

February 20, 2020 at 8:00pm | **Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall**
Pre-concert discussion between Professor Dan Trueman and composer
Anna Clyne at 7:00pm

CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

Jeffrey Myers Violin

Ryan Meehan Violin

Jeremy Berry Viola

Estelle Choi Cello

**FRANZ
JOSEPH
HAYDN**
(1732–1809)

String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No. 2, Hob. III:32

Moderato
Capriccio. Adagio
Menuet. Allegretto
Fuga a quattro Soggetti

**ANNA
CLYNE**
(b. 1980)

Breathing Statues (World Premiere)

INTERMISSION

**LUDWIG
VAN
BEETHOVEN**
(1770–1827)

String Quartet in B-Flat Major, Op. 130/133

Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro
Presto
Andante con moto ma non troppo
Alla danza tedesca. Allegro assai
Cavatina. Adagio molto espressivo
Grosse Fuge, Op. 133

About the Program

By Lucy Caplan, © 2020

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

String Quartet in C Major,

Op. 20, No. 2, Hob. III:32 (1772)

Down is up and up is down at the beginning of Haydn's quartet Op. 20, No. 2: the cello launches into a graceful melody (with support from a surely perplexed second violin), the viola takes over the bass line, and the first violinist is left with nothing to do. Although the players eventually settle into more typical roles, the topsy-turvy spirit of these opening moments persists throughout the work. The second movement might be more at home in the opera house than in the concert hall. Profoundly emotive, with an almost improvisational feel, it alternates searching solo melodies with unison ornamental passages whose combination of strength and delicacy is something like the musical equivalent of a beautifully intricate wrought-iron gate. The third movement's atmospheric beginning and end depart from the hyper-structured feel of a conventional minuet and trio, giving a fuzzy outline to its rustic, energetic themes. The final movement is a fugue on four subjects. Despite—or, perhaps, because of—its impressive technical virtuosity, it is, in a sense, the most conventional of the four movements. Brimming over with energy, it proceeds with mischievous softness until a final forte exclamation.

This quartet is part of a set of six known as the “Sun” quartets: not after any particular musical imagery, curiously, but rather because the cover for an early edition featured a picture of a rising sun. The set dates from the middle stretch of Haydn's thirty years' work as a court musician at the Esterházy estate, located in a rural area east of Vienna. Due to that remote location and distance from other composers, Haydn famously claimed, he was “forced to become original”—a pithy bit of self-mythologizing that bolstered his image as a composer of matchless creativity. Whether or not Haydn was “forced” into originality, however, this and the other “Sun” quartets amply demonstrate his inventive impulses and his perpetual willingness to experiment with this musical ensemble's many possibilities.

ANNA CLYNE (b. 1980)
Breathing Statues (2019)

Statues of Beethoven can be found in dozens of cities worldwide, from Vienna and Bonn to St. Louis, Missouri; Tianjin, China; and Goa, India. As physical manifestations of the composer's enduring impact, these monuments exemplify his outsize stature in the global cultural imagination. In *Breathing Statues*, the British-born composer Anna Clyne honors Beethoven in a less earthbound manner. Clyne describes herself on her website as a "composer + collaborator;" many of her works are collective endeavors with artists working in other media, while others involve deep engagement with the work of figures from the past. Here, she is inspired by Beethoven and the poet Rainer Maria Rilke.

Clyne writes:

Breathing Statues draws inspiration and musical quotes from Ludwig van Beethoven's String Quartets No. 13 in B-flat Major Op. 130, No. 16 in F Major Op. 135, and the Grosse Fuge Op. 133. It also draws inspiration from "On Music," a poem by Rainer Maria Rilke.

The concept for *Breathing Statues* came from a poignant moment in the Grosse Fuge where the music stops and, in between moments of silence, breathes as it shifts from a root position E-flat major chord to a first inversion C-major chord.

This idea of the music breathing reminded me of another poignant moment in the B-flat Major Quartet (for which the Grosse Fuge was originally the final movement) when the lower strings provide a pulsing accompaniment to a violin melody that is marked *beklemmt* ("oppressed, anguished, stifled") and the voice almost stutters as if out of breath. I also found other quotes that have a similar feeling of breathing or sighing, such as a moment in the Adagio of the B-flat Major quartet and quotes that

would strongly contrast, such as the descending rhythmic lines in the lower strings in the *Grosse Fuge*, and a violent outburst in the last movement of the F major Quartet—the last movement of the latter is titled *Der schwer gefaßte Entschluß* (“The Difficult Decision”) and is the last major work that Beethoven completed. *Breathing Statues* begins with a quote from the opening of the last movement of Beethoven’s F major quartet, which is originally accompanied by text—Beethoven writes: *Muss es sein? Es muss sein!* (“Must it be? It must be!”). His notation of these statements is also marked by significant pauses between them. This musical quote builds the foundation for *Breathing Statues*.

The concept of breath—of the music and musicians breathing—sometimes together and sometimes apart, reminded me of Rilke’s poem ‘On Music,’ from which *Breathing Statues* derives its title.

ON MUSIC

Music: the breathing of statues. Perhaps:
the silence of paintings. Language where
language ends. Time
that stands head-up in the direction
of hearts that wear out.

Feeling...for whom? Place where feeling is
transformed...into what? Into a countryside we can hear.
Music: you stranger. You feeling space, growing
away from us. The deepest thing in us, that
rising above us, forces its way out...
a holy goodbye:
when the innermost point in us stands
outside, as amazing space, as the other
side of the air:
pure,
immense,
not for us to live in now.

—Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926)

Breathing Statues was commissioned by Music Accord, a consortium of America's most prestigious presenting organizations. Founded in 1998, the consortium pairs composers with select chamber and solo musicians each season with the goal to create new works and ensure their presentation. Since its inception, Music Accord has commissioned 37 works from a variety of composers and ensembles, including composers Elliott Carter, William Bolcom, Libby Larsen, and Stefon Harris; and pianist Ursula Oppens, mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade, Imani Winds, and the vocal ensemble Chanticleer, and the Guarneri Quartet, as well as Princeton's own Steven Mackey. This unique model brings diverse composers, artists, and presenters into direct conversation, resulting in profound connections.

Princeton University Concerts was asked to join Music Accord in 2016 and has been a part of commissioning seven new works to date. *Breathing Statues* is the first work that has been performed on the Princeton University Concerts series. It receives its world premiere this evening. Another work commissioned by Music Accord will be heard later in the season when violinist Benjamin Beilman makes his PUC debut on April 2, 2020 playing a commissioned work by Princeton alum Frederic Rzewski. In addition to Princeton University Concerts, the members of Music Accord are: Boston Symphony Orchestra/Tanglewood; Celebrity Series of Boston; Center for the Performing Arts at Penn State; The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; Hancher Auditorium at the University of Iowa; Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; Krannert Center

for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois; Middlebury Performing Arts Series; Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis; San Francisco Performances; and University Musical Society at the University of Michigan.

More information on the Music Accord commissioning consortium can be found at musicaccord.org.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

String Quartet in B-Flat Major,
Op. 130, with Op. 133,
Grosse Fuge (1826)

Beethoven's Opus 130 quartet inspires extreme reactions. Going beyond the usual "masterpiece" cliché, critics have described it as "epic," "sprawling," and "supernatural." It has been called, along with the composer's other late quartets, "a lofty testament to completeness and fulfillment." A recording of its Cavatina was launched into outer space in 1977 as the final musical selection on the Voyager Golden Record, intended as a symbol of humankind's "hope and our determination and our goodwill in a vast and awesome universe."

Such proclamations are closely tied to the quartet's ambitious scope (its six movements span nearly an hour) and equally ambitious emotional range. Yet perhaps the work is best understood not so much as the sum total of musical expression—a patent impossibility—but as a performance of such totality, a multifaceted

sketch of music's outermost emotional limits. It begins modestly, with a chromatic descending line stated in unison. That soon blooms into a fully textured adagio and an intricate allegro; abrupt shifts between these two sections characterize the movement. Similar contrasts abound in the next two movements: one quick and skittery, the next ambling and gentle. The fourth movement of the quartet, titled *Alla danza tedesca* ("like a German dance"), has a nostalgia cast. Yet even as it evokes idyllic simplicity, it destabilizes that same concept by means of exaggerated dynamic shifts and trick-mirror distortions of the theme. The Cavatina that follows resists such distant intellectual analysis. As suggested by its name, which refers to an operatic aria, it is lyrical, introspective, and impassioned. At its emotional apex, marked *beklemmt* ("heavy-hearted or anguished"), it trembles with otherworldly feeling.

The Grosse Fuge comes last. As tremendous as responses to the quartet as a whole have been, they are equaled—even surpassed—by descriptions of the fugue, which served as Opus 130's original last movement. (Beethoven later wrote an

alternative, much lighter final movement that can serve as a substitute.) Although it confounded many early listeners, who found it forebodingly inaccessible, it has since become revered as a work of startling modernity; Igor Stravinsky deemed it "an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever." The fugue bristles with urgency from its first declarative statement. It is aggressive, almost violent. Then it is hushed and vulnerable. Then it defiantly roars back. This affective breadth matches the work's consummate technical complexity, which merges strict counterpoint with nods to an array of classical forms. Yet by the time it reaches its curiously exuberant final measures, the fugue seems—amazingly—not to have exhausted all of the composer's resources. Even so complex a work as this one, Beethoven seems to suggest, cannot say it all; there is always more to discover in this "vast and awesome universe."

Lucy Caplan holds a Ph.D. in American Studies and African American Studies from Yale University. The recipient of the Rubin Prize for Music Criticism, she teaches at Harvard College and writes frequently about music, history, and culture.

About the Artists



CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

Recipient of a 2018 Avery Fisher Career Grant and a 2017 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists, the Calidore String Quartet first made international headlines as winner of the \$100,000 Grand Prize of the 2016 M-Prize Chamber Arts Competition. The quartet was the first North American ensemble to win the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship and a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist and is currently in residence with The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two).

In the 2019–20 season, the Calidore String Quartet celebrates both its tenth anniversary and the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth by presenting cycles of his string quartets at the Colburn School in Los Angeles and the Universities of Buffalo, Toronto, and Delaware. In Europe, they will perform Beethoven quartets in Antwerp, Dresden, and at the Rheingau Musik Festival. Additionally, the Calidore premieres a new work, *Breathing Statues*, by composer Anna Clyne inspired by Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* and commissioned by the Music Accord commissioning consortium. It receives its world premiere tonight and then will be heard in performances at Lincoln Center, Penn State University, Caramoor, San Francisco Performances, and

Boston's Celebrity Series. In Europe, the Calidore performs on respected series in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland. The quartet continues to collaborate with artists including pianists Marc-André Hamelin, Pavel Kolesnikov, and Henry Kramer, violists Lawrence Power and Matthew Lipman, cellist Clive Greensmith, bassist Xavier Foley, guitarist Sharon Isbin, and oboist Cristina Gómez Godoy.

Highlights of recent seasons have included performances in major venues throughout North America, Europe, and Asia including Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Kennedy Center, Konzerthaus Berlin, Brussels's BOZAR, Cologne Philharmonic, Seoul's Kumho Art Hall, and at significant festivals including the BBC Proms, Verbier, Ravinia, Mostly Mozart, Music@Menlo, and Rheingau.

The Calidore String Quartet's 2018 Signum release, *Resilience*, features quartets by Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Janáček, and Osvaldo Golijov. The Calidore's other commercial recordings include two albums recorded live in concert at the Music@Menlo Festival; *Serenade*, featuring music for string quartet from the Great War by Hindemith, Milhaud, Stravinsky, Ernst Toch, and Jacques de la Presle on the French label Editions Hortus; and their 2015 debut recording of quartets by Mendelssohn and Haydn, prompted *Gramophone Magazine* to call the Calidore String Quartet "the epitome of confidence and finesse." The Calidore's members were featured as Young Artists-in-Residence on American Public Media's *Performance Today*, and their performances have been broadcast on NPR, the BBC, the CBC, SiriusXM Satellite Radio, Korean Broadcasting System, Bayerischer Rundfunk (Munich), and Norddeutscher



Annual Chamber JAM

TONIGHT!

WITH THE AWARD-WINNING
CALIDORE STRING QUARTET

Please stay after the concert tonight as amateur string players from our audience join the Calidore String Quartet in a community sight-reading of Beethoven Quartet, Op. 18, No. 6.

Rundfunk (Hamburg) and were aired on German national television as part of a documentary produced by ARD public broadcasting.

The Calidore has given world premieres of works by Caroline Shaw, Hannah Lash, Mark-Anthony Turnage, and Benjamin Dean Taylor. The Calidore has collaborated and studied closely with the Emerson Quartet and Ébène Quartet.

As a passionate supporter of music education, the Calidore String Quartet is committed to mentoring and educating young musicians, students, and audiences. The Calidore serves as Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Delaware and the University of Toronto.

The Calidore String Quartet was founded at the Colburn School in Los Angeles in 2010. Within two years, the quartet won grand prizes in virtually all the major US

chamber music competitions, including the Fischhoff, Coleman, Chesapeake, and Yellow Springs competitions, and it captured top prizes at the 2012 ARD International Music Competition in Munich and the International Chamber Music Competition Hamburg. An amalgamation of “California” and “doré” (french for “golden”), the ensemble’s name represents its reverence for the diversity of culture and the strong support it received from its original home: Los Angeles, California, the “golden state.”

The Calidore opened the PUC series in 2015 with the Emerson String Quartet. They returned later that season to perform on the inaugural season of the Performances Up Close series. They were also the first ensemble to participate in PUC’s popular Live Music Meditation which has since become an annual series. PUC is thrilled to welcome them back!

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