



HOPKINS CENTER  
FOR THE ARTS

*presents*

# TAKÁCS QUARTET

Edward Dusinberre *violin*

Károly Schranz *violin*

Geraldine Walther *viola*

András Fejér *cello*

## **Post-Performance Discussion**

You are invited to remain in the theater immediately following the performance for an informal discussion with the artists.

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**Friday, September 25, 2015 • 8 pm**

Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

# PROGRAM

String Quartet No. 14 in A flat, Op. 105

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

- I. Adagio ma non troppo – Allegro appassionato
- II. Molto vivace
- III. Lento e molto cantabile
- IV. Finale: Allegro non tanto

String Quartet No. 57 in C Major, Op. 74, No. 1

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andantino grazioso
- III. Menuetto. Allegro – Trio
- IV. Vivace

## • INTERMISSION •

String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, D. 810 "Death and the Maiden"

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Presto
- IV. Prestissimo

The Takács Quartet appears by arrangement with Seldy Cramer Artists,  
and records for Hyperion and Decca/London Records.

The Takács Quartet is Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Colorado in Boulder  
and are Associate Artists at Wigmore Hall, London

[www.takacsquartet.com](http://www.takacsquartet.com)

# PROGRAM NOTES

## ***String Quartet No. 14 in A flat, Op. 105*** **Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)**

In October 1892 Antonín Dvořák arrived in New York, where he had been invited to head the National Conservatory of Music. There he would stay for three years, and though his time in America brought him many new friends and provided fruitful material for his composition, he was extremely happy to rejoin his family and resume his post at the Prague Conservatory in the autumn of 1895. However, during his last months in New York he began to write a string quartet,

interrupting his work for the journey to Europe. When he had once again settled in Prague, he started composing a second string quartet (Op. 106), and only after completing it returned to the earlier work; thus the quartet in A-flat Major, Op. 105, turned out to be Dvořák's last string quartet, and the two works undoubtedly represent the pinnacle of his quartet writing. As a violist who grew up playing the great quartets of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, Dvořák had a special affinity for chamber music. But these 1895 string quartets would be his last; at the age of 54, after

# PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

an exceptionally productive and devoted attention to quartets, trios and other small ensembles over the course of his life, Dvořák in his late career would turn more exclusively to symphonic music and to opera. The A-flat quartet received its first performance by the Rose Quartet in Prague on October 20, 1896.

Each instrument reveals its distinctive timbre in the staggered entrances that open the first movement, beginning with the cello and moving upward in a somber and stirring slow introduction. The *Allegro appassionato* introduces a new liveliness along with the shift from minor to major mode, and Dvořák maintains an exceptionally well-balanced texture that finds all voices, perhaps most notably the viola, joining the dialogue on equal terms. A swift, rhythmically incisive *scherzo* alluding to the *furiant*, a Bohemian folk dance that Dvořák especially enjoyed, is paired with a charming trio to form the second movement. The *Lento* movement opens with a beautiful singing duet between the two violins. Its central section emerges, after a resonant pause, with pulsing triplets in the cello line that propel an increasingly animated argument. The solo cello launches the final movement with a restless motive that moves into the first violin part and there develops into an exuberant, dance-like melody. The warmth and lyricism of this finale, combined with its colorful textures and rhythmic verve, are hallmarks of Dvořák's style at its most compelling and persuasive.

## ***String Quartet in C Major, Op. 74, No. 1*** **Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)**

No other composer explored the possibilities of the string quartet as comprehensively as Joseph Haydn, who wrote dozens of them over the course of his long and prosperous career. By the 1790s quartet evenings were popular in Vienna's aristocratic circles, and when publishers began to exploit a burgeoning new amateur market for

string quartets, those of Joseph Haydn were the most sought after and copied. An additional spur to Haydn's creativity in this field came with his first visit to London in 1791. In London, Haydn found himself at the center of a rich and lively musical culture that supported many public and private concerts. His entrance to London's concert scene was guided in part by the superb violinist J. P. Salomon, whose quartet and orchestra dominated the city's concert life. Salomon, a German musician who had settled in London about ten years earlier, was constantly before the public as a virtuoso, orchestra director and concert entrepreneur. He excelled in the presentation of string quartets, which he featured on public concert stages though elsewhere, as in Vienna, they remained salon works.

In 1792, between trips to London, Haydn received a commission for six string quartets from Count Anton Georg Apponyi, a cultivated Hungarian nobleman who frequently offered chamber concerts in his home. Having already composed over fifty such works, most of them for intimate audiences of connoisseurs, Haydn was well acquainted with the tastes of that audience. But knowing that his Apponyi works would also be played by Salomon's quartet in London, Haydn wrote them with a more public context in mind; thus all of the Opus 71 and 74 quartets (which Haydn conceived as a single opus, despite a publisher's division of the six works under two opus numbers) feature ear-catching introductions, orchestral gestures and a dominating first violin part tailored to Salomon's talents. The C-major quartet opens boldly with a dissonant dominant seventh chord that demands resolution; with the key firmly established, the first violin unfolds an inexorably ascending chromatic line over the sustained pulsing C of the cello. This rising chromatic idea will recur in the Minuet and Finale, helping to create a sense of underlying unity

# PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

throughout the work. The *Andantino* is poised and balanced, with all voices sharing the lyrical motives in a transparent texture that allows their individual timbres to be heard. Lively rhythms and surprising harmonies emerge in the Minuet, with a hushed, *mezza voce* Trio providing contrast. The Finale features vigorous, virtuosic playing by all parts in exuberant imitative entrances and strongly accented passages.

## **Quartet No. 14, "Death and the Maiden," D. 810 Franz Schubert (1797-1828)**

Schubert's famous quartet in D minor dates from the early spring of 1824, a period in which Schubert devoted himself, for the first time in three years, to writing chamber music. At this time Schubert was in poor health, having been diagnosed with syphilis; he now suffered from pain in his bones, and had lost the ability to sing or even to play the piano. Writing in his diary, he reflected, "Pain sharpens the understanding and strengthens the mind; whereas joy seldom troubles about the former and softens the latter or makes it frivolous." Schubert seems to explore the thin edge between pain and joy in this unusually poignant, passionate quartet. Three of its four movements are in D minor, a key frequently described in Schubert's time as "melancholy" and evocative of suffering. His 1817 song "Death and the Maiden," on which the second movement is based, was also in D minor; in retaining the original key and allowing it to permeate the work, Schubert links the quartet as

a whole to the song, which expresses mortal terror and deathly consolation.

The first bar of the *Allegro* introduces a triplet figure that proves to be a propulsive force throughout the movement; a soft, urgent theme in dotted rhythms that enters in F major provides a gentle balance, though the two ideas will fiercely intertwine as the argument unfolds. In the second movement, the main theme quotes the solemn piano introduction from Schubert's earlier song, alluding to Death's soothing, intoned words to the Maiden ("Give me your hand....Softly you shall sleep in my arms") with soft repeated notes and measured rhythms. A series of five variations enriches the simple melody and brings forth the agitation and pain expressed by the Maiden ("I am still young! Go, and do not touch me"), with particular eloquence emerging from the cello as it carries the theme in the second variation and exploits its contrasting ranges in the fifth. Yet a peaceful reconciliation is finally achieved in the coda. Dramatic accentuations launch the *Scherzo*, which sustains a taut energy even in the quiet D-major Trio section. It is worth noting that while the previous movement quotes one of Schubert's songs, the *Scherzo* borrows material from a German dance (D. 790, No. 6) that Schubert wrote in 1823. The finale, based on tarantella rhythms, is a furious movement that maintains a tight balance between *fortissimo* outbursts and long, sweeping passages that are eerily hushed.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Recognized as one of the world's great ensembles, the **Takács Quartet** plays with a unique blend of drama, warmth and humor, combining four distinct musical personalities to bring fresh insights to the string quartet repertoire.

The Takács became the first string quartet to win the Wigmore Hall Medal in 2014. The Medal, inaugurated in 2007, recognizes major international artists who have a strong association with the Hall. Appointed in 2012 as the first-ever

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

Associate Artists at Wigmore, the Takács present six concerts every season there. Other European engagements in 2014-2015 included the Edinburgh and Bath Festivals, the Louvre in Paris, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Vienna's Musikverein, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and in Geneva, Florence, Cremona and Budapest.

In 2012, Gramophone announced that the Takács was the only string quartet to be inducted into its first Hall of Fame, along with such legendary artists as Jascha Heifetz, Leonard Bernstein and Dame Janet Baker. The ensemble also won the 2011 Award for Chamber Music and Song presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London. Based in Boulder at the University of Colorado, the Takács Quartet performs ninety concerts a year worldwide.

The Quartet's award-winning recordings include the complete Beethoven Cycle on the Decca label. In 2005 the Late Beethoven Quartets won Disc of the Year and Chamber Award from *BBC Music Magazine*, a Gramophone Award, Album of the Year at the Brit Awards and a Japanese Record Academy Award. Their recordings of the early and middle Beethoven quartets collected a Grammy, another Gramophone Award, a Chamber Music of America Award and two further awards from the Japanese Recording Academy.

Their collaboration with Hyperion Records in 2006 started with a recording of Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* and Rosamunde quartets. A disc featuring Brahms' *Piano Quintet* with Stephen Hough was released to great acclaim in 2007 and was subsequently nominated for a Grammy. Other recordings for Hyperion include Brahms' quartets Op. 51 and Op. 67; a disc featuring the Schumann *Piano Quintet* with Marc-Andre Hamelin; the complete Haydn "Apponyi" quartets, Op. 71 and 74; the Schubert quintet CD

with Ralph Kirshbaum; the three Britten quartets and the Brahms viola quintets with Lawrence Power. Upcoming Hyperion recordings include the two Janacek quartets and Smetana's *From My Life*, the Debussy quartet and the Franck *Piano Quintet* with Marc-Andre Hamelin, and Dvorak's Op. 105 quartet and his viola quintet Op. 97 with Lawrence Power.

The Quartet has also made sixteen recordings for the Decca label since 1988 of works by Beethoven, Bartók, Borodin, Brahms, Chausson, Dvořák, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and Smetana. The ensemble's recording of the six Bartók string quartets received the 1998 Gramophone Award for chamber music and, in 1999, was nominated for a Grammy. In addition to the Beethoven string quartet cycle recording, the ensemble's other Decca recordings include Dvořák's *String Quartet in E-flat Major*, Op. 51 and *Piano Quintet in A Major*, Op. 81 with pianist Andreas Haefliger; Schubert's "Trout Quintet" with Mr. Haefliger, which was nominated in 2000 for a Grammy Award; string quartets by Smetana and Borodin; Schubert's *Quartet in G Major* and *Notturmo* piano trio with Mr. Haefliger; the three Brahms string quartets and *Piano Quintet in F minor* with pianist András Schiff; Chausson's *Concerto for Violin, Piano and String Quartet* with violinist Joshua Bell and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet; and Mozart's string quintets, K515 and 516 with Gyorgy Pauk, viola.

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Faculty Fellows at the University of Colorado Boulder. The Quartet has helped to develop a string program with a special emphasis on chamber music, where students work in a nurturing environment designed to help them develop their artistry. The Quartet's commitment to teaching is enhanced by summer residencies at the Aspen Festival and at the Music Academy of

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

the West, Santa Barbara. They are also visiting fellows at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

The Takács Quartet was formed in 1975 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest by Gabor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gabor Ormai and András Fejér, while all four were students. It first received international attention in 1977, winning First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France. The Quartet also won the Gold Medal at the 1978 Portsmouth and Bordeaux Competitions and First Prizes at the Budapest International String Quartet Competition in 1978 and the Bratislava Competition in 1981. The Quartet made its North American debut tour in 1982. Violinist Edward Dusinberre joined the Quartet in 1993 and violist Roger Tapping in 1995. Violist Geraldine Walther replaced Mr. Tapping in 2005. In 2001 ensemble was awarded the Order of Merit of the Knight's Cross of the Republic of Hungary, and in March of 2011 each member of the Quartet was awarded the Order of Merit Commander's Cross by the President of the Republic of Hungary. The Takács Quartet last performed at the Hopkins Center in 2012.

**Edward Dusinberre *first violin*** was born in 1968 in Leamington Spa, England, and has enjoyed playing the violin from a young age. His early experiences as concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain encouraged him to choose music as a profession. He studied with the Ukrainian violinist Felix Andrievsky at the Royal College of Music in London and at the Juilliard School with Dorothy DeLay and Piotr Milewski. In 1990 he won the British Violin Recital Prize and gave his debut recital in London at the Purcell Room, South Bank Centre. Upon

completion of his studies at Juilliard, Dusinberre auditioned for the Takács Quartet, which he joined in 1993.

In July 2010 Dusinberre released a recording of Beethoven's violin sonatas no. 9 and 10 with pianist David Korevaar on the Decca label. Andrew Clements wrote in the *Guardian* newspaper: "Edward Dusinberre brings the same wonderfully subtle and intensely musical qualities to these two violin sonatas as he does to Beethoven's quartets."

Future projects include a performance of Brahms' *Double Concerto* with András Fejér, and performances at the Plush Festival Dorset where he will play Beethoven's *Piano Trio "The Ghost"* with Charles Owen and Louise Hopkins, to be broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Dusinberre enjoys writing about music. In connection with the Takács Quartet's recent Beethoven cycles in London and Madrid, he has written articles for the *Strad* magazine and *Guardian* newspaper.

Dusinberre lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife Beth, an archeologist who teaches at the University of Colorado, and their son Sam. He enjoys hiking in the mountains near Boulder and going to the theater. Never known as one of the more athletic members of his family, he has nonetheless benefited from Boulder's healthy culture of embracing the outdoors.

**Károly Schranz *second violin*** was born in 1952 in Budapest, Hungary. His first musical experiences were listening to the Roma bands in restaurants, which he has always admired for their virtuosity and musicianship. Schranz began playing the violin at the age of four under the very strict

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

supervision of his mother who often resorted to unconventional methods of teaching and encouraging practice. ("To improve my bowing technique, she devised a method of attaching a string to my arm, and pulling in the desired direction. When this approach failed, she spanked me with a wooden spoon, which resulted in my hatred towards practicing.") At the age of fourteen, he entered the Béla Bartók Secondary Music School, where he met his future wife, also a violin student at the school. In 1980, he received his music diploma from the Franz Liszt Academy of Music where he studied with Mihály Szücs, András Mihály and György Kurtág.

**Geraldine Walther viola** was principal violist of the San Francisco Symphony for 29 years, having previously served as assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony and the Miami Philharmonic.

A native of Florida, she first picked up the viola in a public school music program in Tampa. She went on to study at the Manhattan School of Music with Lillian Fuchs and at the Curtis Institute with Michael Tree of the Guarneri Quartet. In 1979 she won first prize at the William Primrose International Competition.

Among the many works Walther performed as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony are Mozart's *Sinfonia concertante*, Telemann's *Concerto in G Major*, Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*, Hindemith's *Trauermusik*, *Der Schwanendreher*, and *Kammermusiken* Nos. 5 and 6, Tippett's *Triple Concerto*, Martinu's *Rhapsody-Concerto*, and the viola concertos of Walton, Piston, Henze, Musgrave, Bartók, Schnittke and Penderecki. She performed the US premieres of several important works with the Orchestra, including Takemitsu's *A String Around Autumn* in 1990, Lieberson's *Viola*

*Concerto* in 1999, Holloway's *Viola Concerto*, and Benjamin's *Viola, Viola* (together with SFS associate principal violist Yun Jie Liu), also in 1999. In May 2002 she was soloist in William Schuman's *Concerto on Old English Rounds* and the Britten *Double Concerto* for violin and viola.

In 1995 Walther was selected by Sir Georg Solti as a member of his Musicians of the World, an orchestra composed of leading musicians from around the globe, for concerts in Geneva to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. She has also served as principal violist with the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego and has performed as soloist with other Bay Area orchestras. She has participated in leading chamber music festivals, including Marlboro, Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Bridgehampton, Cape Cod, Amelia Island, the Telluride, Seattle and Green Music Festivals, and Music@Menlo. She has collaborated with such artists as Isaac Stern, Pinchas Zukerman and Jaime Laredo, and has appeared as a guest artist with some of the world's most renowned string quartets, including the Tokyo, Vermeer, Guarneri, Lindsay, Cypress and St. Lawrence quartets. She joined the Takács Quartet as a regular member in the fall of 2005.

In addition to her recordings for Hyperion with the Takács Quartet, Walther's recordings include Hindemith's *Trauermusik* and *Der Schwanendreher* with the San Francisco Symphony (both on London/Decca), Paul Chihara's *Golden Slumbers* with the San Francisco Chamber Singers (Albany), and Lou Harrison's *Threnody* (New Albion), and, as a member of the Volkert Trio, *Delectable Pieces* (Con Brio).

Walther is the mother of two grown daughters and lives in Longmont, Colorado, with her husband Tom.

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

**András Fejér cello** was born in 1955 into a musical family. His father was a cellist and conductor, and his mother was a pianist. He began playing the cello at the age of seven, because as legend has it, his father was unwilling to listen to the practicing of a violin upstart. Since an early age, his parents have held string quartet weekends, which, for the young cellist were the most memorable of occasions, if not for the music, then for the glorious desserts his mother used to prepare for those sessions.

After attending a music high school, Fejér was

admitted to the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 1975, where he was a pupil of Ede Banda, András Mihály, Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág. That same year he founded the Takács String Quartet with three fellow classmates. Although the quartet has been his sole professional focus since then, he does perform as a soloist occasionally as well.

Fejér is married to a literature teacher. They have three children and live in the Rocky Mountains, where they enjoy year-round sunshine in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. When he is not on tour, he enjoys reading, photography, tennis and hiking.

# CONNECTING ARTISTS TO THE COMMUNITY

*While at Dartmouth, the Takács Quartet worked with students in the Music Department and will participate in a post-performance discussion. For more information on Hop Outreach & Arts Education, call 603.646.2010 or visit [hop.dartmouth.edu/online/outreach](http://hop.dartmouth.edu/online/outreach).*

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