

Sunday, November 12, 2017, 3pm  
Hertz Hall

## Tetzlaff Quartet

Christian Tetzlaff, *violin*  
Elisabeth Kufferath, *violin*  
Hanna Weinmeister, *viola*  
Tanja Tetzlaff, *cello*

### PROGRAM

- Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756–1791) Quartet No. 16 in E-flat Major, K. 428 (K. 421b)  
Allegro non troppo  
Andante con moto  
Menuetto & Trio  
Allegro vivace
- Alban BERG (1885–1935) Quartet, Op. 3  
Langsam  
Mässige Viertel

### INTERMISSION

- Franz SCHUBERT (1797–1828) Quartet No. 15 in G Major, D. 887  
Allegro molto moderato  
Andante un poco moto  
Scherzo: Allegro vivace –  
Trio: Allegretto  
Allegro assai

*Recordings available on the CAvi Music and Ondine labels.  
The Tetzlaff Quartet appears by arrangement with CM Artists.*

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**Quartet No. 16 in E-flat Major,  
K. 428 (K. 421b)****Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Of all the famous composer pairs—Bach and Handel, Bruckner and Mahler, Debussy and Ravel—only Mozart and Haydn were friends. Mozart first mentioned his acquaintance with Haydn in a letter to his father on April 24, 1784, but he probably had met the older composer soon after moving to Vienna three years earlier. Though his duties kept him across the border in Hungary at Esterháza Palace for most of the year, Haydn usually spent the winters in Vienna, and it is likely that he and Mozart attended or even played together at some of the many “string quartet parties” that graced the social calendars of the city’s music lovers during the cold months. True friendship and mutual admiration developed between the two master musicians, despite the 24 years difference in their ages, and they took a special delight in learning from and praising each other’s music.

Mozart’s greatest testament to his respect for Haydn is the set of six superb string quartets composed between 1782 and 1785, and dedicated to his colleague upon their publication in September 1785. “To my dear friend Haydn,” read the inscription. “A father who had resolved to send his children out into the great world took it to be his duty to confide them to the protection and guidance of a very celebrated Man, especially when the latter by good fortune was at the same time his best Friend.” These works are not just charming souvenirs of personal sentiments, however, but they also represent a significant advance in Mozart’s compositional style, for in them he assimilated the techniques of thematic development and thorough integration of the instrumental voices that Haydn had perfected in his Op. 20 (1771) and Op. 33 quartets (1781). “They are,” Mozart noted in the dedication, “the fruit of long and laborious endeavor,” a statement supported by the manuscripts, which show more experimentation and correction than any other of his scores. The superior quality of the “Haydn” Quartets was recognized both by the publisher Artaria, who paid Mozart the extraordinary fee of 100 ducats, a sum usually reserved only for complete op-

eras, and by the composer himself, who insisted that the Parisian publisher Sieber pay considerably more for them than for a set of three piano concertos. “The ‘Haydn’ Quartets are models of perfection,” wrote Homer Ulrich, “not a false gesture; not a faulty proportion. The six quartets stand as the finest examples of Mozart’s genius.”

Mozart played the first three of the quartets (K. 387, K. 421, K. 428) for Haydn on January 15, 1785, and proudly sent a report on the occasion to his father in Salzburg, with which he enclosed the scores for the new pieces. A month later, on Friday, February 11th, Leopold arrived for his only visit to Vienna following Wolfgang’s marriage in 1782 (which Papa constantly decried). That same evening, Mozart whisked his father to a concert at which he played the new D-minor Piano Concerto (K. 466), the first of six heavily subscribed “Academies” he presented that spring. The next night Mozart gave a long-planned party for Leopold and several friends at his flat in Schulerstrasse at which the last three of the “Haydn” Quartets were introduced. (K. 464 and K. 465 were finished on January 10th and 14th; K. 458 was composed the previous November.) Haydn and Mozart were joined in the performance by their Masonic lodge brothers Anton and Bartholomäus Tinti. In a letter to his daughter in Salzburg, Leopold, bursting with pride over the accomplishments and recognition of his son in the Imperial city, recorded the highlight of that soirée: “Herr Haydn said to me: ‘I tell you before God and as an honest man that your son is the greatest composer known to me either in person or by name. He has taste and, what is more, the most profound knowledge of composition.’” For the father who had devoted so much of his life to the training and nurturing of his extraordinary son, that moment was, according to Alfred Einstein, “the climax of his life.”

The E-flat Quartet, K. 428 (corrected to K. 421b in Einstein’s revisions of Ludwig von Köchel’s catalog) was composed in June and July 1783, just before Mozart and Constanze journeyed to Salzburg to convince Papa Leopold of the wisdom of their marriage the year before. (They did not succeed.) The couple’s first child, Raimund Leopold, born on June 17,



Georgia Bertazzi

1783, was placed with a nurse in their absence; the baby died on August 18th, though the parents seem not have learned of the tragedy until they returned to Vienna at the end of November. The emotional richness of Mozart's new life as a husband, father, and family provider was almost certainly one of the reasons behind the increased depth of expression his music began to show at that time, a quality that appears with special force in the Quartet in E-flat Major. Though the elements of good taste and sonorous beauty were always Mozart's foremost concerns in his compositions, Homer Ulrich noted that "during the last 10 years of his life, he gave us music in which unrest, a degree of pessimism, and some concern over the prospect of death are reflected, however faintly." The unsettled quality of this work, the sense of straining after strong emotional effect, is established immediately with the main theme, one of the most unusual opening gestures in Classical music—an octave leap followed by a tortuous series of tonality-defying intervals played in mysterious unison by all of the participants. Hans Keller pointed out that if Mozart had followed the harmonic implications of this extraordinary motive, he would have produced "something even more advanced historically than *Tristan*." Neither Mozart nor anyone else

for the next three-quarters of a century was prepared to follow that lead, however, so the theme soon rights itself into E-flat Major, though the seed of chromatic ambiguity planted in the first measures sprouts in many phrases throughout the movement to cloud the bright home key. It is such peerless balancing of light and shadow, of pitting certainty against doubt in musical terms, that is perhaps the greatest evidence of Mozart's genius. There is simply no one else, not even Haydn, who could have written this movement.

The quest to burrow to the bedrock of feeling continues in the Andante. Wrote A. Hyatt King, "Though the movement is in sonata form, there is little melody which lingers in the memory. The 96 bars are a richly harmonized, dream-like meditation, a quiet but restless inner searching heightened by the use of chromatic syncopation. In all of Mozart's chamber music, only the Adagio of the great String Trio of 1788 [K. 563] offers any comparison." It is indicative of the nature of this music that the formal second theme bears a striking resemblance in its chromaticism and melodic leadings to a passage from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, the revolutionary work that was still 76 years in the future when Mozart penned these measures. There follows an enormous Menuetto movement that balances hammer-blow chords against a limp

lyrical phrase. The central trio provides a remarkable harmonic adventure that begins in the morose key of C minor but ends in the tonality of B-flat Major, an absolutely unexpected progression made graceful by the suavity and sophistication of Mozart's style. The finale, a rondo based on the kittenish theme presented in the opening measures, is, appropriately, the most cheerful movement of the quartet. The spirit and technique of Haydn are strongly evident here, since Mozart borrowed such of his friend's procedures as instrumental interplay, sudden dynamic changes, and surprising silences. Perhaps the most Haydnesque passage occurs near the end of the movement, just before the final return of the rondo theme, where the melody seems to lose its way, disintegrate, and stop completely before remembering what it was about and dashing toward the end.

### String Quartet, Op. 3

#### Alban Berg

Alban Berg, the son of a prosperous salesman for a Viennese export firm, was early introduced to art and theater and music, and given piano lessons as a matter of course during his youth. Berg's taste and knowledge of music matured rapidly, and by age 16, he had eagerly begun to try his hand at composition, though a series of events during the next few months—the death of his father, failure to pass his high school graduation examinations, the collapse of a passionate love affair—resulted in a depression severe enough to cause him to attempt suicide. He survived and managed to finish school in 1904, after which he went to work as an apprentice (i.e., unpaid) accountant in the Austrian ministry that oversaw pigs and distilleries. Berg's ambition to be a musician weathered these Kafkaesque difficulties, however, and he continued to compose. Just at that time, his brother Charley spotted an advertisement in a local newspaper announcing that Arnold Schoenberg, whose reputation as an iconoclastic modernist had been firmly established by the premiere of his *Verklärte Nacht* in 1902, was accepting students in composition. Charley took some of Alban's manuscripts to Schoenberg, who saw such promise in the works that he

agreed to take Berg on as a pupil for free. A fortunate inheritance in 1905 made it possible for Berg to leave his government job and devote himself assiduously to his lessons. He began composing in earnest under Schoenberg's tutelage, and had soon produced the *Seven Early Songs*, the first work that he was to include in his mature canon. A piano sonata (Op. 1) followed in 1908, and a set of four songs (Op. 2) and a string quartet (Op. 3) two years later, by which time Berg considered that his musical apprenticeship had come to an end. He discontinued formal lessons with Schoenberg in 1910, though the two remained supportive friends and creative allies for the rest of their lives.

In later years, after he had moved to the United States, Schoenberg recalled that Berg's String Quartet, Op. 3 marked the artistic emancipation of his student: "Alban, who had occupied himself extraordinarily intensely with contemporary music—with Mahler, Strauss, perhaps even Debussy, whose work I did not know, but certainly with my music—had a burning desire to express himself no longer in the classical forms, harmonies, and melodic idioms and their proper schemata of accompaniment, but in a manner in accordance with the times, and with his own personality, which had been developing in the meantime.... One thing is sure: his string quartet surprised me in the most unbelievable way by the fullness and unconstraint in its musical language, the strength and surety of its presentation, its careful working-out and significant originality." Berg's String Quartet, written during the spring and early summer of 1910, was first performed publicly at a little-noticed concert in Vienna on April 24th of the following year. When it was given again, however, by the noted Havermann Quartet at the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival in Salzburg on August 2, 1923, it drew the attention of the prestigious assemblage of performers and critics in attendance, and was directly responsible for the establishment of Berg's international reputation. Offers came from quartets and concert series in Germany and Scandinavia to program the work, and Emil Hertzka, the influential director of the contemporary music publishing firm Universal Edi-

tion, agreed to issue the work and Berg's future scores. The premiere of the opera *Wozzeck* two years later, in Berlin in December 1925, marked Berg as one of the leading creative figures of his generation.

Berg's String Quartet hovers in the richly expressive zone that marks the boundary of late 19th-century chromatic harmony and modern atonality. The sophistication and ease with which he handled this revolutionary new language in such an early work is remarkable, rivaling in its technique and eloquence Schoenberg's Quartet No. 2 of 1908. The plan of Berg's quartet is unusual, consisting of just a thoughtful and lyrical opening movement and an agitated finale. Though the forms of the two movements are extensions of traditional structures (sonata and rondo), they are difficult to follow on initial acquaintance because of the continuous development of thematic motives, the complex interplay among the instruments, and the equivocity of the harmonic vocabulary. Repeated hearings reveal the sterling formal logic and expert handling of motivic materials that inform the quartet, but until that level of familiarity is achieved, the listener can be caught up in the ceaseless ebb and flow of the music's sounds and feelings, of tension finely accumulated and sensitively released, and of the vast range of innovative sonorities and timbral combinations that a modern master can draw from the most tradition-laden of all chamber ensembles. Following the 1923 Salzburg performance of his String Quartet, Berg summarized its effect upon him in a letter to his wife: "The Havermann played it indescribably beautifully. I tell you—and I can tell only you—that I reveled in the sound and the solemn sweetness of my own music. The so-called wildest and riskiest passages were pure euphony in the classic sense. It was a glorious evening."

### String Quartet No. 15 in G Major, D. 887

#### Franz Schubert

"It is very sad and miserable here—boredom has taken the upper hand too much... I am not working at all. The weather is truly appalling; the Almighty seems to have forsaken us altogether, for the sun simply refuses to shine. It is

May, and we cannot sit in any garden yet. Awful!" Thus did Franz Schubert report from Vienna on his sorry condition in the spring of 1826 to his friends Eduard von Bauernfeld and Ferdinand Mayerhofer, who were away enjoying an extended tour through Carinthia and Upper Austria without him. The mood of the often-lonely bachelor composer was further dampened by news that the 58-year-old Michael Vogl, previously one of the leading lights of the Schubertiads and an important early interpreter of Schubert's vocal music, had finally become engaged to be married. Bauernfeld and Mayerhofer asked Schubert to join them in Linz, but, as usual, he barely had sufficient funds to meet his needs in Vienna and had to pass on their invitation. He got only as far as the suburb of Währing that summer, where he stayed with the family of the devoted musical *amateur* Franz von Schober.

Despite his declarations of inactivity, Schubert completed a number of songs on texts by Shakespeare at Währing in 1826, and set to paper the String Quartet in G Major, which proved to be his final work in the form. He had last broached the genre two years earlier with the quartets in A minor (D. 804) and D minor (D. 810, *Death and the Maiden*), and the new G-Major Quartet may have been spurred by the successful performance of the *Death and the Maiden* quartet at the Viennese residence of the lawyer Josef Barth on February 1, 1826, as well as by his attendance at the premiere of Beethoven's Op. 130 Quartet (with the *Grosse Fuge* as finale) on March 21st. Though Schubert dated the finished score of the G-Major Quartet "June 10–20, 1826," he had almost certainly begun sketching this enormous creation during the preceding weeks. The composer (as violist) played through the piece informally with some friends on March 7, 1827, and included the first movement on the only public concert entirely of his works held during his lifetime, given in the hall of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde on March 26, 1828. That event, prompted and sponsored by his circle of devoted friends, was a significant artistic and financial success, and he used the proceeds to celebrate the occasion at a local tavern, pay off some old debts, acquire

a new piano, and buy a ticket for Nicolò Paganini's sensational debut in Vienna three days later. Schubert offered the quartet for publication to Schott in February 1828, along with the Quartet in D minor, three operas, the Mass in A-flat, the E-flat Piano Trio, and several dozen songs, but he was refused. The work was not played publicly again until 1850, and the score was issued only in the following year.

Robert Haven Schaufler wrote of the G-Major Quartet, "The chief characteristics of the music are a forward-looking modernity surpassing even that of the D-minor Quartet, the rhapsodic quality of certain themes, much of Schubert's characteristic wavering between major and minor, the antiphonal play of upper against lower strings, a more marked orchestral quality, a tendency toward horizontal rather than vertical counterpoint, and a diffuseness that stretched the work to an inordinate length." The first movement is launched by a swelling chord that slips from G Major to G minor as it leads to a tiny leaping motive in craggy dotted rhythms. The main theme, based on the leaping motive, is presented in full in a haunting passage of shivering mystery. Tightly knit extrapolations of the first theme serve as transition to the subsidiary subject, a syncopated construction in chordal texture that incorporates the dotted rhythm of the opening. The extensive development section, largely concerned with permutations of the long swelling note and the craggy figure of the beginning, is marked by unsettled harmonic motion and considerable rhythmic agitation. The music quiets, becomes fragmented, and pauses on an expectant harmony only to lead to the recapitulation, in which the earlier thematic materials are extensively reworked to provide further formal and expressive expansion while satisfying the requirements of the movement's sonata form.

The Andante, one of Schubert's most daring and original formal experiments, contrasts music of irreconcilable differences. The movement opens with a long, lyrical song for the cello. Without warning, the music suddenly turns ferocious and violent, explosive with snapping rhythms, quaking tremolos, fiery scales, and abrupt dynamic shifts. Calm is even-

tually restored, and the cello and then the violin tentatively continue the lyrical theme, but the melody is cut short once again by the vehement music. Finally, emotion spent, the movement tries to resume the mood of the opening, but the earlier serenity has been replaced by a wary enervation occasioned by the menacing corridors through which the music has passed.

The anxious character of the quartet continues in the quicksilver Scherzo, whose elfin transfigurations of its basic motive—six quick notes followed by three longer ones—bring to mind Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, composed in Berlin by that 17-year-old wonder just one month after this quartet. The central trio, in the style of the Austrian *Ländler*, provides the only untroubled passage in the entire quartet. "It sounds like a glimpse of paradise after the storm and stress of the first two movements," commented John Reed in his study of Schubert's final years.

The finale is cast in the form of a vast rondo, though the episodes do not differ markedly in character from the traversals of the principal subject. The movement's theme is a *tarantella* melody that summarizes the flexing between the major and minor forms of the tonic triad that has energized so much of the work. This music of brilliance and energy and soaring spirits requires enormous feats of virtuosity, endurance, and musicianship from the ensemble to close this quartet, which, John Reed wrote, "is in the technical sense perhaps Schubert's most considerable—and most carefully considered—chamber work."

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### **Tetzlaff Quartet**

Praised by the *New York Times* for its "dramatic, energetic playing of clean intensity," the Tetzlaff Quartet, formed in 1994, is one of today's leading string quartets. Ensemble members Christian Tetzlaff, Tanja Tetzlaff, Hanna Weinmeister, and Elisabeth Kufferath take time off from their successful individual careers to tour several times each season, performing concerts that regularly receive great critical acclaim.

Highlights of the quartet's 2017–18 season include a fourth North American tour with the





current performances on the West Coast (including at the Orange County Performing Arts Center and the Green Music Center in Sonoma), the chamber music societies of Cleveland and Cincinnati, Spivey Hall in Atlanta, Shriver Hall in Baltimore, and Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall. In Europe, the quartet appears in London, Cologne, Hamburg, and Hannover, along with a number of other cities. Additional recent European engagements include performances at Berlin's Konzerthaus, Paris' Auditorium du Louvre, Brussels' BOZAR, Vienna's Musikverein, Munich's Herkulessaal, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and London's Queen Elizabeth Hall.

The quartet's first recording, music by Schoenberg and Sibelius, was released by CAvi Music in 2010. Subsequent recordings include Berg's *Lyric Suite* and Mendelssohn's String Quartet No. 2 in 2014 and the group's most recent CD of Schubert and Haydn quartets, released in 2017, both on the Ondine label.

**Christian Tetzlaff** (*violin*), described as "one of the most brilliant and inquisitive artists of the new generation" (*The New York Times*), is a regular guest with the world's leading orchestras and festivals. He also enjoys collaborations with

the most distinguished chamber musicians, including recital partners Leif Ove Andsnes and Lars Vogt. He plays a Peter Greiner violin.

**Elisabeth Kufferath** (*violin*) is a frequent guest at international music festivals including Lucerne, Schleswig-Holstein, Rheingau, Ravinia, and Aspen. Her regular chamber music partners include Lars Vogt, Antje Weithaas, Isabelle Faust, and Jens Peter Maintz. Kufferath is currently a professor of violin at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hannover. She plays a Peter Greiner violin.

**Hanna Weinmeister** (*viola*), currently first concertmaster at Opernhaus Zürich, has collaborated with Leonidas Kavakos, Heinz Holliger, Gidon Kremer, and Benjamin Schmid, among others. She plays a Peter Greiner viola.

**Tanja Tetzlaff** (*cello*) has appeared with many of Europe's major international orchestras under conductors such as Daniel Harding, Lorin Maazel, and Paavo Järvi. She is especially dedicated to chamber music and regularly plays with Lars Vogt, Martin Fröst, and Carolin Widmann. She plays a violoncello of Giovanni Battista Guadagnini from 1776.