

Saturday, March 3, 2012, 8pm
Hertz Hall

Takács Quartet

Edward Dusinberre *first violin*
Károly Schranz *second violin*
Geraldine Walther *viola*
András Fejér *cello*

PROGRAM

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) Quartettsatz in C minor, D. 703 (1820)
Allegro assai

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) String Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 51 (1878–1879)
Allegro ma non troppo
Dumka (Elegie): Andante con moto —
Vivace — Andante con moto — Presto
Romanze: Andante con moto
Finale: Allegro assai

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131
(1825–1826)
Adagio ma non troppo e molto espressivo
Allegro molto vivace
Allegro moderato — Adagio
Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile —
Più mosso — Andante moderato e
lusinghiero — Adagio — Allegretto —
Adagio ma non troppo e semplice — Allegretto
Presto
Adagio quasi un poco andante
Allegro
Played without pause

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Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Quartettsatz (“Quartet Movement”) in
C minor, D. 703

Composed in 1820.

In June 1816, when he was 19, Schubert received his first fee for one of his compositions (a now-lost cantata for the name-day of his teacher, Heinrich Watteroth), and decided that he had sufficient reason to leave his irksome teaching post at his father’s primary school in order to live the life of an artist. Thus began the bohemian existence of his last dozen years—living by the gladly proffered aid of friends, daily climbing up to Grinzing to haunt the cafés, avoiding the higher levels of society for dislike of buying and wearing good clothes. And music, always music. He composed incessantly. Out of bed shortly after dawn (sometimes he slept with his glasses on so as not to waste time hunting for them in the morning), pouring out music until early afternoon, then off to who-knows-where for a bit too much Heuriger wine and a few pipes of cheap tobacco. Compositions filled his head all the while, sometimes scratched out on napkins or envelopes if they could not wait until the next morning. Evenings were spent making music with his devoted band of friends, who were delighted to sing and play what he wrote.

Toward the end of 1820, Schubert’s creative development underwent a pronounced maturation as a new depth of emotional expression and stylistic adventuresomeness emerged in his music. He turned from songs and amateur household pieces to the grander modes of composition intended for professional performance, a change evidenced by his concentration during his later years on the instrumental genres of quartet, sonata and symphony. An incident early in the year was, perhaps, indicative of the unsettled, Romantic state of mind that brought about the change in his creative nature—the day the benign Franz Schubert went to jail. Among the composer’s friends in 1820 was the Tyrolean poet Johann Senn, whose *Schwannengesang* (D. 744, not to be confused with Schubert’s last song cycle of the same name, D. 957, composed

in 1828, or the *Schwangesang*, D. 318, of 1815) Schubert was to set to music two years later. In Metternich’s Austria, students were always under suspicion of subversive activities, and when Senn resisted a police examination of his identification papers in the spring of 1820, he was hauled off for further questioning. Schubert happened to be visiting Senn when the incident occurred, and so was arrested for the crime of propinquity. Schubert’s innocence was soon discovered, and he was released; his friendship with Senn remained strong. Though criminality was never part of Schubert’s nature, the passion, daring and individuality of his later music show him to have been very much a free spirit, increasingly unfettering himself from the Classical models to find a mode of expression that is the essence of musical Romanticism. The *Quartettsatz* in C minor stands at this crucial threshold in Schubert’s life.

On December 1, 1820, August Ritter von Gymnich sang Schubert’s *Erlkönig* (D. 328) at a musical party in Ignaz Sonnleithner’s Viennese apartment, an event that the host said marked the beginning of the composer’s fame. Aided by the first written description of a *Schubertiad*, penned by Josef Huber the following month, word of Schubert’s talents began to circulate among Austrian music-lovers, and some of his works were heard at a public concert on March 7, 1821. The *Quartettsatz* (“Quartet Movement”), composed during the days immediately after Sonnleithner’s soirée, marks the beginning of Schubert’s maturity. Like the “Unfinished” Symphony of 1822, he left this work as a formal torso, completing only the first movement and some 41 measures of an *Andante* in A-flat major. It is unknown why he broke off composing at that point. The explanation currently given the greatest credence is that Schubert thought he could not match the wonderful inspiration of the first movement in what was to follow, so he abandoned this truncated Quartet for work on another project, and simply never returned to complete it. He did not take up the string quartet form again for more than three years. (Like Mozart, Schubert left a sizeable number of incomplete works, including two other quartet

fragments, nine inchoate piano sonatas and at least five partial symphonies in addition to the “Unfinished.”)

The *Quartettsatz* follows a sonata form modified to reverse the repetitions of the themes in the recapitulation. The movement opens with a restless, quick-note motive in the first violin that is soon taken up in imitation by the other instruments. (In his biography of the composer, John Reed wrote that this theme was derived from an incantation scene in Schubert’s failed opera of August 1820, *The Magic Harp*.) The premonitory mood of the main theme brightens, and is supplanted by a lyrical, flowing secondary subject suspended high in the violin’s compass. A chordal passage supported by murmurings from the cello closes the exposition. The compact development section is largely concerned with permutations of the main theme, so the recapitulation begins with the lyrical second theme, reserving the agitated opening motive for the movement’s closing gestures.

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)
Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 51

Composed in 1878–1879. Premiered on July 29, 1879, in Berlin by the Joachim Quartet.

With the lightning success of his *Slavonic Dances* of 1878, Antonín Dvořák became one of his day’s most popular—and busiest—composers. Just three years before, when he was in such dire financial straits that the city officials of Prague certified his poverty, he entered some of his works in a competition in Vienna for struggling composers. He won, and the distinguished jury members, including Johannes Brahms and the powerful critic Eduard Hanslick, took on their young Czech colleague as a protégé. Brahms insisted that his publisher, Fritz Simrock, issue some of Dvořák’s music, and that he commission a new work from him. The result of Simrock’s order, modeled on Brahms’s *Hungarian Dances*, was the *Slavonic Dances*, which, immediately upon their publication in August 1878, created a sensation. Demands for more of Dvořák’s music

came from publishers, conductors, chamber music ensembles, choral societies and soloists. During a single trip to Berlin in the autumn of 1878, he sold the D minor Serenade, the *Slavonic Rhapsodies* and the *Bagatelles* to Simrock, and the Op. 36 *Piano Variations* and the *Two Furiantes* for Piano to Simrock’s competitor Bote & Bock. All these works were issued in February, as quickly as they could be engraved and printed, and were sold out within two months. A *Festival March* for the celebration of the Silver Wedding Anniversary of the Emperor and Empress of Austria at the Prague National Theater was written in February; in March, Dvořák finished the E-flat String Quartet (Op. 51); he delivered his setting of the *149th Psalm* to the Prague Choral Society that same month; and the *Mazurek* for Violin and Orchestra (Op. 49) was premiered in Prague on March 29th. Dvořák somehow found time in his frantic schedule to again visit Berlin to sell Simrock an entire satchel full of songs, chamber pieces, violin works and even an orchestral overture, and to conclude an agreement granting that firm publication rights for all of his future compositions.

The E-flat String Quartet (Op. 51) was written in response to a request from Jean Becker, leader of the Florentine Quartet, for a new work in Dvořák’s best “Slavonic” style. Dvořák, usually a fast worker, began the piece on Christmas Day, but he took three months to finish it because of the many other projects to which he had committed himself in the excitement of his growing fame. The first performance, a private one, was given on July 29, 1879 at the Berlin home of Joseph Joachim by his celebrated quartet; Becker and the Florentine first played it on their tour of Switzerland in November and frequently thereafter. The E-flat Quartet remains one of Dvořák’s most popular contributions to the genre.

As with other of his works of this period (the *Slavonic Dances*, the A major String Sextet, the *Czech Suite*, the *Slavonic Rhapsodies*, the *Mazurek* for Violin), the E-flat Quartet is deeply imbued with the spirit and style of the music of Dvořák’s native Bohemia. “I am just an ordinary Czech musician,” he insisted. The roots

of his love for the country's indigenous songs and dances reached into his earliest childhood. His father played violin and zither, sang agreeably, and was a member of the village band in Nelahozeves. He encouraged his son to try the violin, and soon the boy was entertaining his father's clients (he was an innkeeper and butcher) with local dance tunes. When not playing, young Antonín listened to the Gypsy bands or asked the older villagers to sing their timeless songs. Indelibly etched in his mind and his heart, the music of his countryside youth remained a touchstone for his art throughout his life, and it finds one of its most endearing transformations in the E-flat Quartet.

The Quartet opens with a serene main theme that acquires some dance-like decorating figures reminiscent of the polka as it unfolds. The second theme, initiated by the viola, is structured in short, simple phrases, like a folk song. The development section is mainly devoted to transformations of the main theme and its associated polka rhythm. The themes are reversed in the recapitulation, with the second subject, given this time by the violins in octaves, coming first, and the clear restatement of the principal subject held in reserve until the coda.

The *dumka* was a traditional Slavic (especially Ukrainian) folk ballad of meditative character which often described heroic deeds. Dvořák adapted the form for a number of his works: the *Dumka: Elegy* for Piano (Op. 35, 1876); three of the Slavonic Dances (Op. 46, No. 2, 1878; Op. 76, Nos. 2 and 4, 1886); the slow movements of the A major String Sextet (Op. 48, 1878) and the Piano Quintet (Op. 81, 1887); the *Furiant with Dumka* for Piano (Op. 12, 1884); and the "Dumky" Trio (Op. 90, 1890–1891). The *dumka* acquired various musical characteristics in different cultures (the composer once reportedly asked the noted folklorist Ludvík Kuba at a chance coffee-house encounter, "Just what is a *dumka*, anyway?"), so Dvořák felt justified in making his own formal interpretation of it. For the second movement of the E-flat Quartet, he used a form of alternating sections of slow thoughtful music and fast dancing music.

The *Romanze*, arranged along a formal arch—gentle and nocturnal at beginning and end, more animated near its center—is, according to the composer's biographer Otakar Sourek, "one of the pearls of Dvořák's intimate lyrics, a movement of bewitching variety of mood, whose expressive and formal transparency reflect the composer's fertility of invention and mastery of the compositional art."

The theme of the sonata-form finale is based on a boisterous Czech dance, the *šacna*. The movement's second theme is a folkish melody of initially somber cast that is humored into a happier mood as it entwines with the main theme in the development. The recall of the themes in the recapitulation and a rousing coda bring this splendid Quartet to an exuberant close.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131

Composed in 1825–1826.

On November 9, 1822, Prince Nikolas Galitzin, a devotee of Beethoven's music and an amateur cellist, wrote from St. Petersburg asking Beethoven for "one, two or three quartets, for which labor I will be glad to pay you whatever amount you think proper." After a hiatus of a dozen years, Beethoven was eager to return to the medium of the string quartet, and he immediately accepted the commission and set the fee of 50 ducats for each work, a high price, but one readily accepted by Galitzin. Though badgered regularly by the Russian Prince ("I am really impatient to have a new quartet of yours. Nevertheless, I beg you not to mind, and to be guided in this only by your inspiration and the disposition of your mind"), Beethoven, exhausted by his labors on the Ninth Symphony in 1823–1824, could not complete the Quartet in E-flat major (Op. 127) until February 1825; the second quartet (A minor, Op. 132) was finished five months later; and the third (B-flat major, Op. 130) was written between July and November, during one of the few periods of relatively good health that

Beethoven enjoyed in his last decade. Fulfilling the commission for Galitzin, however, did not nearly exhaust the fount of Beethoven's creativity in the realm of the string quartet. Karl Holz, the composer's amanuensis and the second violinist in Schuppanzigh's quartet, which gave the first public performances of Galitzin's quartets, recorded, "During the composition of the three works for Prince Galitzin, Beethoven was assailed with such an overwhelming flow of ideas that he went against his will, as it were, to write the Quartets in C-sharp minor and F major." Beethoven began sketching the C-sharp minor Quartet in December 1825, immediately after Op. 130 was completed, and worked on it during the following months at his flat in the Schwarzspanierhaus, near the site of the present Votiv-Kirche. By May 1826, the piece was sufficiently advanced for him to begin offering it to publishers, and he sent inquiries to the firms of Schott in Mainz, Schlessinger in Paris and Probst in Leipzig. The Quartet was finished in July, and accepted by Schott the following month, but the final details of the score's publication were not fully settled until March 24, 1827, just two days before Beethoven's death.

Beethoven's last year was one of emotional and physical turmoil, occasioned not only by the declining state of his health (deafness, of course, as well as gout and a serious and painful intestinal inflammation), but also by the difficult relationship with his nephew Karl, whose custody he had won from his widowed sister-in-law in a vicious court battle in 1820. Karl had proven a continuing trial for the bachelor Beethoven, and by 1825 (he was 19), he had acquired an unsavory local reputation as a financial deadbeat, womanizer and general ne'er-do-well. Beethoven harangued him incessantly about his conduct (much of which was probably brought on by rebellion against his gruff and domineering uncle), and by July 1826, only days after the C-sharp minor Quartet was finished, matters came to a head with Karl's attempted suicide. To spite his uncle, Karl chose to shoot himself in the head in the Helenenthal, one of the composer's favorite spots in Vienna, but he was not sufficiently dedicated to his exercise to make a

complete success of it. Karl was hospitalized until September, after which he and Uncle Ludwig spent the next three months at the Gneixendorf estate of the composer's brother Johann, a successful apothecary, where it was decided to get the lad out of Vienna (where suicide was a crime) by enlisting him in the army. (While at Gneixendorf, Beethoven wrote his Op. 135 Quartet and created a new finale for the Op. 130 Quartet to replace the monumental *Grosse Fuge*. This was the last music that he wrote.) Given the delicate nature of Karl's health and emotional constitution, finding a garrison that would accept him was no easy matter, and Beethoven appealed for help to Stephen von Breuning, a member of the Austrian War Council and his longtime friend and patron (the Violin Concerto was dedicated to him), who found a place for Karl in Field Marshal Joseph von Stutterheim's regiment at Iglau. Uncle and nephew returned to Vienna in December, staying along the way at a miserable inn whose damp, drafty rooms exacerbated Beethoven's illnesses. (Karl was sent for a doctor immediately upon their arrival in the city, but stopped first for a game of billiards.) Karl was finally bundled off to the army on January 2, 1827. On March 10th, Beethoven wrote to Schott asking that the C-sharp minor Quartet be dedicated to Field Marshal von Stutterheim in appreciation for the favor he had done for the family. Exactly two weeks later, he signed the document granting all rights to the piece to Schott—it was the final time that he wrote his name. He received last rites that same day. On March 26th, two days later, Beethoven was dead. Karl served for five undistinguished years in the military, and then became a farm manager. The estates that he inherited first from Ludwig and, in 1848, from Johann allowed him to live in comfort until his death at the age of 52 in 1858.

Though Beethoven told Karl Holz that he considered the C-sharp minor Quartet his greatest achievement in the form, perhaps because it was his most daring such work in terms of its formal concept ("Art demands of us that we not stand still," he counseled Holz), he never heard it in performance. The piece was tried out at

the offices of the Viennese publisher Artaria in September 1826, and (perhaps) given a private reading in December, but it did not receive its formal public premiere until 1835, eight years after the composer's death. The Quartet was played privately for Franz Schubert, an ardent admirer of Beethoven, in November 1828, only five days before he died. Holz reported that when Schubert heard the work, "He fell into such a state of excitement and enthusiasm that we were all frightened for him." As with all of Beethoven's late quartets, Op. 131 gained performances and understanding only slowly, but it has come to be regarded by many as peerless in the chamber repertory. Joseph de Marliave wrote, "This Quartet, musically, is unanimously recognized as the richest, the most significant of this art form, of which it is probably the summit. We find in its sumptuous efflorescence the most striking qualities of Beethoven's last works: originality; free form that is always plastic yet rigorously logical; and an intellectual spirituality within every bar and every note. We recognize here, as in most of the last quartets, a psychological concept. It is the elevation of the soul—filled with the nobility of a suffering man tested by grief—out of the most irremediable melancholy into joyful struggle and victory over his adversaries—toward the innermost reconciliation." Martin Cooper, in his fascinating study of Beethoven's last decade, concluded that this is "the purest stuff of music, exquisitely and logically constructed and finished to the highest degree."

The C-sharp minor Quartet may well be Beethoven's boldest piece of musical architecture—seven movements played without pause, six distinct main key areas, 31 tempo changes, and a veritable encyclopedia of Classical formal principles. So adventurous and unprecedented was this structural plan that Maynard Solomon allowed, "Beethoven may be regarded as the originator of the avant-garde in music." Though it passes beyond the Fifth Symphony, *Fidelio* and *Egmont* in its harmonic sophistication and structural audacity, this Quartet shares with those earlier works the sense of struggle to victory, of subjecting the spirit to such states of emotional

unrest as strengthen it for the winning of ultimate triumph. "Music should strike fire in the heart of man," Beethoven told his student and patron Archduke Rudolph in 1823. "There is no loftier mission than to approach the Divinity nearer than other men, and to disseminate the divine rays among mankind." This supreme masterwork is music of transcendent vision.

The opening movement is a spacious, profoundly expressive fugue which, according to Richard Wagner, "reveals the most melancholy sentiment in music." John N. Burk found that here "the process of the intellect is always subservient to that of the heart," and J.W.N. Sullivan waxed almost metaphysical in concluding that this is "the most superhuman piece of music that Beethoven ever wrote. It is the completely unfaltering rendering into music of what we can only call the mystic vision. It has that serenity which, as Wagner said, passes beyond beauty and makes us aware of a state of consciousness surpassing our own." The following *Allegro* offers emotional respite as well as structural contrast. A tiny movement (*Allegro moderato—Adagio*), just eleven measures in the style of a ruminative recitative, serves as the bridge to the expressive heart (and formal center) of the Quartet, an expansive set of variations that seems almost rapt out of quotidian time. The fifth movement, "the most childlike of all Beethoven's scherzos," according to Joseph Kerman, alternates two strains of buoyantly aerial music: a feather-stitched appoggiated theme previewed by the cello and stated in full by the first violin, and a more lyrical motive first given in octaves by the violins above the playful accompaniment of the lower strings. The short, introspective *Adagio* in chordal texture is less an independent movement than an introduction and foil for the finale, whose vast and densely packed sonata form (woven with references to the fugue theme of the first movement) summarizes the overall progress of this stupendous Quartet in its move from darkness and struggle toward light and spiritual renewal.

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RECOGNIZED AS one of the world's great ensembles, the Takács Quartet plays with a unique blend of drama, warmth and humor, combining four distinct musical personalities to bring fresh insights to the string quartet repertoire. Winners of the 2011 Award for Chamber Music and Song presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London, the Takács Quartet is based in Boulder at the University of Colorado. The Quartet performs 90 concerts a year worldwide, throughout Europe as well as in Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea. The 2010–2011 season included a Bartók cycle in Sydney, and a three-concert series focusing on Schubert in New York City (92nd Street Y) and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The 2011–2012 season will focus on the music of Janáček, Britten, Debussy and Ravel, with performances in major cities across the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. This season also finds the Quartet collaborating with pianists Garrick Ohlsson and Joyce Yang, and cellist Ralph Kirschbaum.

The Quartet's award-winning recordings include the complete Beethoven cycle on the Decca label. In 2005, the late Beethoven quartets won Disc of the Year and the Chamber Award from *BBC Music Magazine*, a *Gramophone* Award and a Japanese Record Academy Award. Their recordings of the early and middle Beethoven quartets collected a Grammy Award, another *Gramophone* Award, a Chamber Music of America Award and two further awards from the Japanese Recording Academy.

In 2006, the Takács Quartet made their first recording for Hyperion Records, of Schubert's D804 and D810. A disc featuring Brahms's Piano Quintet with Stephen Hough was released to great acclaim in November 2007 and was subsequently nominated for a Grammy. Brahms's Quartets Opp. 51 and 67 were released in fall 2008, and a disc featuring the Schumann Piano Quintet with Marc-André Hamelin was released in late 2009. The complete Haydn "Apponyi" Quartets, Opp. 71 and 74, were released in November 2011.

The Quartet has also made 16 recordings for the Decca label since 1988 of works



by Beethoven, Bartók, Borodin, Brahms, Chausson, Dvořák, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert and Smetana. The ensemble's recording of the six Bartók string quartets received the 1998 *Gramophone* Award for chamber music and, in 1999, was nominated for a Grammy. In addition to the Beethoven string quartet cycle recording, the ensemble's other Decca recordings include Dvořák's String Quartet in E-flat Major, Op. 51 and Piano Quintet in A major, Op. 81, with pianist Andreas Haefliger; Schubert's Trout Quintet with Mr. Haefliger, which was nominated in 2000 for a Grammy; string quartets by Smetana and Borodin; Schubert's Quartet in G major and "Notturmo" Piano Trio with Mr. Haefliger; the three Brahms string quartets and Piano Quintet in F minor with pianist Andrés Schiff; Chausson's *Concerto* for violin, piano and string quartet with violinist Joshua Bell and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet; and Mozart's String Quintets, K. 515 and 516, with György Pauk, viola.

The Quartet is known for innovative programming. In 2007 it performed, with Academy Award-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman, *Everyman* in Carnegie Hall, inspired by the Philip Roth novel. The group collaborates regularly with the Hungarian folk ensemble Muzsikás, performing a program that explores the folk sources of Bartók's music. The Takács performed a music and poetry program on a 14-city U.S. tour with the poet Robert Pinsky. In 2010, the Quartet collaborated with the Colorado Shakespeare Theatre and playwright

David Morse in a production of *Quartet*, a play set in Beethoven's later years when he was writing the A minor quartet, Op. 132.

At the University of Colorado, the Takács Quartet has helped to develop a string program with a special emphasis on chamber music, where students work in a nurturing environment designed to help them develop their artistry. The Quartet's commitment to teaching is enhanced by summer residencies at the Aspen Festival and at the Music Academy of the West, Santa Barbara. The Takács is a Visiting Quartet at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

The Takács Quartet was formed in 1975 at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest by Gabor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gabor Ormai and András Fejér, while all four were students. It first received international attention in 1977, winning First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France. The Quartet also won the Gold Medal at the 1978 Portsmouth and Bordeaux Competitions and First Prizes at the Budapest International String Quartet Competition in 1978 and the Bratislava Competition in 1981. The Quartet made its North American debut tour in 1982. Violinist Edward Dusinberre joined the Quartet in 1993 and violist Roger Tapping in 1995. Violist Geraldine Walther replaced Mr. Tapping in 2005. In 2001 the Takács Quartet was awarded the Order of Merit of the Knight's Cross of the Republic of Hungary, and in March 2011 each member of the Quartet was awarded the Order of Merit Commander's Cross by the President of the Republic of Hungary.

Edward Dusinberre (*first violin*) was born in 1968 in Leamington Spa, England, and has enjoyed playing the violin from a young age. His early experiences as concertmaster of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain encouraged him to choose music as a profession. He studied with the Ukrainian violinist Felix Andrievsky at the Royal College of Music in London and with Dorothy DeLay and Piotr Milewski at the Juilliard School.

In 1990, he won the British Violin Recital Prize and gave his debut recital in London at the Purcell Room, South Bank Centre. Upon completion of his studies at Juilliard, Mr. Dusinberre auditioned for the Takács Quartet, which he joined in 1993.

In July 2010, Mr. Dusinberre released a recording of Beethoven's Violin Sonatas No. 9 and 10 with pianist David Korevaar on the Decca label. Future projects include a performance of Brahms's Double Concerto with András Fejér, and performances at the Plush Festival Dorset, where he will play Beethoven's Piano Trio, "The Ghost," with Charles Owen and Louise Hopkins, to be broadcast on BBC Radio 3.

Mr. Dusinberre enjoys writing about music. In connection with the Takács Quartet's recent Beethoven cycles in London and Madrid, he has written articles for *The Strad* and *The Guardian*.

Mr. Dusinberre lives in Boulder, Colorado, with his wife Beth, an archeologist who teaches at the University of Colorado, and their son Sam. He enjoys hiking in the mountains near Boulder and going to the theater. Never known as one of the more athletic members of his family, Mr. Dusinberre has nonetheless benefited from Boulder's healthy culture of embracing the outdoors. He currently has plans to start training for the 2020 Bolder Boulder, sometime in the future.

Károly Schranz (*second violin*) was born in 1952 in Budapest, Hungary. His first musical experiences were listening to gypsy bands in restaurants, which he has always admired for their virtuosity and musicianship. He began playing the violin at age four, and at age 14 he entered the Béla Bartók Secondary Music School, where he met his future wife, also a violin student at the school. He was the recipient of the Franz Liszt Prize in 1983. Since 1986, Mr. Schranz, his wife and their three daughters have made their home in Boulder, Colorado, where they often go hiking. He also loves to play tennis.

Geraldine Walther (*viola*) was Principal Violist of the San Francisco Symphony for 29 years, having previously served as assistant principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony and the Miami Philharmonic.

A native of Florida, she first picked up the viola in a public school music program in Tampa. She went on to study at the Manhattan School of Music with Lillian Fuchs and at the Curtis Institute with Michael Tree of the Guarneri Quartet. In 1979, she won first prize at the William Primrose International Competition.

As soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, she performed the U.S. premieres of such important works as Takemitsu's *A String Around Autumn*, Liebermann's Viola Concerto, Holloway Viola Concerto and Benjamin's *Viola, Viola*. In May 2002, she was soloist in William Schuman's *Concerto on Old English Rounds* and the Britten Double Concerto for violin and viola.

In 1995, Ms. Walther was selected by Sir Georg Solti as a member of his Musicians of the World, an orchestra composed of leading musicians from around the globe, for concerts in Geneva to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. She has participated in leading chamber music festivals, including Marlboro, Santa Fe, Tanglewood, Bridgelyampton, Cape Cod, Amelia Island, the Telluride, Seattle and Green music festivals, and Music@Menlo. She has collaborated with such artists as Isaac Stern, Pinchas Zukerman and Jaime Laredo, and has appeared as a guest artist with the Tokyo, Vermeer, Guarneri, Lindsay, Cypress and St. Lawrence quartets. She joined the Takács Quartet as a regular member in fall 2005.

In addition to her recordings for Hyperion with the Takács Quartet, Ms. Walther's recordings include Hindemith's *Trauermusik* and *Der Schwanendreher* with the San Francisco Symphony (London/Decca), Paul Chihara's *Golden Slumbers* with the San Francisco Chamber Singers (Albany), Lou Harrison's *Threnody* (New Albion) and, as a member of the Volkert Trio, *Delectable Pieces* (Con Brio).

Ms. Walther is the mother of two grown daughters and lives in Longmont, Colorado, with her husband Tom.

András Fejér (*cello*) was born in 1955 into a musical family. His father was a cellist and conductor, and his mother was a pianist. He began playing the cello at age seven because, as legend has it, his father was unwilling to listen to a violin-upstart practicing. Since an early age, his parents have held string quartet weekends, which for the young cellist were the most memorable of occasions—if not for the music, then for the glorious desserts his mother would prepare for those sessions.

Mr. Fejér was admitted to the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in 1975, where he was a pupil of Ede Banda, András Mihály, Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág. That same year he founded the Takács String Quartet with three fellow classmates. Although the Quartet has been his sole professional focus since then, he does perform as a soloist occasionally as well.

Mr. Fejér is married to a literature teacher. They have three children and live in the Rockies, where they enjoy year-round sunshine in beautiful Boulder. When he is not on tour, he enjoys reading, photography, tennis and hiking.