

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan



Presents

Guarneri String Quartet

ARNOLD STEINHARDT, *Violin*
JOHN DALLEY, *Violin*

MICHAEL TREE, *Viola*
DAVID SOYER, *Cello*

SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 16, 1977, AT 8:30
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2 BEETHOVEN
Allegro
Adagio cantabile
Scherzo
Allegro molto quasi presto

Quartet in A minor, Op. 132 BEETHOVEN
Adagio sostenuto; allegro
Adagio ma non tanto
Molto adagio
Alla marcia, assai vivace; allegro appassionato

INTERMISSION

Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3 BEETHOVEN
Introduzione—allegro vivace
Andante con moto quasi allegretto
Menuetto; grazioso
Allegro molto

*This concert is the fourth program of the complete Beethoven quartet cycle
being performed by the Guarneri Quartet during this 1976-77 season.*

RCA Red Seal Records

Ludwig van Beethoven

(Born December 16, 1770, in Bonn; died March 26, 1827, in Vienna)

Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2

In his first string quartets, Beethoven sums up the style and the accomplishments of his two great predecessors, Haydn and Mozart, and prepares for the great advances in technique and expression that he will make in his mature quartets. His Opus 18 is a set of six that he wrote between 1798 and 1800. They were published in 1801 with a dedication to the young composer's younger noble friend, Prince Franz Joseph Lobkowitz, who spent a large part of his great fortune on music. Beethoven had already begun to suffer the progressive hearing loss that burdened him during his entire adult life, but he was just approaching the full command of the enormous creative powers that account for his special place in history.

"Some excellent works by Beethoven are outstanding among recent publications," a reviewer wrote shortly after the first three quartets appeared. "They give perfect proof of his art—but they need to be played well and heard often, for they are very difficult to perform and are in no sense 'popular.'" Since then, this Second Quartet has become one of the most popular—in the best sense.

This is a bright and happy work, overflowing with musical ideas. The *Allegro* first movement has more material than many other composers could dream up for an entire four-movement work. The opening phrase alone, in just eight quick and short measures, has three distinct melodic elements that Beethoven works over and develops. Next is a long and beautiful slow movement, a grave but warm *Adagio cantabile* with a contrasting central *Allegro* that buzzes quickly and almost always quietly. The third movement is a Scherzo, *Allegro*, after the classical model of the minuets in the quartets of Haydn and Mozart, but with forceful and dramatic features, especially in the middle Trio section, characteristic of Beethoven. The finale, *Allegro molto quasi presto*, rushes through the classical sonata form: contrasting themes that are developed and then recalled with a different key relationship.

—LEONARD BURKAT

Quartet in A minor, Op. 132

Late in life, between 1816 and 1826, Beethoven composed a series of extraordinary masterpieces, unequalled in the history of music and perhaps in the history of all the arts: his Ninth Symphony, a Mass, five piano sonatas and the five string quartets with opus numbers 127 to 135. During the period just before these works began to appear, his output had been slim, for the compositions of his middle years had exhausted all the possibilities of the classical forms that he had inherited from Haydn and Mozart. His final works were to require new subjects, new forms, and new powers of creation.

Beethoven wrote his last quartets during the three years before his death. They are compositions of such great density, combining concentration and tension with such great weight, that they puzzled both musicians and music-lovers for generations. The technical and interpretative difficulties they presented were usually blamed on the composer's deafness, but the effect that this tragic disability had on Beethoven's music has been reinterpreted in modern times. Early critics seemed to think that during his years without hearing, Beethoven had lost touch with musical reality. Now we believe that deafness liberated him from concern for common practicality and that it freed his imagination for higher flight.

Beethoven wrote the Quartet, Op. 132, in 1825, as the second in a group of three quartets dedicated to his faithful supporter, Prince Nikolas Galitzin, who had organized the first performance of the *Missa Solemnis*, Op. 123, in Saint Petersburg, a year earlier. In the meantime, Galitzin's fortunes had begun to fail and he paid for only one of the quartets. Their interesting correspondence of this period tells us a great deal about their relationship. It was no ordinary thing, in those days, for a mighty Russian prince—even one on the decline—to address a commoner as this one did when he wrote to "Dear, and Respected Monsieur van Beethoven."

The first movement of the Quartet is a freely expanded sonata-form, *Allegro*, that opens with a slow introduction, *Assai sostenuto*. The second, *Allegro ma non tanto*, is a scherzo-like intermezzo in a moderate tempo and with a contrasting middle section in rustic character. The third movement of the Quartet is one of the most glorious inventions in all European music. In his manuscript, Beethoven, who had been very ill that spring, headed it "A Convalescent's Sacred Song of Thanks to the Divinity." Where the initial slow tempo, *Molto adagio*, changes to an *Andante* with more motion, he added, "Feeling new strength." Passages in the two tempos alternate, and the beautiful measures that begin the third *Adagio* section are marked to be played "with the greatest inner emotion." The contrasting fourth movement is a brief march, *Alla marcia, assai vivace*, which is connected, by a kind of recitative for the first violin, to the finale, *Allegro appassionato*, based principally on a long melody of indescribable elegance that Beethoven had once considered using in his Ninth Symphony. There are contrasting episodes and a unique development of great force and intensity, until a long coda, *Presto*, brings the Quartet to a close.

—LEONARD BURKAT

Quartet in C major, Op. 59, No. 3

The three Rasumovsky Quartets, Op. 59, are as representative of Beethoven's maturity as a quartet composer as is the preceding "Eroica" Symphony of his fully developed power as a symphonist. Although written on an intimate scale they show the same inventiveness, diversity and scope as does the symphony. They are, in other words "symphonic quartets" and nothing quite like them had ever been heard before in chamber music repertoire. Audiences found them puzzling and hard to understand, and Beethoven's friends considered them to be intended as "jokes" or "nonsense." Critics used words as "very long and difficult," "deep and well worked," but also "generally incomprehensible."

Composed in 1806 they were first performed in Vienna a year later, and the Quartet in C major, the third of the cycle—sometimes called the "Hero" Quartet—reflects all the qualities of Beethoven's "middle" period; playfulness in the first movement, seriousness in the second, suavity in the third, and a breathless race to the finale, which is literally an overwhelming tour de force.

The Guarneri Quartet has appeared in Ann Arbor on three previous occasions—in 1971, 1972, and in 1975 with pianist Gary Graffman. This season the Quartet presents a total of eight concerts while performing the complete Beethoven cycle of sixteen quartets.

Arnold Steinhardt plays a violin made by Joseph Guarneri about 1728; John Dalley's instrument was made by Nicholas Lupot in 1819. The viola of Michael Tree was made by Dominicus Busan about 1785 and David Soyer's cello was made by Andrea Guarneri in 1669.

International Presentations – 1977–78

Choral Union Series / Hill Auditorium

BEVERLY SILLS, <i>Soprano</i>	Friday, September 23
PHILHARMONIA HUNGARICA/PETERS	Sunday, October 23
LAZAR BERMAN, <i>Pianist</i>	Thursday, November 3
ROTTERDAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA/DE WAART	Friday, November 11
NATIONAL ORCHESTRA OF BRAZIL/KARABTCHEWSKY	Sunday, November 20
RUDOLF SERKIN, <i>Pianist</i>	Wednesday, January 18
LEONTYNE PRICE, <i>Soprano</i>	Wednesday, January 25
MOSCOW PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA/KITAIENKO	Monday, February 27
BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/COMMISSIONA	Sunday, March 19
BAVARIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/KUBELIK	Saturday, April 8

Choice Series / Power Center

MURRAY LOUIS DANCE COMPANY	Monday & Tuesday, October 17 & 18
GEORGE SHEARING QUINTET	Wednesday, October 19
THE HOOFERS—A JAZZ TAP HAPPENING	Saturday, October 22
THE PENNSYLVANIA BALLET	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, November 14, 15, 16
BALLET FOLKLORICO MEXICANO	Saturday, November 19
TCHAIKOVSKY'S "NUTCRACKER" BALLET The Pittsburgh Ballet	Thursday, Friday, Saturday, December 15, 16, 17
JOSE MOLINA BAILES ESPANOLES	Wednesday, January 11
ROSSINI'S <i>Barber of Seville</i> —Canadian Opera Company	Sunday, January 15
HUNGARIAN FOLK BALLET & GYPSY ORCHESTRA	Tuesday, January 17
ELIOT FELD BALLET	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, February 20, 21, 22
NIKOLAIS DANCE THEATRE	Tuesday & Wednesday, March 21 & 22

Chamber Arts Series / Rackham Auditorium

BEAUX ARTS TRIO	Wednesday, October 12
SUK TRIO	Tuesday, October 25
CONCORD STRING QUARTET	Sunday, November 6
FREIBURG BAROQUE SOLOISTS	Thursday, November 17
CAMERATA ORCHESTRA OF SALZBURG/JANIGRO	Friday, January 20
FRENCH STRING TRIO & MICHEL DEBOST, <i>Flutist</i>	Friday, February 3
ORPHEUS CHAMBER ENSEMBLE & THE FESTIVAL CHORUS	Saturday, March 25
AMADEUS STRING QUARTET	Thursday, April 6

Debut Recital Series / Rackham Auditorium

MURRAY PERAHIA, <i>Pianist</i>	Thursday, October 27
MIRELLA FRENI, <i>Soprano</i>	Tuesday, November 8
ALEKSANDER SLOBODYANIK, <i>Pianist</i>	Saturday, February 25
KYUNG-WHA CHUNG, <i>Violinist</i>	Thursday, March 23

Asian Series / Rackham Auditorium

PENCA (The Art of Self-Defense) and TOPENG BABAKAN (Masked Dance), West Java	Saturday, November 12
THOVIL, SRI LANKA	Wednesday, March 1
OKINAWAN FOLK DANCERS	Tuesday, March 28

New brochure available; series ticket orders now being accepted and filled in sequence.

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