Danish String Quartet

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2020
The fifteen string quartets of Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) make up one of the most remarkable and personal contributions to that genre in the 20th century. After running into repeated political difficulties with Soviet officialdom over such large “public” works as his symphonies (which were accused of not following the official party artistic lines), Shostakovich gave up symphonic composition for a number of years. The Ninth Symphony was written immediately after the end of World War II. The Tenth, however, did not come until after Stalin’s death in 1953. In those interim years, string quartet composition predominated.

The personal and private expressive qualities of the string quartet medium meant that party hacks were less likely to attempt second-guessing the “meaning” that the composer was expressing in his music. In short, quartets were simply less dangerous to write.

Shostakovich had written a Ninth Quartet in 1961 but decided not long after to burn the manuscript. Not for three years did he return to string quartet writing, but when he did, he quickly turned out three sibling pieces. The Tenth Quartet was composed between July 11 and 20, 1964, while Shostakovich was on a holiday at the Composers’ Retreat in Dilizhan, Armenia; it is dedicated to a composer friend, Moishei Vainberg. As with all but his First and Fifteenth quartets, the premiere was given by the Beethoven Quartet (the new Ninth was also on the program), in Moscow on November 20 and in Leningrad the next day.

The quartet consists of the “normal” four movements, though in fact their character has little to do with standard quartet practice. The opening Andante is of such simplicity and apparent lack of guile that it seems to serve as an extended upbeat to the Allegretto furioso, one of the most violent string quartet movements ever composed. This “scherzo” strongly resembles in character the similar movement of Shostakovich’s Tenth Symphony, composed soon
after the death of Stalin, where the similar material was reputed to represent a demonic picture of the late dictator.

The third movement, Adagio, employs one of the composer’s favorite devices—a slow passacaglia, working out its variations on a bass line of sober cut. Usually composers use this device to build toward a climactic and intense statement late in the structure, but Shostakovich inverts the normal procedure, starting with a powerful statement of the theme and gradually seeming to run out of steam. The final Allegretto picks up from the collapse of the passacaglia and eventually reworks the passacaglia material as a counterpoise to the faster main subject. The quartet ends, however, in a slow tempo (this became more and more typical of Shostakovich in his late quartets), with references to the opening movement.

—Steven Ledbetter

Steven Ledbetter was program annotator of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 1998.

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The Danish String Quartet brings a rare musical spontaneity to music ranging from Haydn to Shostakovich to contemporary scores. Since its debut in 2002, the quartet has also demonstrated a special affinity for Scandinavian composers including Nielsen, Hans Abrahamsen, Bent Sørensen, and traditional Nordic folk music. The recipient of many awards and prestigious appointments, including the Borletti Buitoni Trust, the Danish String Quartet was named in 2013 as BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists and appointed to the The Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two) at New York’s Lincoln Center. In 2007, they established the DSQ Festival, which takes place in an intimate and informal setting in Copenhagen. Highlights of recent seasons include six-concert series of the complete Beethoven cycle of sixteen string quartets, a recital with violinist Augustin Hadelich, and a world premiere of Bent Sørensen’s Dancers and Disappearance for string quartet and accordion. For their Series of Four concerts they both perform and invite colleagues—the Ebène Quartet and mandolin player Chris Thile, among others—to appear at the venerable Danish Radio Concert Hall. The Danish String Quartet has received numerous citations and prizes including the 2011 Carl Nielsen Prize, the highest cultural honor in Denmark. Most recently, the Quartet received its first Grammy nomination in 2019, for the first release of its five-disc recording project “PRISM” for ECM New Series. In addition to that ongoing recording project, they performed the complete Beethoven cycle at Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in February 2020. Violinists Frederik Øland and Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen and violist Asbjørn Nørgaard met as children at a music summer camp where they played soccer and made music together. As teenagers, they began the study of classical chamber music and were mentored by Tim Frederiksen of Copenhagen’s Royal Danish Academy of Music. In 2008, the three Danes were joined by Norwegian cellist Fredrik Schøyen Sjølin.

Please visit www.danishquartet.com

Exclusive Management:
Kirshbaum Associates Inc

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DANISH STRING QUARTET

Frederik Øland, violin
Rune Tonsgaard Sørensen, violin
Asbjørn Nørgaard, viola
Fredrik Schøyen Sjølin, cello

DANISH STRING QUARTET RETURNS SPRING 2021

Sunday, May 16, 2021, 3pm

Grammy-nominated Danish String Quartet makes its second appearance in the 2020-21 season with a performance showcasing its players’ masterful technique and heartfelt expressivity.

Program to be announced.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS
FALL VIRTUAL ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE
October-December 2020

The Philharmonic Society is excited to announce its inaugural lineup of virtual Artists-in-Residence for Fall 2020: violinist Hilary Hahn, and cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason with pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason. Spanning October to December, Artists-in-Residence will curate, organize, and produce a series of three intimate, virtual performances.

HILARY HAHN PERFORMS MOZART
Saturday, November 14, 7pm PST
“Hahn Solo:” Cadenza and Rondo from Mozart’s Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major
New Cadenza and Rondo written and performed by Hilary Hahn
Commissioned by the Philharmonic Society of Orange County

HILARY HAHN PERFORMS AUBACH, ABELS AND GINASTERA
Saturday, December 12, 7pm PST
AUERBACH: Lonely Violinist (Ballet for a Lonely Violinist), Op. 70
MICHAEL ABELS: New Work (World Premiere)
GINASTERA: Violin Concerto, Op. 30: I. Cadenza

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON & ISATA KANNEH-MASON PERFORM BARBER
Sunday, November 22, 3pm PST
BARBER: Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6

SHEKU KANNEH-MASON & ISATA KANNEH-MASON PERFORM RACHMANINOFF
Sunday, December 20, 3pm PST
RACHMANINOFF: Sonata for Piano and Cello, Op. 19

TICKETS $20/HOUSEHOLD PER CONCERT
On-demand streaming available for 1 week after each concert premiere
949.553.2422 | PHILHARMONICSOCIETY.ORG
UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

JEREMY DENK, PIANO
Saturday, November 21, 2020, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert

R. SCHUMANN: Kinderszenen, Op. 15
MAZZOLI: Bolts of Loving Thunder
BRAHMS: Four Piano Pieces, Op. 119

DECEMBER

TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY FESTIVAL
Anthony McGill, clarinet
Demarre McGill, flute
Additional artists TBA
December 8-13, 2020 PST
Virtual Concerts – Free

Anthony and Demarre McGill curate programs of works spotlighting musicians and composers from marginalized communities, with pieces by Gabriela Lena Frank, Tania León, Valerie Coleman, and David Baker, and including works specifically commissioned for the McGill brothers.

STEPHEN HOUGH, PIANO
Friday, December 11, 2020, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert

BACH/BUSONI: Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D minor, BWV 1004
SCHUMANN: Fantasie in C major, Op. 17
LISZT: Funérailles
LISZT: Mephisto Waltz No. 1, S. 514

JANUARY

ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Branford Marsalis, saxophone
Saturday, January 9, 2021, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert

ROSSINI: Overture to The Barber of Seville
RODRIGO: Suite from Soleriana
DEBUSSY: Rhapsody for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra
IBERT: Concertino da Camera
TURINA: La Oración del Torero (The Bullfighter’s Prayer), Op. 34
BRYAN: Carmen, Jazz suite on themes by Bizet (Orpheus Commission)

TETZLAFF QUARTET
Saturday, January 16, 2021, 7pm PST
Virtual Concert

BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat major, Op. 130
BEETHOVEN: Große Fuge, Op. 133
BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132

LEIF OVE ANDSNES, PIANO
Thursday, January 21, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

SCHUMANN: Three Romances, Op. 28
JANÁČEK: On an Overgrown Path, Volume 1
BARTÓK: Three Burlesques, Sz. 47
SCHUMANN: Carnaval, Op. 9

VADYM KHOLODENKO, PIANO AND BROOKLYN RIDER
Sunday, January 24, 2021, 3pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

The 2013 Cliburn Piano Competition Gold medalist Vadym Kholodenko teams up with string quartet Brooklyn Rider, which has been hailed as “the future of chamber music” (Strings) and continues to draw rave reviews from classical, world, and rock critics alike, in a chamber performance highlighting the performers’ commanding technique and creative interpretations. Program to be announced.
FEBRUARY

JOSHUA BELL, VIOLIN
Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

Grammy Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell returns to Orange County in a recital that will enchant audiences with his breathtaking virtuosity and captivating stage presence. Program to be announced.

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA AT 100 WITH PHILIPPE QUINT AND MEMBERS OF THE JOFFREY BALLET
Philippe Quint, violin
Members of the Joffrey Ballet*
Additional artists to be announced
Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 8pm PST
Irvine Barclay Theatre

Co-presented by Irvine Barclay Theatre
Concert sponsored by Steven M. Sorenson MD
Additional support provided by the Ibex Foundation
*Appearance courtesy of the Joffrey Ballet, Ashley Wheater, Artistic Director

Multi-Grammy-nominated violinist Philippe Quint and members of the world-class, Chicago-based Joffrey Ballet celebrate the centennial of tango legend Astor Piazzolla in a performance of music and dance.

MARCH

SMETANA TRIO
Tuesday, March 2, 2021, 8pm PST
Samueli Theater

RACHMANINOFF: Trio élégiaque No. 1 in G minor
MARTINŮ: Piano Trio No. 3 in C major, H. 332
SMETANA: Piano Trio in G minor, Op 15

GEORGE LI, PIANO
Thursday, March 4, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BEETHOVEN: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2, “Moonlight Sonata”
BEETHOVEN: Variations and Fugue for Piano in E-flat major, Op. 35
CHOPIN: Nocturnes, Op. 27
CHOPIN: Mazurkas, Op. 59
CHOPIN: Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20
CHOPIN: Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
COUNTERPOINT
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Caleb Teicher, dancer
Friday, March 26, 2021, 8pm PST
Locations in Laguna Beach

Duo program with music by Bach, Gershwin, etc.

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
ITS BRILLIANCE ALMOST FRIGHTENED ME
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Saturday, March 27, 2021, 8pm PST
Locations in Laguna Beach

Laurence CRANE: Prelude No. 1
BERG: “Traumgekrönt” from Seven Early Songs
SCHUBERT: “Gretchen am spinnrade” (Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel)
Eric WUBBELS: gretchen am spinnrade
Ruth Crawford SEEGER: String Quartet
BEETHOVEN: String Quartet No. 16, Op. 135

2021 Laguna Beach Music Festival
CHANGE THIS THREAD ON WHICH WE MOVE
Festival Artistic Director: Conrad Tao, piano
Sunday, March 28, 2021, 3pm PST
Locations in Laguna Beach

Caroline SHAW: Entr’acte (Westerlies arrangement)
DEBUSSY: Violin Sonata in G minor
GESUALDO: selected Madrigals
Other works to be announced.
UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

ALISA WEILERSTEIN, CELLO AND INON BARNATAN, PIANO
Thursday, April 8, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall
Select Beethoven Cello Sonatas

BRENTANO QUARTET
Friday, April 9, 2021, 8pm PST
Venue TBD

BRAHMS: String Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51

JERUSALEM QUARTET WITH PINCHAS ZUKERMAN, VIOLIN AND AMANDA FORSYTH, CELLO
Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BRUCKNER: Adagio from String Quintet in F major, WAB 112
DVOŘÁK: Sextet for Strings in A major, Op. 48
BRAHMS: Sextet for Strings No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 18

JEAN-YVES THIBAUDET, PIANO
Saturday, April 24, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

DEBUSSY: Préludes Books 1 and 2

MAY

DANISH STRING QUARTET
Sunday, May 16, 2021, 3pm PST
Samueli Theater
Grammy-nominated Danish String Quartet makes its second appearance in the 2020-21 season with a performance showcasing its players’ masterful technique and heartfelt expressivity. Program to be announced.

SERGIO ASSAD, CLARICE ASSAD, AND THIRD COAST PERCUSSION
Sergio Assad, guitar
Clarice Assad, piano/voice
Third Coast Percussion
Friday, May 28, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

In an exploration of global music traditions, legendary guitarist Sergio Assad, along with Clarice Assad’s spellbinding vocals and the rhythms of Grammy-winning Third Coast Percussion, will take audiences on a vast musical journey grounded in familiar stories.

JUNE

AUGUSTIN HADELICH, VIOLIN AND ORION WEISS, PIANO
Monday, June 14, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

BEETHOVEN: Violin Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23
DEBUSSY: Sonata in G minor, L. 140
COLL: Hyperlufe No. 5 for Solo Violin
YSAŸE: Sonata No. 6 in E major for Solo Violin
BRAHMS: Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100
DEBUSSY: L’isle joyeuse, L. 106
ADAMS: Road Movies
RENNÉE FLEMING, SOPRANO
Thursday, June 17, 2021, 8pm PST
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall

In a rescheduled performance from the previous season, four-time Grammy winner and legendary soprano Renée Fleming appears in a program of beloved songs and arias.

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All artists, dates, times, venues, programs, and prices are subject to change.
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ABOUT US

Founded in 1954 as Orange County’s first music organization, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents national and international performances of the highest quality and provides dynamic and innovative music education programs for individuals of all ages to enhance the lives of Orange County audiences through music.

For more than 65 years the Philharmonic Society has evolved and grown with the county’s changing landscape, presenting artists and orchestras who set the standard for artistic achievement from Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming to the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and many others. In addition, the Philharmonic Society celebrates multi-disciplinary performances under its Eclectic Orange brand and embraces music from a wide range of countries with its World Music performances. Its celebrated family concerts introduce children to classical music with creative and inspiring performances, instilling music appreciation for future generations.

The Philharmonic Society’s nationally recognized Youth Music Education Programs, offered free of charge, engage more than 100,000 students annually through curriculum-based music education programs that aim to inspire, expand imaginations, and encourage learning at all levels. These programs are made possible by the Committees of the Philharmonic Society comprised of 700 volunteer members who provide more than 90,000 hours of in-kind service each year.

As a key youth program, the exceptional Orange County Youth Symphony and String Ensemble provide top-tier training to the area’s most talented young musicians through multi-level ensemble instruction, leadership training, touring opportunities, challenging professional repertoire, and performances in world-class venues. The Philharmonic Society also promotes life-long learning by connecting with colleges and universities to conduct masterclasses and workshops and providing pre-concert lectures to introduce audiences to program selections.