Sunday, October 12, 2014, 3pm Hertz Hall

Takács Quartet

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

with

Marc-André Hamelin, piano

PROGRAM

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) String Quartet No. 50 in B-flat major,

Op. 64, No. 3 (1790)

Vivace assai Adagio

Menuet: Allegretto

Finale: Allegro con spirito

Claude Debussy (1862–1918) String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 (1893)

Animé et très décidé Assez vif et bien rythmé

Andantino, doucement expressif

Très modéré — Très mouvemente et avec passion

INTERMISSION

César Franck (1822–1890) Quintet for Piano, Two Violins, Viola,

and Cello in F minor (1879)

Molto moderato quasi lento — Allegro

Lento, con molto sentimento Allegro non troppo, ma con fuoco

Mark-André Hamelin, piano

This performance is made possible, in part, by Patron Sponsors Shirley D. and Philip Schild.

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Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) String Quartet No. 50 in B-flat major, Op. 64, No. 3

Composed in 1790.

With the move in 1766 of Prince Nicholas Esterházy and his entire household from the old family seat in Eisenstadt to the magnificent but isolated Esterháza Palace in the reclaimed swamps of western Hungary, Haydn found himself rather thoroughly cut off from the outside world, a situation that allowed him to experiment in his music and to administer undisturbed one of Europe's outstanding musical establishments, but which also denied him regular contact with the most fashionable musical trends and performers of the day. He came to look forward with much eagerness to the short time during the winter when the inclement weather around the Neusiedler Lake made the Palace uninhabitable, a period he spent renewing acquaintances and striking business deals in Vienna. During his visit to the imperial city in January 1790, just before he was to begin his thirtieth year of service to the Esterházys, he eagerly attended rehearsals for the première of Mozart's Così fan tutte and socialized at every available opportunity. Among those he saw most frequently in Vienna were the Baron Gottfried van Swieten, Dr. Peter Leopold von Genzinger and his wife, Marianne, and Johann Tost.

Swieten was the Imperial Court Librarian and an influential local patron of the arts who, a few years later, was to provide the German librettos for Haydn's oratorios *The Creation* and *The Seasons*. Genzinger was Prince Nicholas Esterházy's personal physician, and it was in the bosom of the Genzinger family where Haydn found an emotional fulfillment that had long been missing from his childless marriage to a shrewish wife. Marianne von Genzinger became the most important correspondent of the composer's later years, and he wrote in his letters to her in early February of his misery following his return to

Esterháza: "Now, here I sit in my desert, forsaken, like a poor orphan, almost without human society, sad, full of the memory of the glorious days gone by...." Just two weeks later, on February 23, 1790, the wife of Prince Nicholas died and Haydn subsequently reported to Marianne, "The Prince is so overwhelmed at the death of his lady that we have had to strain every nerve to charm His Highness out of his sadness. I arranged a big program of chamber music for the first three evenings...but the poor Prince fell into such profound melancholy on hearing my favorite Adagio in D that I had my work cut out to chase it away again with other pieces." Throughout the spring and summer, Nicholas importuned Haydn constantly for diversion, refusing to let him visit Vienna for even a single day. To Marianne, Haydn complained, "Now I'm caught yet again and have to remain here.... It is a sad thing to be a slave, but Providence will have it so, poor wretch that I am." Haydn's misery was soon ended, however, by the death of the Prince himself on September 28th. Prince Anton, Nicholas's son and successor, cared little for music, so he dismissed the faithful family composer, settled a generous pension on him, and told him that he was free to leave. Haydn bolted to Vienna so quickly that he did not even take time to pack his personal belongings.

One consolation for Haydn during the difficult months of 1790 was the growing international renown of his compositions. professional Amateur and performers throughout Europe and England clamored for his music, and he composed steadily during the summer and autumn of that year to meet the demand, concentrating his chief efforts on a splendid series of six quartets that were published the following year as his Op. 64. The Quartets were dedicated to Johann Tost, principal second violinist in Haydn's orchestra at Esterháza from 1783 to 1788. In 1789, Tost had gone to Paris to present himself as a soloist, and he was entrusted by Haydn to negotiate a deal for engraving two of his recent symphonies (Nos. 88 and 89) with the

publisher Sieber during his visit. The sly Tost, however, sold Sieber not two but three symphonies, the third being a piece by Adalbert Gyrowetz that the violinist passed off Haydn's. (Gyrowetz had enormous difficulty later persuading French musicians that this was indeed his work. When Sieber complained about this shady deal to Haydn, who had been systematically victimized by publishers throughout his career, he replied without sympathy, "Thus Herr Tost has swindled you; you can claim your damages in Vienna.") Such entrepreneurial success encouraged Tost to try his hand at business, and by 1790 he had settled in Vienna as a cloth merchant. During that same year, he married Maria Anna von Jerlischek, a wealthy lady attached to the household of Prince Nicholas Esterházy, and he used her fortune as collateral for his burgeoning business. It is unknown whether Haydn dedicated the Op. 64 Quartets to him out admiration for his playing while in the Esterházy orchestra, or for his assistance in the dealings with Sieber (Tost also helped with the Viennese publication of the Op. 64 Quartets), or upon direct commission from the merchant and/or his new wife (Tost commissioned Mozart's last two String Quintets, K. 593 and K. 614, during the following months), but the "Tost" Quartets are among the most lustrous jewels in the diadem of the composer's chamber music, "perhaps Haydn's greatest single achievement of the period-six flawless masterpieces," wrote the noted Haydn authority H. C. Robbins Landon.

The Op. 64 Quartets have always been among the most popular of Haydn's chamber works. He presented them with great success on several occasions during his first London visit in 1791–1792, and oversaw their English publication in that city before he returned to Vienna. The third number of the set, the Quartet in B-flat major, opens with a sprightly theme whose offbeat beginning provides the rhythmic spring that drives much of the ensuing music. A galloping motive follows, as does an iteration of the main theme before a

more lyrical subject with some delicate harmonic shadings is introduced to provide the movement's formal second theme. All three of these ideas are treated in the development section. The recapitulation of the earlier materials is condensed by the deletion of the lyrical second subject. The Adagio is a three-part movement in two moods, one evoked in the opening and closing sections by a long, elegant melody that is beautifully voiced among the instruments, the other in a dolorous passage at the center. The third movement, with its bracing crossrhythms, imitations of hunting horns, and syncopated central trio, is one of Haydn's most delightful minuets. The finale is launched by a scintillating theme that suddenly seems to lose its momentum before taking up a passage of quiet, chromatic, suspended chords that serves as the bridge to the movement's second theme, which revives the rhythmic motion and also recalls the syncopations of the Menuet. These elements all figure in the development section. A complete recapitulation of the exposition's themes rounds out this invigorating masterwork of Haydn's full maturity.

Claude Debussy (1862–1918) String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10

Composed in 1893. Premièred on December 29, 1893, in Paris by the Ysaÿe Quartet.

By 1893, when he turned 30, Claude Debussy had acquired a modest reputation in Paris as the composer of a number of songs, piano pieces, and miscellaneous vocal and orchestral works, as a winner of the *Prix de Rome*, and as a bohemian musician much under the sway of the Symbolist poets Mallarmé and Régnier. His distinctive creative personality had already been demonstrated to the city's circle of progressive music lovers by the *Petite Suite*, the *Arabesques*, and the *Suite Bergamasque* (from which comes the well-known *Clair de Lune*), but the wider recognition of his genius began when the cantata *La Damoiselle élue* ("The Blessed Damzel") was premièred at a

concert of the Société Nationale on April 8, 1893. By that time, he had already begun sketching out an opera based on Maeterlinck's recently published drama Pelléas et Mélisande, a project that would take him a decade to complete, and written much of a ballet score inspired by Mallarmé's voluptuous poem L'Après-midi d'un faune ("The Afternoon of a Faun"). The other major endeavor of 1893 was a String Quartet, a curious undertaking, perhaps, for a composer of Debussy's decidedly impressionistic proclivities, but one he apparently felt necessary to show that he could handle the Classical forms which had occupied much of his long study at the Conservatoire and as a Prix de Rome recipient-it is indicative in this regard that the Quartet is the only one of his works to which he formally assigned an opus number.

Though the Quartet is rich in melody and harmony, and evidences Debussy's ability to elicit glowing sonorities from his ensemble, it shows the young composer's discomfort in handling the form, relying on an episodic construction rather than on a motivically developed one. He threaded the whole together by the cyclical technique (i.e., the appearance of a theme in more than one movement) favored by César Franck, whose own String Quartet had appeared as recently as 1890. When his friend and colleague Ernest Chausson pointed out the deficiencies in Classical structure, Debussy promised to write him another quartet "with more dignity of form," but he never did. (Indeed, he wrote no more chamber music until the three sonatas he composed at the end of his life.) The composition drew mixed reactions when it was premièred by the Quartet of the celebrated violinist Eugène Ysaÿe at a concert of the Société Nationale on December 29, 1893. One critic accused its exotic sonorities, notably the pervasive use of pizzicato, of being "strange and bizarre, with too many echoes of the streets of Cairo and the gamelan," the Balinese percussion ensemble that had overwhelmed Debussy when he first heard it at the Paris International Exposition of 1889. The noted

composer Paul Dukas, however, hailed Debussy as "one of the most gifted and original artists of the young generation of musicians ... a lyricist in the full sense of the term." When Debussy submitted the score to his then-friend Maurice Ravel (the fastidious Ravel and the profligate Debussy later had a falling out, in some measure prompted by the public disputes over the relative merits of their respective String Quartets), he was advised, "In the name of the gods of music and of my own, do not touch a thing you have written in your Quartet." Opinion soon sided with Dukas and Ravel, and the Quartet was quickly embraced by chamber players following its publication by Durand in 1894; it has remained one of the most popular works in the chamber repertory.

The Quartet opens with a distinctive, modally inflected motive (marked by a quick, three-note ornamental cell) that serves both as the melodic germ from which the first movement grows and as the motto theme that returns in later movements to unify the work's overall structure. The frequent recurrences of the motto throughout the opening movement, usually in transformations of sonority, harmony, and mood, are separated by episodes of mildly contrasting character. The second movement is a free adaptation of the form and manner of a scherzo. The opening section posits a repetitive viola ostinato built from the motto theme around which swirl sparkling pizzicato effects for the other instruments. The center of the movement is occupied by a rhythmically augmented version of the motto theme first given by the violin above a rustling accompaniment. A modified return of the opening section rounds out the movement. The Andantino, sensual, lyrical, permeated with the sweet sensations of early spring, evokes a similar expressive and stylistic world to the one that Debussy conjured in the contemporaneous prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun. The two-part introduction to the finale comprises a slow-tempo transformation of the motto and a quicker mock-fugal passage derived from the scherzo theme. The viola initiates the main part of the movement with

a rapid motive that is tightly restricted in range. This phrase and further transformations of the motto theme occupy the remainder of the movement, which ends with a sun-bright flourish.

César Franck (1822–1890) Quintet for Piano and String Quartet in F minor

Composed in 1879. Premièred on January 17, 1880, in Paris by the Marsick Quartet and pianist Camille Saint-Saëns.

At the concert of the Société Nationale de Musique in Paris on December 14, 1878, César Franck's Piano Trio, Op. 2 was given its first performance in France-36 years after it had been composed. Franck had not written another piece of chamber music since the Trio of 1842, but its enthusiastic Parisian reception encouraged his many students, disciples, and admirers to urge him to take up the chamber forms again. Franck accepted their advice and he settled on a quintet for piano and strings, a genre then in vogue in Paris because of recent such works by Alexis de Castillon, Félicien David, and George Onslow, as well as the continuing popularity of the piano quintets by Schumann and Brahms. Franck worked on the score throughout 1879 (buoyed in part by another successful performance of the Trio on January 25th), and completed the piece shortly before its première at the Société Nationale concert on January 17, 1880.

The event produced one of the most extraordinary scenes in the annals of French music, when Camille Saint-Saëns, founder of the Société Nationale, pianist in the première, and recipient of the work's dedication, stormed off the stage at the end of the performance, pointedly leaving behind the score that the composer had presented to him. Saint-Saëns was incensed, it seems, by the music's intense, almost febrile passion, a quality that the première audience acclaimed but from which the fastidious Camille surmised illicit motivations. César Franck,

exemplary church organist, author of highminded compositions, head of a well-ordered family life with his wife and children—the purported Pater Seraphicus of French music was rumored to have been inspired to write the Quintet by his feelings for a student not half his age, a young female composer named Augusta Holmès. Mlle. Holmès, in her mid-20s when Franck composed his Quintet, was born in Paris of Irish parents and displayed considerable talents as a poet, singer, and allround musician. Saint-Saëns claimed that "we are all of us in love with her," and dedicated to her his symphonic tone poem Rouet d'Omphale ("Omphale's Spinning Wheel"). Vincent d'Indy, Franck's devoted pupil and eventual biographer, said, "I am completely infatuated with the beautiful Augusta!" Franck also seems not to have been immune to her apparently irresistible charms. In speaking with one of the composer's students, someone once claimed that Franck was a mystic and received the reply, "A mystic? Go ask Augusta Holmès." The bitter condemnation that the shrewish Félicité Franck heaped upon her husband's Piano Quintet indicates that she was incensed at more than just the musical content of the piece. Even the worldly Franz Liszt, a long-time champion of Franck's music, thought that the Quintet's vehement expression may have overstepped the bounds of proper chamber music. It may (or may not) be significant that Franck's next composition was a beatific cantata on the Biblical story of Rebecca; Félicité applauded the work's decorum and reserve.

The Quintet's opening movement is a large, thematically rich sonata form that draws much of its material from the two starkly contrasted motives presented in the introduction: a dramatically impassioned descending line in the violin and a humble piano reply in sad, rocking rhythms. These two ideas are repeated in juxtaposition to lead without pause to the main body of the movement, whose principal subject is derived from the introduction's descending motive. A wealth of complementary themes follows, most lyrical, many with a

restlessness that provides the music's dominant emotional personality of yearning tinged with inchoate tragedy.

The emotional temperature of the Quintet drops somewhat for the *Lento*, whose main theme is presented by the violin in disjunct phrases floated upon a pulsing piano accompaniment. The movement's subsidiary subject is given in dialogue between the first violin and cello with a smooth, wide-ranging counterpoint provided by the piano. A faint echo of a theme from the first movement provides a sense of cyclical unity. A brief development section and a condensed recapitulation complete the movement.

An agitated figure in the violins ushers in the finale's principal theme, a tragic-heroic motive in leaping rhythms first stated in its full form by unison strings. The second theme, derived from a motive heard in the *Lento*, is played by the piano against a rustling string background. After the development, which is based largely on the main theme, and the recapitulation, the Quintet ends with a triumphant coda whose broad theme is a transformation of a motive used in both earlier movements, thus unifying the form of the entire work.

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Recognized as one of the world's great ensembles, the Takács Quartet—Edward Dusinberre, first violin; Károly Schranz, second violin; Geraldine Walther, viola; and András Fejér, cello—plays with a unique blend of drama, warmth, and humor, combining four distinct musical personalities to bring fresh insights to the string quartet repertoire.

The Takács became the first string quartet to win the Wigmore Hall Medal on May 10, 2014. The Medal, inaugurated in 2007, recognizes major international artists who have a strong association with the Hall. Recipients so far include Andrås Schiff, Thomas Quasthoff, Menachem Pressler, and Dame Felicity Lott. Appointed in 2012 as the first-ever Associate Artists at Wigmore, the Takács present six concerts every season there. Other European engagements in 2014-2015 include the Edinburgh and Bath festivals, the Louvre in Paris, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Vienna's Musikverein. London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, and concerts in Geneva, Florence, Cremona, and Budapest.

In 2012, *Gramophone* announced that the Takács was the only string quartet to be inducted into its first Hall of Fame, along with

such legendary artists as Jascha Heifetz, Leonard Bernstein, and Dame Janet Baker. The ensemble also won the 2011 Award for Chamber Music and Song presented by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London. Based in Boulder at the University of Colorado, the Takács Quartet performs 90 concerts a year worldwide.

In 2014–2015, the Quartet performs throughout North America, returning to the Ravinia Festival and to Lincoln Center for two programs—one with guest violist Lawrence Power and the other with pianist Joyce Yang, and performs with pianist Marc-André Hamelin at Cal Performances, the University of Connecticut, and Orchestra Hall in Chicago. They also return after many years to Santiago, Chile, and São Paulo, Brazil.

Meryl Streep performed Philip Roth's *Everyman* program with the Takács at Princeton University on September 19, 2014. The program was conceived in close collaboration with Mr. Roth. The Quartet is known for such innovative programming. They first performed *Everyman* at Carnegie Hall in 2007 with Philip Seymour Hoffman. They have toured 14 cities with the poet Robert Pinsky,

collaborate regularly with the Hungarian folk group Muzsikás, and in 2010 they collaborated with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and David Lawrence Morse on a drama project that explored the composition of Beethoven's last quartets.

The Quartet's award-winning recordings include the complete Beethoven quartet cycle on the Decca label. In 2005, the late Beethoven quartets won Disc of the Year and Chamber Award from *BBC Music Magazine*, a Gramophone Award, Album of the Year at the Brit Awards, 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.

Their collaboration with Hyperion Records in 2006 started with a recording of Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" and "Rosamunde" quartets. 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. Other recordings for Hyperion include Brahms's Quartets Opp. 51 and 67; a disc featuring the Schumann Piano Quintet with Mr. Hamelin; the complete Haydn "Apponyi" Quartets, Opp. 71 and 74; the Schubert Quintet with cellist Ralph Kirshbaum; and the three Britten quartets and the Brahms viola quintets with violist Lawrence Power.

Upcoming Hyperion recordings include the two Janáček quartets and Smetana's "From My Life"; the Debussy Quartet and the Franck Piano Quintet with Mr. Hamelin; and Dvořák's Quartet, Op. 105, and his Viola Quintet, Op. 97, with Mr. Power.

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 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 "Notturno" Piano Trio with Mr. Haefliger; the three Brahms string quartets and Piano Quintet in F minor with Mr. 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 K. 516, with violist György Pauk.

The members of the Takács Quartet are Christoffersen Faculty Fellows at the University of Colorado Boulder. The 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 in Santa Barbara. They are also Visiting Fellows at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 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 début 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, ensemble 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.



Marc-André Hamelin begins the 2014–2015 season with a round of recitals in Aspen, New York, Verbier, La Roque d'Anthéron, Orford, the International Chopin Festival in Duszniki, Poland, and in the Montreal Symphony's Virée Classique. There, he also performs Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 27, K. 595, with Kent Nagano and the Montreal Symphony, followed by performances of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto at the Hollywood Bowl with Stéphane Denève and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

He plays a pair of engagements this season Danish National with the Symphony Orchestra: in September he performs Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 1, and at the end of the season he performs Brahms's Concerto No. 2. In between, he plays subscription weeks with the symphony orchestras of Cleveland, New Jersey, Oregon, Seattle, Utah, Vancouver, and Philadelphia. At the last of these, he gives the American première of Mark Anthony Turnage's Piano Concerto with Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin, a work they launched together for its world première last season in Rotterdam. In spring 2015, Mr. Hamelin plays Haydn's D major Concerto from his awardwinning recording on a ten-concert North American tour with Les Violons du Roy.

Engagements abroad include a tour in France with the Orchestre National d'Île de France, performing Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 17, K. 453; Brahms's Concerto No. 2 in Turin with Gianandrea Noseda: Beethoven's Concerto No. 4 with the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine; Liszt's Concerto No. 2 with the Royal Philharmonic in London and Charles Dutoit; and recitals in Amsterdam, Berlin, Birmingham, Copenhagen, Lucerne, Moscow, and Munich. In America, he plays the Franck Quintet on tour with the Takács Quartet and gives solo recitals at the 92nd Street Y in New York, the Lied Center in Nebraska, Mills College in Oakland, and in Princeton, Toronto, Philadelphia, and El Paso.

Last season was a celebration of Marc-André Hamelin hosted by San Francisco Performances, London's Wigmore Hall, Boston's Celebrity Series, and Antwerp's deSingel, where, in each city, he curated and performed a three-part series of solo recitals and chamber music with partners including the Pacifica and Takács quartets, Emanuel Ax, Martin Fröst, and Anthony Marwood. Mr. Hamelin also played recitals at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall, the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam, the Philharmonie in Berlin, and the Herkulessaal in Munich; at the Kennedy Center with the Washington Performing Arts Society, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. With orchestra, he appeared with the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, the WDR Sinfonieorchester Cologne with Andris Nelsons, and with the Montreal Symphony at home and on tour in Europe.

Mr. Hamelin records exclusively for Hyperion Records. His most recent release, Schumann's *Waldszenen* and *Kinderszenen* and Janáček's *On an Overgrown Path*, was the June 2014 Album of the Month in both *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*. Other recent recordings include the late piano works of Busoni; Haydn concertos with Les Violons du Roy and Bernard Labadie; three double-disc

sets of Haydn sonatas; a solo disc of works by Liszt; and an album of his own compositions, *Hamelin: Études*, which received a 2010 Grammy Award nomination—his ninth—and a first prize from the German Record Critics' Association. Mr. Hamelin's Études are published by Edition Peters.

His complete Hyperion discography includes concertos and works for solo piano by such composers as Alkan, Godowsky,

and Medtner, as well as brilliantly received performances of Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, and Shostakovich.

Born in Montreal and a resident of Boston, Marc-André Hamelin is the recipient of a lifetime achievement award from the German Record Critic's Association. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a Chevalier de l'Ordre du Québec, and a member of the Royal Society of Canada.