

## 2018 Preview Notes • Week Two • Persons Auditorium

Saturday, July 21 at 8:00pm



Piano Trio in E-flat Major, Hob. XV:29 (1795-97)

**Joseph Haydn**

Born March 31, 1732 • Died May 31, 1809

Duration: approx. 15 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2005

After the death of his patron, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy, Haydn took advantage of his freedom, and his pension, to travel to London twice. Haydn's works had preceded him across the English Channel and were already much celebrated when the composer saw the ocean for the first time and crossed over to the island on New Year's Day of 1791. Upon arriving, Haydn met with even greater success. He also met the pianist Therese Jansen Bartolozzi, one of Muzio Clementi's best students, to whom Haydn's last piano trios are dedicated. The work itself begins with a plucky little march that gives way to a more lyrical section in the minor mode led by the violin before returning to variations of the first theme. The second movement, marked *innocentemente*, opens tenderly but modulates expertly through several keys to launch into the rapid finale with its dance-influenced *Ländler* rhythms.

Participants: Evren Ozel, *piano*; Stephen Tavani, *violin*; Judith Serkin, *cello*

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String Quartet No.1, Op. 7 (1908-09)

**Béla Bartók**

Born March 25, 1881 • Died September 26, 1945

Duration: approx. 30 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2017

On his blog, Arnold Steinhardt celebrates Bartók alongside Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Dvořák as a composer for whom "the string quartet must have had enduring significance, for [he] returned over and over to this most intimate of art forms." Bartók completed six string quartets, each characterized by different intricacies of rhythm and folk effects, and he had begun a seventh at the time of his death in 1945. This first quartet is also one of his first pieces to include folk elements, an interest for which Bartók became well-known later in life. The piece begins with a lovelorn dirge that winds its way chromatically to a second and third movement that accelerate the piece out of its heavyhearted beginning toward exotic pentatonic melodies and a spirited end that looks back to the beginning with a wry quotation in the cello line of a popular folk song titled "Just a Fair Girl."

Participants: Stephen Waarts, *violin*; Inmo Yang, *violin*; Tanner Menees, *viola*; Peter Stumpf, *cello*

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Piano Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34 (1864)

**Johannes Brahms**

Born May 7, 1833 • Died April 3, 1897

Duration: approx. 45 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2014

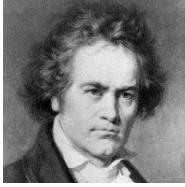
Brahms's only piano quintet actually began as a string quintet that was later rewritten into a double piano sonata and, finally, into its present form. Brahms was in contact with Clara Schumann throughout the composition process, and it was she who urged him to refashion the piece a final time, having been captivated by the musical content outlined in the string quintet but unimpressed with its presentation as a piano sonata, which seemed like an awkward reduction of the original thoughts. The quintet begins with an intense, probing theme that is introduced in unison by the violin, cello, and piano and repeated immediately by the entire ensemble, showing the strengths of including both the piano and strings in the quintet. The piece's first movement unfolds in sonata form that leads into a calm second movement, an electrifying scherzo, and a final movement that blends pensive chromaticism with animated folk elements for a transformative finale.

Participants: Mitsuko Uchida, *piano*; Tessa Lark, *violin*; Robyn Bollinger, *violin*; Zoë Martin-Doike, *viola*; Peter Stumpf, *cello*

# MARLBORO MUSIC

## 2018 Preview Notes • Week Two • Persons Auditorium

Sunday, July 22 at 2:30pm



Quintet for Piano and Winds in E-flat Major, Op. 16 (1796)

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Born December 16, 1770 • Died March 26, 1827

Duration: approx. 25 minutes • Last Marlboro Performance: 2014

This piece is scored for the same instruments and is in the same key as Mozart's wind quintet, to which it is often compared. Mozart said of his piece at the time of its premiere that it was "the best work" that he had yet written. Beethoven, on the other hand, went on to rework his quintet into a piano quartet. With demanding passages for the piano, the piece was first performed with the composer himself at the keyboard. The second movement begins by floating down in a stepwise manner, introducing a simple theme that becomes more complex as it is voiced by the different instruments in turn. The theme recalls the beginning of Zerlina's first aria in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and the movement is indeed marked *Andante cantabile*. The gentleness of the second movement opens to a *Rondo* with plenty of improvisational opportunities for the piano to lead the piece to a spirited finale.

Participants: Emily Beare, *oboe*; Charles Neidich, *clarinet*; Keith Buncke, *bassoon*; Trevor Nuckøls, *horn*; Xiaohui Yang, *piano*

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*A Mirror on Which to Dwell* (1975-76)

**Elliott Carter**

Born December 11, 1908 • Died November 5, 2012

Duration: approx. 20 minutes • Marlboro Premiere

Elizabeth Bishop was the Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress in 1950 when she wrote to her friend Robert Lowell that "I'm supposed to ask the Fellahs if they care to go" to a concert at the Library featuring Rudolf Serkin and Adolf Busch. "It ought to be pretty good, I think." Written 25 years after that letter, Carter's *A Mirror on Which to Dwell* was occasioned by the bicentennial of the country, which is mentioned obliquely in the setting of Bishop's *A View of the Capitol from the Library of Congress*, the penultimate song in a series of six. Carter worked with the poems in *Mirror* in an attempt to see how words can be best reflected in music, noting that he especially appreciated Bishop for the "secondary layer of meaning" in her poetry, "sometimes ironic, sometimes passionate, that gives a special ambiance, often contradictory, to what the words say."

Participants: Lucy Fitz Gibbon, *soprano*; Giorgio Consolati, *flute*; Emily Beare, *oboe*; Bixby Kennedy, *clarinet*; Eunice Kim, *violin*; En-Chi Cheng, *viola*; Alice Yoo, *cello*; William Langlie-Miletich, *double bass*; George Nickson, *percussion*; Ieva Jokubaviciute, *piano*; Charles Neidich, *conductor*

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String Sextet in G Major, Op. 36 (1864-65)

**Johannes Brahms**

Born May 7, 1833 • Died April 3, 1897

Duration: approx. 45 minutes • Last Marlboro performance: 2013

Though there aren't many string sextets in the repertoire, Brahms's two—with another Marlboro favorite, Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*—enjoy extreme and enduring success. This piece blossoms out of its mysterious opening, whose buzzing in the lower strings glances off the enigmatic melody in the first violin. The first movement famously includes a musical reference to Brahms's then-lover Agathe von Siebold, whose name is written into the piece as A-G-A-H-E, with the H represented by B-flat. A *Scherzo* follows with sober humor pricking through in the plucked strings and a lively Trio that contributes a brief contrast to the otherwise understated movement. Elements of the first movement are recalled in the five variations of the third, and the fourth movement simmers to a satisfying ending through all of its fugal intricacies.

Participants: Yoojin Jang, *violin*; Nick Eanet, *violin*; Cong Wu, *viola*; Zhanbo Zheng, *viola*; Tony Rymer, *cello*; Peter Wiley, *cello*