



**CLEVELAND QUARTET AWARD WINNER:
DOVER QUARTET**

Thursday, February 23, 2017, at 7:30pm
Foellinger Great Hall

PROGRAM

CLEVELAND QUARTET AWARD WINNER: DOVER QUARTET

Joel Link, violin

Bryan Lee, violin

Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola

Camden Shaw, cello

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

String Quartet No. 23 in F Major, K. 590 (1790)

Allegro Moderato

Andante Allegretto

Menuetto Allegretto

Allegro

Caroline Shaw
(b. 1982)

Plan & Elevation: The Grounds of Dumbarton Oaks (2015)

The Ellipse

I. The Cutting Garden

II. The Herbaceous Border

III. The Orangery

IV. The Beech Tree

20-minute intermission

Bedřich Smetana
(1824-1884)

String Quartet No. 1 in E Minor, "From My Life" (1876)

Allegro vivo appassionato

Allegro moderato à la Polka

Largo sostenuto

Vivace

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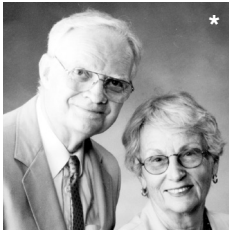
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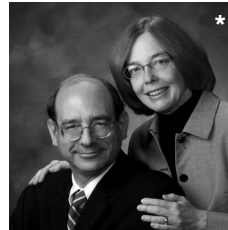
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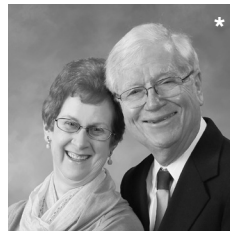
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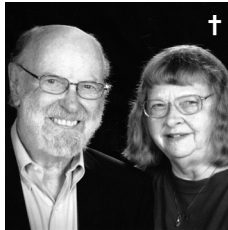
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PROGRAM NOTES

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria

Died December 5, 1791, in Vienna, Austria

String Quartet No. 23 in F Major, K. 590

In the spring of 1789 Mozart traveled to Berlin in hopes of obtaining a commission from the music-loving King of Prussia, an accomplished amateur cellist. Mozart was desperately in need of funds. He wrote to his wife Constanze that he was bringing home a gift of money and a commission for six string quartets, but this is unlikely; there is no record of a gift or commission in Prussian court archives. Mozart continued to send pitiful letters to friends pleading for more loans. In the 18 months following his journey to Berlin, the pace of Mozart's composing faltered. Biographer Maynard Solomon sees this as a period of "partial creative paralysis" and speculates that he was deeply depressed by his financial circumstances and concerns for his wife's bouts of ill health. Only three of the six quartets were completed, and he sold them to a publisher. He later complained that he had to "give away my quartets for a mockery of a fee, only to lay my hands on some money..."

The *Quartet K. 590* was composed in 1790, the last of the three "Prussian" quartets and the last quartet Mozart composed. The first movement is written in the early Classical *concertante* style still popular in Berlin. Unlike his *Haydn* quartets that give each voice an equal role in the musical discourse, the *concertante* style gives solo lines to one voice at a time, while the other voices provide accompaniment. The movement opens with a simple rising arpeggio and descending scale played by all voices together and proceeds as a dialog between the first violin and the cello, with the viola doing a solo turn late in the movement.

Mozart creates a charming if somewhat austere texture from an interrelated pattern of arpeggios and scales. The movement ends with a witty surprise as the music quietly vanishes.

The second movement is built on the gently rhythmic, sighing gesture played in its first two measures. This sequence of notes runs through the entire movement and is embellished by ascending and descending solo lines that pass around the instruments. As in the first movement, the musical texture is not elaborate, but here the mood is wistful and tinged with sadness.

Like the first two movements, the Menuetto is composed with limited means and has an open texture, but it has an unsettled quality. The boundary between melody and accompaniment is indistinct, and long, oscillating lines shift harmonically, occasionally to the point of dissonance. The middle Trio section, by contrast, is sunnier.

The swift *moto perpetuo* finale begins in *concertante* style, with echoing solo lines in the first violin and viola. This is quickly abandoned, however, and the music becomes more complex. Dramatic pauses, intricate part-writing, and *fugato* passages provide a rich texture as musical lines fly between the players. In the middle of the movement, the buoyant mood is disturbed when twisting solo lines descend into jarring dissonance against chords in the other voices. It is hard not to hear Mozart's distressed state of mind in this strange outburst, but the movement recovers itself and dances lightly to a happy finish.

Program note by Robert Strong © 2015

CAROLINE SHAW

Born 1982 in Greenville, North Carolina
Plan & Elevation: The Grounds of Dumbarton Oaks

Commissioned by Dumbarton Oaks, and premiered by the Dover Quartet in the music room of Dumbarton Oaks on November 1, 2015.

I have always loved drawing the architecture around me when traveling, and some of my favorite lessons in musical composition have occurred by chance in my drawing practice over the years. While writing a string quartet to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Dumbarton Oaks, I returned to these essential ideas of space and proportion—to the challenges of trying to represent them on paper. The title, *Plan & Elevation*, refers to two standard ways of representing architecture—essentially an orthographic, or “bird’s eye,” perspective (plan), and a side view which features more ornamental detail (elevation). This binary is also a gentle metaphor for one’s path in any endeavor—often the actual journey and results are quite different (and perhaps more elevated) than the original plan.

I was fortunate to have been the inaugural music fellow at Dumbarton Oaks in 2014-15.

Plan & Elevation examines different parts of the estate’s beautiful grounds and my personal experience in those particular spaces. Each movement is based on a simple ground bass line which supports a different musical concept or character. The Ellipse considers the notion of infinite repetition (I won’t deny a tiny Kierkegaard influence here). One can walk around and around the stone path, beneath the trimmed hornbeams, as I often did as a way to clear my mind while writing.

The second movement, *The Cutting Garden*, is a fun fragmentation of various string quartets (primarily Ravel, Mozart’s *K. 387*, and my own *Entr’acte, Valencia, and Punctum*), referencing the variety of flowers grown there before they meet their inevitable end as cuttings for display.

The *Herbaceous Border* is spare and strict at first, like the cold geometry of French formal gardens with their clear orthogonals (when viewed from the highest point), before building to the opposite of order: chaos.

The fourth movement, *The Orangery*, evokes the slim, fractured shadows in that room as the light tries to peek through the leaves of the aging fig vine.

We end with my favorite spot in the garden, *The Beech Tree*. It is strong, simple, ancient, elegant, and quiet; it needs no introduction.

Program note by Caroline Shaw © 2016

BEDŘICH SMETANA

Born March 2, 1824, in Litomyšl, Czech Republic
Died May 12, 1884, in Prague, Czech Republic
String Quartet No. 1 in E Minor, “From My Life”

By his 19th birthday Bedřich Smetana had determined to devote himself to music despite the wishes of his father. Smetana’s early compositions captured the spirit of his native Bohemia’s folk songs and dances, and during the Revolution of 1848 he composed patriotic marches and a Czech-language *Song of Freedom* as a member of Concordia, a group of politically active artists. After the uprising was crushed and Austria asserted its control over Prague’s cultural life, Smetana’s career languished. In 1856, he accepted a teaching position in Goteborg, Sweden, writing to his parents, “Prague did not wish to acknowledge me, so I left it.” Though

less cosmopolitan than Prague, Smetana found Goteborg much more rewarding financially. By 1862, however, the political climate in Bohemia had greatly improved, and Goteborg's pettiness had become unbearable. Receiving news of a plan to form the first permanent Czech professional theater in Prague, Smetana returned to his homeland.

He was quickly rewarded with an appointment as the first music chairman of a new Artistic Society formed to promote Czech culture. In 1866 he won the coveted post of principal conductor of the new Czech Provincial Theater, eventually becoming artistic director as well. During this period he wrote *The Bartered Bride* and other operas in the Czech language. As composer, conductor, and teacher, Smetana became the leading musical figure in Prague.

In 1874, at age fifty, tragedy struck—Smetana became totally deaf. What started in the early summer as extraneous noises increased by September to a permanent buzzing that blocked out other sounds. Treatment did not help, and he was forced to give up his position at the Provincial Theater. Smetana gradually recovered his spirits, and in the following years he took advantage of his increased time to compose his great symphonic cycle, *Ma vlast* (My Fatherland), *Song of the Sea* for men's chorus, and his two string quartets.

Written in 1876, Smetana's first string quartet was conceived as a representation in sound of his life to that point. He wrote, "I wanted to depict in music the course of my life...written for four instruments which, as in a small circle of friends, talk among themselves about what has oppressed me so significantly." The first movement opens with "a warning of my future misery," represented by the harsh downward motif in the viola, but continues more brightly to depict "love of art

in my youth, my romantic mood, the unspoken longing for something which I could not name or imagine clearly." The second movement, "a quasi-polka, brings to my mind the happy times of youth, when I composed dances for the young world...and the aristocratic circles in which I lived." The third movement "recalls the happiness of my first love for the girl who later became my faithful wife."

The fourth movement celebrates Smetana's pride in having established a Czech national tradition in music and joy at the result "until it was checked by the catastrophe..." Late in the movement the music stops its vigorous folk dance, and over a low tremolo the first violin plays a high, sustained note, "the fateful ringing in my ears of the high-pitched tones." The movement goes on to summarize the entire work by quoting earlier themes, including the viola's opening "warning."

The quartet was first performed privately in Prague with the young Antonín Dvorák playing the viola.

Program Note by Robert Strong © 2015

PROFILES

The **DOVER QUARTET** catapulted to international stardom following a stunning sweep of the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, becoming one of the most in-demand ensembles in the world. *The New Yorker* recently dubbed them “the young American string quartet of the moment,” and *The Strad* raved that the quartet is “already pulling away from their peers with their exceptional interpretive maturity, tonal refinement, and taut ensemble.” From 2013 to 2014, the quartet was the first ever Quartet-in-Residence for the venerated Curtis Institute of Music, and is now faculty Quartet-in-Residence at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music.

In addition to winning the Grand Prize and all three Special Prizes at the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, the Dover Quartet has continued to receive accolades: in 2015 it was announced that the group had been awarded the highly prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award, and shortly thereafter, Lincoln Center awarded the quartet the annual Hunt Family Award, as part of the organization’s Emerging Artist Awards. In its early years, the quartet also won the grand prize at the Fischoff Competition, and special prizes at the Wigmore Hall International String Quartet Competition.

During the 2015-2016 season, the Dover Quartet performed more than 120 concerts throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East. Highlights included the group’s debut at Carnegie Hall, and several residencies including those at Dumbarton Oaks, Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, and People’s Symphony Concerts in New York. 2016 also included the quartet’s first tour of Israel, and

the recording of three albums, to be released beginning in the fall of 2017. The group regularly appears with acclaimed collaborators, and this season these will include such artists as Anthony McGill, David Shifrin, Anne-Marie McDermott, Avi Avital, and Edgar Meyer. The collaborations with Avi and Edgar will include extensive tours together next season.

The Dover Quartet participates regularly in some of the continent’s most reputable summer festivals, including Chamber Music Northwest, Artosphere, Bravo Vail, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and are active proponents of new music: this season included a premier of Pulitzer-Prize-winning Caroline Shaw’s new quartet at Dumbarton Oaks, and next season will include the premieres of multiple commissions, including works from Richard Danielpour and Michael Djupstrom.

The Dover Quartet was formed in 2008 at the Curtis Institute of Music, and continued their studies as Graduate Quartet-in-Residence at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music from 2011 to 2013. Because of the exceptional faculty at both of these institutions, the group draws from the musical lineage of the Cleveland, Vermeer, Concord, and Guarneri Quartets. The quartet has been mentored extensively by Shmuel Ashkenasi, James Dunham, Norman Fischer, Kenneth Goldsmith, Joseph Silverstein, Arnold Steinhardt, Michael Tree, and Peter Wiley, and is dedicated to sharing their music with underserved communities and is an active member of Music for Food, an initiative to help musicians fight hunger in their home communities.

JOEL LINK (violin) has met much success both as a soloist and chamber musician from a very early age. As a top prize winner of numerous competitions including the Johansen International Competition in Washington D.C. and the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition in England, Link's playing has received accolades for being both highly refined and captivatingly passionate. The *Atlanta Journal Constitution* wrote of a concert, "After Joel played, the audience rose, one at a time, seemingly pulled out of their seats by the richness of his sound and the authority of his musical ideas." As a result of his prize at the Menuhin Competition, Link was featured in *The Strad* magazine and has also appeared on numerous radio shows, including NPR's *From the Top*. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, he studied with renowned violinists Joseph Silverstein and Pamela Frank, and served as the Curtis Symphony Orchestra's concertmaster for the 2009-2010 season. Link's love of chamber music has taken him to highly regarded music festivals across the globe, including the Ravinia and Marlboro music festivals, as well as Music from Angel Fire. As a member of the Dover String Quartet (formerly the Old City String Quartet), Link has received the Grand Prize as well as the Gold Medal from the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, and concertizes with the ensemble to great critical acclaim.

BRYAN LEE (violin) has performed as a soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Delaware, Lansdowne, and Temple University Symphony Orchestras, among others. Lee was awarded the Bronze Medal at the 2005 Stulberg International String Competition and won second prize at the 2004 Kingsville International Young Performers Competition. He was featured on America's NPR station on the show *From the Top*, and has attended Ravinia's Steans Institute for Young Artists, La Jolla Summerfest, Music from

Angel Fire, Encore School for Strings, Sarasota Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, and the Perlman Music Program.

Serving as Associate Concertmaster of both Symphony in C and the Curtis Symphony Orchestra, and as a substitute for the Philadelphia Orchestra, Lee has performed under the batons of such renowned conductors as Michael Tilson Thomas, Rossen Milanov, Otto-Werner Mueller, Alan Gilbert, Christoph Eschenbach, and Sir Simon Rattle, and has collaborated in chamber music with Peter Wiley, Ida Kavafian, Roberto Diaz, Anne-Marie McDermott, Carter Brey, and the Tokyo String Quartet. Bryan is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with Pamela Frank and Victor Danchenko. His previous studies were with Choong-Jin Chang and Soovin Kim.

MILENA PAJARO-VAN DE STADT (viola) has already established herself as one of the most sought-after violists of her generation, praised by *The Strad* magazine as having "lyricism that stood out...a silky tone and beautiful, supple lines." In addition to appearances as soloist with the Tokyo Philharmonic, the Jacksonville Symphony, and the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra, she has performed in recitals and chamber music concerts throughout the United States, Latin America, and Europe, including an acclaimed 2011 debut recital at London's Wigmore Hall, which was described in *The Strad* as being "fleet and energetic...powerful and focused."

Pajaro-van de Stadt is the founding violist of the Dover Quartet, First Prize winner and sweeper of every special award at the Banff International String Quartet Competition 2013, and winner of the Gold Medal and Grand Prize in the 2010 Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition. Her numerous awards also include First Prize of the Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition

and top prizes at the Tokyo International Viola Competition and the Sphinx Competition. Pajaro-van de Stadt's summer festival appearances include Marlboro, Bowdoin, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Sarasota, Strings, Bravo! Vail Valley, and La Jolla Summerfest, as well as Italy's Emilia Romagna Festival. Among the conductors with whom she has worked are Seiji Ozawa, Christoph Eschenbach, Alan Gilbert, Charles Dutoit, and Otto-Werner Mueller.

A violin student of Sergiu Schwartz and Melissa Pierson-Barrett for several years, she began studying viola with Michael Klotz at the Bowdoin International Music Festival in 2005. Pajaro-van de Stadt graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Roberto Diaz, Michael Tree, Misha Amory, and Joseph de Pasquale. She then received her master's degree in string quartet with the Dover Quartet at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music as a student of James Dunham. Pajaro-van de Stadt performed on a 2004 copy of the Primrose Amati, originally made for Roberto Díaz by Gabrielle Kundert.

CAMDEN SHAW (cello) has captivated audiences across the United States and Europe as an artist of unique and sincere vision. His playing has been described as "wonderfully rich" (*Kansas City Star*) as well as "dynamic and brave" (*Stereo Times*), and possesses a fluidity and flair that is truly unique. As cellist of the prizewinning Dover Quartet, he has appeared all over the world to great acclaim, being called a "phenomenal instrumentalist who [seems] to have no technical difficulties" (*Rheinpfalz Ludwigshafen*).

Shaw has also collaborated in chamber music with such renowned artists as Daniel Hope, Leon Fleischer, and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and maintains an active career as a soloist: highlights from recent years include a performance of

the Beethoven Triple concerto with the highly acclaimed Artosphere Festival Orchestra, where Shaw also holds the principal chair, and the release of his solo album by the audiophile label Unipheye Music. The album met with much critical praise, and a review in *The Strad* magazine said of Shaw's Kodály *Sonata*: "There is a raw earthiness to Shaw's playing, an interplay of passion and plaintive lyricism, and a courageous contempt for [its] horrific demands that is utterly gripping."

Shaw graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music in 2010, where he studied with Peter Wiley. Other major teachers include Norman Fischer, David Finckel, and Steven Isserlis. Shaw performs on an instrument made in 2010 by Sam Zygmuntowicz of Brooklyn, New York.

CLEVELAND QUARTET AWARD

The creation of a lasting legacy for young musicians was envisioned by the Cleveland Quartet in 1995 as a culmination of its remarkable 26-year history. The quartet joined forces in 1995 with Chamber Music America (CMA) and eight prominent chamber music presenters to found the Cleveland Quartet Award and to raise funds for the establishment of the Cleveland Quartet Endowment Fund. The biennial award is not a competition. Nominations are submitted confidentially to CMA by a national roster of chamber musicians, presenters, and educators, and the award honors and promotes a rising young string quartet whose artistry demonstrates that it is in the process of establishing a major career. The winning string quartet's presentations and performances are funded by income from the Cleveland Quartet Award Endowment Fund, which is managed by CMA. The Dover Quartet is the tenth ensemble to receive this prestigious award. Previous winners include the Brentano (1997), Borromeo (1999), Miami (2001), Pacifica (2003), Miro (2005), Jupiter (2007), Parker (2009), Jasper (2012), and Ariel (2014) quartets.

Cleveland Quartet Award winners perform on the following presenters' series: Buffalo Chamber Music Society (Buffalo, New York), Carnegie Hall (New York, New York), Chamber Music Society of Detroit (Detroit, Michigan), Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (Washington, DC), Friends of Chamber Music (Kansas City, Missouri), Market Square Concerts (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), Krannert Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Urbana, Illinois), and University of Texas at Austin (Austin, Texas). Nominations for the Cleveland

Quartet Award are submitted confidentially to Chamber Music America by a national roster of chamber musicians, presenters, and educators. The winning string quartet's presentations and performances are funded by income from the Cleveland Quartet Award Endowment Fund.

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