

2019 Preview Notes • Week Three

Friday, July 26 at 8:00pm—Marlboro College Dining Hall



Piano Trio in F Major, Op. 80 (1847)

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810

Died July 29, 1856

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2018

Schumann wrote three piano trios, and though the opus designations between Schumann's first two trios span almost 20 numbers, the trios were both composed in the same year. Schumann himself stated that the second makes a "friendlier and more immediate impression" than the first, which was written in a "time of gloomy moods." This trio in F Major romps through a version of sonata form in the first movement, exuberantly exploring unexpected keys and closing with enthusiasm. The lyrical second movement provides balance, and the third movement continues with a quirkily elegant, dance-like sense of motion. The final movement draws on previous themes to conclude the piece with mounting excitement.

Participants: Evren Ozel, *piano*; Stephanie Zyzak, *violin*; Alice Neary, *cello*



Three Songs from William Shakespeare (1953)

Igor Stravinsky

Born June 17, 1882

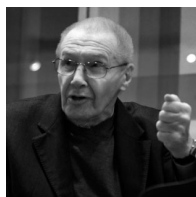
Died April 6, 1971

Duration: approx. 7 minutes

Last Marlboro Performance: 2012

When Mitsuko Uchida announced her co-directorship of Marlboro Music with Jonathan Biss last summer, she quoted Shakespeare's beloved comment on music from *Twelfth Night*: "If music be the food of love, play on!" The Bard's references to music, throughout his plays as well as his poems, are many. In this collection of songs, Stravinsky chose to set Sonnet VIII, *Music to hear*, Ariel's song "Five Fathoms Deep" from *The Tempest*, and the cuckoo's song "When Daisies Pied" from *Love's Labour's Lost*. Stravinsky combines some tonal implications with limited serialist techniques to illustrate each song, including playful rhythms that imitate the cuckoo in the third song.

Participants: Sara Couden, *mezzo-soprano*; Giorgio Consolati, *flute*; Yoonah Kim, *clarinet*; Sally Chisholm, *viola*



Hommage à R. Schumann (1990)

György Kurtág

Born Feb. 19, 1926

In residence 1997

Duration: approx. 10 minutes

Last Marlboro Performance: 2016

Kurtág has written several works in homage to others, from Tchaikovsky to Nancy Sinatra. His tribute to Schumann takes the same instrumentation as the earlier composer's *Märchenerzählungen*, or Fairytale Narrations. Comprised of six short movements, this collection of miniatures can feel like a series of stories that references earlier music using Kurtág's own language. Of particular interest is the final movement, titled 'Farewell (Master Raro discovers Guillaume de Machaut).' Raro was a character that Schumann used in his music journalism; Machaut was a 14th century composer who used repeating rhythms to influential effect in his motets. Kurtág assigns a characteristic rhythm to each instrument and lets them conclude his tale.

Participants: Yoonah Kim, *clarinet*; Jing Peng, *viola*; Shai Wosner, *piano*



String Quintet in G Minor, K. 516 (1787)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born January 27, 1756

Died December 5, 1791

Duration: approx. 35 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2015

Beset with professional frustrations and the illness of his father, Mozart wrote this string quintet in a key that is strongly associated with anguish in his works. G minor is the key of his 40th Symphony, written the following year, and of Pamina's heartbreaking aria in *The Magic Flute*. Like his five other string quintets, this piece features two violas, an instrument that Mozart himself enjoyed playing. The first movement opens turbulently, and, contrary to expectation, its second theme continues in a minor key and provides no relief from the serious beginning. The *Menuetto* continues to defy expectations, placing declamatory chords on what should be the weak beats of an otherwise courtly dance. It is only after plaintive adagios, in the third movement and at the beginning of the fourth, that the final movement bursts forth in G major for a congenial ending.

Participants: Anna Göckel and Ji Won Song violin; Zoë Martin-Doike and Samuel Rhodes, *viola*; Julia Yang, *cello*

2019 Preview Notes • Week Three

Saturday, July 27 at 8:00pm—Persons Auditorium



String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 41, No. 1 (1842)

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810 • Died July 29, 1856

Duration: approx. 25 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 1980

The three String Quartets, Op. 41, are the only works of that genre that Schumann composed. Written during his so-called “chamber music year,” which followed his “song year” in 1840 and “symphony year” in 1841, Op. 41 was the product of Schumann’s focused study of the Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven quartets. All three of his own quartets were completed in less than two weeks, dedicated to his friend Felix Mendelssohn, and first performed in honor of his wife Clara’s 23rd birthday. This quartet in A Minor, though published as No. 1, was actually the last piece to be completed in this opus. However, its lengthy introductory movement, which opens with a delicate and expressive canon, positions it well as the beginning of the entire group of quartets.

Participants: David McCarroll and Geneva Lewis, *violin*; Zhanbo Zheng, *viola*; Marcy Rosen, *cello*



String Trio, Op. 45 (1946)

Arnold Schoenberg

Born September 13, 1874 • Died July 13, 1951

Duration: approx. 20 minutes

Last Marlboro Performance: 2011

Though Schoenberg had already begun to sketch this string trio upon receiving a commission from Harvard, it was an almost fatal heart attack that provided him with crucial inspiration. Schoenberg divulged to a friend after the piece was complete that the composition depicted the exact moment that the hypodermic needle entered his heart, which had completely ceased to beat. The work was composed without formal movements, but it is broken into five sections, including three parts and two episodes. With a strong serialist backbone, the piece is nevertheless emotionally expressive, using contrast at all levels to depict the disorientation of near-death experience.

Participants: Daniel Phillips, *violin*; Tanner Menees, *viola*; Alexander Hersh, *cello*



Piano Quintet in E-flat Major, Op. 44

Robert Schumann

Born June 8, 1810 • Died July 29, 1856

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2011

This piano quintet was composed by Schumann just a few months after he finished the string quartet that opens the program. Combining his recently acquired experience in chamber writing with his deeply held affinity for piano writing, Schumann created a work that was hailed as fiendishly difficult, especially for the pianist, but also “splendid, full of vigor and freshness.” It was Clara Schumann who thus praised the work, and though she was unable to give the first private performance due to illness—Felix Mendelssohn stepped in to play the part—she did perform in its public premiere. The first movement is by turns brisk and romantic, and the funeral march that follows in the second movement is no less memorable (and was used thematically in Lanthimos’ recent film, *The Favourite*). The acrobatic scherzo and fervent final movement contribute further to this muscular work’s enduring strength.

Participants: Mitsuko Uchida, *piano*; Geneva Lewis and Alina Kobialka, *violin*; Tanner Menees, *viola*; Alice Neary, *cello*

2019 Preview Notes • Week Three

Sunday, July 28 at 2:30pm—Persons Auditorium



Horn Quintet in E-flat Major, K. 407 (1782)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

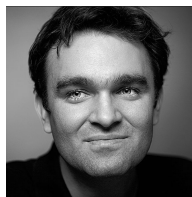
Born January 27, 1756 • Died December 5, 1791

Duration: approx. 17 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2014

Ignaz Joseph Leutgeb, a horn player and friend of the Mozart family, settled in Vienna and realized that he could not sustain himself on a musician's salary. He opened a small cheese shop, which was compared to "the size of a snail shell" by Wolfgang when the composer rekindled his friendship with Leutgeb upon his own arrival in Vienna. The friendship remained a musical one, and though Leutgeb continued at the shop, Mozart wrote this quintet and four horn trios for his cheesemonger friend. The manuscripts are full of good-natured insults aimed at the horn player, true to Mozart's character. Accordingly, the quintet is a genial piece described glowingly by the critic Alfred Einstein as containing "a little love duet between horn and violin" during its slow second movement in addition to a jovial rondo that finishes the piece off with panache.

Participants: Yevhen Churikov, *horn*; Mari Lee, *violin*; En-Chi Cheng and Samuel Rhodes, *viola*; Alice Neary, *cello*



Versuch über die Fuge (2005)

Jörg Widmann

Born June 19, 1973

In residence • 2008, 2019

Duration: approx. 25 minutes

Marlboro Premiere

Versuch über die Fuge, or Attempt at a Fugue, suggests the form of an essay in its name. The piece, for soprano and string quartet, makes inquiries into both the possibilities of form, with respect to the fugue, and the possibilities of content, with respect to its biblically-sourced lyrics, which speak to issues of originality, mortality, and profundity. Bach and Beethoven present themselves as hints while the biblical material is explicit: "That which is, is far off and exceedingly deep. Who can find it out? - Vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas!"

Participants: Lucy Fitz Gibbon, *soprano*; Brian Hong and Alina Kobialka, *violin*; En-Chi Cheng, *viola*; Marcy Rosen, *cello*



Piano Trio in F Minor, Op. 65 (1883)

Antonín Dvořák

Born September 8, 1841 • Died May 1, 1904

Duration: approx. 40 minutes

Last Marlboro performance: 2017

Written in the decade after Dvořák achieved international acclaim for his spirited, Slavonic-tinged music, this piano trio is often singled out as his most Brahmsian of compositions. Indeed, Brahms had fostered the young Czech composer's success, and the trio begins with a searching theme in the first movement that is tempestuous, brooding, and noble. Though conceived on a larger scale than his other compositions, the trio doesn't miss chances to look back on the *furiant* dance rhythms that made Dvořák's earlier work so infectiously popular. Flashes of the *furiant* are heard in the second and fourth movements, enlivening a piece whose inspiration is otherwise identified as the death of the composer's mother just two months before the trio was written.

Participants: Jonathan Biss, *piano*; Abigail Fayette, *violin*; Timotheos Petrin, *cello*