

63rd Concert Series 2016-2017



is pleased to present

The Dover Quartet

Joel Link, violin

Bryan Lee, violin

Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola

Camden Shaw, cello

Saturday, May 6, 2017 8:00 PM

Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York



FRIENDS *of* MUSIC

President:

Betsy Shaw Weiner, Croton

Vice President:

William Altman, Croton

Secretary:

Susan Harris, Ossining

Treasurer:

Marc Auslander, Millwood

David Kraft, Briarcliff Manor

Tom Post, Mt. Kisco

Rosella Ranno, Briarcliff Manor

Board Associates:

Keith Austin, Briarcliff Manor

George Drapeau, Armonk

Nyla Isele, Croton

Board of Directors:

Klaus Brunnemann, Briarcliff Manor

Howard Cohen, Cortlandt Manor

Adam Glenn, Sleepy Hollow

Raymond Kaplan, Yorktown

Who We Are

Friends of Music Concerts, Inc. is an award-winning, non-profit, volunteer organization that brings to Westchester audiences world-renowned ensembles and distinguished younger musicians chosen from among the finest artists in today's diverse world of chamber music. Through our Partnership in Education program in public schools, and free admission to our six-concert season for those 18 years of age and under, we give young people throughout the county enhanced exposure to and appreciation of classical music, building audiences of the future.

We need additional helping hands to carry out our mission. Do consider joining the volunteers listed above. Call us at 914-861-5080 or contact us on our website (see below); we can discuss several specific areas in which assistance is needed.

Acknowledgements

Our concerts are made possible, in part, by an ArtsWestchester Program Support grant made with funds received from Westchester County Government, and by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Additional support is received from many friends of Friends of Music who include subscribers and other ticket holders listed in this program* who give over and above the cost of their attendance, and from the matching grants programs of IBM, Pitney Bowes, and others. If you can choose this way to help maintain the excellent quality of our concerts, please send your contributions to Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546.

Program

String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95 (“Serioso”) Ludwig van Beethoven
Allegro con brio (1770-1827)
Allegretto ma non troppo
Allegro assai vivace ma serioso – Più Allegro
Larghetto espressivo – Allegretto agitato – Allegro

String Quartet No. 2 in C Major, Op. 36 Benjamin Britten
Allegro calmo senza rigore (1913-1976)
Vivace
Chacony: sostenuto

Intermission

Quartet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 68 Dmitri Shostakovich
Overture, Moderato con moto (1906-1975)
Recitative & Romance, Adagio
Valse, Allegro
Theme & Variations

The Dover Quartet appears by arrangement with MKI Artists, 115 College Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401. www.mkiartists.com. www.doverquartet.com.

Next Concert

Saturday, May 20, 2017, 8:00 pm at
Sleepy Hollow High School, Sleepy Hollow, New York

Windscape

Program: “The Roaring Twenties.” Arrangements of Armstrong: Yes, I’m In the Barrel; Stravinsky: Ragtime; excerpts from Weill’s Three-Penny Opera, three Brazilian Choros by Nazareth/Abreu; and three virtuoso Etudes by George Gershwin. Hindemith: Kleine Kammermusic, Op. 24, No. 2; Villa-Lobos: Quintette (en forme de Choros).

Program notes

String Quartet in F minor, Op. 95 (“Serioso”)

Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven’s Opus 95 is the shortest of his sixteen quartets, the most compact, and the most concentrated. In his manuscript, he called it *Quartett serioso*, the only quartet to which he gave a qualifying title. It is indeed a serious work, introspective, impassioned, dramatic, forceful, at times even violent. Beethoven seems to have written it for himself, from inner compulsion alone. He had no commission for it, and he dedicated it to Nikolaus von Zmeskall, a middle-class personal friend, instead of, as was then traditional, to some noble and wealthy supporter. He began it in the summer of 1810 and completed it that October, but withheld it from publication until 1816. Even then, he wrote a curious proviso to Sir George Smart, “N.B. The Quartet is written for a small circle of connoisseurs and is never to be performed in public.”

Beethoven composed this quartet almost a year after the *Emperor Concerto*, shortly after the *Egmont Overture*, and about six months before the *Archduke Trio*, as his middle period came to an end. He was experiencing both personal and professional difficulties during this time. He and a woman friend recently had separated most painfully, and a grave musical problem seemed to occupy him: what would be the future of the classical forms in which he had cast most of his works until then? The quartet at last gives hints of the great inventions that were to come from him during what were his final ten years.

In May 1810 Bettina Brentano had written to Goethe about Beethoven, “What forces need he guard against, now that love and ambition are buried? All that remains is the splendor and the joy of his genius, and the desire to exercise his creative power!”

Most modern commentators see this quartet as a harbinger of Beethoven’s late quartets. The very first measure indicates how stylistically ahead of its time this work is. Beethoven opens the first short movement, *Allegro con brio*, as directly as possible. No introduction, no preparatory accompaniment figure, not even an up-beat exists, only an abrupt melodic motif, not harmonized but in octaves that all four musicians play. Beethoven gives no provision for repeating the terse thematic exposition, and the entire development is only twenty measures in length, shorter even than the coda that closes the movement with viola repetitions of the opening five-note phrase. The whole movement is characterized by sudden concise, angry eruptions. A significant hallmark of this movement is the way the music has been compressed, pared down to its essence. As a result, the listener becomes aware of how Beethoven avoids lengthy transitions. Also in this movement, unusual unison declamations occur seven times in a particularly efficient and insistent way, with all four voices intoning the same theme.

The second movement, *Allegretto ma non troppo*, filled with chromaticism, has a simple three-part form with a smooth central fugal section. The soft little cello solo figure with which it begins may, at first, seem to be just an introduction to the lyrical violin melody, but the way Beethoven uses it later makes clear that it is, in fact, the first part of the main theme of the movement. The viola first articulates the second theme, which then passes contrapuntally from one instrument to the other in imitation. A shortened recapitulation of the beginning section comes before the coda.

A diminished chord leads directly into the third movement, *Allegro assai vivace, ma serioso*, an energetic, galloping variant of the classical scherzo, with an accompanied chorale as its contrasting central trio section. Based on a rhythmic cell, the energy is unabated, but the movement does not have the jocular cast expected of a scherzo; it has, rather, an insistence, a drama enhanced by pauses.

The fourth movement’s melancholic opening, *Larghetto espressivo*, has an extremely expressive almost vocal quality. Beethoven then connects this prefatory section to the previous movement’s

opening rhythmic motif, which introduces a rondo, *Allegretto agitato*, a favorite, classical finale structure that often is jolly and playful; here, however, its principal and subsidiary themes are passionate and stormy. In fact, although it begins with melodic segments, Beethoven actually introduces a fugue that he does not complete; it and the key shifts contribute to a feeling of tension and unrest. An additional section, *Allegro*, almost a movement within a movement, is added at the end. Because the finale reinterprets many of the motifs and harmonies of the initial movement, it seems that Beethoven could conclude the work only with a sudden transition to something completely different. Here Beethoven breathes some sunshine by introducing the major tonality. Adding this new material with its sudden change of tempo and meter brings the quartet to a close on a liberating, optimistic, even triumphal note. Yet this final part does not negate the overwhelming impression of what had preceded it.

Quartet No. 2 in C Major, Op. 36

Benjamin Britten

England's greatest 20th century composer, Benjamin Britten, primarily has been known and admired for his works for the human voice. They range from simple folk song settings to the opera *Peter Grimes* and the gigantic *War Requiem*, written to celebrate the restoration of Coventry Cathedral following its bombing in the second World War.

Since Britten himself played the viola, his compositions for string instruments are entirely idiomatic, based on his thorough understanding of all aspects of performing techniques. In July 1945, he toured Germany as the accompanist of the legendary violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who was to play to survivors of German concentration camps. Strongly moved by this experience, on his return he completed this string quartet, which was premiered that year by the Zorian Quartet in London's Wigmore Hall on November 21. (He wrote it, his settings of the Holy Sonnets of John Donne, and *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* to commemorate the 250th anniversary of composer Henry Purcell's death.) Although the reference to Purcell provides the framework for the quartet, the content is dictated by Britten's reaction to his experience in Germany.

Britten reputedly kept a copy of Haydn string quartets next to his bed. In the first movement of this remarkable work, he follows the sonata-allegro form Haydn so frequently used, writing an expanded, expansive version of that structure. This first movement, *Allegro calmo senza rigore*, has two contrasting subjects, as well as a third theme motivated by one of them. Each theme derives from the interval of a major tenth, and each entrance is five degrees high on the scale than the one that preceded it. This soothing movement is economical; at its conclusion, its themes appear simultaneously.

The contrasting middle movement, a short but strong *Vivace*, feels menacing, even malevolent, as well as mournful. Its trio, with its theme linked to the primary subject, although set off from the main body because it is played with mutes, offers no relief. Each of its three parts is itself divisible into three parts in a Haydn-like, intricate, intimate interlocking of elements.

Britten composed the third movement, a massive *Chacony: sostenato*, in homage to Purcell, following the chaconne form Purcell frequently utilized; it is quite a bit longer than the first two movements combined. He has given this magnificent, stately structure in the style of Purcell's time in which the simple theme, announced with a powerful unison for four instruments, first is repeated over and over; then twenty-one variations follow. The variations, which become more and more complex both technically and emotionally, fall into four large subsections that are separated by cadenzas for the cello, viola, and first violin, with the second violin accompanying the viola cadenza by a sustained C note. This sustained note also is part of Britten's tribute to Purcell, based on Britten's playing of the viola in a recording of Purcell's *Fantasy Upon One Note* with the

Zorian Quartet. The Purcell work is constructed around a C; Britten not only used the sustained note but also composed the quartet in the key of C Major. The first six variations are harmonic with a cello cadenza separating them from a further set of six that focus on rhythm. After that come the viola cadenza and six contrapuntal variations. The first violin cadenza precedes the final three variations. The movement resolves with an all-consuming climax that disturbs rather than reassures the listener.

String Quartet No. 2 in A Major, Op. 68

Dmitri Shostakovich

Quartet No. 2 displays Shostakovich's mastery of quartet composition. Written quickly at the Composers' Retreat in Ivanovo when Russian victory in World War II seemed certain, this work, which Russian critic Ivan Martynov called a "romantic poem" full of "sight and space," was dedicated to Vissarion Shebalin, a fellow composer and friend. The Beethoven Quartet premiered it in St. Petersburg on November 14, 1944. Many critics, trying to place it in the context of the rest of his quartets, have called this large-scale work his one quartet in "correct" form.

The first movement, *Overture, Moderato con moto*, is written in sonata form and includes folk motifs. Although it has a generally sunny disposition, some tension and dark coloring appear. The driving rhythm of the exotic, brilliant-sounding first theme, articulated by the first violin, and the subsequent fugal technique, emphasize the movement's composite character. The second theme journeys through several distant keys, hesitant and uncertain, before it ends the exposition by leading to a repeat. The masterful development section is long and beautifully crafted. Here Shostakovich offers the first theme in a waltz format with pizzicato accompaniment; the cello echoes it before the viola explores the second subject. The other strings discover more new areas quickly and loudly before the reverse-order recapitulation, much modified and concentrated. The first theme concludes the movement with interjections of a bit of the second.

Two long, freely written, incantatory first violin solos accompanied by sustained chords in the lower strings frame the lyrical, contemplative second movement, *Recitative and Romance, Adagio*, in three-part form. Martynov described it as taking the listener into "the sphere of lyrical contemplation." The effect variously has been compared to Orthodox Church music, to Middle Eastern incantation, and even to the recitatives of Bach. Commentators find that this movement foreshadows Shostakovich's later works, offering glimpses into his private world. The "Romance" is slow and calm; again the first violin has melodic prominence. Including short passionate episodes, it is based more or less on thematic material from the first movement that is altered enough not to be easily recognizable. After an impressive climax, the Recitative returns, shortened, also making references to the first movement.

The third movement, *Valse Allegro*, is not a Viennese waltz but follows the traditions of Glinka and Tchaikovsky. The fundamental theme, entrusted to the cello, is based on the first movement's second subject; the mood reflects that of the second movement. The muted instruments play several extended waltzes containing elements of what has been called the "dance of death," also present in other Shostakovich works, in which the war's massacres and persecution are mourned. The ghostly movement, often called one of Shostakovich's more remarkable creations, builds to a climax in the center, but makes a quiet, mysterious close.

The Theme and Variations, with its *Adagio* introduction, bears the weight of the work. A recitative-like passage helps make the transition from the previous movement's ternary rhythm to the new four-beat base of this rather despairing movement. The three lower instruments play powerful octaves related to the quartet's opening. The unaccompanied first violin, whose line recalls the

waltz theme of the previous movement, answers, albeit in a slower tempo. The texture resembles that of the second movement; the viola theme has a folk-like quality with a sense of Russian Orthodoxy. Twenty-two variations follow, some being very brief. The first three introduce changes of texture. The violins and cello each dominate a variation that includes an exact repetition of the theme. In the second group of variations, the cello introduces a three-beat rhythm, and the variations become increasingly more brilliant and tense, as the energetic music adopts both the duple and triple time. At the end, the Adagio returns, and the theme is restated.

— notes provided by Susan Halpern

About the Artists

The Dover Quartet's rise from being an up-and-coming young ensemble to occupying a spot at the top of their field has been meteoric. Catapulted to prominence after sweeping the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, the group has become a major presence on the international scene. Named as Cleveland Quartet Award winner for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, the group was awarded the Avery Fisher Career Grant in last March.

In addition to appearing here with Friends of Music Concerts, this season's schedule takes the Dover to the University of Buffalo, the University of Connecticut, and the Montreal Chamber Music Festival, venues at which, over the course of six concerts each, they perform the complete Beethoven quartet cycles, among other works. Rounding out the season are a five-city tour with bassist-composer Edgar Meyer; a tour of the West Coast with mandolinist Avi Avital; and a tour of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Members of the Dover Quartet met as students at the Curtis Institute; the group's name pays tribute to Dover Beach by fellow Curtis alumnus Samuel Barber. **Violinist Joel Link** is a top prize winner of numerous competitions including the Johansen International Competition in Washington, DC, and the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition in England; his love of chamber music has taken him to highly regarded music festivals across the globe, including the Ravinia and Marlboro music festivals. **Violinist Bryan Lee** has performed as soloist with the Philadelphia and Temple University Orchestras, among others, and has been featured on NPR's program "From the Top;" he has served as Associate Concertmaster of both Symphony in C and the Curtis Symphony Orchestra. **Violist Milena Pajaro-Van de Stadt** has appeared as soloist with the Tokyo Philharmonic, the Jacksonville Symphony, and the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra; she has performed in recitals and chamber music concerts throughout the United States, Latin America, and Europe, including an acclaimed 2011 debut recital at London's Wigmore Hall. **Cellist Camden Shaw** has collaborated in chamber music with such renowned artists as Daniel Hope, Leon Fleisher, and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and has maintained an active career as a soloist, having released a critically-acclaimed solo album under the label Unipheye Music; he performs on an instrument made in 2010 by Sam Zygmuntowicz of Brooklyn, NY.

The Dover Quartet is dedicated to sharing its music with under-served communities; it is actively involved with Music for Food, an initiative enabling musicians to raise resources and awareness in the fight against hunger.

Grantor

ArtsWestchester
 Alice and Stanley Goldstein
 New York State Council
 on the Arts

Benefactor

Marc and Rochelle Auslander
 Anita and David Kraft
 Jeffrey von Wald and Michael
 Levy
 Betsy Shaw Weiner

Patron

Joan and Keith Austin
 Alan Bandes
 Deborah Donaldson and John
 Wehr
 Raymond and Elizabeth Kaplan
 Marguerite and Reid Pitts
 Rosella and Kurt Ranno
 Ruth and David Schwab

Sponsor

William Altman
 Eleanor M. Bromberg
 Miriam and Howard Budin
 Peter and Gillian Corfield in
 memory of David Kornreich
 Lila d'Adolf
 Andrew and Dominique Fitch
 Serban and Marilena Fotino
 David and Cynthia Hodes
 Dr. Susan Harris and Thomas
 Molnar
 Nicholas and Shelley Robinson
 Robert Schloss and Emily Sack

Donor

Doris Appleby
 Bernie and Lois Bacharach
 Jewel Bellush
 Lenore Brager
 Stephen and Susan Butterfass

Robert and Mona Buzak
 Helene and Martin Celnick
 Gloria and Wally Cooper
 Peter and Phyllis Davies
 Sheila and George Drapeau
 Mark and Nancy Golodetz
 Philip and Ellen Heidelberger
 Lee Hemphill and Elsbeth
 Lindner
 Bob and Betsy Hughes
 Nyla and Gerhard Isele
 Jacob and Irene Judd
 Marvin Kalisch
 Doris and Clifford Kaplan
 Marcia and Robert Klein
 Jon and Erica Kolbrener
 Alan and Gail Koss
 Sue Kurtzberg
 Shirley Leitner
 Barbara Lieberman
 Missy and Christopher Lipsett
 Maggie and Paul
 Loewenwarter
 Valerie Lyle
 James G. McMurtry III, MD
 Susan and Avraham Merav
 Mirla and George Morrison
 Norman Nadel and Sandra A.
 Forster
 Peter Oden
 Marianne Phiebig
 Vera Plummer
 Peggy and Tom Post
 Jean Rivlin
 Joelyn Rohman
 Mrs. Lee Sack
 Elizabeth Sadewhite
 Jay W. Seligman
 Heda Silverstein
 Fern and Jeff Stearney
 Steven and Rita Waldbaum
 Rita Wexler
 Janet and Donald Zagoria

Contributor

Paul and Lilyan Abramson
 Barbara and Hal Baron
 William Becker
 Melvin and Anita Berry
 Dorothea Bone
 William Bronner and Nancy
 Bloomgarden
 Haya and Zvi Caspi
 Howard Cohen in memory of
 Hedy Dichter
 Joan Conklin
 Arthur and Donna Cooper
 Nancy deKoven
 Ted and Blanche Dolmatch
 Patricia Dunne
 Paula and Larry Edlavitch
 Andrea Erstling and Philippe
 Charles
 Melvin Fitting and Roma
 Simon-Fitting
 Bruce Fleischer and Judy
 Freedman
 Carol and Paul Freedman
 Jeannette Gerber and Matko
 Peckay
 Barbara Gochman
 Louise Goldenberg
 Helen G. Goodman
 Julia Kosow Grosberg
 Sonya and Ernest Hammer
 George and Martha Heller
 Dr. W. Jean Horkans
 Helene Isaac
 Sally Kellock
 Rosemary King
 Doris Kinney
 Sylvain Kleinhaus
 Burton and Joyce Koyner
 Carolyn and Lawrence Kunin
 Alice B. Kurland
 Elizabeth M. Laite
 Carol Lasher

Jerome and Estelle Lebowitz
 Judith Levine
 Selma Levy
 Daniel and Marissa Licht
 Mrs. Susan Lichten
 Dr. Morton Linder
 David Lubell and Jody Israel
 Rosemary and Harry
 MacLaughlin
 Margaret and Donald Mahaney
 Alice Marcus
 Bernice Masse
 Bernice Myers
 Janet G. Myers
 Edna Ortof, PhD
 Estelle and Gerald Palevsky
 Stephanie and Richard Paley
 Mrs. Liliane M. Potier
 Leslie Grey Puner
 George and Renata Rainer
 George J. Rehl
 Roland Reisley and Barbara
 Coats
 Susan Rose
 Joan and Richard Rose
 Nechama and Bill Ross
 Ms Joan Rubenstein
 Natalie and Vincent Schifano
 Esther Schwartz
 Laura S. Seitz
 Robert and Ruth Singleton
 Rhoda Stephens
 Lore Strauss
 Beverly and Oliver Swift
 Dr. Henry and Karen Thomas
 Lynne K. Verna and Michael
 Stemerman
 Lois Waldman
 Florence Walker
 Geraldine Wassey
 Sandra Zinman