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CMS Chamber Music Society
of Lincoln Center

**THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
DAVID FINCKEL AND WU HAN, ARTISTIC DIRECTORS
PRESENTS**

THE SCHUMANN QUARTET

WORKS BY

**HAYDN, BARTÓK,
REIMANN & SCHUMANN**

**APRIL 29
ALICE TULLY HALL**



The Chamber Music Society showcases the talents of the exciting young Schumann Quartet on Sunday, April 29, at 5:00 PM in Alice Tully Hall. The diverse program features Haydn's String Quartet in B-flat major, Hob. III:78, Op. 76, No. 4, "Sunrise," Bartók's String Quartet No. 2, BB 75, Op. 17, Schumann's Quartet in F major for Strings, Op. 41, No. 2, and a U.S. Premiere by the masterful Berlin composer Aribert Reimann: *Adagio zum Gedenken an Robert Schumann* for String Quartet. [photo: Kaupo Kikkas.]

Aribert Reimann was born in Berlin in 1936 and entered the Berlin Hochschule [Conservatory] für Musik in 1955 to study composition with Boris Blacher and Ernst Pepping, and piano with Otto Rausch. He also studied musicology at the University of Vienna. Reimann has composed for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and piano, and he is especially recognized for his vocal works, notably his nine operas; his *Lear*, after Shakespeare, has been produced steadily around the world since it was introduced in 1978.

Reimann admits that he has “always had a great fondness for the works of Schumann,” and that interest took on a real immediacy and intimacy in 1988 when an uncle sent him a copy of the notes Schumann’s attending physician, Dr. Franz Richarz, had kept of his patient’s condition in the asylum in Eendenich, near Bonn, in which he died in July 1856 after more than two difficult and delusional years. The notes affected Reimann deeply and that year he composed the *Sieben Fragmente in Memoriam Robert Schumann* for orchestra, based on the Theme and Variations in E-flat (the “Ghost Variations”) of February 1854 that was Schumann’s last completed work.

In 2006, the city of Düsseldorf organized a musical commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Robert Schumann’s death, and commissioned Reimann to write a new piece for the event. He accepted the commission and took as inspiration for his *Adagio zum Gedenken an Robert Schumann* (Adagio in Memory of Robert Schumann) for String Quartet two Lutheran chorales—*Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist* (“When My Hour Is at Hand”; Bach used the melody in his Cantatas Nos. 31 and 95 as well as three chorale preludes) and *Stärk uns, Mittler, dein sind wir* (“Strengthen Us, Intercessor, We Are Yours”)—which Schumann wrote down without text or harmonization near the end of his life. Phrases of the chorales are heard throughout the eight-minute piece, most clearly in the closing pages, but they are continually pierced or interrupted or distorted by slithering notes, jarring isolated sounds and grating out-of-tune pitches. Though he did not speak of it directly, the *Adagio* seems to be Reimann’s conception of the way Schumann perceived these chorale fragments in his own troubled mind during his last months.

The **Schumann Quartet** was praised by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* as playing “staggeringly well... with sparkling virtuosity and a willingness to astonish.” This season the quartet continues its three-year Chamber Music Society Two residency. The quartet also tours the U.S. and gives performances at festivals in South America, Italy, and Switzerland, as well as at Mozart Week in Salzburg and the Mozartfest in Würzburg. Other performances include concerts in the important musical centers of London, Hamburg, Berlin, Amsterdam, Florence, and Paris. The quartet’s current album, *Landscapes*, in which it traces its own roots by combining works of Haydn, Bartók, Takemitsu, and Pärt, has been hailed enthusiastically both at home and abroad, receiving five Diapasons and being selected as Editor’s Choice by *BBC Music Magazine*. The Schumann Quartet won the 2016 Best Newcomers of the Year Award from *BBC Music Magazine* for its previous CD, *Mozart Ives Verdi*. The quartet’s other awards include premier prix at the 2013 Concours International de Quatuor à Cordes de Bordeaux, the music prize of the Jürgen Ponto Foundation in the chamber music category in 2014, and first prize in the 2012 Schubert and Modern Music competition in Graz, Austria.

Brothers Mark, Erik, and Ken Schumann grew up in the Rhineland. In 2012, they were joined by violist Liisa Randalu, who was born in the Estonian capital, Tallinn, and grew up in Karlsruhe, Germany. The quartet studied with Eberhard Feltz and the Alban Berg Quartet, and served as

resident ensemble for many years at the Robert-Schumann-Saal in Düsseldorf. The Schumann Quartet is a member of CMS Two.

Listing Information:

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center at Alice Tully Hall

Sunday, April 29, 5:00 PM

Tickets from \$32 available at the box office; by calling 212.875.5788;

on-line: www.ChamberMusicSociety.org

SCHUMANN QUARTET

(Erik Schumann, Ken Schumann, violin; Liisa Randalu, viola; Mark Schumann, cello)

Haydn Quartet in B-flat major for Strings, Hob. III:78, Op. 76, No. 4, “Sunrise” (1797)

Bartók Quartet No. 2 for Strings, BB 75, Op. 17 (1914-17)

Reimann *Adagio zum Gedenken an Robert Schumann* for String Quartet (U.S. Premiere) (2006)

Schumann Quartet in F major for Strings, Op. 41, No. 2 (1842)
