ONEPPO CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

David Shifrin, artistic director

Brentano String Quartet

Tuesday, October 11, 2022 | 7:30 pm
Morse Recital Hall in Sprague Memorial Hall

Yale SCHOOL OF MUSIC
Robert Blocker, Dean
Program

Joseph Haydn
1732–1809

String Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 33, No. 4
I. Allegro moderato
II. Scherzo – Minore
III. Largo
IV. Presto

Béla Bartók
1881–1945

String Quartet No. 5, Sz. 102
I. Allegro
II. Adagio molto
III. Scherzo. Alla bulgarese (vivace)
IV. Andante
V. Finale. Allegro vivace – Presto

INTERMISSION

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel
1805–1847

String Quartet in E-flat major (1834)
I. Adagio ma non troppo
II. Allegretto
III. Romanze
IV. Allegro molto vivace
Artist Profile

Brentano String Quartet

Mark Steinberg, violin
Serena Canin, violin
Misha Amory, viola
Nina Lee, cello

Since its inception in 1992, the Brentano String Quartet has appeared throughout the world to popular and critical acclaim. Within a few years of its formation, the quartet garnered the inaugural Cleveland Quartet Award and the Naumburg Chamber Music Award. In recent seasons the quartet has appeared in the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, and Australia.

The Brentano String Quartet has performed many musical works that pre-date the string quartet as a medium, including the madrigals of Gesualdo, fantasias of Purcell, and secular vocal works of Josquin. The quartet has also worked closely with some of the most important composers of our time, including Elliott Carter, Charles Wuorinen, Chou Wen-chung, Steven Mackey, Bruce Adolphe, and György Kurtág, and has commissioned works from Wuorinen, Adolphe, Mackey, David Horne, and Gabriela Frank. The quartet has been privileged to collaborate with such artists as Jessye Norman, Joyce DiDonato, Richard Goode, Jonathan Biss, and Mitsuko Uchida.

In fall 2014, the quartet became the quartet-in-residence at the Yale School of Music, succeeding the Tokyo String Quartet in that position.

» brentanoquartet.com
Program Notes

String Quartet No. 5
Bartók
Patrick Campbell Jankowski

A “desert island collection” with few equals, Bartók’s six string quartets form arguably the most substantive, illuminating, and expansive set by a single composer since Beethoven’s. As with Beethoven, Bartók distilled so much of his musical style and outlook into a genre written for just four instruments. We can find parallels to several of his other works (including the Divertimento for Strings, or even the Concerto for Orchestra) within these quartets, as though he were using the genre to explore possibilities that he carried over into other contexts. The fifth quartet is constructed in the palindromic “arch form” that the composer preferred, wherein the first and last, and second and fourth movements form reflective pairs surrounding the center. This reflective idea extends further to the pitch and motivic substance as well, as we hear similar or slightly transformed melodies and brief motives scattered throughout, gluing the five movements together. The dramatic opening movement is a study in contrasts, with its unison rhythmic mottos like square blocks of sound pitch juxtaposed against with sinuous chromatic lines. An imperceptibly slow second movement with a murky texture in the lower strings against whistling high violin tones creates an illusion of vast, empty space. This example of “night music” contains a signature of that style: a prolonged crescendo to a loud extreme followed by a sudden drop, creating the sonic effect of looking out into the darkness after staring.
into a bright light. The dancing central movement is notable for its unique rhythmic subdivisions and groupings traditional to Bulgarian music. By the final movement, the mirror images begin to really take shape, with clear connections back to the thematic material of the first. One surprise to look for: an out of context, satirical little melody played in two different keys between melody and accompaniment, a half-step apart. Played “indifferently” and with no fanfare, the movement goes right on about its business with no thought.

String Quartet in E-flat major
MENDELSSOHN HENSEL
Patrick Campbell Jankowski

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel wrote much more music than could ever have been performed or especially published in her lifetime. In the 100+ years since her death has solidified her place among the most significant composers of Romantic music. This quartet in E-flat is remarkable not only for its quality and historic significance but for its unique characteristics, and not just because it might be the earliest-known quartet to be written by a woman. To start, she begins not with an allegro nor a moderato movement, but unexpectedly with an adagio and in A minor key (although the movement closes in major, as though transformed). The idea of a string quartet functioning purely as “light” music is clearly not one shared by Hensel. A jaunty and sprightly scherzo follows, with skittering figures that perhaps not coincidentally resemble the Midsummer Night’s Dream scherzo music of her brother Felix, something of a musician himself. The meandering of the lyrical third movement leave us wondering where we might find our harmonic footing, something which Felix pointed out to his sister in a letter. By the time we reach the finale, however, in clear-cut sonata form and rollicking dance rhythm, we’ve emphatically found that footing.
Thank you for your support!

Become a patron of the Oneppo Chamber Music Series at Yale!

» Visit music.yale.edu/support or contact us at 203 432–4158.

CHARLES IVES CIRCLE
$750 & above

PAUL HINDEMITH CIRCLE
$500–$749
Barbara & Bill Nordhaus
Dr. Lorraine Siggins
Margaret & Marc Mann

HORATIO PARKER CIRCLE
$250–$499
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Crowley
Carolyn Gould
Robert Jaeger
Barbara & Ivan Katz
Lisa Kugelman & Roy Wiseman
Marion & Richard Petrelli
Abby N. Wells

SAMUEL SIMONS SANFORD CIRCLE
$125–$249
Nina Adams & Moreson Kaplan
Elizabeth M. Dock
Richard & Madlyn Flavell
Irene K. Miller
Dr. E. Anthony Petrelli
Maryanne & W. Dean Rupp
Clifford Slayman

GUSTAVE J. STOECKEL CIRCLE
$50–$124
Anonymous
Susan S. Addiss
Victor & Laura Altshul
Irma Bachman, in memory of Robert Bachman
Bill & Donna Batsford
Nancy & Dick Beals
Ray Fair
Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
Ralph W. Franklin
Howard & Sylvia Garland
Dr. Lauretta E. Grau
Elizabeth Greenspan
Elizabeth Haas
Robert & Noël Heimer
In memory of Jon T. Hirschoff
Alan & Joan Kliger
Constance & Joseph LaPalombara
Dr. Leonard E. Munstermann
Stuart Warner & David Paltiel
Prof. Paul Schultz
Antoinette Tyndall
Werner & Elizabeth Wolf

List as of October 6, 2022
Upcoming Events at YSM

**OCT 12**  
**Lunchtime Chamber Music**  
12:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall  
Free admission

**OCT 19**  
**Lunchtime Chamber Music**  
12:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall  
Free admission

**OCT 20**  
**Q&A with Dr. Samantha Ege and Soomin Kim**  
**YSM Special Events**  
12:00 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall  
Free admission

**OCT 20**  
**Jonathan Salamon, harpsichord**  
**Doctor of Musical Arts Degree Recital**  
7:30 p.m. | Morse Recital Hall  
Free admission

**OCT 21**  
**World orchestra premiere of Helen Hagan’s Piano Concerto**  
**Yale Philharmonia**  
7:30 p.m. | Woolsey Hall  
Tickets start at $12, Yale faculty/staff start at $8, Students **FREE**

**OCT 26**  
**Lunchtime Chamber Music**  
12:30 p.m. | Slifka Center  
Free admission