

# THE CARTHAGE 1997-1998 CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

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THE JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET



{ FEBRUARY 15, 1998 • 4:00 P.M. }

# THE JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET

Joel Smirnoff . . . . . Violin  
Ronald Copes . . . . . Violin  
Samuel Rhodes . . . . . Viola  
Joel Krosnick . . . . . Cello

Quartet in E flat major, Op. 12 . . . . . Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)

*Adagio non troppo - Allegro non tardante*

*Canzonetta: Allegretto*

*Andante espressivo*

*Molto allegro e vivace*

Three Pieces for String Quartet . . . . . Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

*Movement for String Quartet (1921-24)*

*Lento molto (1928)*

*Rondino (1923)*

## INTERMISSION

Quartet in D minor, D. 810 . . . . . Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)

("Death and the Maiden")

*Allegro*

*Andante con moto*

*Scherzo: Allegro molto*

*Presto*

*The Juilliard String Quartet records exclusively for Sony Classical. They appear with Colbert Artists Management Inc., Agnes Eisenberger, President, 111 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019.*

# PROGRAM NOTES

## QUARTET IN E FLAT MAJOR, OP. 12.....MENDELSSOHN

*Adagio non troppo - Allegro non tardante*

*Canzonetta: Allegretto*

*Andante espressivo*

*Molto allegro e vivace*

Mendelssohn's melodic gifts were so great that his occasional conventionality in the field of harmony and rhythm has not interfered with the popularity of such works as the Violin Concerto, the Overtures, the Wedding March, etc. After more than a century, their lovely melodies still have the same effect. This Nietzsche must have meant when he spoke of Mendelssohn as a "happy incident" in the history of German music. With his far-reaching intuition Nietzsche here also sensed the Mediterranean character of Mendelssohn's melodic language of which other German admirers, including even Schumann, were not aware.

The beautiful melody of the first movement of this quartet could almost be from "Aida," written more than fifty years later. After a short introduction, modeled upon Beethoven's opus 74, this theme dominates the entire first movement. The form of this movement, written by a boy of eighteen, is astonishingly mature, and so is the scoring. (Mozart and Beethoven struggled many years before they were able to express themselves as perfectly in the difficult medium of a string quartet.)

The piquant melody of the canzonetta—which holds the place of a scherzo—is charming enough to carry the simple three-part form.

The slow movement, conceived as an introduction to the finale, may be described as a nocturne for violin. It is surprisingly followed by an agitated movement in C minor. There may have been a secret poetic program to this finale, because its form is insufficiently explained by mere analysis. The exposition later presents a quiet theme in B flat major and then ends in G minor. Instead of writing a development the composer then recalls the second subject of the opening movement. A full recapitulation follows in which the second theme is transformed into the minor. At its close, a short improvisation prefaces the resumption of both themes of the first movement, and the quartet ends with a literal repetition of the coda of the first movement.

— Konrad Wolff

## THREE PIECES FOR STRING QUARTET.....COPLAND

*Movement for String Quartet*

*Lento molto*

*Rondino*

The chamber music of Aaron Copland is unjustly neglected, partly because there is so little of it. His string quartet works, for instance, are limited to three small pieces written when he was in his twenties and still polishing his compositional skills. Yet to hear them is to catch a glimpse of a genius at work, already displaying the assured craftsmanship that would serve him well for decades to come.

Of the three Copland pieces on today's program, the single Movement for String Quartet is the greatest rarity. It dates from Copland's student days in Paris where he worked under the stern yet affectionate tutelage of Nadia Boulanger. As so often happens with early works, Copland quickly discarded his Movement and allowed it to slip into complete oblivion. Over sixty years later and quite by accident, the music was discovered among Copland's papers at the Library of Congress and published and professionally performed for the first time with the composer's approval.

The piece opens with a plaintive motive of a single rising and falling minor third, cast against gently dissonant accompaniment, before giving way to a biting, aggressive middle section that could not be a sharper contrast. The work then sinks back into the uneasy softness of the beginning, with the main motive eventually reappearing.

The Lento molto and the Rondino are known as Copland's Two Pieces for String Quartet (which were later arranged by the composer as Two Pieces for String Orchestra) but were not originally written as a set. The Rondino came first, in 1923, as part of a two-movement musical tribute to Gabriel Fauré, who was one of Copland's favorite composers. The Rondino was coupled with Copland's arrangement of a Fauré piano piece to honor the beloved Frenchman as he approached his 78th birthday.

Five years later, Copland composed his Lento molto and paired it with the Rondino. (By this time, Fauré was deceased and Copland probably felt more comfortable about replacing the prelude with something entirely original.) At least one Copland biographer has insisted that the Lento molto was not conceived as a companion piece to the Rondino, citing the sharp stylistic contrast between the two. But other writers suggest just the opposite, and the ultimate truth will probably never be known. At any rate, Copland's Two Pieces for String Quartet received their premiere on one of the newly-organized modern music concerts led by Copland and Roger Sessions. (There were eight such concerts in all, and sixteen different young American composers had works premiered on these programs!)

The Lento molto (dedicated to composer Roy Harris) is mostly homophonic in texture with its succession of parallel triads against a lyrical line. The serenity of the opening, however, yields to the biting passion and increasingly unbridled dissonance of the middle section before calm returns. Copland's teacher called this "a masterpiece. . .so moving, so deep, so simple." The Rondino features an opening theme that spells out the letters of Gabriel Fauré's name and is written in the intriguing time signature of 3 + 5 over 8. The opening is witty and energetic, with a touch of jazz in the rhythm, while the center section is much more lyrical. In both movements we hear canon-like imitation between voices and Copland's unerring gift for balancing beautiful lines.

– Gregory Berg

QUARTET IN D MINOR, D. 810.....SCHUBERT  
("DEATH AND THE MAIDEN")

*Allegro*

*Andante con moto*

*Scherzo: Allegro molto*

*Presto*

The well-known Quartet in D minor, "Death and the Maiden," uses the melody of Schubert's song text of that name, a practice which was not unusual for this composer. The quartet was written in the year 1826 but was not published until after Schubert's death.

Though making the melody "Death and the Maiden" the central feature of the quartet, it is not planned as an organic whole as in Chopin's tragic Sonata in B flat minor. However, there are signs that Schubert deliberately maintained a sombre mood, although each movement is independent of the others. The first movement, which is in sonata form, begins with four dramatic bars, followed by ten measures of simple yet eloquent harmony; the two highly contrasted moods suggesting the relentless approach of Death, and the tender appeal of the stricken child. Schubert has quoted, as part of the second subject of the Finale, a phrase from the "Erl-King." This may only be a coincidence, but it is just probable that this section from Death to the Boy may have recurred to Schubert's mind as he pondered over the words of "Death to the Maiden."

The second movement is a theme and variations. The theme melody differs greatly from the form in which it appeared in the first movement. Forty-eight bars in length, it is an expansion and development of the introductory measures of the original melody. The variations which follow stay closely within the framework of the theme; each variation presents its own mood, as different instruments add Arabesques and varied rhythms.

The Scherzo and Trio is characteristic of Schubert, being full of striking rhythms and swift dynamic and harmonic changes. The strongly rhythmic opening motif dominates the Scherzo and is not without influence upon the Trio. The grace and charm of the Trio contrasts the Scherzo and the entire movement is the most concise of the quartet.

The fourth movement is marked finale-presto. Structurally this movement defies all the rules of form. The opening theme is marked for repetition; the succeeding passage, constructed upon the first theme, is also marked for repetition, whereas the bridge-passage and the second subject are not included in the repetition but merge imperceptibly into the development. In the recapitulation, there are several new features. The repetitions are omitted and instead of the bridge-passages, Schubert devises an entirely new section. In a brilliant display of virtuosity, the coda marked Prestissimo concludes the movement.

– Konrad Wolff

# THE JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET

For over 50 years, the Juilliard String Quartet has been renowned internationally for its uncompromising musicianship and the emotional intensity of its performances. The Quartet has been celebrated for its performances of works as diverse as the string quartets of Beethoven, Bartók, and Elliott Carter – performances that are unfailingly characterized by clarity of structure, plasticity of line, and compelling rhythmic drive.

During the 1997-98 season, the Juilliard String Quartet returns to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., to officially re-open the Coolidge Auditorium, which has been under renovation for almost a decade. It will also perform concerts in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, Houston, Pasadena and other cities throughout the U.S. The Quartet will embark on its annual tours of Europe in November and March. At the Tanglewood Music Festival this past summer, the Quartet welcomed its newest member, Ronald Copes, who succeeds Joel Smirnoff as second violinist. Mr. Smirnoff is now the Juilliard String Quartet's primarius.

The 1996-97 season was a milestone period for the Juilliard Quartet: it celebrated its 50th anniversary and marked a major change of personnel with the retirement (from the group) of founding member and first violinist Robert Mann, who played his final concert with the ensemble on July 2 at Tanglewood. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, which occurred on October 11, 1996, the Juilliard String Quartet presented concerts featuring works - new and old - long associated with the ensemble. Early in its career the Quartet gave pioneering performances of all six Bartók quartets, and this legacy was celebrated with a Bartók cycle in New York in December 1996 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Quartet also gave premiere performances of a Quintet for Clarinet and Strings by Milton Babbitt and a Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra by David Diamond with the Juilliard School Orchestra at Avery Fisher Hall. The ensemble was also heard on tour in Europe in Japan.

For over three decades, the Juilliard String Quartet has enjoyed a phenomenal reputation as quartet-in-residence at the Library of Congress, having succeeded the Budapest Quartet in 1962.

In 1996, *Musical America* named the Juilliard String Quartet "Musicians of the Year," making it the first chamber music ensemble ever to grace the cover of the *Musical America International Directory of the Performing Arts*.

As quartet-in-residence at New York City's Juilliard School, the Juilliard Quartet is widely admired for its seminal influence on aspiring string instrumentalists from all over the world. In particular, the Juilliard Quartet continues to play an important role in the formation of new American string ensembles. Some of the quartets it helped to create include the Alexander; American; Concord; Emerson; La Salle; New World; Mendelssohn; Tokyo; Brentano; Lark; St. Lawrence; and Colorado String Quartets.

Long a favorite of audiences abroad, the Quartet is heard regularly in Europe and Asia. Highlights of the 1996-96 season include the string quartet cycles of Beethoven in Bonn and Tokyo, and a Hindemith cycle in Venice. In 1961 the Quartet made musical history when it became the first American string quartet to visit the former Soviet Union after World War II, and in 1965 returned for another triumphant tour. The ensemble also played throughout Asia, South America, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

The Juilliard String Quartet has performed a comprehensive repertoire of some 500 works, ranging from compositions by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms and Dvorák to works by 20th century masters. It was through the Juilliard Quartet's performances that the quartets of Arnold Schoenberg were rescued from obscurity. The Quartet has been a particularly ardent champion of 20th century American chamber music. It has premiered more than 60 compositions of American composers, including works by some of America's finest jazz musicians. In recent seasons the Quartet has become a persuasive advocate for the complex and visionary four string quartets of Elliott Carter which received a landmark recording from the Juilliard on the Sony label in 1991 during the Quartet's 45th anniversary.

The ensemble records exclusively for Sony Classical and has been associated with the label (formerly Columbia Records) since 1949. In celebration of the Quartet's 50th year, Sony released seven CDs containing previously unreleased material as well as notable performances from its award-winning discography. With more than 100 releases to its credit, the group is one of the most widely recorded string quartets of our time. The Juilliard Quartet's recordings on Sony of the complete Beethoven Quartets, the complete Schoenberg Quartets, and the Debussy and Ravel Quartets have all received Grammy Awards. The ensemble is also recording the complete Hindemith Quartets for the German label Wergo which has released the first volume. The Quartet was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the National Academy for Recording Arts and Sciences in 1986 for its recording of the complete Bartók String Quartets, and in 1993 was awarded the "Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik" (German Record Critics Award) for Lifetime Achievement in the recording industry. In May 1994, its Sony Classical recording of quartets by Ravel, Debussy, and Dutilleux was selected by *The Times Magazine* of London as one of the 100 Best CDs ever recorded.

All members of the Juilliard String Quartet are American-born and trained.

JOEL SMIRNOFF, first violinist, is a native of New York City. He attended the University of Chicago and the Juilliard School, and was for a period of six years a member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He won second prize in the International American Music Competition in 1983. In 1985, Mr. Smirnoff made his New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall and in 1986 joined the Juilliard Quartet as second violinist. Mr. Smirnoff has participated in the world premiere of many contemporary works, some of which were composed for him.

RONALD COPES, second violinist, comes to the Quartet after a long, distinguished career as a chamber musician, concert soloist and recitalist. A former member of the Dunsmuir and Los Angeles Piano Quartets, Mr. Copes has also taught at the University of California at Santa Barbara for many years and has appeared as a featured performer in several renowned chamber music festivals. Devoting considerable energy to the development and playing of contemporary string literature, he has worked closely with composers and premiered a number of solo works. Mr. Copes' recordings are available on the Orion, Musical Heritage, CRI and New World labels.

Violist SAMUEL RHODES, who also hails from New York City, studied composition with Roger Sessions and Earl Kim at Princeton University. Celebrating his 27th season as a member of the Juilliard String Quartet and the faculty of the Juilliard School, he is also a member of the faculty at Tanglewood and a frequent participant at the Marlboro Festival. Mr. Rhodes' solo appearances have included recitals at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., at Weill Recital Hall, and with orchestras and chamber groups in the U.S. and abroad. He has given world premiere performances of works for unaccompanied viola by Milton Babbitt and Arthur Weisburg.

Cellist JOEL KROSNICK, a native of Connecticut, is active as both performer and educator. His principal teachers were William D'Amato, Luigi Silva, Jens Nygaard and Claus Adam, whom he succeeded in the Juilliard Quartet. A frequent recitalist and soloist, Mr. Krosnick performs throughout the U.S. and Europe. He has performed at Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Symphony Space, and appears regularly at Columbia University's Miller Theatre with pianist Gilbert Kalish. Mr. Krosnick's solo recordings may be heard on the Orion, Nonesuch, and New World Record labels. Mr. Krosnick serves on the teaching faculties of the Juilliard School and Tanglewood.

## MUSIC EVENTS

*Saturday, February 21, 1998* ..... 1:00 p.m.  
Delbert Disselhorst  
Organ Master Class

*Sunday, February 22, 1998* ..... 4:00 p.m.  
Delbert Disselhorst  
Guest Organ Recital

*Saturday, March 7, 1998* ..... 7:30 p.m.  
Gary Verkade  
Faculty Organ Recital

*Sunday, March 8, 1998* ..... 4:00 p.m.  
Spring Jazz Concert  
Carthage and UW-Milwaukee Jazz Ensembles

*Friday, March 13, 1998 to Sunday, March 22, 1998*  
Carthage Choir Tour to New York

*Friday, March 27, 1998* ..... 7:30 p.m.  
John Schubring  
Senior Organ Recital

*Saturday, March 28, 1998* ..... 7:30 p.m.  
Lyra String Quartet

*Sunday, April 5, 1998* ..... 4:00 p.m.  
London Brass

ALL PERFORMANCES ARE HELD IN A.F. SIEBERT CHAPEL,  
CARTHAGE, KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

FOR TICKET INFORMATION, CALL 414-551-5859,  
MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.