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CHAMBER MUSIC @ BEALL

2014-15



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UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

School of Music
and Dance

Calder String Quartet

March 1, 2015 | 3 p.m. | Beall Concert Hall

ArcadianaThomas Ades
(b. 1971)

- I. Venezia notturna
- II. Das klinget so herrlich, das klinget so schon
- III. Auf dem Wasser zu singen
- IV. Et... (tango mortale)
- V. L'Embarquement
- VI. O Albion
- VII. Lethe

String Quartet No. 2, "Intimate Letters"Leoš Janáček
(1854–1928)

- I. Andante
- II. Adagio
- III. Moderato
- IV. Allegro

INTERMISSION

**String Quartet in
C-sharp Minor, Op. 131**Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

- I. Adagio, ma non troppo e molto espressivo
- II. Allegro molto vivace
- III. Allegro moderato – adagio
- IV. Andante, ma non troppo e molto cantabile
- V. Presto – Molto poco adagio
- VI. Adagio quasi un poco andante
- VII. Allegro

As its title suggests, Thomas Adès' austere yet richly allusive *Arcadiana* evokes imagined idylls, Arcadia being the ancient Peloponnesian region that came to symbolize pastoral paradise. Composed for the Endellion String Quartet in 1994, when the English composer was 23, its seven movements alternate between water and land, with glancing references to earlier works but little in the way of direct quotes. "Venezia notturna" combines a Venetian barcarolle's rocking motion with a nocturne's quiet cantabile; "Das klinget so herrlich, so klinget so schön", its title taken from Mozart's *Magic Flute*, evokes Papageno's bells and, briefly, the Queen of the Night. "Auf dem Wasser zu singen" adopts both the name and figuration of the eponymous Schubert lied. The halting dance "Et...(tango mortale)" occupies the central point of the piece and expresses its central idea: the title refers obliquely to Poussin's paintings of shepherds gathered around a tomb engraved with the words "Et in Arcadia ego", signifying the presence of death even in Arcadia. Another painting, Watteau's "L'Embarquement pour Cythère", was the inspiration for "L'Embarquement"; the achingly nostalgic "O Albion" (the archaic name of Great Britain) evokes Elgar; and the finale, "Lethe" drifts off in a reference to Greek mythology's underworld river of oblivion.

Leoš Janáček's Second String Quartet reflects less a cultural than a personal history, that of his relationship with his greatest muse, Kamila Stösslová. He had met her in the resort town of Luhačovice in 1917, when he was 63 and she 25. Both were married, but he was smitten, and he initiated a mostly one-sided correspondence that lasted 11 years; he ultimately sent her over 700 gushing missives. He wrote the quartet shortly before his death in 1928, calling it "Intimate Letters" and intending it to capture his deepest feelings. The opening depicts their first encounter: animated violins and trembling cello meet a cool, mysterious phrase in the viola, which symbolized Stösslová (he wrote the part originally for the viola d'amore, a cousin of the viola little used since the Baroque era). In a frequently folk-inflected style, the rest progresses through abrupt emotional transitions, with unstable tonality, pungent harmonies and arresting string effects.

A century earlier, Beethoven had written his penultimate quartet, a work that listeners including the composer himself judged to be the pinnacle of his quartet writing. Beethoven composed Op. 131 as part of a package deal for the Paris publisher Moritz Schlesinger, who was also to get rights to the already completed Op. 130 and 132 quartets (in the end, he offered it to another publisher, Schott's, and wrote a final quartet for Schlesinger). The piece is highly unusual from the beginning, a melancholy fugue that sets up a long and circuitous harmonic journey through highly contrasting sections. The short sonata-form second movement gives way to a even shorter third, which itself functions as an introduction to a wildly diverse set of variations on an ingenuous tune in the fourth. From there, a quirky scherzo and a poignant Adagio lead to an intense finale in the C sharp minor of the beginning—until, unpredictable to the end, Beethoven veers sharply into the major, underscoring what a long, strange trip the quartet has been.



Benjamin Jacobson, violin
Andrew Bulbrook, violin
Jonathan Moerschel, viola
Eric Byers, cello

The Calder Quartet, called “outstanding” and “superb” by the New York Times, performs a broad range of repertoire at an exceptional level, always striving to channel and fulfill the composer’s vision. Already the choice of many leading composers to perform their works – including Christopher Rouse, Terry Riley and Thomas Adès – the group’s distinctive approach is exemplified by a musical curiosity brought to everything they perform, whether it’s Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, or sold-out rock shows with bands like The National or The Airborne Toxic Event. Winners of the 2014 Avery Fisher Career Grant, they are known for the discovery, commissioning, recording and mentoring of some of today’s best emerging composers (over 25 commissioned works to date). The group continues to work and collaborate with artists across musical genres, spanning the ranges of the classical and contemporary music world, as well as rock, and visual arts; and in venues ranging from art galleries and rock clubs to Carnegie and Walt Disney concert halls. Inspired by innovative American artist Alexander Calder, the Calder Quartet’s desire to bring immediacy and context to the works they perform creates an artfully crafted musical experience.

Recent season highlights include debuts at New York’s Mostly Mozart Festival, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, London’s Wigmore Hall, Barbican Festival and the Edinburgh



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ABOUT Calder String Quartet

International Festival. They returned to the Los Angeles Philharmonic's 2014 Minimalist Jukebox, and in 2013 the quartet performed Terry Riley's The Sands with the Cleveland Orchestra. The quartet also returned to Australia for the Adelaide Festival with Iva Bittova, and it appeared at the Laguna Beach Festival alongside Joshua Bell and Edgar Meyer. They have performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Cleveland Museum of Art, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and Hollywood Bowl.

The quartet has been featured in extremely popular TV shows such as the Late Show with David Letterman, the Tonight Show with Jay Leno, KCRW's Morning Becomes Eclectic, the Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien, Late Night with Jimmy Kimmel, and the Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson.

In 2011 the Calder Quartet launched a non-profit dedicated to furthering its efforts in commissioning, presenting, recording, and education, collaborating with the Getty Museum, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, and the Barbican Centre in London.

The Calder Quartet formed at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music and continued studies at the Colburn Conservatory of Music with Ronald Leonard, and at the Juilliard School, receiving the Artist Diploma in Chamber Music Studies as the Juilliard Graduate Resident String Quartet. The quartet regularly conducts master classes and has taught at the Colburn School, the Juilliard School, Cleveland Institute of Music, University of Cincinnati College Conservatory and USC Thornton School of Music.



Calder Quartet appears by arrangement with Alliance Artist Management, 98B Long Highway, Little Compton, RI 02387 AllianceArtistManagement.com

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