

April 5, 2018 at 8:00pm  
Pre-concert Talk by Professor Emeritus Scott Burnham at 7:00pm  
**Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall**

# ARTEMIS STRING QUARTET

**Vineta Sareika** Violin | **Anthea Kreston** Violin | **Gregor Sigl** Viola | **Eckart Runge** Cello

**WOLFGANG  
AMADEUS  
MOZART**  
(1756-1791)

**String Quartet No. 23 in F Major, K. 590**

Allegro moderato  
Andante – allegretto  
Menuetto: Allegretto  
Allegro

**DMITRI  
SHOSTAKOVICH**  
(1906-1975)

**String Quartet No. 7 in F-sharp Minor, Op. 108**

Allegretto –  
Lento –  
Allegro

## INTERMISSION

**ROBERT  
SCHUMANN**  
(1810-1856)

**String Quartet in A Major, Op. 41, No. 3**

Andante espressivo – Allegro molto moderato  
Assai agitato – un poco adagio – tempo risoluto  
Adagio molto  
Finale: Allegro molto vivace

# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

By Peter Laki ©2018

String Quartet No. 23 in F Major, K. 590

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**

(1756–1791)

The Quartet No. 23 is the last Mozart ever wrote. Saying farewell to the genre was of course the farthest thing from his mind—he was 34 years old, at the height of his creative powers and in good health. No one could have predicted that he had only a year and a half to live when he finished the F-Major quartet in Vienna in June 1790.

Quartets were usually written in sets of six in those days, and the F-Major work was only the third in the series begun the previous year with the quartets in D and B-flat (K. 575 and 589). It is traditionally believed that Mozart had received a commission for six quartets from King Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia, an avid cello player. But there is no actual evidence that such a commission was ever given. Mozart did visit Prussia in the spring of 1789, but he never got an audience with the King. A court document dated April 26 speaks of “one named Mozart who at his ingress declared himself to be a “Kapellmeister from Vienna”—hardly a very encouraging introduction. Mozart’s attempts to get work at the Prussian court

were evidently unsuccessful. He certainly never delivered any quartets to the King, and chances are that none were expected of him at Potsdam. In his biography of Mozart, scholar Maynard Solomon suggests that the composer simply made up this commission in letters to his wife, to justify a long and expensive journey (during which, moreover, he even seems to have had an affair.)

Unconfirmed rumors aside, writing string quartets was a difficult task even for a Mozart. The composer whose ease and speed in composing were legendary, had toiled long and hard on his six earlier quartets dedicated to Haydn, and the new set did not seem to come any more easily. In a letter written in June 1790, Mozart called his work on the quartets “exhausting labor.” The artistic difficulties were soon compounded by financial ones, and Mozart had to sell his existing three quartets to the Viennese publisher Artaria for quick cash. Afterwards, he returned to the form of string chamber music he clearly preferred in his later years, namely the quintet with two violas. He produced two splendid works in that genre in 1790–91 (K. 593 and 614), but wrote no more quartets.

The first so-called “Prussian” quartet (K. 575) featured many exposed cello solos, and Mozart’s catalog of his own works confirms that he wrote it for the King of Prussia (which doesn’t necessarily mean a commission). For K. 589 and 590, the catalog says nothing about Friedrich Wilhelm, and the cello does not predominate quite as much as it did in the earlier piece. Instead, as one commentator has noted, Mozart “gave all four instruments featured roles; they shift constantly between playing the melody and collaborating in the accompaniment”—an innovation that amounts to a “complete rethinking of a quartet’s instrumental balance.”

The F-Major quartet opens very unconventionally, with sharp contrasts in rhythm (long opening notes followed

by a rapid descending scale), dynamics (soft immediately followed by loud), and texture (unison followed by four-part harmony). Moreover, the three-measure phrases are at odds with the standard four-bar units on which so much Classical music is based. All these contrasts are fully exploited in a sparkling movement, full of energy and vitality. The lyrical flow of the melodies is interrupted, time and time again, by the wildly cascading descending scales from the work’s opening. Particularly noteworthy is the way Mozart “re-orchestrates” the recapitulation, giving the cello’s melodic phrases to the viola the second time around. At the end, the music simply vanishes into thin air, with the first violin playing the last two notes alone.



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free to patrons, in the lobby at intermission.

In his autograph score, Mozart called the second movement an “Andante;” the first edition, printed just after Mozart’s death, changed this to “Allegretto.” Somewhat unusually for a Mozart slow movement, it is dominated by its basic rhythmic pattern more than its melodic line. There are also some highly unexpected harmonies, and a playful rhythmic figure added in the recapitulation. As in the first movement, the ending is extremely soft, though here all four instruments participate and a very wide range is involved.

The minuet and trio are curiously understated, though Mozart introduces some sophisticated games with asymmetrical phrase structures and, in the trio, seems to recall the playful figure from the second movement. He then pulls out all the stops in the virtuosic finale, which contains several elements more readily associated with Haydn than with Mozart, such as sudden slowdowns, jumps into new keys and hints at Hungarian Gypsy style. (It must be noted, though, that the Haydn movement it sounds closest to, the Rondo of the G-Major piano trio, was written several years later than this quartet). The conclusion of this brilliant and witty movement is, once more, soft and delicate, as if one left a party inconspicuously through the back door.

String Quartet No. 7 in F-sharp Minor,  
Op. 108

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH**

(1906-1975)

Shostakovich made the string quartet his medium of choice at a time when the genre had only a very limited tradition in Russia. Despite the beautiful contributions of Tchaikovsky and Borodin, the main interests of those composers lay elsewhere. Only Shostakovich’s teacher, Alexander Glazunov, cultivated the quartet with any regularity. In the 20th century, there was a further reason for the dearth of Russian string quartets: the Soviet regime was demanding large-scale works for extensive performing forces and showed little interest for the quartet, which, after all, had been associated with “bourgeois” music-making. Maybe these reasons explain why Shostakovich didn’t turn to quartet writing until he was well established as a symphonic composer. (His First Quartet was written shortly after the resounding success of his Fifth Symphony.) On the other hand, the lack of official interest could also be a good thing; since string quartets were, as one commentator put it, “under the radar screen,” the composer could feel free to be himself. In later years, Shostakovich increasingly came to regard

the quartet as his most personal way of expression, and, by the end of his life, he had composed no fewer than fifteen of them. This imposing series forms a private counterpart to the fifteen very public symphonies.

The Seventh Quartet, the shortest of the Shostakovich quartets, is the first written in a minor key. It was dedicated to the memory of Nina Varzar, Shostakovich's first wife, who had died in 1954 at the age of 45. (The composer remarried in 1956, but this marriage was unsuccessful and ended in 1959. He married his third wife, with whom he would spend the rest of his life, in 1962.)

Everyone who has ever heard this quartet feels that it tells a story of some kind, but there is no consensus about what exactly that story might be. One might well ask how it is possible for music to tell stories at all. Shostakovich's answer lies in the ingenious transformation of a small number of simple themes. In his works we often find simple and unassuming little tunes that appear playful and innocent at first sight, yet there is always an element of irony, if not outright sarcasm, lurking underneath. In the course of the work, remarkable and unexpected things happen to these little tunes, suggesting processes whereby an

idea is being examined from different points of view, called into question, mocked, distorted, and so on.

The quartet is in three movements (fast-slow-fast), played without pauses. After the feigned insouciance of the first movement and the expansive lyricism of the brief central Lento, the final Allegro is the longest and the most complex part of the piece. We are first reminded of the main rhythmic idea of the first movement; then we hear an enigmatic viola solo consisting of only four descending notes before a furious fugue erupts, using those same four notes in a completely different way. The tensions and dissonances keep piling up until they are suddenly brushed aside by a gentle waltz (or almost-waltz) that takes us to the end of the piece. The closing measures are almost identical to the conclusion of the first movement: the notes are the same but they are played *pizzicato* (with plucked strings) and stretched rhythmically, enhancing the mysterious effect.

*(continued on page 8)*

# ANNOUNCING the 2018-2019 SEASON

## CONCERT CLASSICS SERIES

Thursday, Oct. 11, 2018 8PM  
**JERUSALEM STRING QUARTET**  
**Pinchas Zukerman**, Viola  
**Amanda Forsyth**, Cello\*  
STRING SEXTETS BY STRAUSS, SCHOENBERG, TCHAIKOVSKY

Thursday, Dec. 13 2018 8PM  
**MARTIN FRÖST**, Clarinet\*  
**HENRIK MÅWE**, Piano\*  
POULENC, VIVALDI, TELEMANN, BRAHMS

Thursday, Feb. 28, 2019 8PM  
**STEVEN ISSERLIS**, Cello\*  
**CONNIE SHIH**, Piano\*  
SCHUMANN, MARTINU, FRANCK

Thursday, Mar. 14, 2019 8PM  
**ALEXANDER MELNIKOV**, Piano  
**ANDREAS STAIER**, Piano\*  
ALL-SCHUBERT FOUR HANDS

Thursday, Mar. 28, 2019 8PM  
**PATRICIA KOPATCHINSKAJA**, Violin\*  
**POLINA LESCHENKO**, Piano\*  
BARTÓK, POULENC, ENESCU, RAVEL

Thursday, Apr. 4, 2019 8PM  
**TAKÁCS STRING QUARTET**  
**Marc-André Hamelin**, Piano  
**John Feeney**, Bass\*  
HAYDN, SHOSTAKOVICH, SCHUBERT

Thursday, Apr. 11, 2019 8PM  
**AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**  
**Richard Tognetti**, Artistic Director  
**Paul Lewis**, Piano  
SAMUEL ADAMS, MOZART, BRAHMS

Thursday, May 2, 2019 8PM  
**ÉBÈNE STRING QUARTET**  
BEETHOVEN, FAURÉ



## PERFORMANCES UP CLOSE

Three profound chamber works chosen by our audience, each performed by world-class musicians in an almost communion-like intimacy. By offering these remarkable pieces of music a chance to breathe and stand on their own, this forward-thinking series goes straight to the spiritual and communal core of chamber music.

Wednesday, Oct. 17, 2018 6PM & 9PM  
**SCHUBERT STRING QUINTET IN C MAJOR, D. 956**  
Takács String Quartet with David Requiro, Cello\*

Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2019 6PM & 9PM  
**MESSIAEN "QUARTET FOR THE END OF TIME"**  
Stefan Jackiw, Violin; Jay Campbell, Cello;\*  
Yoonah Kim, Clarinet;\* Conrad Tao, Piano\*

Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2019 6PM & 9PM  
**SCHUBERT OCTET FOR WINDS & STRINGS, D. 803**  
Brentano String Quartet & Friends

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Two special events this season highlight artists who engender community, offer jubilant, jazz-inspired programs, and defy expectations. It's a celebration of PUC as a magnet for the greatest musical icons of our time.

Friday, Sep. 21, 2018 7:30PM  
"Circlesongs"  
**BOBBY MCFERRIN**

Sunday, Mar. 10, 2019 7:30PM  
"Songplay: Gioco d'Amor"  
**JOYCE DIDONATO**, Mezzo-soprano  
Craig Terry, Piano;\* Chuck Israels, Bass;\*  
Charlie Porter, Trumpet;\* Drums TBD

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I cannot say that music is the only thing that will save the world, but we have to put art somewhere far more central to the main sense of our society.

- Gustavo Dudamel

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL IN-RESIDENCE: THE CONCERTS

As PUC's first Artist-in-Residence for the 125th Season, Maestro Dudamel will curate three performances by ensembles closely associated with him, each exploring music's relationship to the world around us through a different lens – one geographical, one natural, and one spiritual. Each program will also feature the world premiere of a PUC-commissioned piece, composed by members of our Music Department faculty, and will be followed by a panel discussion hosted by Maestro Dudamel. The residency culminates with Dudamel taking baton in hand, as he leads the students of the Princeton University Orchestra and Glee Club.

Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018 2PM

**SIMÓN BOLÍVAR STRING QUARTET\***

Exploring "Art & the Americas"

Monday, Jan. 7, 2019 7PM

**MUSICIANS FROM THE LOS ANGELES\*  
PHILHARMONIC**

Exploring "Art & Faith"

Tuesday, Apr. 23, 2019 7PM

**MUSICIANS FROM THE BERLIN PHILHARMONIC\***

Exploring "Art & Nature"

Friday/Saturday, Apr. 26/27, 2019 7:30PM/4PM

**PRINCETON UNIVERSITY ORCHESTRA  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY GLEE CLUB**

**GUSTAVO DUDAMEL**, Conductor\*

SCHUBERT, PROKOFIEV, MENDELSSOHN

ALL IN THE FAMILY



Saturday, Nov. 3, 2018 1PM

**BABY GOT BACH**

"Bring on the Brass"

**Orli Shaham**, Host/Piano with special guests

**The Westerlies Brass Quartet\***



Saturday, Mar. 23, 2019 1PM

**MEET THE MUSIC**

"The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses"

**The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**,

**Bruce Adolphe**, host with special guests

**The Princeton Girlchoir**

CROSSROADS

A new series draws musicians and music from around the globe, distilling chamber music to its purest and most elemental form and highlighting music's steadfast intimacy and uncanny capacity to tell stories and spark new conversations. It's a celebration of PUC's expansion of all that "chamber music" can encompass.

Thursday, Nov. 8, 2018 7:30PM

"Beijing Meets Banjo"

**ABIGAIL WASHBURN**, Banjo

**WU FEI**, Guzheng\*

Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019 7:30PM

"8980: Book of Travelers"

**GABRIEL KAHANE**, Vocalist/Composer\*

Tuesday, Apr. 16, 2019 7:30PM

"Avital meets Avital"

**AVI AVITAL**, Mandolin\*

**OMER AVITAL**, Bass\*

RCP

**RICHARDSON CHAMBER PLAYERS**

Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018

Sunday, Feb. 10, 2019

**Subscriptions to the 2018-2019  
season will go on sale in May**

**609-258-2800 [princetonuniversityconcerts.org](http://princetonuniversityconcerts.org)**



String Quartet in A Major, Op. 41, No. 3  
**ROBERT SCHUMANN** (1810-1856)

1842 was Schumann's "chamber music year" just as 1841 had been his "symphony year" and 1840 his "song year." At this crucial point in his career, the composer who until then had concentrated on solo piano music made a conscious effort to conquer the other major musical genres of the time. This expansion in Schumann's creative output certainly wouldn't have happened without another fortunate "conquest:" on September 12, 1840, he married Clara Wieck after a courtship of many years, during which the couple had to overcome numerous obstacles due to the vigorous objections of Friedrich Wieck, Clara's father and Robert's former piano teacher.

The long-awaited union with his beloved released enormous creative energies in Schumann. In 1842 alone, he completed his three string quartets (Op. 41), his Piano Quintet (Op. 44) and Piano Quartet (Op. 47), in addition to the *Phantasiestücke* for piano trio (Op. 88). It was an enormous amount of work, accomplished amidst the demands of a growing family and between bouts of the severe depression that had plagued him since his youth.

Schumann dedicated his three string quartets to his close friend Felix Mendelssohn who spoke of them with the greatest admiration: in fact, Schumann may be said to have taken the string quartet, perhaps the hardest of all musical genres, by storm, producing three highly original masterworks that speak in the composer's unmistakable personal voice.

Everything in the first movement of the A-Major quartet seems to grow out of a germinal motif of only two notes—a drop of a perfect fifth from the sixth degree of the scale to the second. This gentle idea underlies both the first and the second themes, provides the starting point for an ingenious development, and dominates the recapitulation until, in the very last measure, the cello answers it with another descending perfect fifth, this time from the dominant to the tonic, providing a closure that is entirely natural and yet surprising in its context.

The second movement begins with an "Agitato" theme followed by a set of variations in turn animated, fugal, lyrical and energetic; yet the high point of the movement may well be the coda with its sudden jumps to distant keys and a magical texture in which the first violin

and the cello “sing” the melody as a duet while the inner voices play an animated accompaniment.

After a heartfelt Adagio, whose expressive melody is elaborated with a great deal of sophistication, the work culminates in a complex rondo finale in which all the themes (not only the rondo theme but the episodes as well) return multiple times, and in a new key every time! Thus, the movement traverses an unusually large number of tonalities as several different musical characters are explored, from the dynamic dotted figure of the opening theme to a gentler second episode and then a section marked “Quasi Trio” which, at least initially, resembles a Baroque Gavotte. Once more, Schumann saves one of the most striking moments for last, concluding as he does with a coda where the excitement and intensity of the music surpasses everything heard before.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



The Berlin-based Artemis Quartet was founded in 1989 at the University of Music Lübeck and is counted among the foremost worldwide quartet formations today. Important mentors have been violist Walter Levin, pianist Alfred Brendel, the

Alban Berg Quartet, the Juilliard Quartet and the Emerson Quartet.

From the beginning, collaboration with musical colleagues has been a major inspiration for the ensemble. Thus, the

Artemis Quartet has toured with notable musicians such as clarinetists Sabine Meyer and Jörg Widmann and pianist Elisabeth Leonskaja. Various recordings document the artistic cooperation with several partners; for example the piano quintets by Schumann and Brahms with pianist Leif Ove Andsnes, the Schubert quintet with cellist Truls Mørk (who will make his PUC debut this May) or Arnold Schoenberg's 'Verklärte Nacht' with Thomas Kakuska and Valentin Erben from the Alban Berg Quartet.

The Artemis Quartet records exclusively for Virgin (now Erato), and now look back on a large discography. Their recordings have been repeatedly awarded the The German Record Critic's Award, the *Gramophone* Award and the *Diapason d'Or*. The entire cycle of Beethoven string quartets was honored with the important French *Grand Prix de l'Académie Charles Cros* in 2011. The quartet has received an ECHO Klassik on four occasions; the last in 2015 for the recording of works of Mendelssohn, as well as in 2016 for the recording of Brahms' Quartets Op. 51/1 and Op. 67, dedicated to the quartet's former violist Friedemann Weigle, who tragically passed away in July 2015. Their next recording with works of Shostakovich will be released in 2018, including the piano quintet with Elisabeth Leonskaja.

The examination of contemporary music has always been a significant part of the artistic work of the ensemble. Composers such as Mauricio Sotelo (2004), Jörg Widmann (2006), and Thomas Larcher (2008) wrote creations for the Artemis Quartet. In 2014 a concert for strings and orchestra by Daniel Schnyder premiered in Frankfurt. The musicians launched their own contest for musical composition in 2015. Eduard Demetz was nominated the awardee in November 2015 and his String Quartet No. 2 was given a very well-received premiere in Berlin in May 2016.

In addition to concertizing, the four musicians teach as professors at the University of the Arts Berlin and Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth in Brussels. This is the quartet's second appearance on the PUC series, and the first appearance with the Anthea Creston, the quartet's second violinist.

