. Apr. 1
 PINCHAS ZUKERMAN, *Conductor/Violinist*
 BONN WOODWIND QUINTET Sun. Apr. 6
 with STEVEN MASI, *Pianist*
 PHILIP JONES BRASS ENSEMBLE Sun. Apr. 13
 JOHN WILLIAMS, *Guitarist* Wed. Apr. 16
 93rd ANNUAL MAY FESTIVAL Wed.-Sat. Apr. 30-May 3
 Complete Festival information available in December.

*Single tickets and most series available;
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