



AND JEANNE S. HUTCHISON

present

Dover String Quartet



Reynolds-Kirschbaum Recital Hall

April 3, 2012

www.bcmsal.org

Dover String Quartet

Bryan Lee, Violin • Joel Link, violin
Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, Viola • Camden Shaw, Cello

Considered one of the most remarkably talented young string quartets ever to emerge at such a young age, the Dover Quartet (formerly known as the Old City String Quartet) was the Grand Prize-winner of the 2010 Fischhoff Competition. Formed at the Curtis Institute of Music in 2008, when its members were just 16 years old, the Quartet draws from the musical lineage of both the Vermeer and Guarneri Quartets, but brings a youthful enthusiasm and musical conviction to the repertoire that is truly its own. The *Strad* recently raved that the Quartet is “already pulling away from their peers with their exceptional interpretative maturity, tonal refinement and taut ensemble.”



The Dover Quartet was the winner of the Second Prize in the 2009 Young Concert Artists International Auditions and has taken part in festivals such as Artosphere, La Jolla SummerFest, and the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival. The Quartet has also performed for such influential series as the Washington Performing Arts Society, the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Peoples' Symphony, Schneider Concerts, Kneisel Hall, and the Houston Friends of Chamber Music, and recently returned from a tour of Spain.

Members of the Quartet have appeared as soloists with some of the world's finest orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic, Kansas City Symphony and BBC Concert Orchestra.

The group's recording of the Mendelssohn and Debussy quartets (Unipheye Music) was awarded the Blue Moon Award by the highly respected audiophile website 6moons.com. The album's review by David Kan proclaimed that “...the maturity in these interpretations is phenomenal and disproportionate to the age [of the group].”

The ensemble worked intensively at the Curtis Institute with such renowned chamber musicians as Shmuel Ashkenasi, Arnold Steinhardt, Joseph Silverstein, and Peter Wiley, and is currently the Graduate String Quartet-in-Residence at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, Texas.



The Dover String Quartet is managed by Melvin Kaplan, Inc.
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“Those who braved the muggy air and rush hour traffic on Thursday to hear the Old City String Quartet's 6 p.m. concert at Altamont School were rewarded with music making that can only be described as astonishing.

For them to be performing at such a high level while still in their early 20s, is confounding ... they are destined for the company of some of the finest string quartets ever assembled.”

Excerpted from Michael Huebner's August 19, 2010 five-star review in *The Birmingham News* of the group's performance in the city that year.

Program

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

String Quartet in G Major, Op. 77, No. 1, "Lobkowitz"

Allegro moderato

Adagio

Menuetto: Presto

Finale: Presto

BÉLA BARTOK (1881-1945)

String Quartet No. 6 (1939)

Mesto – Vivace

Mesto – Marcia

Mesto – Burletta: Moderato

Mesto: Molto tranquillo



Intermission



CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10

Animé et très décidé

Assez vif et bien rythmé

Andantino, doucement expressif

Très modéré – En animant peu à peu –

Très mouvementé et avec passion

Program Notes

Franz Joseph Haydn • String Quartet in G Major, Op. 77, No. 1, “Lobkowitz”

Born on March 31, 1732, in Rohrau, Austria, Franz Joseph Haydn was originally intended for the priesthood. He was recruited at age eight to the choir at St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, where he learned violin and keyboard. By his own account his early years were largely given to self-instruction in music. On leaving the choir, he began supporting himself by teaching and playing violin, while undertaking a rigorous study of counterpoint and harmony.

In 1761 he became head of the musical establishment at the great palace of the Esterházy family. His duties were to provide two operas and two concerts a week plus a Sunday Mass and whatever additional music might be wanted. As he described it: “As head of an orchestra I could experiment, observe, and so could improve, expand, cut, take risks; I was cut off from the world, there was no one near me to torment me or make me doubt myself, and so I had to become original.”

In 1791 the death of Prince Nicholas Esterházy freed Haydn from private service, and he embarked on the last phase of his career. His first visit to England was a triumph. Haydn was awarded a degree by Oxford University, met and was honored by members of English society, and gave a highly successful series of concerts. In 1792 he returned to the Continent, passing through Bonn, where he met the young Beethoven, who became his pupil in Vienna. In 1794 he returned to London for another successful tour, then in 1795 settled in Vienna for good.

By his late years he was recognized internationally as the greatest living composer. He composed important works in almost every genre, balancing wit and seriousness, custom and innovation. The first great symphonist, he composed 106 symphonies. He virtually invented the symphony and the string quartet (characterized by the four-movement structure—allegro, slow movement, minuet and trio, and finale), and his 68 quartets remain the foundation of the quartet literature. His choral works include 14 masses and oratorios. He also wrote 47 piano sonatas and more than 125 works for the cello-like baryton. Haydn's classical formal structures of the string quartet and symphony were developed later by his friend Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his student Ludwig van Beethoven. Haydn died on May 31, 1809, in Vienna.

Béla Bartók • String Quartet No. 6 (1939)

Béla Viktor János Bartók was born in the Transylvanian town Nagyszentmiklós (now Sânnicolau Mare, Romania), in the Kingdom of Greater Hungary, on March 25, 1881. He learned to play the piano early; by the age of four he was able to play 40 songs, and his mother began teaching him at the age of five. Bartók is considered one of the greatest composers of the twentieth century.

In addition to composing, Bartók was a pianist and collector of Eastern European and Middle Eastern folk music. He was one of the pioneers (with Kodály) in the field of ethnomusicology – collecting, studying and documenting folk music of indigenous cultures. This was as important as his composing, because it led to the breaking down of cultural barriers.

Upon discovering Magyar peasant folk song (which he regarded as true Hungarian folk music), Bartók began to incorporate folk songs into his own composi-

tions, write original folk-like tunes, and frequently use folksy rhythmic figures. This synthesis of folk elements and Western “art music” became the basis of a vibrant individualistic style in which both traditions were ingeniously integrated. The music of Richard Strauss, whom he met in 1902, had great influence, as well.

Bartók was building a career for himself as a pianist when, in 1907, he landed a job as piano professor at the Royal Academy. This allowed him to stay in Hungary rather than having to tour Europe as a pianist, and thus allowed him to collect more folk songs, notably in Transylvania. Meanwhile his music was influenced by the music of Claude Debussy that Kodály had brought back from Paris.

In 1940, after the outbreak of World War II, Bartók reluctantly moved to the United States. He did not feel comfortable here and found it very difficult to write. He was not very well known, and there was little interest in his music. Bartók died in New York City from leukemia on September 26, 1945. He was interred in Hartsdale, New York, but after the fall of communism in 1988, his remains were transferred to Budapest, Hungary, for a state funeral on July 7, 1988.

Claude Debussy • String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 10

French composer Claude Debussy was born on August 22, 1862, in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France. Born into near poverty, he showed an early gift for the piano. He entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1873, and soon thereafter was employed as pianist by Nadezhda von Meck, Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s patroness.

Influenced by the Symbolist poets and Impressionist painters, Debussy was inclined toward a compositional style of great originality, shunning the strictures of traditional counterpoint and harmony to achieve new effects of great subtlety. Regarded as the founder of musical Impressionism, a term which he dismissed, he used unusual voice leading and timbral colors to evoke pictorial images and moods and appeal to aesthetic sensibilities beyond conventional cultural constructs.

Debussy was one of the most influential French composers and one of the most important figures in music at the beginning of the twentieth century. His music represented the transition from late-Romantic music to the twentieth century Modernist music. His significance in weakening the hold of traditional tonal harmony equals that of Liszt, Wagner, and Schoenberg. Given his effect on such composers as Ravel, Stravinsky, Bartók, Berg, Webern, and Boulez, he can be seen as the most influential French composer of the last three centuries. As Stravinsky stated, “The musicians of my generation and I myself, owe the most to Debussy.” His works include opera, orchestral, cantatas, piano, and chamber music.

Debussy lived during a period of chronic political instability. He abandoned his first wife and maintained affairs with other married women. Only his second wife, Emma Bardac, along with their daughter Chouchou, brought lasting love into his life. Debussy died of cancer at the age of 55 in Paris on March 25, 1918.

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