

15
july

SUNDAY

5 PM

Barry Shiffman, *artistic director*
Osvaldo Golijov, *composer-in-residence*

EMERSON STRING QUARTET

Eugene Drucker, *violin* | Philip Setzer, *violin*

Lawrence Dutton, *viola* | Paul Watkins, *cello*

WITH

COLIN CARR, *cello*

GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY THE JERRY AND MARGARETTA HAUSMAN
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STRING QUARTET IN B-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 130 (1825-26)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro

Presto

Andante con moto ma non troppo

Alla danza tedesca: Allegro assai

Cavatina: Adagio molto espressivo

Finale: Allegro

:: INTERMISSION ::

STRING QUINTET IN C MAJOR, D. 956 (1828)

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Allegro ma non troppo

Adagio

Scherzo: Presto

Allegretto

*Please join Rockport Music for a reception at the Rockport Art Association and Museum
immediately following the concert.*

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STRING QUARTET IN B-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 130

Ludwig van Beethoven (b. Bonn, Germany, December 15 or 16, 1770;
d. Vienna, Austria, March 26, 1827)

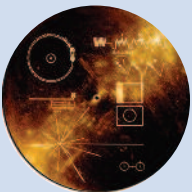
Composed 1825–26; 38 minutes

String quartet writing was the medium of choice for Beethoven in his final years. After the acclaim brought by his monumental Ninth Symphony and the *Missa solemnis*, he began sketches for a Tenth Symphony. He also had plans for a second opera. But Beethoven found that his thoughts truly crystallized in his five late quartets. This was music written from inner need. Money was not the issue. Quartet writing offered little potential for income. Only three of the quartets were commissioned, although, in the end, Beethoven never received any proceeds from the commission.

Op. 130 is the most immediately appealing of Beethoven's late quartets and the idea of contrast within the music is at the very heart of this appeal. Contrast lies behind Beethoven's decision to cast the work in six movements. These include two highly approachable dance movements (which were encored at the work's first performance) and a profound slow movement that invariably brought tears to Beethoven's eyes. In the original version of the quartet, Beethoven provided a monumental crowning conclusion in the form of a great fugue, which contrasts its length, cumulative power, range and freedom of musical expression with everything heard before. The *Grosse Fuge* finale made Op. 130 the longest of the late quartets. At the same time, it remains the most positive and outward-looking. Yet the audience was unenthusiastic when the Schuppanzigh Quartet gave the first performance with the *Grosse Fuge* ending on March 21, 1826. The news was carried to Beethoven who waited in a nearby tavern. He was unimpressed to hear that the two shorter dance movements of the Quartet had been encored. Six months later, however, he did write an alternative ending for the Quartet in the form of the scurrying Allegro we'll be hearing tonight. It takes the focus off the finale and puts it squarely on the preceding movement, the Cavatina.

In the first movement, Beethoven contrasts and links the themes of the opening Adagio with the Allegro that follows. The two are so bound together that the novelist Aldous Huxley once described the way they contrast as "majesty alternating with a joke." A miniature scherzo provides a complete change of pace in its brevity, immediacy and symmetry. It also finds Beethoven at his most jocular and humorous. Then comes the third movement. This grows entirely out of a somber opening phrase that is first heard on viola. Beethoven writes a note of caution over the music: "poco scherzoso"—"don't take it too seriously," perhaps. It indicates

that there are contrasts of a bittersweet nature, the cheerful as well as the melancholy, to come. The next two movements reveal the utmost contrast. The untroubled fourth movement—"In the style of a German dance"—leads to the tragedy of the Cavatina, about which Beethoven wrote: "Never have I written a melody that affected me so much." Its title is Italian for "short aria," a reference to the essentially lyrical nature of the music. In the middle



The Sounds of Earth. Together with Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C (*WTC* Book II), [Rockport Chamber Music Festival, June 23, 2018, with Stephen Prutsman], and a kaleidoscopic musical playlist, a recording of the Cavatina from tonight's Op. 130 Beethoven quartet concludes the famous Golden Record. This 12-inch gold-plated copper disk was sent aboard the 1997 Voyager 1 and 2 space probes. The disk, pictured above, with its extraterrestrial instructions, contains sounds and images selected to portray the diversity of life and culture on Planet Earth.

section Beethoven writes the word “beklemmt” (oppressed) over several repeated notes, which then increase in importance.

The Allegro finale is a carefully proportioned and relatively untroubled movement without the relentless intellectual drive of the *Grosse Fuge*. But it is no less valid a resolution. With it, Beethoven pursues the dualism that he had explored throughout his working life. It led to highly contrasting works like the mellow “Spring” and forceful Op. 23 violin sonatas, the dynamic Fifth and pastoral Sixth symphonies, and the epic “Waldstein” Sonata and its modest companion the F-major Sonata, Op. 54. Beethoven worked on these works and other similar contrasting pairs simultaneously and, at times, published them together. With the Allegro finale to his Op. 130 quartet, he continues the journey, presenting a choice to the performer and listener, resolving all contradictions and problems with two sides of a coin. This Allegro finale was to be the last work Beethoven wrote.

STRING QUINTET IN C MAJOR, D. 956

Franz Schubert (b. Vienna, Austria, January 31, 1797; d. Vienna, November 19, 1828)

Composed 1828; 54 minutes

This great C-major String Quintet was written in the autumn of 1828, when Schubert was not in good health. But there is no evidence that he was consciously or unconsciously preparing for the end by writing music that is noble in conception and spiritual in melodic invention. In the summer months immediately preceding its composition, Schubert’s life followed the familiar pattern of cultural and social gatherings and visits to the taverns—particularly the Moonshine and the Partridge. In October 1828 he travelled with friends fifty miles on foot to Eisenstadt, to visit the grave of Haydn. Back in Vienna, Schubert began further lessons in counterpoint. During the year, three publishing houses wrote to him asking for compositions. This activity paints a picture of a man who was facing life rather than preparing to bid it farewell.

Although written in C major, tonal ambiguity is present from the outset, as the opening chord wavers between major and minor. Schubert immediately creates a sense of spaciousness, building a feeling of expectation in his listener. The second theme is equally striking. It appears in the unusual key of E-flat and is played by both cellos. If Schubert was simply following the precedent of Mozart and Beethoven in writing a string quintet, he would have followed their example and used two violas rather than two cellos. But the Romantic side of his nature determined Schubert’s choice of tone color—and the lower instrument, with its wide tenor range allowed him the sonorous, spacious palette that his Quintet so memorably explores. He had written an earlier string quintet—a striking Overture in C minor, D. 8, when he was 14 and it is well worth hearing—but it is on an altogether smaller scale and scored with the more customary two violas, not two cellos.

The slow movement is ethereal, woven around an expansive organ-like melody in the middle voices, punctuated by interjections high on the violin and low in the cello. A passionate, anguished middle section forms a dramatic contrast. The Scherzo is spirited and rustic and, at the outset at least, not unlike many that Schubert had previously written. Soon, however, a remarkable trio plunges the music into distant keys at a considerably slower speed and in a different tempo. Schubert was being highly original. The only precedent was in the music he himself composed around the same time. In the finale, Schubert’s spirit emerges optimistic.

The music is purposeful and driven, combining a jaunty Hungarian dance melody with the *Gemütlichkeit* of a more sentimental, Viennese cafe melody.

Many musicians have admired Schubert's C-major Quintet. Its fusion of dynamic, muscular part-writing, propulsive rhythmic energy and floating, contemplative ecstasy is at once unique to Schubert and prophetic of Viennese music of the future. The piece served as a model for Brahms, Bruckner, Berg and many others. The pianist Artur Schnabel wanted the slow movement played at his funeral. To all of us, it speaks a deeply personal language.

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Beethoven's tombstone (left) and Schubert's (right) in the Musician's Corner in the Central Cemetery (Zentralfriedhof) in Vienna. Mozart's memorial is between them.



The remains of Beethoven and Schubert were moved from Währing cemetery, Vienna, in 1888 and transferred to the Zentralfriedhof. Now named Schubertplatz, the former Währing cemetery still contains memorial tombstones to both composers. Schubert's (on the right) bears the Viennese poet and playwright Franz Grillparzer's well-intentioned but still awkward epitaph: "The art of music here entombed a rich possession, but even fairer hopes."



EMERSON STRING QUARTET

The Emerson String Quartet has amassed an unparalleled list of achievements over four decades: more than thirty acclaimed recordings, nine Grammys (including two for Best Classical Album), three Gramophone Awards, the Avery Fisher Prize and *Musical America's* "Ensemble of the Year." The arrival of Paul Watkins in 2013 has had a profound effect on the Emerson Quartet—his dedication and enthusiasm have infused the Quartet with a warm, rich tone and a palpable joy in the collaborative process. Having celebrated its 40th Anniversary last season, the Emerson looks toward the future by collaborating with today's most esteemed composers and premiering new works, thus proving their commitment to keeping the art form of the string quartet alive and more relevant than ever. In 2016, Universal Music Group reissued their entire Deutsche Grammophon discography in a 52-CD boxed set, and in April 2017, the Quartet released its latest album, *Chaconnes and Fantasias: Music of Britten and Purcell*, the first release on Universal Music Classics' new U.S. classical record label, Decca Gold. Formed in 1976 and based in New York City, the Emerson was one of the first quartets whose violinists alternated in the first chair position. The Emerson Quartet, which took its name from the American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, is Quartet-in-Residence at Stony Brook University. In 2016, full-time Stony Brook faculty members Philip Setzer and Lawrence Dutton received the title of Distinguished Professor, and part-time faculty members Eugene Drucker and Paul Watkins were awarded the title of Honorary Distinguished Professor. In 2015, the Quartet received the Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award, Chamber Music America's highest honor, in recognition of its significant and lasting contribution to the chamber music field.

COLIN CARR, *cello*



Colin Carr appears throughout the world as a soloist, chamber musician, recording artist and teacher. He has played with major orchestras worldwide, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, The Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic,

BBC Symphony, the orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, Philadelphia and Montréal and all the major orchestras of Australia and New Zealand. Conductors with whom he has worked include Simon Rattle, Valery Gergiev, Charles Dutoit, Mark Elder, Stanislav Skrowaszewski and Neville Marriner. He has been a regular guest at the BBC Proms and has twice toured Australia. As a member of the Golub-Kaplan-Carr Trio, he recorded and toured extensively for twenty years. Chamber music plays an important role in his musical life. He is a frequent visitor to international chamber music festivals worldwide and has appeared often as a guest with the Guarneri and Emerson string quartets and with New York's Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.