



**YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS WINNER:  
ZORÁ STRING QUARTET**

Sunday, February 19, 2017, at 3pm  
Foellinger Great Hall

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# PROGRAM

## YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS WINNER:

### ZORÁ STRING QUARTET

Dechopol Kowintaweewat, violin

Seula Lee, violin

Pablo Muñoz Salido, viola

Zizai Ning, cello

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(1756-1791)

*String Quartet No. 15 in D Minor, K 421 (1783)*

Allegro

Andante

Minuetto: Allegretto

Allegretto ma non troppo

Anton Webern  
(1883-1945)

*Langsamer Satz (1905)*

*20-minute intermission*

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich  
(1906-1975)

*Quartet No. 9 in E-flat Major, Op. 117 (1964)*

Adagio

Allegretto

Adagio

Allegro

Moderato con moto

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*Zorá String Quartet appears by arrangement with:*

*Young Concert Artists, Inc.*

*250 West 57 Street, Suite 1222*

*New York, New York 10107*

*www.yca.org*

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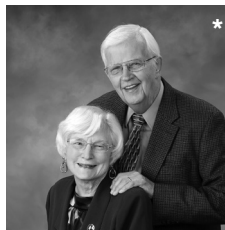
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# PROGRAM NOTES

## WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, in Salzburg, Austria  
Died December 5, 1791, in Vienna, Austria  
*String Quartet No. 15 in D Minor, K 421*

Mozart's bow to Haydn in the six quartets he dedicated to him reveals much about the genius of both Haydn and Mozart as well as the genius of the string quartet form itself. Essential to Mozart's admiration of Haydn's quartets was the earlier master's integration of musical ideas that extended far beyond the simple sonata form and his equal treatment of all four instruments. Mozart, in turn, took these principles and applied to them his own singular genius. Thus we have in Mozart the building of melodies from kernel phrases followed by the expansion and reintegration of them in ways far more complex than any composer had done before. This concept would lead to Beethoven's highly developed use of the motto in his sacred canon of string quartets and to what Arnold Schoenberg would call the "developing variation" in Brahms. Nor let us omit the ultimate effects on Bartók and Shostakovich. In other words, what Mozart recognized in Haydn and recreated in his own way was essential to the development of western music, and specifically the string quartet, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present and presumably beyond. That Mozart, by his own admission, struggled with the string quartet form is not evident in his six quartets dedicated to Haydn and notably not so in the *D Minor Quartet*.

History tells us that Mozart's wife Constanze insisted that the *D Minor Quartet* was inspired by her confinement with the birth of their child Raimund Leopold, who would die two months later. Apparently, according to Wolfgang

Hildesheimer, she even sang the labor-pain passages to Vincent and Mary Novello as a resource for Vincent's biography of Mozart. While Hildsheimer quotes Ludwig Finscher as saying, "The idea of degrading Mozart's music into a clinical graph is unusually stupid, even for the school of vulgar romantic-heroic historical writing," he seems willing to admit the accuracy of Constanze's claims.

Historical implications aside, the *D Minor Quartet* is fraught with a complex melancholy sometimes associated with Mozart's compositions in G minor, his so-called "key of fate." We are thrust into this melancholy with the downward octave leap that becomes the motto of the first movement. The ominous gives way to virtuosic display in the highly developed part right before the opening motto returns with its dark mood. A four-note rising figure in the second movement leads to emotionally charged harmonic shifts from major to minor that retain the darkness of the work. There is little relief even in the following Menuetto with its unusually strong opening in D minor and its nervous dotted rhythms. The darker voice of the viola reigns in the variations of the *Allegretto ma non troppo*. While the work ends in a major key, the melancholy and even pathos are not dispelled in this great and moving work.

## ANTON WEBERN

Born December 3, 1883, in Vienna, Austria  
Died September 15, 1945, in Mittersill, Austria  
*Langsamer Satz*

While Webern's output is slim—only 31 brief pieces were assigned opus numbers—his impact on the music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is vast. Without Webern, the twelve-tone system of music may

have earned less repute because Schoenberg, though initiating it, never taught it as such. It was Webern who did so with great clarity in his lectures. The so-called “post-Webern” period after World War II does not signify his decline but rather the beginning of the full fruition of his influence as evidenced by such composers as Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Milton Babbitt, and John Cage.

To father serialism may seem a questionable paternity to some, yet it was an evolution so inevitable in its progression that to think of 20<sup>th</sup> century music without it is impossible. Schoenberg pushed us from the excesses of Late Romanticism, but Webern hurled us, kicking and screaming at times, into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. He viewed his own musical style and its powerful influence, however, as merely the fulfillment of fate. And he was firmly convinced that serialism was a necessary advancement in music that could not be avoided.

Even those who smile upon Webern’s music may question his politics. Although the Nazis banned his music as “cultural Bolshevism,” he displayed a certain tolerance of Nazism in the texts of his cantatas. Guilt by association, for which he paid an awful price, came through the marriage of both his daughters to Nazi party members. He stayed in Vienna after Schoenberg had fled to America but moved to his daughter’s mountain village of Mittersill when the bombing became heavy in the last months of the war. Mistaken for his son-in-law, he was shot on September 15, 1945 by American soldiers as he stepped outside his door to light a cigar.

The *Langsamer Satz* of 1905 is to Webern what *Verklärte Nacht* is to Schoenberg. Early works written in the language of Brahms and Mahler, they push that language to its limits. Yet Webern’s one movement piece already hints of things to

come in its chromaticism and its conciseness. The opening three-note motto is reminiscent of Beethoven’s *Op. 135 Quartet* and its famous “It must be” fragment, an underscoring of Webern’s philosophy about the inevitability of his music. The work was inspired by a walk in the Austrian Alps with Webern’s cousin Wilhemine Mörtel, whom he would marry in 1911. As Brahms yearned for Clara, so does Webern yearn for Wilhemine in the great Romantic spirit touched here with the radical.

The manuscript was one of many found in Webern’s home after his death.

### **DMITRI DMITRIYEVICH SHOSTAKOVICH**

Born September 25, 1906, in Saint Petersburg, Russia

Died August 9, 1975, in Moscow, Russia

*Quartet No. 9 in E-flat Major, Op. 117*

With more and more certainty, the 15 string quartets of Dmitri Shostakovich are seen as monuments of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature and are ranked next to the six quartets of Béla Bartók. The quartets, however, differ so greatly from Shostakovich’s symphonic output that one sometimes comes to them in a secondary fashion. Such adjectives as “mysterious,” “fragmented,” “death-haunted,” and “confessional” have been applied to them, sometimes with a hint of the pejorative. Much of this is explained by Shostakovich’s working and surviving in a totalitarian state where it was necessary to cloud meaning. Behind that complex game, one finds, particularly in the string quartets, a tragic voice in mourning for the victims of tyranny. One also finds a composer determined to write his music under any circumstances. Shostakovich’s string quartets punctuate his tumultuous relationship with the Soviet regime. In 1936, Stalin had stormed out in protest from a performance of

*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, and this was followed by the famous review in which the opera was described as “muddle instead of music.” *Pravda* wrote ominously that *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* “is a leftist bedlam instead of human music” and that “this game may end badly.” In 1948 the situation came to a head with Shostakovich and Prokofiev being accused of “formalist perversions and anti-democratic tendencies in music, alien to the Soviet people and its artistic tastes.” Shostakovich was publicly apologetic but from that point on turned inward to chamber music and to the completion of his 15 quartets. Prior to the 1948 condemnation, however, he had already begun that monumental task with his first three string quartets of 1938, 1944, and 1946. The remaining 12 quartets would come between 1949 and 1974, the year before his death.

There is always danger of artistic compromise when politics toys with art. Particularly in his chamber music, Shostakovich solved the problem by retreating to the inner sanctum of his creative genius, which was more abstract and therefore more impervious to political controversy. As the Nazis did not comprehend the irony of the performance of Messiaen’s *Quartet for the End of Time* before five thousand prisoners in 1941, so did the Stalinists miss the impact of Shostakovich’s 15 string quartets.

Relatively speaking, a certain serenity pervades the *String Quartet No. 9*. Strict Classical form (with the exception of the second Adagio) also contributes to its serenity. Yet the work defies exact categorization since it seems to elude the Classical qualities of Shostakovich’s middle period and the intensely personal nature of his late works. If categorization is necessary, one might say it contains something of both. Its serenity does not exclude a certain melancholy, particularly evident in the third movement Allegretto and in the two poignant Adagio movements. The *pizzicatos* in these movements are a dose of Shostakovich’s wry humor with his typical sense of the grotesque. The finale, Allegro, is a glowing example of Shostakovich’s contrapuntal skills. The work is played without pause.

Written in 1964 in Armenia, the *Ninth Quartet* is dedicated to Shostakovich’s wife Irina, whom he married in 1962. It was premiered on November 20, 1964, in Moscow by the Beethoven Quartet.

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# PROFILES

The **ZORÁ STRING QUARTET** (violinists Dechopol Kowintaweewat and Seula Lee, violist Pablo Muñoz Salido, and cellist Zizai Ning) won the Grand Prize and Gold Medal of the 2015 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition; the 2015 Coleman National Chamber Music Competition in California; and the 2015 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, where they were also awarded the Sander Buchman Award which provides major support for their New York debut; and five concert prizes. As a result of winning the Fischhoff Competition, they toured the Midwest and appeared at the 2016 Emilia Romagna Festival in Italy.

During the 2016-2017 season, the Zorá gives its New York and Washington, DC, recital debuts in the Young Concert Artists Series and performs throughout the United States at Chamber Music Wilmington, the Lied Center of Kansas, the Paramount Theatre, Rockefeller University, Hayden's Ferry Chamber Music Series, University of Florida Performing Arts, the Schneider Concert Series at the New School in New York, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Chamber Music International, and with Curtis on Tour.

The quartet was selected to participate in the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Encounters program in June 2016, which concluded with a performance at Alice Tully Hall. In the summer of 2016, the Zorá also appeared at Chamber Music Northwest and the Oregon Music Festival, and in 2015, they participated in Chamber Music Residencies at the Banff Centre in Canada and Norfolk Chamber Music Festival in Connecticut. The ensemble also participated at the Center for Advanced Quartet

Studies of the Aspen Music Festival in 2014, working intensively with Earl Carlyss, the Takács Quartet, the Pacifica Quartet, and the American String Quartet.

The quartet collaborated with Pulitzer-Prize-winning American composer Caroline Shaw and the NOTUS Contemporary Ensemble in the fall of 2013. In spring 2014, the quartet was selected as the string quartet in residence to perform and study manuscripts at the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, Germany.

The Zorá String Quartet aspires to educate individual students, serve as mentors for collegiate-level string, and initiate outreach projects in Bloomington, Illinois, to introduce new audiences to chamber music. The quartet has worked with the non-profit organization Reimagining Opera for Kids and performs at the Wylie House Museum, Waldron Arts Center, and the Art Museum of IU Bloomington to bridge the gap better with the local community.

The quartet's members earned prestigious Chamber Music Performer's Diplomas from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, where they served as the Graduate Quartet in Residence under the tutelage of the Pacifica Quartet and Atar Arad. The Zorá is Quartet in Residence at the Curtis Institute of Music during the 2016-17 season.

The name "Zorá" was chosen by Bulgarian professor Kevork Mardirossian; it means "sunrise" in Bulgarian.



**YOUNG CONCERT ARTISTS** is a non-profit organization founded by Susan Wadsworth in 1961, dedicated to discovering and launching the careers of exceptional, but unknown, young musicians from all over the world.

Even for an extraordinary artist, it is not easy to have the chance to be heard. Young Concert Artists does everything to open the doors of the international concert world to its artists by providing all management services; New York, Washington, D.C., and Boston debuts; extensive performing experience; and career guidance.

Each YCA artist is chosen by winning the annual Young Concert Artists International Auditions. The auditions differ in three important ways from competitions: YCA hears instruments, voice, and chamber ensembles; there is no limit to the number of artists who can win; and the participants are competing against a standard of excellence—not each other.

Each YCA artist is presented in a debut recital in the Young Concert Artists Series in New York and in Washington, D.C., at the Kennedy Center, as well as in Boston at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Young Artist Showcase Series.

YCA artists receive all management services, which bring recitals, educational activities, and concerto appearances with orchestras throughout the United States and abroad, as well as publicity materials, promotion, career guidance, and development.

After initial residency training, YCA artists bring their extraordinary talent, virtuosity, and energy up close to young audiences through our Annaliese Soros Educational Residency Program. Each year, YCA artists give hundreds of lecture demonstrations, mini-concerts, and master classes at schools, colleges, and community centers throughout the country in connection with their concert appearances.

Since 1994, Young Concert Artists has chosen a composer every two years to be added to the management's roster as a Composer in Residence. For the composers, YCA secures commissions and provides publicity, promotion, and two YCA commissions written for new Auditions Winners to premiere in the New York and Washington, D.C. Young Concert Artists Series.

Among the renowned musicians whose careers began with Young Concert Artists are violinists Pinchas Zukerman, Ani Kavafian, Ida Kavafian, and Chee-Yun; pianists Emanuel Ax, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, Jeremy Denk, Richard Goode, Anne-Marie McDermott, Olli Mustonen, Ursula Oppens, Murray Perahia, Fazil Say, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet; flutists Paula Robison, Marya Martin, and Eugenia Zukerman; the St. Lawrence and Borromeo String Quartets; cellists Fred Sherry and Carter Brey; soprano Dawn Upshaw; and composers Kevin Puts, Andrew Norman, and Mason Bates.