

- July 20 -

**PROGRAM**

**String Quintet in B flat Major, Op. 76, No. 4 “Sunrise”**  
**Allegro con spirito**  
**Adagio**  
**Minuetto: Allegro**  
**Finale: Allegro ma non troppo**

*Franz Josef Haydn*  
*(1732-1809)*

**Emily Daggett Smith, violin**  
**Nancy Bean, violin**  
**Catherine Beeson, viola**  
**Alberto Parrini, cello**

**Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, Op. 40 (1917)**  
**Pastoral**  
**Vif**  
**Lent**  
**Tres vif**

*Darius Milhaud*  
*(1892-1974)*

**Cyrus Beroukhim, violin**  
**Marcantonio Barone, piano**

**INTERMISSION**

**String Sextet in A Major, Op. 48 (1878)**  
**Allegro moderato**  
**Dumka: Poco Allegretto**  
**Furiant: Presto**  
**Finale: Tema con variazioni**

*Antonín Dvořák*  
*(1841-1904)*

**Nancy Bean, violin**  
**Emily Daggett Smith, violin**  
**Catherine Beeson, viola**  
**Cyrus Beroukhim, viola**  
**Alberto Parrini, cello**  
**Lloyd Smith, cello**

## PROGRAM NOTES

### FRANZ JOSEF HAYDN (1732-1809): String Quartet in B-Flat, Op. 76, No. 4, "Sunrise" (Hob. III: 78) (c.1797)

The six quartets of opus 76 were written in Vienna during Haydn's last creative period that extends from his return, in 1795, from his second triumphal visit to London until his death in 1809. These were very stressful times in the Austrian capital. Napoleon's army was running rough shod over the Austrian forces, and Vienna was in danger of falling. Some excerpts from the Wiener Zeitung will portray the situation. April 12<sup>th</sup>: "The city of Vienna will in any event be completely defended, the fortifications organized, the walls to receive cannon, stores and provisions to be laid in, and preparations made for any eventuality..." April 29<sup>th</sup>: "New music. Artaria and Comp...Austrian War Song, by Friedelberg, set to music for the piano by Ludwig v. Beethoven, 20 kr." May 3<sup>rd</sup>: "Among the countless indications of true love for Prince and Fatherland, must not be forgotten, Count Prosper von Sinzendorf who offered gratis 200 pails of wine in order to refresh and rally the exhausted troops who have moved into field position here..." These distressing developments stifled some musical activity but not all. A big concert for April 7<sup>th</sup> at Prince Schwarzenberg's that included Haydn's The Seven Words was cancelled because of the distressing war news. On the other hand, Constanze Mozart (his widow) gave her "benefit academy", in which she participated in a concert performance of La Clemenza di Tito on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, F.S. Silverman wrote in a letter: "...A few days ago I went to see Haydn again who now lives right next to me...On this occasion he played for me, on the piano, violin quartets which a certain Count Erdödi has ordered from him. These are more than masterly and full of new thoughts. While he played, he let me sit beside him and see how he divided the various parts of the score..." The works played are those of opus 76. It was standard practice to write works on commission. The patron would have exclusive right to the works for a stated period, after which the composer would be free to do as he chose with them. Opus 76 was eventually published by Artaria in 1799.

When Charles Burney, the English music historian, first heard these works he said that he "never received more pleasure from instrumental music; they are full of invention, fire, good taste and new effects, and seem the production, not of a sublime genius, who had written so much and so well already, but of one of highly-cultivated talents, who had expended none of his fire before." Haydn was, at this time, considered the greatest living composer.

Of the six works in opus 76, number four is probably the finest. Its nickname, The Sunrise, is a rather naïve appellation for the opening measures. While the lower strings play sustained chords, the first violin melody rises in a series of intervals that create a feeling of growth and expansion. It is one of the greatest beginnings in chamber music. A notable feature of this first theme is a telling use of dissonant half steps. The adagio movement is one of Haydn's slowest. It suggests sadness and deep reflection. The minuet is driving and energetic. The final rondo is a lively, cheerful piece. It has an easily outlined form that can be plotted thus:

A	B	A	Coda
aba	aba	aba	
Major	Minor	Major	

That is—there are three main sections, each of which has its own similar sub-structure. The large scale coda has two changes of speed, each an increase of the pace. H.C. Landon Robbins, the Haydn scholar, calls the coda "buffoonery on a Falstaffian scale."

– Hoyle Carpenter

### **DARIUS MILHAUD (1892-1974): Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2, Op. 40 (1917)**

If internet visibility is what establishes the degree of popularity of an artist, then French composer Darius Milhaud is gradually slipping towards oblivion. Yet happily there is no ratio between the perceived importance of the works of a given composer and the quantity of information one can dig up in the digital universe. “French musician of Jewish religion from Provence,” as Milhaud liked to describe himself, was one of the most prolific composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He grew up in a family of merchants, although both his parents were amateur musicians.

Milhaud’s extensive use of polytonality and jazz was as much a reaction to the heavy German Romanticism of Wagner and Strauss as it was against the lush orchestration of Debussy. Such rebellious bravery earned him membership in Les Six, that noteworthy group of French composers that included Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Louis Durey, and Germaine Tailleferre.

Milhaud’s second sonata for violin and piano was composed in Brazil in May, 1917. Dedicated to the French writer André Gide, it was his first sonata to show the influence of Latin-American music. Milhaud himself was the violin soloist for the first performance of the piece in Rio de Janeiro. The first movement, labeled "Pastoral," opens with a folk-like theme. Milhaud makes skillful use of dissonance throughout the piece, evident here in long sequences of parallel fifths. Marked "Vif" (Fast), the second movement opens in a toccata-like vein, with the violin playing another folk-like melody, making much use of polytonality – that is, the simultaneous use of two or more keys.

The third movement, "Très lent" (Very Slow), opens with a canon and ends in a finale shaped by a distinctive melody, possibly drawn from Milhaud’s Jewish heritage (his mother had pursued the Jewish lyrical tradition as a singer). The movement’s elusive rhythmic shifts and other irregular rhythmic figurations are characteristics of the entire sonata. Finally a bona fide Latin-American rhythm appears in the fourth movement, “Tres vif” (Very fast). In contrast to the rather pensive third movement, this one is lively, showy, and a real crowd-pleaser.

– Steve Siegel

### **ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK: String Sextet in A Major, Op. 48 (1878)**

Until he got a little help from his friends, Antonin Dvořák was a little-known Prague musician whose income from his compositions and as an organist was so meager it barely kept him out of poverty. In 1874 he submitted some of his work for consideration to a committee in Vienna awarding government grants to struggling artists. The young musician was awarded 400 gulden, the highest stipend bestowed by the program.

Among the award committee’s members were the renowned critic Eduard Hanslick and that titan of Viennese music himself, Johannes Brahms, both of whom were to prove powerful influences on Dvořák’s career. Brahms requested that his publisher begin to issue Dvořák’s works, and in 1878 one of them, the Slavonic Dances, modeled on Brahms’ popular Hungarian Dances, became an instant hit. Inspired by his success, Dvořák engaged in a whirlwind composing spree, the A Major String Sextet one of its outcomes.

The sextet blends the folk-inspired idioms of the Slavonic Dances with the endearing Viennese lyricism of Schubert and Brahms. Full of spontaneous invention, the Sextet’s themes have been described as “flowing with Slavonic blood.” The opening movement uses as its main theme a melody of rapturous beauty given as a sweet duet between first violin and first cello. The middle two movements are labeled “Dumka” and “Furiant” – the first a traditional Ukrainian folk ballad alternating between meditative and joyful, and the second a Czech dance whose fiery character is indicated by its name.

The two movements so strongly impress their folk idioms to the sextet that British music critic Alec Robertson writes, “The work has the effect of a brightly colored travel poster advertising Czechoslovakia.” The finale is a set of five variations on a theme stated initially by the first viola, followed by a rhapsodic, perhaps somewhat boisterous, coda.

– Steve Siegel