



*International  
Presentations of  
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*

FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 13, 1987, AT 8:00  
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

### P R O G R A M

- Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 18, No. 6 ..... BEETHOVEN  
Allegro con brio  
Adagio ma non troppo  
Scherzo  
La Malinconia: adagio; allegretto quasi allegro
- Grosse Fuge in B-flat major, Op. 133 ..... BEETHOVEN  
(Composed originally as the last movement of Quartet, Op. 130)

### I N T E R M I S S I O N

- Quartet in F major, Op. 135 ..... BEETHOVEN  
Allegretto  
Vivace  
Lento assai, cantabile e tranquillo  
Grave ma non troppo tratto, allegro

*RCA Red Seal Records*

With this concert the Guarneri Quartet brings to a close its Ann Arbor performances of Beethoven's monumental string quartet cycle, presented over three successive seasons. In all, the Guarneri Quartet has given twenty-two concerts in Ann Arbor, beginning in 1971, under University Musical Society auspices.

*The Musical Society gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Ford Motor Company Fund for underwriting the costs of this house program.*

#### **University of Michigan No-Smoking Policy**

In accordance with new regulations effective January 1, 1987, concerning smoking in the work place and public areas, smoking is prohibited in both lobbies, the inner lobby restrooms, and, of course, the auditorium itself. It is permitted in the designated area: the outer lobby restrooms. Your cooperation in implementing this new policy is requested.

## Program Notes by Jeremy Yudkin

Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 18, No. 6 . . . . . LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
*(b. Dec. 15 or 16, 1770; d. Mar. 26, 1827)*

The first movement of the Op. 18, No. 6 quartet (1800) opens with a delightful operatic duet between the first violin and the cello. Later the texture thickens, but the elegant ambience prevails. A fugal section and a transitional passage in thirds precede the return of the opening. The *Adagio* is another operatic movement, with a singing theme, a contrasting pathetic central section, and Italian-style ornamentation. A brilliant wit and deliberate eccentricity dazzle the listener in the *Scherzo*. The aim is to delight and to confuse. A comic trio section adds to the fun.

The slow introduction to the last movement is an unusual and remarkable piece of writing, especially for 1800. The composer evidently shared this view, for he entitled it "La Malinconia" and wrote in the score: "This piece must be played with the greatest delicacy." It opens with a hushed sense of suppressed significance and unlimited possibilities. It is the brief ornamental turn, however, that becomes the real germinal force of the piece. The unexpected modulations add mystery and a disturbed sense of direction. Alternating dynamics lead to a final *fortissimo* climax and a formal cadence. The finale itself is more conventional, expounding a graceful and charming rondo; but, before the end, the "Malinconia" music returns to stem the flow. Even the rondo theme itself is affected. But a *prestissimo* ending sweeps every shadow from view.

Grosse Fuge in B-flat major, Op. 133 . . . . . BEETHOVEN

With its overall layout, its summation and synthesis of contrasting elements, and its powerful declamatory rhetoric, the Grosse Fuge (1825-6) stands appropriately as the capstone to the impressive musical arch that is Op. 130. Beethoven, however, was persuaded ultimately to detach the movement from its original position, and to publish it as a separate entity.

The opening presents the elements that will become substantive in the course of the piece, all of which are characterized by a four-note motif of two half-steps, in different guises. This motif appears elsewhere in Beethoven's work, most notably at the opening of the A-minor Quartet, Op. 132. The fugue that ensues unleashes an explosive force, unflagging in its intensity. This dissolves into a second, smoother fugue, and then a light, dance-like section that is metamorphosed into a powerful series of passages, severely abstract and impressionistic. Lightly lilting themes, tossed back and forth, alternate with powerful chords. The ending is delayed. The fragmentary opening synopsis is repeated in reverse order, and then a powerful build-up of intensity carries the music forward to the final, emphatic, implacable close.

Quartet in F major, Op. 135 . . . . . BEETHOVEN

Beethoven's Op. 135 (1826) represents a change of direction for the composer, from outpouring to restraint, from loquaciousness to terseness, from explication to implication. The quartet was the last complete work in the medium that Beethoven wrote, finished in October of 1826. In the preceding late quartets, Beethoven had burst through the limits of convention and found for himself a new world of expanded forms and fullness of expression. The B-flat Quartet, Op. 130, contains six movements; the C-sharp minor Quartet, Op. 131, is in seven continuous movements. For his final quartet, the composer returned to the classical four-movement scheme and to a language of profound restraint. In this rarefied atmosphere, every note has meaning, every gesture is substantive.

The opening movement is a tight collage of germinal figures and contrasting motifs, in which juxtaposition of tonal register and the power of silence vie for significance. The demonic wit and energy of the second movement are breathtaking, providing constant surprises from the simplest materials. The central trio section begins like a simple country dance, but turns to a grotesque and disturbingly insistent underworld fantasy. The slow movement develops from hushed beginnings into a flowing melody, rich in sound and rhythm. There are three variations on this melody, disguised by brilliant inventiveness and contrast of articulation and texture.

The final movement is headed by the famous motto themes: "Muss es sein?" (Must It Be?) with its rising dotted figure, and "Es muss sein!" (It Must Be!) in definitive cadential half-notes. The slow introduction poses the question, spurred by hammering chords, and the movement proper provides the answer, resigned but content, with a varying melodic outline unified by surefooted harmonic direction. The motion dissolves, and the question returns more insistently, with terrifying richness of sound. A new and more confident answer ensues, while a breezy, carefree melody, seemingly sprung from nowhere, carries the movement to its delicate, and then definitive, close.

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†First term began January 1, 1987.

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