THE
BRENTANO
STRING QUARTET

QUARTET-IN-RESIDENCE • PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

FIFTH RESIDENCY CONCERT
October 23, 2001
Tuesday evening at 8:00 p.m.
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall
The Department of Music & The Friends of Music at Princeton

present

The Brentano String Quartet

The Program

String Quartet in F Minor, Opus 20, no. 5
Moderato
Menuet — Trio
Adagio
Finale: Fuga a 2 soggetti

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1723-1809)

Ricercare

Paul Lansky
(b. 1944)

String Quartet No. 2 in D, Opus 35
Fuga: Largo misterioso
Fantasia: Allegro passionato — Quasi scherzo —
Tempo del comincio — Largo misterioso

Vitezslav Novák
(1870-1949)

INTERMISSION

String Quartet in C-sharp Minor, Opus 131
1. Adagio, ma non troppo e molto espressivo
2. Allegro molto vivace
3. Allegro moderato — Adagio
4. Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
5. Presto
6. Adagio quasi un poco andante
7. Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Tuesday evening, October 23, 2001 at 8:00 p.m.
Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall

Quartet in Residence • Princeton University
The Brentano String Quartet was appointed Quartet-in-Residence at Princeton University beginning in September, 1999. Made possible by a generous gift from an anonymous alumnus, the residency includes free public performances (of which this evening is the fifth); teaching and coaching chamber music in the Program in Musical Performance; working with undergraduate, graduate student, and faculty composers; and participating in Professor Scott Burnham’s course surveying the history of the string quartet (among other activities).

Since its founding in 1992, the Brentano String Quartet has been recognized by critics and audiences alike for its technical brilliance, musical insight, and stylistic elegance. The Quartet is named after Antonio Brentano, whom many scholars believe to have been Beethoven’s mysterious “Immortal Beloved,” and to whom he wrote his famous confession of love.

Within a year’s time, the Brentano Quartet claimed the distinction of being named to three major awards: the first Cleveland Quartet Award, 1995 Naumburg Chamber Music Award, and the Tenth Annual Martin E. Segal Award. For its first appearance in Great Britain at the Wigmore Hall, the Brentano was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award for the most outstanding chamber music debut of 1997. The Brentano was the first quartet-in-residence at New York University, and was chosen by The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center to participate in the inaugural season of Chamber Music Society Two, a program designed for outstanding emerging artists on the verge of international careers in chamber music.

Appearances in the major musical centers of North America include New York’s Alice Tully Hall, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pittsburgh’s Frick Museum, at the La Jolla Chamber Music Society, the Chamber Music Society of Detroit, the Ford Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto, and at venues in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, Houston, New Orleans, Kansas City, and Boston.

The Brentano’s summer festival appearances have included the Festival De Divonne in France, the Bath Festival, Chamber Music Northwest, the San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival, Chautauqua, Caramoor International Music Festival, and Interlochen’s Advanced String Quartet Institute.

Mark Steinberg, violin, is an active chamber musician and recitalist. He has been heard in chamber music festivals in Holland, Germany, Austria, and France, and has participated for four summers in the Marlboro Music Festival, with which he has toured extensively. He has also appeared with the El Paso Festival, on the Bargemusic series in New York, at Chamber Music Northwest, with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and in trio and duo concerts with pianist Mitsuko Uchida, with whom he will do a complete Mozart sonata cycle this season. Mark Steinberg has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Kansas City Camerata, and the Philadelphia Concerto Soloists. He was the recipient of the 1992 Lotos Foundation Award, which included a recital in Weil Hall, and was selected to give a 1993 recital in the Metropolitan Museum’s “Introductions” series.

Mark Steinberg holds degrees from Indiana University and The Juilliard School, and has studied with Louise Behrend, Josef Gingold, and Robert Mann. He taught for six years on the chamber music faculty of Juilliard’s Pre-College division, has taught at Princeton University, and is currently a member of the violin faculty of New York University.

Serena Canin, viola, was born into a family of professional musicians in New York City. An accomplished chamber musician, Ms. Canin was twice invited to the Marlboro Music Festival and has toured the United States with Music-from-Marlboro, the Brandenburg Ensemble, and Goliard Concerts. In New York, Serena Canin performs regularly with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s and the Sea Cliff Chamber Players. She has made frequent appearances on the Continuum Series at Alice Tully Hall, the Summergarden Series at the Museum of Modern Art, at the Garden City Chamber Music Society, and at Chamber Music Quad Cities in Davenport, Iowa. Ms. Canin has taught at Princeton University, New York University, and taught chamber music to young musicians at The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. She holds degrees from Swarthmore College and The Juilliard School; her teachers have included Burton Kaplan and Robert Mann. She lives in Manhattan with her husband, pianist Thomas Bauer.

Misha Amory, viola, won the 1991 Naumburg Viola Award and has since gone on to a diverse career as soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. He has performed with orchestras in the United States and Europe, and has been presented in recital at New York’s Alice Tully Hall, on Los Angeles’ Ambassador series, Philadelphia’s Mozart on the Square Festival, the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, the Vancouver Festival, The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and the Boston Chamber Music Society. He released a recording of Hindemith sonatas on the Musical Heritage Society label in 1993. Misha Amory holds degrees from Yale University and The Juilliard School. His principal teachers were Heidi Castleman, Caroline Levine, and Samuel Rhodes. Himself a dedicated teacher, Mr. Amory serves on the faculties of Juilliard and the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Nina Maria Lee, violoncello, is an active chamber musician who has collaborated with such artists as Felix Galimir, Jaime Laredo, David Soyer, Nobuko Imai, Isidore Cohen, Mitsuko Uchida, and Andras Schiff. She has performed at the Marlboro and Tanglewood Festivals, and toured with Music-from-Marlboro and participated in the El Paso International Chamber Music Festival. As a strong advocate of education, she has also appeared on programs to introduce music to children as part of a program at the Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Lee began studying the 'cello at the age of twelve in St. Louis. At the age of sixteen, Ms. Lee was accepted at The Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied 'cello with David Soyer and chamber music with Karen Tuttle and Felix Galimir. In 1992, Ms. Lee attended Boston University as a biology major, where she studied 'cello with Michael Reynolds. She has been awarded top prizes in such competitions as the St. Louis Symphony Young Artists Competition and the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts Talent Search. She is the recipient of bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music from The Juilliard School, where her teacher was Joel Kronick.
Haydn: Quartet in F minor, Opus 20, No. 5

The very earliest of Haydn’s string quartets are shrouded in some mystery. Scored on four staves, are they for four instruments, or are they actually for five with the ‘cello line doubled by a contrabass? Are they for solo performers, or are they for small string orchestra? They mostly have five movements rather than four; most have two minuet/trio movements; some are labelled Divertimento or Cassation and they surely look more like string serenades or early symphonies than later string quartets. Though they contain charming music, nobody knows for sure.

Among the works that are certainly string quartets, the six quartets of Opus 20 are preceded by only twelve works: the six of Opus 9 and the six of Opus 17.

Dating from 1772, the Quartets of Opus 20 are known by the nickname “The Sun Quartets,” owing to nothing more important than the appearance of the solar trademark of the publisher — Ausgabe Hummel — on the title page.

But it is in these compositions that the string quartet as a medium truly comes to first fruition. Donald Francis Tovey says, "With Opus 20 the historical development of Haydn’s quartets reaches its goal; and further progress is not progress in any historical sense, but simply the difference between one masterpiece and the next." Reginald Barrett-Ayers provides insight into why this is so: "Opus 20 ... is imbued with a spirit of quiet authority: this music cannot be questioned, for it is written by a composer who has at last found himself." H.C. Robbins Landon extends this observation even further: "It is clear that the Viennese classical style arrived at its first maturity not with the Quartets [of] Opus 33, but with Opus 20."

Most important, Opus 20 first manifests Haydn’s growing occupation with the single factor that ultimately makes the medium of the string quartet so powerful: giving each of the four instruments equally interesting parts to play. This necessitated, among other things, the liberation of the ‘cello from “always playing the bass line,” and we see Haydn working assiduously to make it an equal partner to the violins (though the viola does not always fare quite so well). There is no question of double bass here.

The set exhibits Haydn’s growing mastery of the subtleties of form, and in particular, sonata-allegro or first-movement form. In his earliest works, development sections were frequently vestigial, often consisting of little more than a chain of sequences based on the first theme. Beginning with Opus 9, however, the development sections begin to take on proportions roughly equal to the exposition and recapitulation. By Opus 20, Haydn begins to exhibit a true facility with the process of development through recognition and exploitation of the potential inherent in specific musical elements (motives) rather than entire themes. It is here that individual movements first become organic — that is, growing out of the specific musical materials upon which they are based — rather than merely formulaic.

But Haydn has larger concerns: in the earlier quartets, he struggled with the matter of balance among the four movements. In Opus 20, we find the first fruits of his steps towards creating an entire work with what we have come to understand as “Classical proportions.” This manifests itself at least two ways: a search for a more satisfying fourth movement (that is, one able to counter-balance the newly expanded first), and experimentation with the order of the two inner movements.

The first striking feature of Opus 20, no. 5, is its unusual key: F minor — with four flats, a considerably darker key than any previously used by Haydn in a string quartet; more than one critic has here found an adumbration of Beethoven. The first movement — restless and serious — is (for Tovey) "the most nearly tragic work Haydn ever wrote." The second theme is in the relative major (A-flat), a choice which was the usual alternative to the dominant for works in minor keys. The extended coda, with its own climax, is another new feature: the movement ends in "pathetic collapse" (Tovey).

Haydn follows his earlier practice of placing the minuet-and-trio in second position. Its music was called "impressed and sombre" by Tovey, who saw it as an inspiration for Mozart "in the most passionate of all his minuets, that in the great G-Minor Quintet, K.516." But even here, there is some of the amusing Dudelsack (bagpipe) droning of which Haydn appeared to be fond.

The third movement, Adagio, is peacefully in F major (the tonic major). A highly imaginative move at the end of the development is marked "per figuram retardationem" and the great violinist (and friend of Brahms’) Joseph Joachim remarked to Tovey in 1888, "It means that the figures of the violin are always a step behind the chords; it must be played dreamily and tenderly, not stiffly and coldly."

Throughout Opus 20, one sees Haydn struggling toward writing equally interesting parts for each of the four instruments, and contrapuntal gestures occur with great frequency. So it is perhaps not surprising that in three of the Opus 20 quartets the fourth movement (as Tovey succinctly says) is "a fugue and nothing but a fugue." In choosing a fugue as the last movement of a quartet, Haydn looks back, acknowledging that of all the compositional means known to him, only fugue guarantees that equality among voices is achieved. The result is not, however, a fugue in the style of Bach. Rather, points out Reginald Barrett-Ayers, Haydn "uses Baroque language to paint a picture which is classical in design."

The fugue which forms the last movement of Opus 20, no. 5, opens with a subject in the violin on a familiar Baroque model (Handel uses it in And with His stripes from Messiah; Bach in the Fugue in A Minor, WTC II).

Remarkable is the instruction to the performers to play sempre sesto esoso (always in an undertone, etc.) in the theme. Haydn may also imply bowing nearer the fingerboard so as to produce a tone which is less effective in harmonics) until only tiny bars from the end, where a sudden forte produces a violent effect. Of particular interest are the modulations in the middle of the movement: by the circle of fifths, Haydn moves to the extremely remote key of A-flat minor, said by some critics to be the most remote harmonic move of the eighteenth century. The following coda more or less abandons the polyphonic, and the work ends in relatively normal Classical style.

It is interesting to observe that Haydn only once again used the fugal form as a movement in a string quartet (the Finale of Opus 54, no. 3).

Lansky: Ricercare

Paul Lansky grew up in New York City, and went to the High School of Music and Art, and Queens College in the City University of New York. He earned his Ph.D. at Princeton.
University, and joined the faculty in 1969. Since 1973, his main preoccupation has been computer music, and for the most part, his work has involved non-real-time processing of "realworld" sounds. He likes to regard the computer as an aural camera, and often uses visual metaphors to describe his work. Professor Lansky teaches courses at Princeton at the undergraduate and graduate levels in all aspects of computer music, as well as composition, and topics in twentieth-century theory and analysis.

The term *ricercare* came into common use during the early sixteenth century, having first appeared in a collection of works for lute dated 1507. It originally applied to works of a rhapsodic, preludial style, and only later came to denote works of a fugal nature. Paul Lansky's use of the term reflects this earlier meaning, as well as the tendency of such compositions to be somewhat sectional.

About the work, Prof. Lansky observes: "*Ricercare* is my first string quartet in almost thirty years. The title refers to a sense in which the piece gently plays with some of the syntax of late Renaissance and early Baroque music. More than that, however, it is a study for me (ricercare/research) of the ways in which I can apply what I've learned in the intervening three decades to once again writing for the wonderful medium of the string quartet."

NOVÁK: STRING QUARTET NO. 2
Vitezslav Novák is little known at present, though he was the most famous Czech composer during the first decade of the twentieth century.

He studied at the Prague Conservatory, and was fortunate to be selected for Dvořák's master class. Like his teacher, Novák had a strong interest in folk music, and his earliest popular successes were three major orchestral works of nationalistic character: *In the Tatra Mountains*, *Slovak Suite*, and *Eternal Longing*, all dating from 1902-03. These were followed by a series of popular works culminating in the cantata *The Storm* (1910), composed for the fiftieth anniversary of the Brno Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 1909, he was appointed to the professorship of the composition master class at the Prague Conservatory, a position he was to hold for more than thirty years. Ironically, at just about the same time, his influence and popularity began to wane; after World War I, he was largely eclipsed in the public fancy by Janáček. It is a mark of Novák's strong moral character that, nonetheless, he continued to praise Janáček and his music until the end of his life.

Novák's music again achieved a period of popularity immediately prior to World War II, largely on account of its strong nationalistic character. Immediately following the war, he was named National Artist of the Czech Republic, but in 1949, suddenly and unexpectedly, he died at the age of seventy-nine.

As a composer, Novák was widely respected for his extraordinary skill as a contrapuntist; fugal structures are a generative feature of many of his compositions, including the Second String Quartet which opens with an otherworldly fugue, whose subject is revealed to be the basis for the entire work. Violinist Mark Steinberg writes: "[It] inhabits a nearly orchestral sound realm near to that of composers such as Bruckner, wide-ranging with broad, sensual climaxes, and rarefied, ethereal pianissimos. The fugue subject is further transformed in the Fantasia and becomes, in altered form, the theme for a rustic galloping section and then, altered once more, for a scherzo. Having examined the subject in several varying guises, the return to the subject in its original state as the second half of the fugue is revisited at the end of the work evokes a sense of wistful remembrance."

About the Brentano Quartet's selection of the work, Mr. Steinberg writes: "The programming of Novák's Second Quartet affords us several special pleasures. There is the pleasure of presenting a relatively unknown work which we love and find worthy of a wider audience. There is the pleasure of offering a fugue in a style not often associated with such 'academic' forms. And there is the visceral pleasure of playing a string quartet in a lush, late-Romantic style which is exceedingly rare in our repertoire. We first came upon this work when we participated in the Bard Music Festival in the year during which the concentration was on Dvořák and his circle. A specific program was suggested to us, and included was this piece, which had been recommended by the great Czech pianist Rudolf Firkusny."

BEETHOVEN: QUARTET IN C-SHARP MINOR
The String Quartet in C-sharp Minor, Opus 131, was composed in 1826, and published at Mainz the following year. It bears the most curious of all the quartet dedications: to one Lieutenant-Marshals Baron Joseph von Suttertem, The explanation is that the Baron accepted Beethoven's nephew Karl into his regiment following the boy's suicide attempt in 1827. The dedication of Opus 131 is Beethoven's acknowledgement of the Baron's service to his family.

The unusual numbering of the movements from one to seven stems from Beethoven's manuscript.
octave, then (after a fermata) is answered by a rising octave D, immediately revealed as the opening gesture of a new movement. The C# - D relationship is, of course, the Neapolitan relationship explored so thoroughly in Opus 59, no. 2, and in Opus 95 (and in many other of Beethoven's works). In the present Quartet, this harmonic relationship will be found to cast a long shadow over the structure of the entire work.

The second movement at first promises to be a sonata form. (Was the fugue merely a particularly scholarly sort of slow introduction?) Eventually, it reveals itself to be merely embryonic through lack of a development. Like the fugue, it fails to reach a definitive conclusion.

No. 3: Allegro moderato — Adagio
Two vigorous chords mark the moment of articulation: a short, improvisatory interlude explores (briefly) the key of B minor (built on the seventh degree of the descending C-sharp minor scale). A short recitative for the violin links (again, without sharp articulation) to the expansive, central fourth movement.

No. 4: Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
In the key of the submediant, A major, the fourth movement consists of a particularly naïve and graceful theme (comprised of two eight-bar phrases repeated with noted alterations) followed by five variations of remarkably enigmatic, even chameleon nature. Each variation gives the impression of changing its character as it proceeds, retrospectively revealing the theme to have been considerably more complex than one could grasp at first hearing.

No. 5: Presto
The fifth movement is in actuality a scherzo of remarkably spirited nature, considering what has gone before. The paradox is noted by Kerman, who sees the movement as "Beethoven's most childlike scherzo in his mature and complex work of art." A good part of its brilliant effect is due to the fact that it is cast in the mediant key of E major (that is, the tonal mirror-image of A major — as far above the tonic C# as A major was below it).

The movement begins with another version of the "cello too early" joke first pulled in Opus 59, no. 1. It proceeds with a madcap perpetuum mobile which perplexes by its periodic threats to grind to a halt! The observant will notice that the key of the Trio (unusually) does not deviate from that of the scherzo; further, the bizarre repeat structure parades the joke of the "unwinding clock" past us no fewer than five times.

After a zany unravelling of the Trio, culminating in frantic pizzicati with echoes in a particularly tinny sul ponticello, another equivocal gesture in octaves brings the movement to an end (if not a conclusion).

No. 6: Adagio quasi un poco andante
The viola introspectively introduces the sixth movement, a brief cantilena in C# minor (the minor version of the dominant, resulting once again from the lowered seventh scale-degree). As the short movement progresses, there are first hints and then a frank statement of the Neapolitan A-major triad, a clear signal that something momentous is about to take place. Just as this Neapolitan relationship was the manner in which Beethoven took departure from both the first movement and the tonic key of C# minor, so it is the means by which he effects transition to the last movement and returns to the tonic key (through its true dominant, G# major).

No. 7: Allegro
The final movement begins with an abrupt gesture in octaves reminiscent of the opening of Opus 18, no. 1, or Opus 95. The movement soon reveals itself to be cast (finally!) in a fully developed sonata form. The return to "normality" after six perplexing movements is extraordinarily powerful. Opus 131 is the quintessential example (at least among the Quartets) of Beethoven's Late-Period tendency to shift the primary rhetorical weight of an entire work towards the concluding movement. Kerman elucidates this principle as follows: "the dance movements shrink and become strikingly popular, even childlike in tone. The slow movements no longer feel so central ... and in consequence the finales are treated with a new complexity and emphasis. Or put the other way around: these quartets drive to climax in their finales, and in consequence tend to keep the earlier movements less weighty than before."

An amusing incident gives us considerable insight into Beethoven's own awareness of the curious structure of Opus 131. In addition to numbering the movements, Beethoven attached a note to the score when he turned it in to Schott's for publication: "Put together from pilferings from one thing and another ..."

The response from the (incredibly literal-minded) publisher must be inferred from a second letter written by Beethoven only a few days later: "I report to you that the score was delivered ... seven days ago. You wrote to me that the quartet must be an original one. I felt rather hurt, so as a joke, I wrote on the copy that it was put together from pilferings. Nevertheless, it is brand new — ."

This remarkable Quartet now occupies a unique place in the repertory, as beloved by audiences as it was by its composer. Holz reported that on several occasions, Beethoven referred to Opus 131 as his favorite among all his Quartets. Ironically, Opus 131 never received a public performance during the composer's lifetime. At the beginning of August, 1827, the Schuppanzigh Quartet rehearsed the work several times at the home of the publisher Artaria. Holz wrote in a conversation book that "Artaria was enraged and the fuge, when he had heard it for the third time, he found wholly intelligible." (Unlike the Grosse Fuge!) Other private performances were given in December of the same year. In November of 1828, Schott was given a private hearing, six days before his own death. Holz reported, "He fell into such a state of excitement and enthusiasm that we were all frightened for him."

Though it was published by Schott and Sons in June, 1827 (after Beethoven's death), ultimately, Opus 131 was to receive its first public performance in Vienna only in 1835, and it was only performed twice there between its composition and 1850.

© 2001 Nathan A. Randall
**Upcoming Events**

**Thursday, October 25, 2001 at 8 pm**
Andrew Manz, violin
& Richard Egarr, harpsichord
Virtuosic music of J.S. Bach, Handel, and others

**Sunday, December 9, 2001 at 3 pm**
**The Richardson Chamber Players**
Of Foreign Lands and Peoples

**Thursday, January 17, 2002 at 8 pm**
Alan Feinberg, piano
& Nathan A. Randall, speaker
Works of Richard Strauss and others

**Saturday, February 9, 2002 at 8 pm**
**The Duke Ellington Orchestra**
directed by Paul Mercer Ellington
University Concerts Jazz Series

**Thursday, February 28, 2002 at 8 pm**
**Theatre of Voices, Paul Hillier, director**
with Nigel North, theorbo
Works of Campon, Ellington, Sterngow, and Lassky

**Thursday, March 21, 2002 at 8 pm**
**Catrin Finch, harp**
2000 Young Concert Artists Winner
2000 Princeton University Concerts Prize

**Thursday, April 4, 2002 at 8 pm**
**Venetian Extravaganza**
Chamber music rarities from the 17th century
under the direction of Nancy Wilson

**Saturday, April 20, 2002 at 8 pm**
**The Maria Schneider Orchestra**
University Concerts Jazz Series

**Sunday, April 21, 2002 at 3 pm**
**The Richardson Chamber Players**
String Quintet Series

---

**Princeton University**
Department of Music
Scott Burnham, Chair
Marilyn Ham, Department Manager
Gregory D. Smith, Administrative Assistant
Kyle Subramaniam, Office Assistant
Cynthia Masterson, Secretary/Receptionist

**Princeton University**
Concert Office
Nathan A. Randall, Artistic Director
Christopher Bynum, Administrative Assistant
Deborah Rhoads, Bookkeeper

**Richardson Auditorium**
In Alexander Hall
John C. Schenck III, Production Manager
Stacey Mignone, Box Office Manager
John Burton, Stage Manager
Christopher Gorzelink, Production Technician
William Pierce, Stage Technician
Benjamin Holkin ’04, Assistant Stage Manager
Mary Lee Roberts, Recording Engineer
James Allington, Recording Engineer
James H. Bennett, House Manager
Matthew Frazier ’02, Assistant House Manager
Judy Dale Vandenberg, Uber Coordinator

The use of recording or photographic equipment in Richardson Auditorium is strictly prohibited.