Musicians from Marlboro

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)  String Quintet in E-flat major, K. 614 (1791)

Allegro di molto
Andante
Menuetto
Allegro

Bella Hristova, violin
Robin Scott, violin
Dimitri Murrath, viola
Vicki Powell, viola
Marcy Rosen, cello


Allegro non troppo
Menuetto
Vivo

Bella Hristova, violin
Robin Scott, violin
Vicki Powell, viola

INTERMISSION

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)  Piano Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44 (1842)

Allegro brillante
In modo d’una Marcia: Un poco largamente
Scherzo molto vivace
Allegro ma non troppo

Cynthia Raim, piano
Robin Scott, violin
Bella Hristova, violin
Dimitri Murrath, viola
Marcy Rosen, cello

Cal Performances’ 2013–2014 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.
Mozart experienced a surprising surge of creativity during the months before his death in December 1791. The preceding year was the least productive of his mature life: he was ill much of the time with symptoms of the kidney failure that would soon end his life; Constanze’s health was in serious decline from the burden of almost constant pregnancy and from grief over the death of the fifth of the six children the couple produced during their nine-year marriage, a daughter named Anna Maria, who survived only a few hours before dying in November 1789; Mozart had nudged open the door to the imperial court with his appointment as Court Chamber Musician in December 1787 (for which his only duty was to compose trifling dances for the royal balls), but continued to be frustrated in gaining the more lucrative and honored appointment that would allow him to compose the Emperor’s operas; there was no longer sufficient demand in Vienna for him to sponsor his own concerts; and he was sliding into worrisomely increasing debt. After Mozart put the finishing touches on Cosi fan tutte in early January 1790, his catalog for the next ten months shows only the two quartets dedicated to the King of Prussia (K. 589, 590), and orchestrations of Handel’s Alexander’s Feast (K. 591) and Ode for St. Cecilia’s Day (K. 592), undertaken for performances by Baron van Swieten’s Society of Noblemen to raise some quick cash. In October, Mozart pawned the family silver to underwrite the commission for the Emperor’s operas; and he was sliding into worrisomely increasing debt. A total of $600, at least double what he could expect to earn for the same work in Vienna, where, in any case, he had no such immediate prospects. The situation had been arranged for him by his friends the Irish tenor Michael Kelly and the English soprano Nancy Storace, who had participated in the première of The Marriage of Figaro in May 1786 before returning home. Without explanation, Mozart refused the offer, as he did one from Johann Salomon in December, when that ambitious impresario tried to snare both Haydn and him for his series of London concerts. Haydn accepted Salomon’s proposal, and made a considerable fortune from the project. Mozart saw his older colleague off on December 12th; the two never met again. Perhaps Mozart was too ill to make the journey, or perhaps too discouraged by his Frankfurt debacle, or perhaps too worried about Constanze’s most recent pregnancy (Franz Xavier Wolfgang was born on July 7, 1791). Whatever his reason, he stayed in Vienna, and, amazingly, began to compose again. The first fruit of his rejuvenated creativity was the Quintet for Strings in D major (K. 593), completed in December 1790. The Concerto No. 27 in B-flat major (K. 595) was finished on January 5, 1791, three weeks before his 35th birthday, and a second string quintet, in E-flat major (K. 614), was entered into his catalog on April 12, 1791. Ave verum corpus, The Magic Flute, La Clemenza di Tito, the Clarinet Concerto, and the Requiem followed in quick order during the next eight months. On December 11th, Wolfgang Mozart died.

When the E-flat major String Quintet was published, posthumously, in Vienna in May 1793 by Artaria along with the one in D major, the edition’s title page noted that the works had been “Composto per un Amatore Ongarese”—“Composed for a Hungarian Amateur”—the outcome, according to an advertisement for the publication in the Wiener Zeitung, of the earnest solicitation of a musical friend.” Constanze said that the Hungarian was Johann Tost, born in Uherské Hradisté (actually in Moravia, today part of the Czech Republic), who had worked as a violinist in Haydn’s orchestra at Esterháza before marrying well and setting himself up, with estimable financial success, as a cloth merchant in Vienna. Tost acted for Haydn (rather unscrupulously, but not to the composer’s disadvantage) in selling his Symphonies Nos. 88 and 89 to the Parisian publisher Sieber in 1787, and two years later commissioned from him two sets of string quartets (Opp. 54 and 55). In his biography of Mozart, Ivor Keys speculated that Haydn, out of concern for Mozart’s financial woes, may have been the “musical friend” mentioned in the newspaper announcement as the person who encouraged Tost to commission the two Quintets. The truth has never been discovered, but it is a pleasing thought that Haydn, then the most revered composer in Europe and one of the few contemporaries who fully grasped the scope of Mozart’s incomparable genius, might have been instrumental in bringing to life these, the last of his colleague’s chamber compositions.

The noted Mozart authority Eric Blom wrote, “Perhaps the E-flat major Quintet is the most superb of all [the string quartets]. It has probably the highest sum-total of great invention plus great workmanship, and the two are most miraculously balanced.” Though written at a period of intense emotional turmoil, the Quintet exhibits qualities also abundant in The Magic Flute: optimistic spirit, rich sonority, grandeur through contrapuntal texture, touchingsymphonic, and jovial, folk-like melodies. The Quintet opens with a bold theme comprising repeated notes and trills, which serves as the motivic kernel from which much of the movement grows. The violins provide kithenomatious upon this opening proposal before borrowing it for themselves as the material for the transition to the second theme, a melody of greater melodic variety and leaping intervals. The initial subject soon returns to close the exposition. Much of the development section is concerned with the trill gesture from the main theme. The recapitulation traverses the principal subject at some length, but barely mentions the second theme before a trill-laden coda rounds out the movement.

Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967)
Serenade for Two Violins and Viola, Op. 12

Composed in 1920.

It took a world war to destroy the millennium-old Habsburg Empire, but when the Viennese government was finally dissolved in 1918, political changes in Eastern Europe came quickly. Despite strong challenges over the years to their authority, the Habsburg emperors had ruled Hungary since the early 16th century, and the Hungarians gladly threw off the ancient yoke at the end of the First World War—the Hungarian Republic was declared on November 16, 1918. However, the communist fervor that had erupted into revolution in Russia the year before quickly spread to Hungary, and Béla Kun attempted to found a Hungarian Soviet Republic the following March. That effort also failed, and Admiral Horthy brought back a form of monarchy under his own totalitarian rule in 1920.
Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

**Piano Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44**

*Composed in 1842. Premiered on January 8, 1843, in Leipzig.*

“I often feel tempted to crush my piano—it is too narrow for my thoughts,” wrote Schumann in 1839 to Heinrich Dorn, his former composition teacher. Until that time (Schumann turned 30 that summer), he had produced only songs and small-scale works for solo piano, with the exception of an abandoned symphony in 1832, but within a year of his words to Professor Dorn he received strong encouragement to act on his ambition to launch into the grander genres of music. The venerated Franz Liszt had recently taken up a number of his piano works, notably the brilliant *Carnaval*, and tried to convince his young colleague that he was capable of accomplishing bigger things. Liszt fired off several letters encouraging Schumann to forge ahead, even offering to arrange performances and seek out a publisher for him. “I think I have already expressed to you in one of my previous letters the desire I have to see you write some ensemble pieces—trios, quintets, septets. Will you forgive me for insisting again on this point? It seems to me that success, even commercial success, will not be denied them.” Liszt was the brightest star in the European musical firmament at that time, and Schumann could hardly help but be swayed by his advice. Another source of encouragement for Schumann to broach the larger musical forms came from his beloved wife, Clara. Their long-hoped-for marriage finally took place in September 1840, and Clara, one of the greatest musicians and pianists of the 19th century, was soon coaxing her new husband to extend his creative range. Her urging had an almost immediate effect. The year 1841 was one of enormous productivity for Schumann, during which he wrote not one but two symphonies, the first movement of what became his Piano Concerto, a hybrid orchestral work called *Overture, Scherzo and Finale* (Op. 52), and sketches for a C minor symphony that was never completed.

In 1842, Schumann turned from the orchestral genres to concentrate with nearly monomaniacal zeal on chamber music. Entries in his diary attest to the frantic pace of his inspiration: “June 4th: Started the Quartet in A minor. June 6th: Finished the Adagio of the Quartet. June 8th: My Quartet almost finished. June 11th: A good day, started a Second Quartet. June 18th: The Second Quartet almost finished up to the *Variazioni*. July 5th: Finished my Second Quartet. July 8th: Began the Third Quartet. July 10th: Worked with application on the Third Quartet.” Schumann’s three string quartets, published together under the single opus number 41, were completed in a frenzy of creative activity within just six weeks, after which he never wrote another work in the form. Having nearly exhausted himself, he and Clara took a holiday at a Bohemian spa in August, but he again threw himself into composition soon after his return: the Piano Quintet (Op. 44) was begun in September and the Piano Quartet (Op. 47) on October 24th; both were finished before the *Phantasiestücke* for Piano, Violin, and Cello (Op. 88) was created in December. Schumann, drained by three months of feverish work, then slumped into a state of nervous collapse, and he was unable to compose again until the following February, though his achievement of 1842—the composition of six chamber music masterpieces in five months—stands as one of the greatest bursts of creative inspiration in the history of the art.

Schumann sketched the Quintet for Piano, Two Violins, Viola, and Cello, the first major work ever written for that combination of instruments, in just five days during September 1842 and completed the score only two weeks later. He held a trial run-through of the piece at his home the following month; Clara played the piano part, and the ensemble parts were taken by a string quartet from the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra which was headed by that ensemble’s distinguished concertmaster, Ferdinand David (for whom Mendelssohn was to write his Violin Concerto two years later). Schumann arranged another performance of the Quintet for December 6th at the home of Carl and Henriette Voigt, who were among the most influential local patrons of the arts, but Clara fell ill that morning, and Mendelssohn, though never having seen the manuscript, agreed to fill in for her. Upon Mendelssohn’s suggestion, Schumann revised the slow movement and added a second trio to the Scherzo after the reading at the Voigts, and it was in this version that the Quartet was heard publicly for the first time, at the Gewandhaus on January 8, 1843. The performance was so successful that it had to be repeated on February 9th to satisfy audience demand. The composer was understandably pleased with his new creation, calling it “very spirited and full of life,” and the work proved to be an immense hit with its early auditors—Hector Berlioz, visiting Leipzig at the time of the Quintet’s premiere, spoke glowingly of it. The score has remained...
Schumann’s most beloved contribution to the chamber music repertory.

The Quintet opens with a striding, heroic theme played by the full ensemble. A gentler motive is posited by the piano and the violin as a transition to the second theme, a lovely scalar melody initiated by the cello. A recall of the vigorous opening theme closes the exposition. The development section, led by the piano (as is most of the work—the keyboard has only six measures of rest in the entire composition), deals mostly with permutations of the main theme. The recapitulation provides balance and closure by recalling the earlier thematic material in appropriately adjusted tonalities. The second movement is in the mode and manner of a solemn funeral march into which are inserted two contrasting episodes. The first intervening paragraph is a lyrical effusion for the violin and cello in duet supported by a restless accompaniment from the inner strings and the keyboard. The second episode is a tempestuous passage of angry triplet rhythms that are not soothed until the lyrical melody from the earlier episode returns in a heightened setting. The funeral march, nearly exhausted, is heard one final time to bring the movement to a dying close. The Scherzo, called by one commentator “the glorification of the scale,” is strewn with long ribbons of ascending and descending notes. Two trios, one sweet and flowing, the other impetuous and Gypsy-inspired, provide contrast. The finale, one of Schumann’s most masterful formal accomplishments, begins in the shadow of defiant tragedy but, before its end, achieves a soaring, life-affirming proclamation through an expertly constructed double fugue based on the conjoined main themes of the finale and the opening movement.

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PROGRAM NOTES

The Musicians from Marlboro, the touring extension of the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont, offers exceptional young professional musicians together with seasoned artists in varied chamber music programs. Each program is built around a work performed in a previous summer that Artistic Directors Richard Goode and Mitsuko Uchida and their colleagues felt was exceptional and should be shared with a wider audience. The resulting ensembles offer audiences the chance to both discover seldom-heard masterworks and enjoy fresh interpretations of chamber music favorites.

The Musicians from Marlboro touring program has introduced to American audiences many of today’s leading solo and chamber music artists early in their careers, and in the process has offered these artists valuable performing experience and exposure. The list includes pianists Jonathan Biss, Yefim Bronfman, Jeremy Denk, Richard Goode, Murray Perahia, András Schiff, and Peter Serkin. It has also been a platform for artists who subsequently formed or joined such noted ensembles as the Beaux Arts, Eroica, and Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson trios and the Brentano, Emerson, Guarneri, Johannes, Juilliard, Orion, St. Lawrence, and Tokyo string quartets. A member of the Tokyo Quartet once remarked, “I think that we are the only major American chamber music group without at least one former Marlboro participant. It’s almost like driving without a license.” Five years later, when cellist Clive Greensmith joined the Quartet, they got their license.

Now in its 49th season, Musicians from Marlboro offers audiences across North America a sample of the spirited music-making that is characteristic of Marlboro, prompting The Washington Post to describe Musicians from Marlboro as “a virtual guarantee of musical excellence.” And according to the Chicago Sun-Times, “the secret is a sense of joy…apparent from the very first note.” A few recollections from past Musicians from Marlboro participants:

“I was 18 when I went on my first of several Marlboro tours, and it was nothing short of a formative experience for me…If Marlboro had been an unmatched opportunity to study a piece over time, Musicians from Marlboro was a chance to learn about a piece through the simple act of playing it repeatedly.”—Jonathan Biss

“The tours were put together to show Marlboro to the world, but also to get us more opportunities to perform…it is a beautiful idea.”—András Schiff

“Musicians from Marlboro taught me not only the basics of touring, it showed me how to bring the highest musical values to an audience that is being increasingly deprived of the deeply thoughtful and expressive music-making, which is the hallmark of the Marlboro Festival.”—Steven Tenenbom, violist, Orion String Quartet

Musicians from Marlboro are sponsored by Steinway Pianos, Marlboro Recording Society, Sony Classical, and Bridge Records. More information on Marlboro may be found at marlboromusic.org.

With her “passion and commanding stage presence” (The Strad), violinist Bella Hristova engages with “natural command, tenderness and fervent virtuosity” (Washington Post). Ms. Hristova has performed with Pinchas Zukerman in the Bach Double Concerto at Lincoln Center, at Carnegie Hall as soloist with the New York String Orchestra under Jaime

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Laredo, as well as with orchestras around the country. She frequently appears at such festivals as Music@Menlo, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, and Music from Angel Fire, and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Her newly released CD, Bella Hristova: Unaccompanied (A. W. Tonegold Records), features a unique solo violin program. First-prize-winner in the 2009 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, Ms. Hristova was the first recipient of YCA’s Helen Armstrong Violin Fellowship. A laureate of the Indianapolis Violin Competition, she also won first prize at the 2007 Michael Hill International Violin Competition in New Zealand. Born in Pleven, Bulgaria, she graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music in 2003, where she studied with Ida Kavafian and Steven Tenenbom, and received her artist diploma with Jaime Laredo at Indiana University. Ms. Hristova plays a 1655 Nicolò Amati violin once owned by violinist Louis Krasner.

Born in Brussels, Belgium, violist Dimitri Murrath has made his mark as a viola soloist of the international scene, performing regularly in venues including Jordan Hall (Boston); Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, and Royal Festival Hall (London); Kioi Hall (Tokyo); the National Auditorium (Madrid); and Palais des Beaux-Arts (Brussels).

A first-prize-winner at the Primrose International Viola Competition, Mr. Murrath has won numerous awards, including second prize at the First Tokyo International Viola Competition and the special prize for the contemporary work at the ARD Munich Competition.

An avid chamber musician, Mr. Murrath has collaborated with Miriam Fried, Pamela Frank, Richard Goode, Laurence Lesser, Gidon Kremer, Menahem Pressler, Radovan Vlatković, Mitsuko Uchida, and members of the Cleveland, Mendelssohn, Juilliard, Emerson, and Guarneri string quartets.

His festival appearances include IMS Prussia Cove (United Kingdom), Ravinia’s Steans Institute for Young Artists (Chicago), Verbier Festival Academy, Gstaad Festival (Switzerland), Caramoor Rising Stars (New York), Busan Music Festival (Korea), and the Marlboro Music Festival.

Mr. Murrath began his musical education at the Yehudi Menuhin School studying with Natalia Boyarsky, and went on to work in London with David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He graduated with an artist diploma from New England Conservatory as a student of Kim Kashkashian.

He is on the viola faculties of New England Conservatory and the Longy School of Music.

Praised by The New York Times for her “probing introspection,” violist Vicki Powell has appeared as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, and the Aspen Festival Orchestra, and has won top prizes at the Primrose International Viola Competition and the Johansen International Competition. An avid chamber musician, Ms. Powell has been a featured artist at the Marlboro Music Festival, Verbier Festival, Ravinia’s Steans Institute, Music from AngelFire, and Seiji Ozawa’s International Music Academy of Switzerland, and performs as violist of the contemporary ensemble E39. Ms. Powell is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School, where she studied with Roberto Díaz and Misha Amory.

Cynthia Raim, who was unanimously chosen as first-prize-winner at the Clara Haskil International Piano Competition, has been acclaimed for her concerto and recital appearances throughout the United States and abroad. In summing up the performance that won Ms. Raim the coveted Clara Haskil prize, La Suisse (Geneva) noted that, “Miss Raim showed a musical nature that has gone far beyond technical mastery: Without affectation, without useless bravado, Cynthia Raim has imprinted herself on us and cannot escape our admiration.” Le Monde (Paris) called her “a new Clara Haskil.”

Ms. Raim has won the prestigious Pro Musics Award and, in 1987, was the first recipient of the “Distinguished Artist Award” of the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia (America’s oldest continuing musical organization), which was given for “outstanding achievement and artistic merit.”

Ms. Raim has made numerous recital, radio, and television appearances. She has appeared as soloist with leading orchestras in such major cities as Detroit, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, New Orleans, Prague, Hamburg, Lausanne, and Vienna. She has also participated in leading international music festivals, including Marlboro, Ravinia, Tanglewood, Meadow Brook, Grand Teton, Bard, Mostly Mozart, Santa Fe, Lucerne, and Montreux. She has recorded for Gallo, Pantheon, and Connoisseur Society.

Before graduating in 1977 from the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Rudolf Serkin and Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Ms. Raim had won the Festorazzi Award for Most Promising Pianist at Curtis, as well as first prizes in the J. S. Bach International and Three Rivers National piano competitions.

Marcy Rosen has established herself as one of the most important and respected artists of our day. Los Angeles Times music critic Herbert Glass has called her “one of the intimate art’s abiding treasures.” She has performed in recital and with orchestra throughout Canada, England, France, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, and all 50 United States. In recent seasons, she has given master classes and appeared on stage in Beijing and Shanghai, China, the Seoul Arts Center in Korea, and in Cartagena, Colombia.

A consummate soloist, Ms. Rosen’s superb musicianship is enhanced by her many chamber music activities. She has collaborated with the world’s finest musicians, including Leon Fleisher, Richard Goode, András Schiff, Mitsuko Uchida, Peter Serkin, Isaac Stern, Robert Mann, Sándor Végh, Kim Kashkashian, Jessye Norman, Lucy Shelton, Charles Neidich, and the Juilliard, Emerson, and Orion string quartets. She is a founding member of the ensemble La Fenice, a group comprising oboe, piano, and string trio, as well as a founding member of the world renowned Mendelssohn String Quartet. With the Mendelssohn String Quartet she was Artist-in-Residence at the North Carolina School of the Arts and for nine years served as Blodgett-Artist-in Residence at Harvard University. The Quartet, which disbanded in January 2010, toured annually throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe for 31 years.

Ms. Rosen appears regularly at festivals both here and abroad, and since 1986 has been Artistic Director of the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival in Maryland. Another important association is with the Marlboro Music Festival in Vermont. Since first attending Marlboro in 1975, she has taken part in 21 of their “Musicians from Marlboro” tours and performed in concerts celebrating the 40th, 50th, and 60th anniversaries of the Festival.

Ms. Rosen was born in Phoenix, Arizona, and her teachers have included Gordon Epperson, Orlando Cole, Marcus Adney, Felix Galimir, Karen Tuttle, and Sándor Végh. She is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and is currently Professor of Cello at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, where she is also Artistic Coordinator of the concert series Chamber Music Live, and she serves on the faculty at the Mannes College of Music in New York.

Her performances can be heard on recordings from the BIS, Bridge, Deutsche Grammophon, Sony Classical, CBS Masterworks, Musical Heritage Society, Phillips, Nonesuch, Pro Arte, and Koch labels, among others.

At home as a soloist, chamber musician, and concertmaster, violinist Robin Scott enjoys a broad musical career. He has competed internationally, winning first prizes in the California International Young Artists Competition and the WAMSO Young Artist Competition, and second prizes in the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition, the Irving M. Klein International String Competition, and the Stulberg International String Competition. He has appeared as soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille (France), and Montgomery Symphony Orchestra, among many others. He has given recitals and performances throughout the United States and
France, in such venues as Weill Hall and the Schubert Club in St. Paul, Minnesota.

As a chamber musician, Mr. Scott has performed at the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, and Jordan Hall in Boston. He has attended Marlboro Music Festival, the Ravinia Festival’s Steans Institute for Young Artists, the Yellow Barn Festival, the Kneisel Hall Festival, the Maine Chamber Music Festival, and others.

Mr. Scott serves as concertmaster of the New York Classical Players. From 2011 to 2013 he was Artist in Residence with the Montgomery Symphony Orchestra. He was recently a student of Donald Weilerstein and Kim Kashkashian at New England Conservatory in Boston. He received his bachelor’s degree under Miriam Fried at New England Conservatory. In 2006, he completed an artist diploma at Indiana University, also under Ms. Fried. Previously, he was a student of Mimi Zweig at Indiana University’s preparatory program.

Mr. Scott plays on a Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume violin generously lent to him by the Marlboro Music Festival.