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STRADIVARI ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

Saturday, December 18, 2021 ~ 8:00 pm
The Library of Congress
Virtual Event
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STRADIVARI ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

CALIDORE
STRING QUARTET

JEFFREY MYERS
& RYAN MEEHAN, VIOLIN

JEREMY BERRY, VIOLA
ESTELLE CHOI, CELLO
PROGRAM

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)
Quartet in F major, op. 77/2, H.III:82 (1799)
I. Allegro moderato
II. Menuetto: Presto, ma non troppo—Trio—Coda
III. Andante
IV. Finale: Vivace assai

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847)
String Quartet in A minor, op. 13 (1827)
Adagio—Allegro vivace
Adagio non lento—poco più animato—Tempo I
Intermezzo: Allegretto con moto—Allegro di molto—Tempo I
Presto—Adagio non lento—Recit.—Adagio come I—con moto

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)
String Quartet in A minor, op. 51/2 (c.1865-1873)
Allegro non troppo—più animato sempre
Andante moderato
Quasi Minuetto, moderato—Allegretto vivace—Tempo di Minuetto—
   Allegretto vivace—Tempo di Minuetto
Finale: Allegro non assai—Poco tranquillo—Più vivace

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

JOSEPH HAYDN, Quartet in F major, op. 77/2

One of the most famous and successful composers of his time, Franz Joseph Haydn is arguably the first musician whose fame rose largely through dissemination of his music as printed copies. Haydn’s fame depended on his cultivation of a limited number of instrumental music genres: the symphony, piano trio, keyboard sonata, and, above all, the string quartet. And before 1790, when his long-standing patron Prince Nikolaus Esterházy died, he had not been free to travel, compose based solely on his own desires, or reap the full benefits of his celebrity.
The curious circumstances under which Haydn composed the op. 77 string quartets in 1799 have elicited several theories regarding the composer’s intent and inspiration as well as the state of his health at the time. The reviewer for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* who attended the first public performance of *The Creation* on March 19, 1799 sent a report including the note that “Haydn is at work, as he himself informed me, on six new quartets for the Hungarian Count K.”

Haydn did complete two new string quartets that year, but they were not published until 1802, when they then bore a dedication to Prince Joseph Franz Lobkowitz. Lobkowitz was an enthusiastic amateur musician who also financially supported the young Ludwig van Beethoven; his private orchestra later gave the first performance of Beethoven’s Symphony no. 3, the “Eroica.” Who originally commissioned Haydn’s op. 77 quartets thus remains somewhat unclear. Haydn had likewise planned for a set of six string quartets for op. 77 (most of his string quartets were conceived as sets of six). But plans for six soon dwindled to three, and finally to just the two completed in 1799. Correspondence from the time indicates he wrote other movements. At least some of that material was published separately as op. 103 in 1806.

Some scholars have suggested that Haydn failed to complete the planned set of six because of the radical changes in musical form and texture brought by Beethoven’s op. 18 quartets – also commissioned by Lobkowitz. Other writers have suggested a quasi-cold war between Haydn and his former pupil – waged by proxy through string quartets. Most of the basis for these notions rests on an account by Ferdinand Ries, Beethoven’s friend and secretary, in the *Biographische Notizen* published in 1838. Ries claimed that Haydn advised Beethoven to delay publishing the Piano Trio no. 3 in C minor because the public was unlikely to accept it. No other sources confirm this dubious claim, so perhaps a more judicious breakdown might be to say that:

Perhaps Haydn did make one or another remark about Beethoven’s boldness in publishing such an overwrought work, or about not having expected it to do so well; and maybe Beethoven, in his paranoid way, took offense.

Beethoven’s remarkable op. 18 quartets could be construed as a challenge to Haydn’s supremacy in the genre. But perhaps Haydn had no interest in engaging in

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a contest, especially given his focus on large-scale oratorios. The aging composer was in the throes of completing one of his greatest, if less popular, oratorios, The Seasons, which premiered in 1801.

In any case, the quartet on tonight’s program, no. 2 in F major, constitutes the last quartet Haydn completed. A beautifully executed work, it represents a composer both at the height of his craft and still interested in exploring new ground. Indeed, many listeners have heard and continue to hear the quartet as if “the whole spirit of Beethoven is in this music.” There are certainly aspects of the op. 77 quartets that have been interpreted as the influence of the young Beethoven on Haydn, but the evidence remains ambiguous. Beethoven’s influence, such as it is, seems to consist in a number of daring turns of phrase and harmony, such as dramatic shifts from forte to pianissimo or the whole of the driving and rhythmically unstable second-movement minuet.

Rather, we can think of the op. 77 no. 2 quartet as a retrospective on the Viennese string quartet, written by the composer who shaped its history for half a century. The outer two movements remain in relatively clear sonata form. The minuet and trio, “though hardly deficient in novelty, conforms to Haydn’s existing flexible norms with respect to overall size, proportion, and rounded binary procedure.” And the slow movement is based on a tried-and-true model: strophic variation. The work contains few moments of loud, dense textures; no tonal adventures quite so radical as in the op. 76 quartets, and very little in the way of fugal or polyphonic textures. Balanced, symmetrical structures abound in lieu of more dramatic end-weighted forms.

Yet the opening theme of the first movement, Allegro moderato, presents “Haydnesque wit at its most sophisticated.” Haydn opens the movement with a graceful pair of four-measure phrases. Or does he? The upward-leaping gesture that closes the initial four-bar phrase is elaborated and spun out further in its answer. Indeed, this generative cell forms the basis for much of the movement’s motivic content, and encapsulates Haydn’s profound (and clever) ability to craft elusive themes that flit between balanced and disruptive forces – a fitting start to the complex musical narrative that unfolds throughout the larger work. Typical of Haydn, the second thematic key area arrives with an unfulfilled cadential gesture. The second theme that thereafter enters is but the first cloaked in a new guise, with a brief chromatic ascent. In the development section that follows, Haydn ventures farther afield – E-flat minor to E minor – before gradually making his way to the expected F major for the recapitulation.

Haydn places the minuet next, a common practice in his earlier quartets and seen less frequently in his later ones. Still in F major, the minuet’s brusque counter-

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5 Landon, 516.
6 Grave, 325.
7 Grave, 327.
rhythms suggest a frenzied, if still decidedly dance-like, scherzo. Four beats of rests separate the minuet and trio – which further accentuate the composer’s playing with rhythmic stability. The trio likewise takes us to the unexpected realm of D-flat major. The melody’s lilting serenade provides a brief respite before returning to one more repetition of the more rhythmic minuet.

The third movement, *Andante*, offers a set of strophic variations remarkable for the sense of unpretentious serenity they offer. Continuing a journey through unexpected and even odd key relations, Haydn begins in D major. He delays the arrival of the first variation with a 17-measure interlude that mostly prolongs the dominant through a duet between first violin and cello. Three variations follow. In the first, the second violin receives the melody in a middle-register texture. The second variation begins in D minor and shortens the theme considerably. The cello and first violin dominate the third variation. The cello has the theme while the first violin provides a series of glistening arabesques, another decidedly old-fashioned – but effective – technique that exemplifies the quartet’s retrospective outlook. The movement closes with the theme returning to the first violin once more, this time *pianissimo* and fully harmonized.

The final movement, *Finale. Vivace assai*, breaks the tranquility of the previous movement with a bustling dance in 3/4. The melody features a great deal of syncopation, either on the second beat or second half of the beat. Haydn often used this same “German dance” in the closing movements of his piano trios. The opening theme likewise includes references to Hungarian “exoticisms” through its melodic leaps, chromatic inflections, and rhythmic jauntiness. The music maintains a swift, forward momentum if a not quite breakneck pace. The beginning of the development section does offer a brief moment of canonic imitations based on the first theme – Haydn’s only nod to counterpoint in the quartet. The four instruments present cascading versions of the theme that beget more motivic tension all the way through and into the recapitulation. Haydn then injects a series of *sforzandos* – as if to remind players and audience alike that the movement’s final section has already started. The finale thereafter concludes in a brilliant, resonant F major. And in his effortless weaving of traditional forms, remote key areas, and motivic wit, Haydn once more illustrates his mastery of the genre.

*Paul Allen Sommerfeld*

*Music Reference Specialist*

*Library of Congress, Music Division*
FELIX MENDELSSOHN, Quartet in A minor, op. 13

It is fortuitous that Felix Mendelssohn reached such an astounding degree of artistic maturity while still a teenager, given that he died at the young age of 38. Just two years after composing the genre-defining octet at the age of 16, Mendelssohn composed in 1827 his string quartet in A minor, which would be published in 1830 as the composer’s op. 13. In this work he grapples with the late quartets of Beethoven while also delving into musical autobiography and exploring the relationships that can be found between words and music. The resulting quartet is a remarkable achievement that ultimately became a staple of the repertoire.

Mendelssohn may have written the poem that served as the basis for his 1827 song “Ist es wahr?” Mendelssohn then used that song’s material as the thematic foundation of his op. 13 quartet. The Lied was published as “Frage,” op. 9/1, and Mendelssohn acknowledged the explicit relationship in a letter. As Larry Todd describes it, the song was “...composed as an ‘impromptu’ during a summer party... [and] ‘Frage’ served as the thematic and expressive basis for the quartet, prompting Mendelssohn to incorporate explicit quotations from the song in the outer movements and implicit references in the inner movements.” Given Mendelssohn's possible authorship of the love poem and the importance of the material that led to its significant use in the op. 13 quartet, Todd thinks that it might be an encapsulation of his amorous interest in Betty Pistor, to whom Felix would secretly dedicate his next string quartet (op. 12).

The Adagio introduction of the op. 13 quartet contains the most direct relationships to “Frage.” Mendelssohn sets the words “Ist es wahr?” (Is it true?) to a dotted-rhythm melody that is unresolved, metaphorically and harmonically (Example 1a). A bit later in the song the voice accentuates the word “Sprich!” (speak) on an E (Example 1b), present also at the beginning of the Lied (Example 1a) and perhaps given more weight even in the string quartet setting of these basic ideas (Example 1c); it is an exhortation to speak, realized in dramatic fashion when the movement proper begins. But in the Lied, the question is musically resolved (perhaps there is an implied “Es ist wahr” (It is true) here?), with the

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8 Some editions list J.H. Voss (Johann Heinrich Voss, 1751-1826) as the poet, but Sebastian Hensel maintained that Mendelssohn himself wrote the lyrics. Confusingly, the son of Johann Gustav Droysen (1808-1884) claimed that his father had written the text, as his father's pseudonym was J.N. Voss. Todd, R. Larry, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 176.
11 Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music*, 176. The op. 13 string quartet was actually composed before the E-flat major quartet that would be published as his “first” quartet, op. 12.
12 While the op. 13 quartet is generally described as a work in A minor, it is sometimes referred to as a quartet in A major, since the introduction is actually in A major. However, A minor is the principal key of the *Allegro vivace* and later movements.
instrumental statement of the motive leading to an A-major chord instead of a dominant seventh (Example 1d):

Example 1

a) Felix Mendelssohn, “Frage,” op. 9/1: mm. 1-3

b) Felix Mendelssohn, “Frage,” op. 9/1: mm. 12-15

c) Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, I: mm. 13-15
In the introduction of the string quartet, Mendelssohn doesn’t hang his hat on just these references, and instead paints a more fully-formed, almost achingly-beautiful hymn/instrumental Lied in A major. At the close of “Frage,” as seen in Example 1d, a sort of spiritual resolution is implied by the use of a plagal cadence. That resolution is reversed in a sense in the quartet, which opens with a prominent emphasis of the IV chord of the Lied’s plagal cadence (IV-I), but here moves on with an intervening dominant chord (I-IV-V-I):

Example 2

In doing this Mendelssohn sets up the potential for the cyclical use of the introduction (it can both “begin” and “end”), and indeed it serves as both an invocation at the quartet’s beginning and a benediction at its close.

Larry Todd points out that the Allegro vivace of Mendelssohn’s quartet “...recaptures the sound world of the opening movement of Beethoven’s String Quartet, op.

13 Note that the moderately-loud/soft dynamic sequence holds for the song and the quartet as well; see examples 1a, 1c and 2.
This is a particularly apt observation, as there are similarities in both the transitional music (the running 16th-notes) and the dotted-rhythm melodic material that appear early in each piece:

Example 3

a)

Beethoven, String Quartet in A minor, op. 132, I: mm. 9-14

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Mendelssohn integrates these materials as the movement progresses. The main theme is often presented either as a solo or among imitative gestures such as those in Example 3c. His discipline in presenting the material in this way makes the climactic final presentation where all voices are unified extremely effective:
Example 4

Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, I: mm. 233-238

The movement closes con fuoco with the thematic material combined with the running sixteenths that opened the Allegro vivace.

The Adagio non lento is another fascinating movement, something of a microcosm of the quartet as a whole with its cantabile bookends that evoke the spirit of the first movement's introduction. As Larry Todd states, “Beethoven's late style especially impresses itself on the second movement, a heartfelt Adagio with at least three allusions. The opening is similar to the Cavatina of Beethoven's Op. 130, which Felix nearly quotes in one passage. The center of the Adagio, a chromatic fugue, invokes the second movement of Beethoven's Serioso Quartet, Op. 95, and the end of the Adagio revives the high-pitched, ethereal sonority concluding the Heiliger Dankgesang of Beethoven's Op. 132.”¹⁵ These connections seem borne perhaps of Mendelssohn's close study of the late quartets, at that stage among the most avant-garde music available.¹⁶

¹⁵ Todd, Mendelssohn: A Life in Music, 178.
¹⁶ Some of Beethoven's later quartets would have been hot off the press in 1827 when Mendelssohn wrote his op. 13, and his rapid assimilation and re-imagination of their content is astounding.
The opening music of the *Adagio non lento* once again shows Mendelssohn's talents as a lyrical composer; the sense of an “instrumental voice” is always present, and it is easy to see how the composer could manage to elevate the genre of “Songs without Words” throughout his career. The dynamic choices that characterized the introduction to the first movement are again present, with the *pianissimo* echoes caressing the sound of the previous phrase:

**Example 5**

Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, II: mm. 5-7

After a cadence in F major, Mendelssohn introduces a fugato theme, and despite being at the same tempo, the juxtaposition of materials is striking. The fugato subject is inverted (given “upside-down,” with modifications) for its presentation after the *poco più animato* section begins; this can be seen more clearly if you isolate the first viola statements of each:

**Example 6**

a)  

Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, II: mm. 20-22, viola subject

b)  

Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, II: mm. 54-56, viola subject inverted

The slower music returns after traversing the arch of Mendelssohn’s central section, and it is followed by a brief and haunting reprise of the fugato material.
before resolving quietly in the upper registers of the instruments.

The Intermezzo is another movement that takes the bookend approach to its material. The stately figures of the opening violin theme (accompanied by the other voices in *pizzicato*) are related to the fugato theme—a feature that Mendelssohn accentuates when he presents part of the Intermezzo’s first theme imitated across the quartet:

**Example 7**

![Example 7](image)

Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, III: mm. 15-19

A central *Allegro di molto* scherzo presents some of Mendelssohn’s characteristic frenetic elven music, with a particularly humorous tendency of the first violin to “get stuck” on the repeated notes. Melodies are allowed to briefly surge above the swiftly moving background, but it is not until the return of the initial material that melody again takes center stage. The coda of the movement briefly combines the movement’s musical ideas before quietly ending in A minor.

The finale is an intensely dramatic affair that opens with an *ad libitum* violin solo above *tremolando* strings in the remainder of the quartet. Fleet music that eventually establishes a more pronounced profile pushes past more measured recitative material to arrive at the principal theme of the movement. As the movement progresses earlier themes begin to emerge, with a special prominence given to the fugato theme from the second movement. The tension between Lied and instrumental setting is always at the fore, and Mendelssohn’s use of the violin as the sung line mashes the Baroque recitative with a Romantic quartet. One example that can stand for many is how Mendelssohn uses the first violin in this way at the close of the first movement, and again near the end of the finale:
Example 8

a) Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, I: mm. 249-251

b) Felix Mendelssohn, String Quartet in A minor, op. 13, IV: mm. 330-335

After the magical sequence of recitatives that follow Example 8b, the music of the quartet’s *Adagio* introduction returns. The passage is extended to allow for the peaceful resolution of the quartet, finally answering in its own way the “Frage” of the song: “Es ist wahr.”

David Plylar  
Senior Music Specialist  
Library of Congress, Music Division
JOHANNES BRAHMS, Quartet in A minor, op. 51/2

"The composition recalls Beethoven in its spiritual atmosphere, in the strict discipline of its musical thought, and in the wonderful transparency of the setting for stringed instruments, born of a perfect understanding of the nature of chamber music."

~ Karl Geiringer on op. 51, no. 2

Brahms' two op. 51 string quartets provide insights about the composer's perception of the importance of the quartet genre. The String Quartet in C minor, op. 51, no. 1 and the String Quartet in A minor, op. 51, no. 2 were the first of Brahms' string quartet compositions to be published, a result of his having been wary of entering the genre given his physical and musical proximity to his master predecessors in Austro-German quartet composition, including Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert and Mendelssohn. Some historical accounts recall Brahms as having stated that he had upwards of twenty scrapped string quartet compositions prior to sticking with the op. 51 quartets through development, performance and publication. Brahms' important stature within the Viennese musical scene in the 1860s and 1870s makes it entirely understandable that he would want to ensure total expertise in a new genre of composition prior to going public with new works.

The A-minor quartet was completed in 1873 (while Brahms was spending a summer in the Bavarian town of Tutzing) after several years of work, dating back to at least the late 1860s. Brahms' most recent completed chamber work at the time was the Trio in E-flat major for violin, horn and piano, op. 40 (1865). Op. 51, no. 2 was premiered in Berlin on October 18, 1873 by the Joachim Quartet, led by Brahms' friend and violinist Joseph Joachim (1831-1907). Simrock published the score and parts in 1873, a fast turnaround that indicated the market potential perceived by Brahms and his publisher for widespread performance. This may have been influenced by Brahms' stature as director of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde concerts in Vienna from 1872-1875. His other major works from 1873 were the orchestral (op. 56a) and two-piano versions (op. 56b) of Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn in B-flat major.

Brahms dedicated both op. 51 quartets to a gentleman named Theodor Billroth (1829-1894), an important surgeon who had a major impact on the medical profession through treatment innovations. He was also a sponsor of house concerts and an avid amateur musician (who chose to practice medicine rather than pursue a career in music). Billroth and Brahms became acquainted in Switzerland in 1865 and their relationship flourished into a friendship that facilitated ongoing

17 Karl Geiringer, Brahms: His Life and Work (New York: Da Capo Press, 1982).
19 The Library of Congress Music Division holds the holograph manuscript of the Trio in E-flat major, op. 40 (call number: ML30.8b .B7 op. 40). View it online: https://go.usa.gov/xX3sB.
exchanges of musical ideas. Peter Clive writes that Brahms had "...so high a regard for Billroth's musical judgment that he eagerly sought his observations on new works still in manuscript, and Billroth furnished such comments with acumen and remarkable speed."\(^{20}\) One of the great advantages of Billroth's avid support of Brahms' music was that many of Brahms' works were performed in a private setting, giving the composer the opportunity to essentially workshop and revise his works prior to their public dissemination. The dedication of the op. 51 quartets was therefore given to Billroth in acknowledgment of the opportunities he had afforded to Brahms and their budding friendship.

The first movement of the A-minor quartet is the Allegro non troppo, which is set in the home key of A minor, despite an intentionally deceptive opening that suggests D minor is the strong key. Overt statements of the A-minor chord are not heard until several bars after the outset. The first violin plays the opening theme, which introduces a thematic motive that can be heard throughout the quartet. The four-note motive, A-F-A-E, is said to represent a work given to Joachim as a gift called the F.A.E. Sonata for violin and piano (1853), which was a joint composition by Robert Schumann, Brahms and Albert Dietrich. The letters represent a personal motto that Joachim adopted, "Frei, aber einsam" (Free, but alone).\(^{21}\) Direct evidence that Brahms intended to honor his friend Joachim with the use of this musical motive is lacking, but it is surely plausible since the violinist regularly performed Brahms' works.

The opening theme is a refined, emotive statement that expands upon the short motive. Transition phrases juxtapose the violin and the middle voices which adopt pulsating rhythmic figures. The second theme is first heard as a whimsical duet between the violins, with the viola rocking back and forth with a triplet figure and quarter-note pizzicato harmonic outlines in the cello. A ruminative episode brings major sections of the movement to a close. When developing the thematic material Brahms displays a knack for subtle transformation of the various melodic and rhythmic motives. He draws out varying textures from each instrument and easily transitions from fiery, passionate moments to withdrawn, subdued moments. When the key changes to A major, keep an ear tuned to the viola, which has a soloistic moment in the middle of a thick texture that finds the first violin jumping around an arpeggiated scale. Brahms shifts back to A minor, but as you will hear, he revisits the original statements of the principal themes in a manner that is intriguing and demands attention. He nudges the tempo up a bit as the movement draws to a close and concludes with a short cadence to confirm that A minor is in fact the home key.

In the Andante moderato the opening phrase is marked espressivo (expressive). The first violin sings a slow moving, pleasant theme while the viola and cello provide an

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eighth-note heartbeat pulse that carries forward pleasantly. The second statement of the phrase is drastically quieter, exposing the gorgeous and silken playing of the first violin. Geiringer describes the movement as having a "solemn character," reflecting a sense of nostalgia or the landscape at Tutzing where Brahms completed work on the quartet. As Brahms explores and expands the harmonic language in the movement the character shifts from quiet and contemplative to rich and adrenalized. He pulls back to restate the opening theme when the harmony shifts to F major. This gives way to the cello's statement of the theme that pulls back to A minor. Particularly satisfying throughout this movement are soaring gestures that appear in all of the parts at various times, but especially in the first violin part. These figures have the sense of expanding the sonic space.

The third movement is the Quasi Minuetto, moderato, which opens with a quiet and moderately paced theme that has a rhythmic character infused with a desire to move quickly. McDonald calls this movement "sad, spiritualized dance music," which has perhaps more of a negative connotation than the movement deserves. Brahms may have intended this feeling as a gradual transition from the relaxed pace of the Andante moderato. Before long, he launches into the Allegretto vivace section, which rather than taking the place of a trio acts as an independent contrasting section when alternating with the Quasi Minuetto, moderato material. The sequence of the movement is Quasi Minuetto, moderato—Allegretto vivace—Quasi Minuetto, moderato—Allegretto vivace—Quasi Minuetto, moderato. Brahms also alternates between A minor and A major, helping to delineate the section breaks. The structure of the movement can also be heard when the meter changes from the triple meter of the minuet to the duple meter of the faster Allegretto vivace music.

Brahms gives the Finale a "certain Hungarian flavor," as Geiringer describes. The theme has a certain rustic-chique quality about it, but this does not necessarily provoke imagery of Hungary for all listeners. Thematically inventive and engaging, this movement demonstrates a masterful use of rondo form, in which the thematic material alternates clearly (though without the added tempo and meter changes from the third movement). After the music recedes to almost silence, Brahms launches into a fast Più vivace section that acts as icing on top of this spectacular string quartet, while poking fun at the loftiness of the quartet.

Nicholas Alexander Brown
Former Music Specialist
Library of Congress, Music Division

22 Brahms was particularly fond of the balance of the lake scene, greenery, and the Alps in the background. Geiringer, 233.
23 MacDonald, 215.
24 Geiringer, 233.
About the Artists

The Calidore String Quartet has been praised by *The New York Times* for its “deep reserves of virtuosity and irrepressible dramatic instinct.” *The Los Angeles Times* described the quartet as “astonishing,” their playing “shockingly deep,” approaching “the kind of sublimity other quartets spend a lifetime searching” and praised its balance of “intellect and expression.” *The Washington Post* has said that “Four more individual musicians are unimaginable, yet these speak, breathe, think and feel as one.”

Recipient of a 2018 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2017 Lincoln Center Emerging Artist Award, the Calidore String Quartet first made international headlines as the winner of the $100,000 Grand Prize of the 2016 M-Prize International Chamber Music Competition. The quartet was the first North American ensemble to win the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship, was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, and is currently in residence with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

In summer 2021, the Calidore made debuts at the Sarasota, La Jolla, and Saratoga Music Festivals, and the Schubert Club of St. Paul, MN. Highlights of the ’21-’22 season include returns to Wigmore Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society. The Calidore will debut at the Library of Congress, the 92nd Street Y, Harvard University, and Penn State University, and internationally in The Hague and Antwerp. It will premiere a new work by composer Huw Watkins commissioned by Wigmore Hall and collaborate with the Emerson Quartet and pianists Jeffrey Kahane, Henry Kramer, and Gabriela Fahnenstiel.

Highlights of recent seasons have included performances in major venues throughout North America, Europe, and Asia such as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Kennedy Center, Berlin Konzerthaus, Brussels BOZAR, Cologne Philharmonie, and Seoul’s Kumho Arts Hall, and at significant festivals including the BBC Proms, Verbier, Ravinia, Mostly Mozart, Music@Menlo, Rheingau, East Neuk, and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

The Calidore has given world premieres of works by Caroline Shaw, Hannah Lash, and Mark-Anthony Turnage, among others. Its collaborations with esteemed artists and ensembles include Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Marc-André Hamelin, Joshua Bell, David Shifrin, Inon Barnatan, Lawrence Power, Sharon Isbin, David Finckel, and Wu Han. The Calidore has collaborated and studied closely with the Emerson Quartet and Quatuor Ébène, and has also studied with André Roy, Arnold Steinhardt, Günter Pichler,
Guillaume Sutre, Paul Coletti, and Ronald Leonard.

As a passionate supporter of music education, the Calidore String Quartet is committed to mentoring and educating young musicians, students, and audiences. In 2021 the Calidore joined the faculty of the University of Delaware School of Music, where they serve as directors of the newly established Graduate String Quartet Residency. Formerly, they served as artist-in-residence at the University of Toronto, University of Michigan, and Stony Brook University.

The Calidore String Quartet was founded at the Colburn School in Los Angeles in 2010. Within two years, the quartet won grand prizes in virtually all the major US chamber music competitions, including the Fischoff, Coleman, Chesapeake, and Yellow Springs competitions. It captured top prizes at the 2012 ARD International Music Competition in Munich and Hamburg's International Chamber Music Competition. An amalgamation of “California” and “doré” (French for “golden”), the ensemble’s name represents its reverence for the diversity of culture and the strong support it received from its original home: Los Angeles, California, the “golden state.”

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Library of Congress Stringed Instrument Collection

Instrument collecting at the Library of Congress began with the generosity of Mrs. Gertrude Clarke Whittall, who donated five stringed instruments made by Antonio Stradivari to the Library of Congress in 1935. Since that time, the Library's Music Division has acquired five additional stringed instruments through generous donations. These additional violins were made by Stradivari, Nicolò Amati, Jean Baptiste Vuillaume, and Giuseppe Guarneri (two violins) in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The "Tuscan-Medici" viola is on loan to the Library of Congress from the Tuscan Corporation.

Instruments Featured In This Performance

**VIOLIN BY ANTONIO STRADIVARI, CREMONA, 1704, "BETTS"**
*Played by Jeffrey Myers*

The "Betts" is among the most legendary violins to have come from Stradivari's workshop. Part of that status comes from the fabulous bargain that John Betts made in its acquisition. In about 1820, an individual entered his shop at the Royal Exchange in London and offered the violin, in a pristine state. A deal was made and the instrument changed hands for the sum of only one guinea. It remained a treasured part of Betts' collection, but after the death of his son in 1852, the violin came into the hands of W. E. Hill & Sons of London followed by a variety of distinguished owners. By 1920, the "Betts" was owned by R. D. Waddell of Glasgow. In 1923, Jay C. Freeman of Wurlitzer's approached Waddell in Scotland and came away with the "Betts" as well as the "Leduc" Guarneri. Wurlitzer's sold the "Betts" to John T. Roberts of Hartford, Connecticut, who later acted as an intermediary in its sale to Mrs. Whittall.

**VIOLIN BY ANTONIO STRADIVARI, CREMONA, 1699, "CASTELBARCO"**
*Played by Ryan Meehan*

This violin was, with the "Castelbarco" cello of 1697, once a part of the quartet of Stradivaris owned by Count Cesare Castelbarco of Milan. After the count died, it was sold in London to Jean Baptiste Vuillaume. The violin later was sold to several other owners until it was purchased in about 1875 by John Mountford, who also owned the "Kreisler" Guarneri. Mountford owned this violin until his death, at which time it passed to the Hills of London and then to a Mrs. Renton of Guildford, Surrey. Nathan Posner bought this violin from Mrs. Renton and brought it to the United States. He in turn sold it to Mrs. Gertrude Clarke Whittall.
**VIOLA BY ANTONIO STRADIVARI, CREMONA, 1727, "CASSAVETTI"
Played by Jeremy Berry**

The "Cassavetti" arrived in England through David Laurie, who sold it to Alexander Cassavetti. In 1928, the agents of department store-magnate Rodman Wanamaker of Philadelphia bought it from George Hart to add to the extraordinary ensemble being assembled by Wanamaker to play orchestral concerts in his stores. After Wanamaker's untimely death in 1929, the entire collection passed to the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company and the "Cassavetti" appeared in their 1931 catalog. It was sold to John T. Roberts, who eventually sold it to Mrs. Whittall, joining the "Bets" with which he previously had parted. The "Cassavetti" viola is built from the same mould (still surviving in the Stradivari museum in Cremona, Italy) as the "Tuscan-Medici" viola, though comparative measurements demonstrate the range of variation due to different edge widths and natural distortion.

**VIOLONCELLO BY ANTONIO STRADIVARI, CREMONA, 1699, "CASTELBARCO"
Played by Estelle Choi**

The known history of this magnificent cello begins with Count Cesare Castelbarco of Milan. Today the violoncello is united in a quartet of Stradivaris, as it was in Castelbarco's collection; one of its musical partners was the 1699 violin also in the Library's collection. After the count's death, the instrument passed to Egidio Fabbri of Rome, who first acquired it from Vuillaume. It later came into the possession of his son-in-law, the Marchese de Piccolellis, and then went into obscurity. In *How Many Strads?* (1945), Ernest N. Doring recounts his experience in advising a family in New York on their cello. He was confronted with the "Castelbarco," which had been in New York—unknown—for a number of years. It later passed to Hills in London and next to Wurlitzer in New York, which included an illustration of the cello in their 1931 catalog. In 1934 the "Castelbarco" came into the possession of Mrs. Whittall. The "Castelbarco" is significant for a number of reasons, not least in that it is one of a handful of Stradivari cellos of the large form that still retain their original, large, uncut dimensions. This cello is one of several uncut Stradivari cellos-along with the 1690 "Medici," the 1696 "Aylesford," and the 1701 "Servais"-which retain its original body outline and size.
Concerts from the Library of Congress

The Coolidge Auditorium, constructed in 1925 through a generous gift from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, has been the venue for countless world-class performers and performances. Gertrude Clarke Whittall presented to the Library a gift of five Stradivari instruments which were first heard here during a concert on January 10, 1936. These parallel but separate donations serve as the pillars that now support a full season of concerts made possible by gift trusts and foundations that followed those established by Mrs. Coolidge and Mrs. Whittall.

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