

CMS Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

TUESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 7, 2017, AT 7:30 ▶ 3,664TH CONCERT

Alice Tully Hall, Starr Theater, Adrienne Arsht Stage
Home of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

SHANGHAI QUARTET

WEIGANG LI, violin
YI-WEN JIANG, violin
HONGGANG LI, viola
NICHOLAS TZAVARAS, cello

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809) **Quartet in D major for Strings, Hob. III:34, Op. 20, No. 4** (1772)
▶ Allegro di molto
▶ Un poco adagio affettuoso
▶ Menuetto: Allegretto alla Zingarese
▶ Presto scherzando

FRANK BRIDGE
(1879–1941) **Novelletten for String Quartet** (1904)
▶ Andante moderato
▶ Presto
▶ Allegro vivo

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI
(b. 1933) **Quartet No. 3 for Strings, "Leaves of an unwritten diary"** (2008)

INTERMISSION

ANTONÍN DVORÁK
(1841–1904) **Quartet in A-flat major for Strings, Op. 105** (1895)
▶ Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro appassionato
▶ Molto vivace
▶ Lento molto cantabile
▶ Allegro non tanto

This concert is made possible, in part, by **The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation** and the **Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation**.

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ABOUT TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Dear Listener,

CMS is honored today by the presence of the Shanghai Quartet, one of the foremost string quartets of our time.

To possess such status is the dream of countless ensembles and individuals, both young and old. To earn it is not an easy or simple task, for it is only earned, not acquired or bestowed. The Shanghai Quartet, since its formation in 1983, has relentlessly pursued music's most daunting challenges, climbing mountains others fear or simply cannot scale. The quartet members' dedication to quality shines through not only on stage but in their impeccable recordings, comprising a discography of over 30 albums. Their many commissions and world premieres attest to their dedication to growing the quartet literature, and their championing of Chinese composers and Eastern music is unparalleled today.

The Shanghai's program offers us a fine sampling of the quartet's artistry. From the 20th and 21st centuries we'll hear two remarkable and contrasting works, each deserving a prominent place in the repertoire. And the remaining Haydn and Dvořák works, each a pinnacle of the Classical and Romantic periods respectively, will leave no doubt of the Shanghai's consummate musicianship. And for those who today become new fans of this quartet, may we suggest attending our New Music concert on April 13? You'll hear the Shanghai perform, with unassailable authority, stunning new works by not one but three living Chinese composers.

Enjoy the concert,



David Finckel
ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



Wu Han



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Quartet in D major for Strings, Hob. III:34, Op. 20, No. 4

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

- ▶ Born March 31, 1732, in Rohrau, Lower Austria.
- ▶ Died May 31, 1809, in Vienna.

Composed in 1772.

- ▶ First CMS performance on January 28, 1977.
- ▶ Duration: 24 minutes

The six works of Op. 20, composed in 1772, were known to Haydn's contemporaries as the "Sun" Quartets because the cover of their first published edition (1774) was emblazoned with a drawing of the rising sun. The sobriquet was just as appropriate for musical reasons, since these were really the earliest quartets in which Haydn's full genius in the form dawned. "Everything that his later works were to bring to fruition is here, not merely in embryo but breaking into flower," wrote Rosemary Hughes. The Op. 20 Quartets are remarkable for the manner in which all four of the instrumental voices participate fully in the musical conversation, a distinct stylistic advance over the Rococo *divertimento*, in which the violins largely played their pretty tunes above the discrete background of the lower strings. Haydn's new musical democracy is confirmed by the contrapuntal nature of all the movements, especially the finales, four of which use fugal procedures. The importance of the Op. 20 Quartets was not missed by Haydn's colleagues and successors—Mozart wrote six quartets directly under their influence (K. 168–173, the first and last of which have fugal

finales) and Beethoven copied out the first of the set for his own study.

The opening movement of the Quartet in D major, Op. 20, No. 4, is moody and unsettled. The series of soft, mysterious six-measure phrases that serves as the main theme is suddenly snapped by the violin's furious arpeggiated outburst of triplets, which are given a more melodic shape in the second theme. The development section makes dramatic use of the thematic material through bold harmonies, sudden changes of dynamics, and truncated phrases. A climactic moment and an abrupt silence precede the recapitulation. The second movement is a set of variations on a melancholy theme given by the first violin. In Variation I, the second violin and viola share the lead; in Variation II, the cello is given prominence, and in Variation III, the violin. The theme returns in its original form before the movement ends with an eloquent, extended coda. The *Menuet*, marked "*alla Zingarese*" (in the Gypsy manner), exhibits the fiery cross-rhythms that Haydn would have known from the folk musicians in the area of Esterházy Palace; the movement's central trio is deliberately bland for contrast. An impudent, darting melody ("very fast, jokingly" instructs the score) provides the main subject for the sonata-form finale; the second theme is a stream of flashing 16th notes divided between the violins. The themes are developed and restated before the quartet comes to a quiet close. ◆

Novelletten for String Quartet

FRANK BRIDGE

- ▶ Born February 26, 1879, in Brighton, England.
- ▶ Died January 10, 1941, in Eastbourne, England.

Composed in September 1904.

- ▶ Premiered by the English String Quartet on a student concert at the Royal College of Music in London on November 24, 1904.
- ▶ First CMS performance on February 28, 2013.
- ▶ Duration: 12 minutes

Frank Bridge was one of the leading English musicians during the years between the two World Wars. Born in 1879 in Brighton, where he played violin as a boy in a theater orchestra conducted by his father, he entered the Royal College of Music as a violinist but turned to composition after winning a scholarship in 1899. Following his graduation, Bridge played in the Grimson, Joachim, and English string quartets, and also earned a reputation as a conductor good enough for Thomas Beecham to appoint him as his assistant with the New Symphony Orchestra in 1906. Bridge thereafter conducted opera at the Savoy Theatre and Covent Garden, and appeared at the Promenade Concerts and with such major orchestras as the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic. In 1923, he toured the United States as conductor of his own music, giving concerts in Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, and New York. When he returned to England, he bought a small country house at Friston in Sussex, near Eastbourne, and spent most of his remaining years there, composing, accepting an occasional conducting engagement, and guiding the progress of his gifted student Benjamin Britten.

Bridge wrote his *Novelletten* in September 1904 at the end of his

study at the RCM and premiered it on a student concert on November 24 with his own English String Quartet; he regarded it as his first mature chamber work after numerous experiments during “the nursery period,” as he called his student days. The *Novelletten* may have been a sort of test run for submitting an entry to the prestigious chamber music composition contest sponsored by Walter Wilson Cobbett, a successful London businessman, amateur violinist, and enthusiastic patron of the arts—Bridge placed second among the 67 entrants in the competition the following year with his *Phantasy for String Quartet* in F minor and won first prize in Cobbett’s contest in 1907 with his *Phantasie for Piano Trio* in C minor. The first of the *Novelletten* is lyrical and nocturnal in its outer sections but becomes more impassioned in its central episode. The charming *Presto* is built from three thematic elements—a brief, pizzicato gesture (A); a theme of teasing character in descending chromatic notes (B); and a tender melody (C)—arranged according to a symmetrical plan: A–B–C–B–C–B (in quicker 6/8 meter)—A. The *Allegro vivo* begins with a main theme comprising a bold, dotted-rhythm statement and a restless, legato passage; the second theme is a rhapsodic, arching strain shared between viola and cello. A development-like section fills the center of the movement, though its materials are only loosely related to those of the exposition. The earlier themes are reversed in the recapitulation, separated with a brief reminiscence of the nocturnal music that opened the first movement. ◆

Quartet No. 3 for Strings, "Leaves of an unwritten diary"

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

► Born November 23, 1933, in Debica, Poland.

Composed in 2008.

- Premiered at the Krzysztof Penderecki Festival in Warsaw on November 21, 2008, by the Shanghai Quartet.
- Tonight is the first CMS performance of this piece.
- Duration: 15 minutes

Krzysztof Penderecki (pen-de-RET-skee), the most significant Polish composer of his generation and one of the most inspired and influential musicians to emerge from Eastern Europe after World War II, enrolled at the University of Cracow when he was 17 with the intention of studying humanities but a year later transferred to the Cracow Academy of Music as a composition student. Upon graduating from the Academy in 1958, he was appointed to the school's faculty and soon began establishing an international reputation for his works. In 1966, he went to Münster for the premiere of his *St. Luke Passion*, and his presence and music made such a strong impression in West Germany that he was asked to join the faculty of the Volkwäng Hochschule für Musik in Essen. Penderecki returned to Cracow in 1972 to become director of the Academy of Music; while guiding the school during the next 15 years, he also held an extended residency at Yale University. He has been active as a conductor in Europe and America since 1972. Among Penderecki's many distinctions are the prestigious Grawemeyer Award from the University of Louisville, Order of the White Eagle (Poland's highest honor), three Grammys, and honorary doctorates

from several European and American universities.

Penderecki said that his String Quartet No. 3, commissioned by a consortium led by Montclair State University in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Shanghai Quartet and the 75th birthday of the composer, was "a sentimental journey into long-abandoned landscapes"; he revealed at the work's premiere, during a festival of his music in Warsaw in 2008, that he was going to subtitle it "Leaves of an unwritten diary" upon its publication. The quartet plumbed deeply into Penderecki's past. "When I was 12," he recalled, "my father bought a good instrument for me from a Soviet soldier for a bottle of raw spirits"; he wrote his first violin pieces soon thereafter. Penderecki also remembered his father materially in the Third Quartet by basing its closing section on a traditional Gypsy dance tune of the Hutsul people of the Ukrainian Carpathians, not far from where his father had grown up in southeastern Poland. "My father," Penderecki said, "played that tune on the violin. He played it obsessively, each time slightly differently, coming up with all kinds of variations.... [In the quartet, this theme] grew so much that it nearly took control of my whole piece."

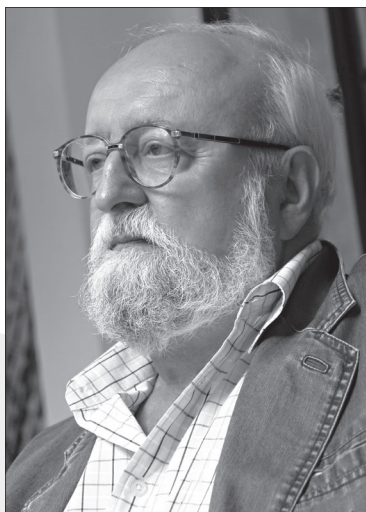
Nicholas Tzavaras, cellist of the Shanghai Quartet, wrote that Penderecki's Quartet No. 3 is "composed in a single movement with strongly defined subsections. Starting with an almost grave introduction, a dark, screaming melody in the viola leads directly into a driven, brilliant *vivace* in G minor, which recurs throughout the piece. A beautiful waltz

THE MUSIC OF KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

Krzysztof Penderecki's music first drew attention at a 1959 competition sponsored by the Youth Circle of the Association of Polish Composers when three of his works—entered anonymously—each won first prize in its class. He gained international fame only a year later with his Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima, winner of UNESCO's "Tribune Internationale des Compositeurs." His stunning St. Luke Passion of 1966 enjoyed enormous success in Europe and America, and led to a steady stream of commissions and performances. During the mid-1960s, Penderecki began incorporating more traditional techniques into his works without fully abandoning the powerfully dramatic avant-garde style that energized his early music. Utrenia (a choral setting of texts treating Christ's Entombment and Resurrection), the oratorio Dies Irae (dedicated to the memory of those murdered at Auschwitz), the opera Paradise Lost, the Violin Concerto, and other important scores showed an increasing reliance on orthodox Romanticism in their lyricism and introspection filtered through his modern creative sensibility. Even though his compositions are filled with fascinating aural events,

Penderecki insists that these soundscapes are not ends in themselves, but the necessary means to communicate his vision. "I am not interested in sound for its own sake and never have been," wrote Penderecki. "Anyone can make a sound: a composer, if he be a composer at all, must fashion it into an aesthetically satisfying experience."

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda



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▶ Krzysztof Penderecki

soon emerges, followed by a poignant and sweetly singing *notturmo*, then back to the *vivace* pattern that Penderecki insisted we play 'faster, faster.' By the end of our work with the composer we could barely play all the notes in this furious tempo. As we increased the tempo however, the excitement and intensity were slowly revealed.

"Towards the end of the work, a spectacular Gypsy melody appears, a theme that hadn't been heard in any of the composer's previous works.

We asked Maestro Penderecki about this theme and he told us it's a melody his father used to play on his violin when he was a child. The climax of this masterpiece soon comes, where all of the previously heard themes collide in a powerful moment that is full of intensity and drama. The end follows shortly after this: soft and introspective, almost walking off into the distance, with stopped harmonics played by the second violin echoing the Gypsy melody." ♦

Quartet in A-flat major for Strings, Op. 105

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

- ▶ Born September 8, 1841, in Nelahozeves, Bohemia.
- ▶ Died May 1, 1904 in Prague.

Composed in 1895.

- ▶ Premiered on April 16, 1896, in Prague.
- ▶ First CMS performance on April 11, 1986.
- ▶ Duration: 33 minutes

After serving as director of the new National Conservatory of Music in New York City for three years, Dvořák left America on April 16, 1895 and arrived home in Prague 11 days later. His heart soared. He took the summer of 1895 off—for seven months, from his arrival home in April until November, he did not put a single note on paper, the longest respite he had ever taken from creative work. He spent the warm months almost entirely at his country home at Vysoká, where the world-famous composer worked his garden and tended his pigeons. Dvořák's main sport that summer was furnished by his ex-pupil Josef Suk, a fine violinist and a promising composer, who was courting

his 17-year-old daughter, Otilie. Every time the young suitor commuted from Prague, Dvořák, a passionate lover of railroads, insisted that he observe and report the type and number of the engine pulling his train. Once, when he was more intent on Otilie than on the particular species of locomotive, Suk forgot to do so, and Dvořák growled good-naturedly to his daughter, "How can you expect me to let you marry a young man with so little sense of responsibility?" Josef proved sufficiently observant, however, and he and Otilie were married three years later.

Dvořák was back in Prague by September teaching again at the local conservatory, but he was still unwilling to resume creative work. He enjoyed spending his evenings with the musicians and stage people who gathered at a café near the National Theater, though, no matter how stimulating the company, he always left punctually at nine o'clock so as not to delay his accustomed early bedtime. He also regularly attended the fashionable

Friday soirées given by Josef Hlávka, president of the Czech Academy of Arts and Sciences, where he met a number of the country's important political and cultural figures and frequently heard his music performed. By November, Dvořák was finally primed to return to composition, and his first project was the String Quartet in G major (Op. 106), which he finished in less than a month. Just three days after completing that work on December 9, 1895, he took up the sketches for the A-flat Quartet he had begun in New York nine months earlier, and produced his 14th and last work in the form (Op. 105) just in time for Christmas. The happiness he expressed in a letter to Alois Göbl immediately after finishing the quartet is reflected by many pages of the music: "How different it was in America, when we were so far away and separated from our children and friends. But God has granted us this happy moment, and so we all feel inexpressibly happy." The quartet was first played by an ensemble of students from the Prague Conservatory on April 16, 1896, the anniversary of his departure from New York.

The A-flat Quartet was Dvořák's last piece of absolute music; the nine remaining years of his life were devoted to composing tone poems and the operas *The Devil and Kate*, *Rusalka*, and *Armida*. The quartet is marked throughout by his superb mastery of

the craft of instrumental composition and by the distinctive melodic leadings and rhythmic patterns derived from the music of his native Bohemia. The first movement opens with a surprisingly morose introduction in which an embryonic version of the main theme, whose most distinctive feature is a prominent turn figure, is shared by all the instruments. The principal section of the movement is begun with the vivified tempo, the modulation to a brighter tonality (representing happiness at his return home?), and the announcement of the main theme by the first violin. The formal second subject is a bounding hunting-horn motive in triplet rhythms. The center of the movement is occupied with a vigorous discussion of the motives by all the participants. The recapitulation provides balance and closure. The second movement, one of Dvořák's finest scherzos, was inspired by the Czech *furiant*. The *Lento*, lyrical and autumnal, follows a three-part form (A-B-A) whose center section is distinguished by pulsing accompaniment figures in triplet rhythms. The finale is a remarkable demonstration of Dvořák's ability to make a satisfying artistic creation out of such seemingly unpromising material as the crabbed theme proposed by the cello at the beginning. The music accumulates a fine energy as it proceeds, and is brought to an end by a burst of youthful spirits. ♦

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



SHANGHAI QUARTET: (L-R) Honggang Li, Nicholas Tzavaras, Weigang Li, and Yi-Wen Jiang

► Renowned for its passionate musicality, impressive technique, and multicultural innovations, the Shanghai Quartet has become one of the world's foremost chamber ensembles. Its elegant style melds the delicacy of Eastern music with the emotional breadth of Western repertoire, traversing musical genres from traditional Chinese folk music to masterpieces of Western music and cutting-edge contemporary works.

Formed in 1983, the quartet has worked with the world's most distinguished artists and regularly tours the major music centers of Europe, North America, and Asia. Recent festival performances include the International Music Festivals of Seoul and Beijing, the Festival Pablo Casals in France, Beethoven Festival in Poland, and the Yerevan Festival in Armenia, as well as concerts in all regions of North America. The quartet has appeared at Carnegie Hall in chamber performances and with orchestra. Among innumerable collaborations, the quartet members have performed with the Tokyo, Juilliard, and Guarneri quartets, cellists Yo-Yo Ma and Lynn Harrell, pianists Menahem Pressler, Yuja Wang, Peter Serkin, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and pipa virtuosa Wu Man. They have been regular performers at North America's leading chamber music festivals, including the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Chamberfest Ottawa, and Maverick Concerts.

The quartet has a history of championing new music. Its 30th anniversary season brought new works from David Del Tredici, Carl Vine, Jeajoon Ryu, Lei Liang, and

Robert Aldridge. Its 25th anniversary season featured Penderecki's String Quartet No. 3: Leaves of an unwritten diary, Chen Yi's *From the Path of Beauty*, commissioned with Chanticleer, and works by Vivian Fung and jazz pianist Dick Hyman. The Penderecki premiered at the composer's 75th birthday concert in Poland, followed by US premieres at Montclair State University and the Modlin Center and was featured again at the composer's 80th birthday celebration in 2013. Chen Yi's *From the Path of Beauty*, premiered in San Francisco, with performances at Tanglewood and Ravinia, Beijing and Shanghai. Other recent premieres include works by Bright Sheng, Zhou Long, Dan Welcher, Du Yun, and in 2016, Zhao Lin's *Red Lantern* for pipa, based on the music of his father, Zhao Ji-Ping. The tradition continues with a commission from William Bolcom to be premiered in spring 2017.

The Shanghai Quartet has an extensive discography of more than 30 recordings. Delos released the quartet's most popular disc, *Chinasong*: a collection of Chinese folk songs arranged by Yi-Wen Jiang. The complete Beethoven String Quartets can be heard on Camerata's set, released in 2009.

Media projects range from Bartók's String Quartet No. 4 in Woody Allen's film *Melinda and Melinda* to PBS television's *Great Performances*. Weigang Li appeared in the documentary *From Mao to Mozart: Isaac Stern in China*, and the family of Nicholas Tzavaras was the subject of the film *Music of the Heart*. The quartet is the subject of a documentary film, *Behind the Strings*, currently in production.

The Shanghai Quartet is quartet-in-residence at Montclair State University, ensemble-in-residence with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, and visiting guest professors of the Shanghai Conservatory and the Central Conservatory in Beijing.

UPCOMING CONCERTS AT CMS

MENDELSSOHN ON FIRE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017, 7:30 PM ▶ ALICE TULLY HALL

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2017, 5:00 PM ▶ ALICE TULLY HALL

CMS's Winter Festival begins with Mendelssohn's dazzling First Piano Trio, Mozart's meditative Adagio, K. 540, and turbulent string quartets of both Schubert and Mendelssohn.

JOYOUS MENDELSSOHN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2017, 7:30 PM ▶ ALICE TULLY HALL

In this program of glowingly optimistic music, we find Beethoven at his wittiest in the Variations for Piano Trio, Op. 44, Chopin in a pleasant mood in the Ballade in A flat major, Op. 47, and Mendelssohn contributing three of his sunniest creations, including the Second String Quintet.

If the Chamber Music Society has played a part in
your past...play a part in its future.



Please remember CMS in your Will.



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who have included CMS in their legacy gift planning:

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your Will and other deferred gifts, please call Sharon Griffin,
Director of Development, at 212-875-5782.

ABOUT THE CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) is known for the extraordinary quality of its performances, its inspired programming, and for setting the benchmark for chamber music worldwide: no other chamber music organization does more to promote, to educate, and to foster a love of and appreciation for the art form. Whether at its home in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center, on leading stages throughout North America, or at prestigious venues in Europe and Asia, CMS brings together the very best international artists from an ever-expanding roster of more than 150 artists per season, to provide audiences with the kind of exhilarating concert experiences that have led to critics calling CMS “an exploding star in the musical firmament” (*The Wall Street Journal*). Many of these extraordinary performances are livestreamed, broadcast on radio and television, or made available on CD and DVD, reaching thousands of listeners around the globe each season.

Education remains at the heart of CMS’ mission. Demonstrating the belief that the future of chamber music lies in engaging and expanding the audience, CMS has created multi-faceted education and audience development programs to bring chamber music to people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages, and levels of musical knowledge. CMS also believes in fostering and supporting the careers of young artists through the CMS Two program, which provides ongoing performance opportunities to a select number of highly gifted young instrumentalists and ensembles. As this venerable institution approaches its 50th anniversary season in 2020, its commitment to artistic excellence and to serving the art of chamber music, in everything that it does, is stronger than ever.

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David Finckel and Wu Han, Artistic Directors ♦ Suzanne Davidson, Executive Director

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