

speed with which he mastered harmony and counterpoint. He composed an opera when he was 13 years old, and before his death just short of his 20th birthday he had also composed an oratorio, several other sacred vocal works, a symphony, and three string quartets.

The quartets, composed between 1821 and 1822, were the only music he published during his lifetime, and they remain his best known works. They are modelled on the quartets of Haydn and Mozart, but they have their own personality and style. The D-minor quartet's *Allegro* opens with a terse motive that is amply developed before a second subject enters. That subject is in major mode, but in the reprise it appears at first in minor before the movement ends in major. The *Adagio* begins calmly as a florid aria for the first violin. The other instruments have their turns as the piece becomes more agitated, but calm prevails at the close. The *Menuetto* seems to start in the wrong key, and it plays with that expectation through its course. Its *Trio* slows into a leisurely waltz tempo. The finale begins with a slow introduction that is heard again after the exposition is completed. The main *Allegretto* dances along in the Spanish equivalent of a jig, with its second theme in F major. That theme returns in D major near the end, but the quartet ends quietly in D minor.

—Peter Bergquist

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ABOUT TONIGHT'S ARTISTS

The **Oregon String Quartet**, formed in 1982, is in residence at the University of Oregon School of Music. Committed to excellence in performance and music education, the members teach while maintaining busy concert schedules with the quartet and as soloists. They bring together a wide range of musical experiences, including years of chamber music collaborations with world-renowned artists, solo appearances with major orchestras and festivals, and principal positions with major symphonies. They have recorded on the Koch International, CRI, Centaur, and Albany labels. The Oregon String Quartet most recently recorded a compact disc, released by Koch International Classics, of works by the early 20th century African-American composer William Grant Still. The disc has been praised by the press for its beauty as well as its significant content. Strad Magazine hailed: "MUSICAL HEAVEN: OREGON STRING QUARTET . . . you will adore William Grant Still's 1960 string quartet, especially in a performance as sumptuously voiced and stunningly engineered as this." The Oregon String Quartet has been featured at the internationally-renowned Oregon Bach Festival, and is heard frequently on NPR. The quartet continues to enjoy performing and recording new compositions, including recently works by composers Victor Steinhardt and David Crumb.

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105th Season, 72nd program



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON • SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Beall Concert Hall
1:30 p.m.

Sunday afternoon
March 6, 2005

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

presents

OREGON STRING QUARTET

Kathryn Lucktenberg, violin

Fritz Gearhart violin

Leslie Straka, viola

Steven Pologe, cello



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

PROGRAM

Quartet No. 1 in D minor Juan Crisóstomo Arriaga
Allegro (1806-1826)
Adagio con espressione
Menuetto
Adagio; Allegretto

Canandaigue Quartet (1996) Albert Glinsky
Sundance (b. 1952)
Nocturne (West on I-90)
Spinout

INTERMISSION

Quartet No. 7 in F major, Ludwig van Beethoven
Op. 59, No. 1 (1770-1827)
Allegro
Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando
Adagio molto e mesto
Allegro

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PROGRAM NOTES

Quartet No. 7 in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1 Ludwig van Beethoven

The three string quartets of Beethoven's Op. 59 were commissioned by Count Andrei Razumovsky, who was Russian ambassador in Vienna for over twenty years. At the time of the commission in 1805, Beethoven was already interested in writing new quartets, and he soon began to work on the "Razumovskys," completing them in 1806. Six years thus separate these works from the quartets of Op. 18, years during which a number of other major works were composed, notably the *Eroica* Symphony. In this symphony Beethoven irrevocably expanded the expressive and technical bounds of his art, and Op. 59 continued that expansion in the realm of the quartet. The first "Razumovsky" quartet is especially comparable to the *Eroica* in the way it pushes past every previous limit on quartet writing, in size, form, expression, and demands on the players. Every movement explores these things to an extreme, and it is not surprising that the piece was an enigma to its first players and hearers.

The first movement of the F-major quartet is similar to the first movement of the *Eroica* in a number of ways. For example, in both movements the first theme is initially presented by the cello. The more fundamental resemblances include the large proportions, the long and intense developments and codas, and the prominent fugal passages in both movements. The quartet's *Allegro*, however, is not really "heroic"; it does not embody struggle

or conflict. It is simply grand in an abstract way, one of Beethoven's most satisfying first movements. The *Allegretto vivace* is indeed *scherzando*, as the score indicates, but it is not a conventional scherzo and trio. Aspects of that form perhaps help organize it, but sonata elements are also prominent. The rhythmic figure repeated on a single pitch pervades the movement, and it caused variously great offense and great merriment at early performances.

The *Adagio molto e mesto* may be the darkest slow movement Beethoven ever wrote. Hardly a ray of light pierces its intense gloom. This quality is all the more pronounced after the energetic brilliance of the first two movements, and some commentators have even suggested that the extreme contrast almost pulls the quartet apart. Perhaps in response to this danger, Beethoven linked the *Adagio* and finale together with a transition of elaborate trill and scale figures which releases the tension and leads directly into the *Thème russe* that opens the finale. The Russian tune was perhaps used in tribute to Rasumovsky, or possibly at the count's own suggestion. Beethoven bends the tune out of its original D minor, however, and forces it into a cheerful F major for this "most elegant, spirited, and forthright of his finales" (Joseph Kerman).

—Peter Bergquist

Canandaigua Quartet Albert Glinsky

Written for the Cavani Quartet-commissioned by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. World Premiere: October 23, 1996. Cavani Quartet, Cleveland Institute of Music. Albert Glinsky's *Canandaigua Quartet* takes its name from the beautiful lake in Western New York State which served as the backdrop for the commissioning of the piece. The work draws its primary inspiration from the geographical imagery of this region and the adjoining areas of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. The first movement, "Sundance," is a celebration of the natural radiance of the lake and the joy of observing the motion and interplay of the surrounding flora and fauna. The second movement, "Nocturne (West on 90)," represents the enchantment of a night ride on Interstate 90-leaving the lake behind and heading west toward home. A full moon in a charcoal gray sky is framed by illuminated clouds; pinprick stars are sprinkled throughout the celestial dome—another twist on the American "romance of the road." The third movement, "Spinout," is a wild dance of ecstasy—one that threatens to spin out of control at any moment. It is a rejuvenation and affirmation of spirit stimulated by the memory of the lake and the shimmering beauty of the night journey home. A coda built on continuous acceleration concludes the work with a final spinout into the atmosphere. As with the composer's other works, the Canandaigua Quartet draws much of its harmonic and rhythmic raw material from contemporary popular forms: rock, folk rock, and jazz. "As I worked on the piece," the composer explained, "I also wanted to tailor it to the Canvani's personality. They have warmth, immediacy, humor, and delight. I tried to capture their spirit in the aesthetic nature of the work."

Quartet No. 1 in D Minor Juan Crisóstomo Arriaga

Arriaga ranks with Mozart and Mendelssohn as a child prodigy composer. Born in Bilbao, Spain, in 1806, his musical talent emerged very early, and his parents sent him to Paris to be trained at the Conservatoire. There he studied violin and composition and awed his teachers by the