



**M-PRIZE WINNER:
CALIDORE STRING QUARTET**

Sunday, March 4, 2018, at 3pm
Foellinger Great Hall

PROGRAM

M-PRIZE WINNER:

CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

Jeffrey Myers, violin

Ryan Meehan, violin

Jeremy Berry, viola

Estelle Choi, cello

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

String Quartet No. 3 in D Major, Op. 44, No. 1

Molto allegro vivace

Menuetto: Un poco Allegretto

Andante espressivo ma con moto

Presto con brio

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

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

Moderato con moto

Adagio

Allegretto

Adagio

Allegro

20-minute intermission

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

String Quartet No. 7 in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1, "Razumovsky"

Allegro

Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando

Adagio molto e mesto

Theme Russe: Allegro

Audience and rising young performers share the stage of the Foellinger Great Hall in these events, fostering a close mutual connection. The stage ticket price includes light refreshments; balcony seating, which does not include refreshments, is available at a reduced price. The 2017-18 series includes Young Concert Artists Winner: Nathan Lee, piano (November 5), Concert Artists Guild Winner: Jiji, guitar (January 28), M-Prize Winner: Calidore String Quartet (March 4), Krannert Center Debut Artist (April 22). For more information about these events, please visit KrannertCenter.com/calendar.

Calidore String Quartet appears by arrangement with:

Opus 3 Artists

470 Park Avenue South

9th Floor North

New York, NY 10016

www.opus3artists.com

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING THIS PERFORMANCE

Krannert Center honors the spirited generosity of donors who make these performances possible. This event is supported by:



**DIANA SHEETS &
STEPHEN LEVINSON**

in memory of Dr. Arthur Chitz
Thirteen Previous Sponsorships
Two Current Sponsorships



ANONYMOUS

Seven Previous Sponsorships
Three Current Sponsorships

**HELP SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF THE ARTS. BECOME A KRANNERT CENTER SPONSOR
BY CONTACTING OUR DEVELOPMENT TEAM TODAY:**

KrannertCenter.com/Give • development@krannertcenter.illinois.edu • 217.333.1629

PROGRAM NOTES

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Born February 3, 1809, in Hamburg, Germany
Died November 4, 1847, in Leipzig, Germany
String Quartet No. 3 in D Major, Op. 44, No. 1

Mendelssohn's few critics suggest that he missed the mark of greatness because of his birthright as a member of the wealthy bourgeoisie. That Mendelssohn was free of the impoverishment so often associated with musical careers and that he wore his genius lightly should not obscure his greatness. It would seem a harsh sentence for a composer whose particular talent is unmatched, so much so that Robert Schumann, in an 1840 edition of *Neue Zeitschrift*, called him the "Mozart of the 19th century." By the time he was 20, Mendelssohn would conduct the first performance of *St. Matthew's Passion* since Bach's death in 1750 as well as compose his famous Octet, the first two of his six great string quartets, the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the first of the two string quintets that would punctuate the beginning and end of his career.

Anti-Semitic trends already evident in the mid-19th century, including Wagner's notorious essay, *Judaism in Music*, limited the spread of Mendelssohn's music, and the Nazi era completely suppressed it. His memorial in Leipzig was destroyed in 1936 by the Fascists. Fortunately today his music has been restored to its rightfully high place in history. In his impressive book, *The Romantic Generation*, Charles Rosen calls Mendelssohn "the greatest child prodigy the history of Western music has ever known."

Furthermore, Rosen adds that Mendelssohn's models were "the most eccentric and imaginative works of the final years of Beethoven's life, the last sonatas and quartets."

The three quartets of Mendelssohn's Op. 44 are considered his masterpieces in the form, and among them, the D Major is said to have been his favorite. Written between 1837 and 1838, it was third in composition despite its numbering. The graciousness that marks the work suggests the happy period of Mendelssohn's life from which it sprang. His son was born the year before, he had achieved international recognition as a composer, and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, which he had conducted since 1835, was flourishing.

More important than any of these circumstances, however, is the nature of Mendelssohn himself. It is well to remember that he was not only the composer whom Schumann compared to Mozart but also the one Liszt referred to as "Bach reborn." Pablo Casals described him as "a Romantic who felt at ease within the world of Classicism."

The music of Op. 44, No. 1 speaks for itself, but it might be worthwhile to point out the crackling spirit of the opening movement, the contrasting quietness of the two inner movements with the lovely song of the third movement, and the brilliant drive of the final movement written in the form of a *saltarello*, a 16th-century dance form with a dotted note skipping rhythm.

All three quartets of Op. 44 were dedicated to the Crown Prince of Sweden.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Born September 25, 1906, in

Saint Petersburg, Russia

Died August 9, 1975, in Moscow, Russia

String 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 the 20th-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. The inspiring quality of good music is sacrificed in favor of petty-bourgeois clowning. 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 5,000 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.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born December 1770, in Bonn, Germany
Died March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria
String Quartet No. 7 in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1,
"Razumovsky"

The three "Razumovsky" quartets of Op. 59, so named after their commissioner and dedicatee, Count Andrey Razumovsky, were written between July and September of 1806. They represent Beethoven's Middle Period as well as a daring exploration into an uncharted territory of emotional expression. Op. 74, "Harp," and Op. 95, "Serioso," came, respectively, in 1809 and 1810 and are fascinating transitions between the Middle and Late periods, suggesting what has been and what will come.

Conflict is inherent in the public reception of the entire Op. 59 quartets. The reactions to the three "Razumovsky" quartets stretched from animosity to bewilderment. Members of the Schuppanzigh Quartet reportedly joked about the technical difficulties of the F Major Quartet, causing Beethoven's famous retort: "Do you think I worry about your wretched fiddles when the music speaks to me?" When violinist Felix Radicati said to Beethoven, "Surely you do not consider this music." Beethoven replied, "Not for you, but for a later age."

While we might conclude that the animosity has receded, surely we cannot hear any of the Op. 59 quartets without some sense of wonderment over the differences among them. It is this total individualism that drives the opus and explains its transitional position between the elegance of the Op. 18 quartets and the elusive greatness of the late quartets.

"Let your deafness no longer be a secret—even in art," Beethoven scrawled on a page of sketches for the Op. 59 quartets. So it is he unleashed his truthfulness upon us who, even in this century, remain startled.

Six years separate the three "Razumovsky" Quartets of Op. 59 from the earlier set of Op. 18. In those six years Beethoven had come to terms with his growing deafness as suggested by the question he included in the sketchbook: "Can anything stop you from expressing your soul in music?" The answer to that question seems obvious in this first Razumovsky Quartet, which marks the start of his so-called Middle Period but in many ways seems more like a culmination than a beginning.

Indeed, the first movement is as sure-footed in its lyricism as in the sharp chords that interrupt the lovely song treated by each instrument. The particularly interesting cello parts may be a bow to Beethoven's patron, Count Razumovsky, an accomplished amateur cellist. A noble and highly developed exposition is followed by a huge development section and a recapitulation that is a still further development of the opening theme. The whole movement suggests a culmination of classical form.

The repeated notes that open the second movement were probably a source of bewilderment for the musicians of Beethoven's time, and in truth are no less imposing today. We are teased by the staccato playing of this aptly indicated *Allegretto vivace e sempre* movement with its merry eight-note theme twisted and turned about in every way imaginable. Delicacy, however, turns to power. Lyricism sings over

a staccato accompaniment, and we have a suggestion of the contrasts and conflicts that will follow in Op. 59, No. 2. The ending of this movement affirms Beethoven's new confidence and the advancing power of his genius.

On the score of the third movement, Beethoven wrote, "A weeping willow or acacia tree upon my brother's grave," elusive words that have been given various interpretations by scholars but which ultimately point to the profoundly contemplative quality of the movement. Some are tempted by programmatic interpretations that suggest Beethoven's distress over his brother Casper's marriage to Johanna Riess, but perhaps it is best to hear it as a crying out for what is sad in the world.

The brilliant final movement, which follows without pause, is built on a Russian theme, possibly requested by the work's dedicatee, Count Razumovsky, but implemented fully by Beethoven in terms of elegance and spirit. After a dramatic pause, it comes to a remarkable conclusion.

©2018 *Lucy Miller Murray*

PROFILE

The **CALIDORE STRING QUARTET**, one of the most acclaimed and sought-after chamber ensembles of their generation, has been heralded as “the epitome of confidence and finesse,” (*Gramophone Magazine*) and “a miracle of unified thought,” (*La Presse*, Montréal). Other major highlights of 2016 include being named a BBC Next Generation Artist for the 2016-18 seasons and becoming the first North American ensemble to win the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship. Additionally, the quartet begins a three-year residency with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center Two for the 2016-2019 seasons. In fall 2016 the quartet was named Visiting Guest Artists at the University of Delaware and will serve as Visiting Artists-in-Residence at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater, and Dance. The Calidore String Quartet regularly performs throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, and has debuted in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center, Seoul’s Kumho Arts Hall, Schneider Concerts (NYC), and at many significant festivals, including Verbier, Ravinia, Mostly Mozart, Rheingau, East Neuk, and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

In addition to winning the M-Prize, the Calidore String Quartet won grand prizes in virtually all the major United States chamber music competitions, including the Fischhoff, Coleman, Chesapeake,

and Yellow Springs competitions, and captured top prizes at the 2012 ARD Munich International String Quartet Competition and Hamburg International Chamber Music Competition.

As protégés of the Emerson Quartet, the Calidore String Quartet was featured in a performance of Mendelssohn’s octet with the Emerson Quartet presented by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center to commemorate the Emerson’s 40th anniversary season. Other highlights of the 2016-17 season included the quartet’s Chinese debut in Hong Kong as well as debuts on major series in Berlin, New York, Chicago, Houston, Portland, and Ann Arbor, a world premiere of a quartet by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw at SOKA University and collaborations with David Shifrin, Anne-Marie McDermott, and members of the Emerson, Borodin, and Vogler String Quartets.

Summer 2016 included a return to the East Neuk Festival (United Kingdom) where the quartet performed the entire Mendelssohn String Quartet cycle. Additionally, the quartet made its debut at Music@Menlo, the Encore Chamber Music Festival, and performed the closing concert of the McGill International String Quartet Academy. The quartet returned as quartet-in-residence for a third summer at both the Innsbrook Music Festival and the Bellingham Festival of Music.

In February 2015 the Calidore String Quartet released its critically acclaimed debut recording of quartets by Mendelssohn and Haydn. Additionally, in February 2016 the Calidore released an album on the French label Editions Hortus, with music by Hindemith, Milhaud, Stravinsky, de la Presle, and Toch, commemorating the World War I Centennial. The Calidore were featured as Young Artists-in-Residence on American Public Media's *Performance Today* and their performances have been broadcast on National Public Radio, BBC, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Korean Broadcasting Corporation, Bayerischer Rundfunk (Munich), Norddeutscher Rundfunk (Hamburg), and were featured on German national television as part of a documentary produced by ARD public broadcasting.

The Calidore String Quartet has collaborated with many esteemed artists and ensembles, including Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Joshua Bell, Inon Barnatan, Paul Coletti, Ronald Leonard, Paul Watkins, Raphael Merlin, and the Quatuor Ebène, among others. Formed in 2010 at the Colburn School of Music, the Calidore has studied closely with such luminaries as the Emerson Quartet, David Finckel, Andre Roy, Arnold Steinhardt, Günther Pichler, Gerhard Schulz, Heime Müller, Guillaume Sutre, Gábor Takács-Nagy, Paul Coletti, Ronald Leonard, Clive Greensmith, Martin Beaver, and the Quatuor Ebène.

As a passionate supporter of music education, the Calidore String Quartet is deeply committed to mentoring and educating young musicians, students, and audiences. From 2014-16 the Calidore served as Artists-in-Residence at Stony Brook University. The Calidore String Quartet has conducted masterclasses and residencies at Princeton, Stanford, the University of Michigan, UCLA, and Mercer University, as well as at Chamber Music Connection in Columbus, Ohio. The Calidore was previously on the faculty of the Ed and Mari Edelman Chamber Music Institute at the Colburn School.

Using an amalgamation of "California" and "doré" (French for "golden"), the ensemble's name represents a reverence for the diversity of culture and the strong support it received from its home of origin, Los Angeles, California, the "golden state." The Calidore String Quartet aims to present performances that share the passion and joy of the string quartet chamber music repertoire.

For more information about the Calidore String Quartet, please visit www.calidorestringquartet.com and www.facebook.com/calidorequartet.

M-PRIZE

M-PRIZE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION, based in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, was created by the school's dean, Aaron Dworkin, in 2016 and is the largest prize for chamber music in the world. It received applications representing 41 countries and 60 performing arts institutions, and the Calidore String Quartet made international headlines as the Grand Prize winner of the inaugural M-Prize.

M-Prize, of which Krannert Center is a Founding Presenting Partner, aims to:

- Identify and showcase the highest caliber of international chamber arts ensembles
- Provide a professional performance and adjudication platform for the chamber arts
- Help launch and advance the careers of chamber ensembles through prizes and professional development opportunities
- Evolve the breadth and depth of the chamber arts landscape and associated professional opportunities for exceptional ensembles

This year's M-Prize brings new additions: recently appointed artistic director Matt Albert, founding violinist/violist of the groundbreaking ensemble Eighth Blackbird and chair of School of Music, Theatre & Dance's new Department of Chamber Music; an interview round for first place Laureates (senior division winners) to present and advocate for their ensemble's curatorial vision; and an increased prize pool.