

Sunday, April 5, 2009, 3pm
Hertz Hall

American String Quartet

Peter Winograd, *violin*
Laurie Carney, *violin*
Daniel Avshalomov, *viola*
Wolfram Koessel, *cello*

with

Menahem Pressler, *piano*

PROGRAM

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) String Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 64, No. 3
(H. III/67) (1790)

Vivace assai
Adagio
Menuetto: Allegretto
Finale: Allegro con spirito

Alban Berg (1885–1935) String Quartet, Op. 3 (1910)

Langsam
Mässiger viertel

INTERMISSION

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) Quintet in A major for Piano and Strings, Op. 81
(1887)

Allegro, ma non tanto
Dumka: Andante con moto — Vivace
Scherzo (Furiant): Molto vivace
Finale: Allegro

*The American String Quartet is represented by Melvin Kaplan, Inc.,
115 College Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401, www.melkap.com.*

Menahem Pressler is also represented by Melvin Kaplan, Inc.

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Peter Schauf

Internationally recognized as one of the world's finest quartets, the **American String Quartet** (Peter Winograd and Laurie Carney, *violins*; Daniel Avshalomov, *viola*; Wolfram Koessel, *cello*) recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. Highlighting the anniversary was the Quartet's debut in a new series of recordings on the Arabesque label, including quartets of celebrated composer Richard Danielpour, and the launch of the complete Brahms string chamber music featuring a stellar list of collaborative artists. The Quartet was honored to be selected to represent the chamber music field in a series of retrospective concerts celebrating the Naumburg Foundation's 80th anniversary, performed by previous winners of the Naumburg Award.

In three decades of touring, the American has performed in all 50 states and appeared in virtually every important concert hall throughout the world. Their presentations of the complete quartets of Beethoven, Schubert, Schoenberg, Bartók and Mozart have won widespread critical acclaim. The Quartet performs frequently with celebrated guest artists, including clarinetist Richard Stoltzman

and pianist Menahem Pressler, with whom the American will tour in Europe and South America during the 2008–2009 season.

The American's innovative approach to concert programming has won them a number of notable residencies in recent years, including *Beethoven the Contemporary* at the University of Michigan, the six Mozart viola quintets at the Aspen Music Festival with Guarneri Quartet violist Michael Tree (broadcast live nationally via Chicago superstation WFMT), and a recently concluded four-year cycle titled *4–5–6...* at Princeton University, where the Quartet performed the complete quintets and sextets of Mozart and Brahms, joined in each concert by renowned guest artists.

Resident quartet at the Aspen Music Festival since 1974 and the Manhattan School of Music in New York since 1984, the American has also served as resident quartet at the Taos School of Music (1979 to 1998), the Peabody Conservatory and the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. The Quartet's diverse activities have also included numerous international radio and television broadcasts, tours of Asia and performances with the New York City Ballet, the Montreal Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In summer 2008, the Quartet returned to Beijing for its fourth residency at the Great Wall International Music Academy.

As champions of new music, the American has given numerous premieres, most recently including Richard Danielpour's *String Quartet No. 4*, commissioned by Kansas City Friends of Chamber Music, and Curt Cacioppo's *a distant voice calling*, commissioned by Arizona Friends of Chamber Music. Albany Records released their recording of three quartets by Kenneth Fuchs in 2001. In January 2009, the American premiered Tobias Picker's *String Quartet No. 2* in New York City.

Their extensive discography can be heard on the Albany, CRI, MusicMasters, Musical Heritage Society, Nonesuch and RCA labels. The 1998 MusicMasters *Complete Mozart String Quartets*, performed on a matched quartet set of instruments by Stradivari, are widely considered to have set the standard for this repertoire. Additionally, the Quartet is popular with national radio audiences and has been featured on Minnesota Public Radio's *St. Paul Sunday Morning*, National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* and live broadcasts on WFMT.

Formed in 1974, when its original members were students at The Juilliard School, The American String Quartet was launched by winning both the Coleman Competition and the Naumburg Award in the same year. Individually, the members devote additional time outside the quartet's active performance and teaching schedule to solo appearances, recitals and master-classes.



Pianist **Menahem Pressler**, founding member and pianist of the Beaux Arts Trio, has established himself among the world's most distinguished and honored musicians, with a career that spans over five decades.

Mr. Pressler's world-renowned career was launched after he was awarded first prize at the Debussy International Piano Competition in San Francisco in 1946. This was followed by his successful American debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Eugene Ormandy. Since then, Mr. Pressler's extensive tours of North America and Europe have included performances with the orchestras of New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Dallas, San Francisco, London, Paris, Brussels, Oslo, Helsinki and many others.

In 2007, Menahem Pressler was appointed an Honorary Fellow of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance in recognition of a lifetime of performance and leadership in music. In 2005, Mr. Pressler received two additional awards of

international merit: the German President's *Deutsche Bundesverdienstkreuz* (Cross of Merit) First Class, Germany's highest honor, and France's highest cultural honor, the *Commandeur in the Order of Arts and Letters* award.

Mr. Pressler has received honorary doctorates from the University of Nebraska and the North Carolina School of the Arts, five Grammy Award nominations (including one in 2006), a lifetime achievement award from *Gramophone*, Chamber Music America's Distinguished Service Award, and the Gold Medal of Merit from the National Society of Arts and Letters. He has also been given the German critics' *Ehrenurkunde* award, and was elected into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Internationally active as soloist and chamber musician, Mr. Pressler has also received England's Record of the Year Award and Ensemble of the Year from Musical America in 1997. In addition to his busy schedule as a performer, he has given master-classes in Germany, France, Canada and Argentina, and continues to serve on the jury of the Van Cliburn, Queen Elisabeth and Artur Schnabel competitions.

The 1955 Berkshire Music Festival saw Menahem Pressler's debut as a chamber musician, where he appeared as pianist with the Beaux Arts Trio. This collaboration quickly established Mr. Pressler's reputation as one of the world's most revered chamber musicians. His other chamber music collaborations have included performances with the Juilliard, Pacifica, Emerson, Guarneri, American and Cleveland quartets.

In addition to more than 50 recordings with the Beaux Arts Trio, Mr. Pressler has compiled over 30 solo recordings, ranging from the works of Bach to Ben Haim, released by the Musical Heritage Society, Monitor, Philips and Deutsche Grammophon labels, among others.

The pianist fled the Nazis from his hometown of Magdeburg, Germany, in 1938, emigrating to Israel. His life has always been completely devoted to his music. When he is not collaborating in chamber performances, appearing as a soloist, or teaching master classes, Mr. Pressler can be found teaching at Indiana University, where he holds the rank of Distinguished Professor. Mr. Pressler lives in Bloomington, Indiana, with his wife, Sara.