

camera lucida

Chamber music concerts at UC San Diego

2013-2014 season

Sponsored by the Sam B. Ersan Fund at the San Diego Foundation

upcoming concerts

Monday, June 2

Mendelssohn - Piano Quartet in b minor, Op. 3

Dvorak - F-minor Piano Trio, Opus 65

Sibelius - String Quartet "Voces intimae"

Tuesday, June 10

Myriad Trio and Camera Lucida

Subscriptions (at a considerable savings from the already-reasonable single-concert price) are a wonderful way to take advantage of the best discounts and seating.

For more information, contact the San Diego Symphony ticket office at 619.235.0804 or via the web at: <http://www.sandiegosymphony.org/concertcalendar/cameralucida.aspx>

Tonight's concert will be broadcast Saturday, April 19th at 7 pm on kpbs-fm 89.5 or streaming at kpbs.org

Artistic Director - Charles Curtis
Executive Coordinator - Colin McAllister
Program notes - Lukas Schulze
Recording engineer - Tom Erbe
Production manager - Jessica Flores

For more information:
<http://www.cameralucidachambermusic.org>

We now have an official camera lucida kpbs email address for listener questions or comments!
cameralucida@kpbs.org

Taiwanese-American violist **Che-Yen Chen** has established himself as an active performer and educator. He is a founding member of the Formosa Quartet, recipient of the First-Prize and the Amadeus Prize winner of the 10th London International String Quartet Competition. Since winning the First-Prize in Primrose Competition and the "President Prize" in the Tertis Competition, Chen has been described by the Strad Magazine as a musician whose "tonal distinction and essential musicality produced an auspicious impression" and by San Diego Union Tribune as an artist whose "most impressive aspect of his playing was his ability to find not just the subtle emotion, but the humanity hidden in the music." Having served as principal violist of the San Diego Symphony for eight seasons, he is principal violist of the Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra and has appeared as guest principal violist with Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra. A former member of Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society Two and participant of the Marlboro Music Festival, he is a member of Camera Lucida, Concertante Chamber Players and The Myriad Trio. Chen is currently on faculty at USC Thornton School of Music and California State University, Fullerton and has given master-classes in major conservatories and universities across North America and Asia. In August 2013, the Formosa Quartet inaugurated the annual Formosa Chamber Music Festival in Hualien, Taiwan. Modeled after American summer festivals such as Marlboro, Ravinia, the Taos School of Music, and Kneisel Hall, FCMF is the product of long-held aspirations and years of planning, and represents one of the quartet's more important missions: to bring high-level chamber music training to talented young musicians in Taiwan and first-rate music to Taiwanese audiences.

Cellist **Charles Curtis** has been Professor of Contemporary Music Performance at UCSD since Fall 2000. Previously he was Principal Cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. A student of Harvey Shapiro and Leonard Rose at Juilliard, on graduation Curtis received the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orquestra de la Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Brazil and Chile. He is internationally recognized as a leading performer of unique solo works created expressly for him by composers such as La Monte Young and Marian Zazeela, Éliane Radigue, Alvin Lucier, Christian Wolff, Alison Knowles and Mieko Shiomi. Of a recent New York recital the New York Times noted that Curtis' "playing unflinchingly combined lucidity and poise... lyricism and intensity." The current season includes solo concerts at New York's Issue Project Room, the Auditorium du Louvre in Paris, the Rothko Chapel in Houston and the Kampnagelfabrik in Hamburg. Curtis is artistic director of Camera Lucida.

Monday, April Fourteenth
Two Thousand and Fourteen
7:30pm

String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, no. 2 Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Moderato

Capriccio – Adagio

Menuetto – Allegretto

Fuga a 4 Soggetti – Allegro

Grosse Fuge for String Quartet, Op. 133 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Allegro - Meno mosso e moderato - Allegro molto e con brio

Intermission

String Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 130 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Adagio – ma non troppo – Allegro

Presto

Andante con moto, ma non troppo, poco scherzoso

Alla danza tedesca – Allegro assai

Cavatina – Adagio molto espressivo

Finale – Allegro

Jeff Thayer, violin
Tereza Stanislav, violin
Che-Yen Chen, viola
Charles Curtis, cello



UC San Diego | Department of Music



Franz Joseph Haydn: String Quartet in C Major, Op. 20, No. 2

Haydn didn’t invent the string quartet. By his day, there had been generations of music written for quartets of strings. Sammartini, Alessandro Scarlatti, a host of English masters of the viol—many composers in Europe explored new territories of chamber music as the Baroque ceded to the 18th Century. Yet no composer is more closely linked with the string quartet than Haydn, and the Op. 20 pieces do more for this connection than any of Haydn’s other quartets. Tovey wrote, “Every page of the six quartets of Op. 20 is of historic and aesthetic importance...there is perhaps no opus in the history of instrumental music which has achieved so much.” Haydn had written many quartets before Op. 20, but this group is universally regarded as groundbreaking--advancing structure, instrumental technique, and the ability of the chamber ensemble to raise issues of rhetoric and commentary through strictly instrumental means. They are edgy, filled with capricious gestures and turns of emotion; the Op. 33 quartets (written a decade later) are noticeably *galante* and genteel in comparison. In Op. 20 (referred to as the “Sun” quartets in reference to the image of a rising sun on the cover of an early edition), players assume for the first time a genuine equality of function, in stark contrast to earlier works in which the first violin roamed freely above subservient accompanying instruments. These works show an evolved sonata-allegro form, subject to precisely the sort of personalized variation and eccentricity that helped it become the dramatic form of the classical style. Moreover, counterpoint itself—commonly associated with the Renaissance and Baroque—is for the first time transformed into a rhetorical archetype, used to refer back to older musics and genres. The mannered use of fugue and fugal writing, used in several finales in Op. 20, can be easily traced through the work of Mozart and Beethoven, with Haydn as the clear source.

The first movement *Moderato* begins with a fugal treatment of the main theme played in the cello, above the other instruments, voice equality proved by the echo of this melody in the first violin, the instrument that typically would have taken the lead. All of the instruments have an opportunity to state the theme in this amiable movement that moves easily and imperceptibly between imitative and homophonic textures. The *Capriccio—Adagio*, in the parallel minor, shows precisely the sort of modeling of dramatic and referential materials Haydn was to provide for Beethoven: the theme stated first in declamatory unison, then in the cello, suggests opera; as the movement progresses, the distinction between recitative and aria grows more polarized. Again here, this seems to be music about music—a quality that had enormous importance in later composers from Mozart to Mahler. The *Menuetto—Allegretto* is an astonishing movement, again shaped by reference to other types of music. A *Musette de Cour* (a small bagpipe associated with the French court), represented by the drones that undulate within the chordal melody, furthers the minuet idea. Haydn is exceedingly sensitive to all aspects of his materials here: the quiet pulsation of the players together in the dusty low register is contrasted with violin solos that break off and ascend into the upper reaches of its range. The final *Allegro* is a fugue in “4 *Soggetti*,” or four subjects. This dense and focused finale maintains a driving 6/8 meter, which gives the music a quality of dance that masks a remarkably learned approach to the fugue form. Numerous imitative devices such as *stretto* (closely overlapping entrances of the subject) and inversion (which Haydn labels *al roverscio*) are negotiated without any diminishment of the lightness and clarity of the discourse.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133

In a very real sense, any understanding of Beethoven’s music that fails to take into account the *Grosse Fuge* is a benighted one. More than any other of his works, this piece sets boundaries—performative and aesthetic—of the most extreme sort, charting the furthest reaches of his compositional impulse, and posing the greatest challenge to the audience. Indeed, those listeners who would take this work seriously have a more imposing task in front of them than the disinterested ones: we find ourselves obliged to make sense of this music, and to build (either as it is performed, or afterwards) an understanding of its place in Beethoven’s music as a whole. The more seriously it is heard, the greater its mysteries become.

The basic outline of the history of the *Grosse Fuge* is easy enough to follow: Beethoven imagined this as the original finale of his String Quartet in B-flat, Op. 130, written in 1825. Though Beethoven had turned toward fugue many times in his life, especially in the later works, this music seemed simply too bizarre—too long, turgid, incoherent. The publisher, Matthias Artaria, proposed issuing it as a separate work, and suggested Beethoven write an

alternate finale for Op. 130, which he did. This second finale was used in performances of the piece throughout the 19th Century, and even now it is regularly performed with the revised ending. Structurally, the *Grosse Fuge* is a massive and complex double fugue. Beginning with an *Overtura* that outlines a chromatic subject recalling both the opening of the Op. 132 Quartet as well as a fragment taken from Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the music launches immediately into a hybridized, sectional form that moves between intense and unabated counterpoint to moments of what Kerman calls “almost blinding innocence,” wherein fugal writing is totally absent.

It is the work’s tone and its content—and, importantly, our understanding of that content—that places us in the most precarious position. To begin with, this is terrible (in the archaic sense of the term) music: hysterical, incessant, even brutal. From the moment of its premiere, it confounded critics and listeners. “No composer before Beethoven ever disregarded the capacities of both his performers and his audience with such ruthlessness,” Charles Rosen wrote; this is reflected in the fact that the *Fuge* was publicly performed only a handful of times prior to the 20th Century. In truth, this music was rescued, as it were, by the modern age. It is only the new directions in philosophy, psychology, experimental art movements, turbulent world history and modern themes of alienation that have provided us with an interpretive capacity to understand the piece. The notion of a developmental musical logic pushed so far that it begins, finally, to cannibalize coherence was simply not part of the 19th Century worldview. Even now, the language of this music requires extensive metaphorical filters in the listener to be deciphered. Not surprisingly, the musicians who first related to the work came from the avant-garde. Stravinsky called it “an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever.” Further, while Beethoven is widely thought of as exemplifying “absolute music”—music that is autonomous, relying on no extra-musical narrative for its impact, numerous details of biography and circumstance in Op. 133 amplify its tragic nature: Beethoven was almost totally deaf when he wrote it; his increasing separation from his physical world is darkly mirrored in his solitary commitment to a music that seems to turn its back from the collective emotional coherence of his age. The remoteness of the music’s impenetrable dialect is set into even greater relief by the publisher’s decision to separate it from the rest of the quartet—a series of other movements it was designed to accompany and relate to, that might have buttressed it, aesthetically. The *Grosse Fuge* could have been much like Bach’s famous *Chaconne*, the titanic last movement that so transforms the D-minor Partita. The choice to amputate the *Fuge* from the quartet was understandable yet pathetic--a decision akin to Beethoven’s own in writing this music. “*Muss es sein?*” Beethoven wrote on the score of his final quartet, Op. 135—“Must it be?” “*Es muss sein!*” he answered himself: “it must be”—a necessary commitment that, in being made, irreparably changed our relation to the work. This music must mean something, must be something, but, what is that? How can this make sense? We see, in the intractability of these questions, that Beethoven wrote this music for an audience not yet alive.

String Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 130

Beethoven’s quartets push further into his last period than either the piano sonatas or the symphonies; thus they articulate those issues of “lateness” more authentically, and more problematically, than any other genres. As a set, the last group of quartets (five multi-movement pieces and the *Grosse Fuge*) acts as a real biological family: they share a DNA that links them to one another, but each has a trajectory and outlook that gives it a distinct identity, none of them just like any of the others. The B-flat Major Quartet, Op. 130 was written in 1825, and is one of the three “Galitzin” Quartets—commissioned by Prince Nicholas Galatzin in 1822. It deviates (as do several of the late quartets) from the traditional four-movement plan, having instead six. The original finale, the massive Grosse Fuge, was replaced on a publisher’s urging and published as a separate piece, with a substitute finale taking its place.

While the first movement *Adagio ma non troppo—Allegro* is a fractured work (as are many of the late works), full of caesuras and changes of tempo and mood, it has a pastoral unity that unifies, somehow, the disparate materials that make it up. Beginning as if in the middle of a slow movement, it lapses into strict counterpoint before stating a main theme made up of two ideas: a cadential gesture accompanied by running sixteenth-notes. The “objective” quality referred to in Beethoven’s late music can be

seen in this theme: both the cadential figure and its accompaniment seem to be lifted out of a cosmic bin of stock ideas. As the movement goes on, the slow introduction and the allegro alternate back and forth, eroding both the introductory quality of the first, and the central function of the latter. The terse and singular *presto* has the function of a scherzo. Focused and fast, its main idea is almost overshadowed by the flowering and insistent *Trio*. The third movement, *Andante con moto*, shows how important placement is in determining mood in Beethoven’s late music, as the ominous fixation of the second movement, still in our ears, makes the leisurely, divertimento quality of the *Andante* almost bizarre, as if blocking out some awful truth. There is a storytelling quality to the fourth movement, the *Alla danza tedesca*—it rocks gently like a favorite childhood tale, broken by idyllic moments of the hurdy-gurdy which Beethoven was so fond of representing in his late music. The main idea returns, subtly but drastically altered by a syncopation that seems to put the triple meter into duple beneath the opening theme. The *Cavatina*, the emotional center of the work, is one of Beethoven’s most earnest and sumptuous slow movements, whose melody seems to be taken simply from the top chordal voice, alternating back and forth between the first and second violins, very much like a vocal duet. Especially striking are the cadential double-stops in the cello, which grind and glow beneath the melody. More arresting still, the momentary digression into a perplexing and shadowy *sotto voce* melody in the first violin, almost none of the notes of which align with the triplets that tick off beneath it—an idea that could have easily been written a hundred years later. The *Finale—Allegro* takes the former place of the great fugue. Again, juxtaposition in Beethoven’s late work is crucial, and in this case, we cannot hear this last movement without considering the movement that ought to have been here. However, this movement—likely the last music Beethoven ever wrote—is hardly an empty foil. Beethoven comments on the absence of the *Fuge* with the key of g minor that opens the piece before steering it back to B-flat. This rondo has a Hungarian, *Zingarese* (Gypsy) quality that offers a final, poignant tribute by Beethoven to Haydn.

about the performers

Violinist **Jeff Thayer** is currently the concertmaster of the San Diego Symphony as well as concertmaster and faculty member of the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Previous positions include assistant concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, associate concertmaster of the North Carolina Symphony, and concertmaster of the Canton (OH) Symphony Orchestra. He is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the Juilliard School’s Pre-College Division. His teachers include William Preucil, Donald Weilerstein, Zvi Zeitlin, Dorothy DeLay, and James Lyon. He has appeared as soloist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, the North Carolina Symphony, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, the Pierre Monteux School Festival Orchestra, the Spartanburg Philharmonic, the Cleveland Institute of Music Symphony Orchestra, The Music Academy of the West Festival Orchestra, the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, the Nittany Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Conservatory Orchestra of Cordoba, among others. Through a generous loan from Irwin and Joan Jacobs and the Jacobs’ Family Trust, Mr. Thayer plays on the 1708 “Sir Bagshawe” Stradivarius.

Violinist **Tereza Stanislav** was appointed Assistant Concertmaster of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra in 2003 by music director Jeffrey Kahane. Dividing her time among orchestral, solo, chamber and recording projects, Tereza has been hailed for her “expressive beauty and wonderful intensity” (Robert Mann) and her “sure technique and musical intelligence” (Calgary Herald).An active performer, Tereza has appeared in venues including Alice Tully Hall, the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall, the Ravinia Music Festival, Bravo! Vail, the Chautauqua Festival, Merkin Concert Hall, La Jolla Summerfest, Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival, the Banff Center in Canada, St. Barth’s Music Festival and at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall. She has performed in concert with artists including Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Gilbert Kalish, Jon Kimura Parker, Colin Currie, and Monica Huggett. In 2004, Tereza released a CD in collaboration with pianist Hung-Kuan Chen. This season, Tereza served as Concertmaster of the Los Angeles’ Opera production of The Marriage of Figaro, conducted by Plácido Domingo. In 2009, Tereza was invited to be the Chamber Music Collaborator for Sonata Programs and a member of the jury for the Sixth Esther Honens International Piano Competition, as well as the soloist on a Central European tour performing Mozart’s Fifth Violin Concerto.