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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Quatuor Mosaïques**  
**Tuesday, April 10 – 8:00 PM**  
*Perelman Theater*

**Background**

“Quartet playing does not come any more eloquent or richly imagined” than by the Quatuor Mosaïques, the Austrian string quartet that specializes in music of the 18th century. Repeat recipients of the prestigious Gramophone Award for its interpretations of Haydn, the ensemble begins its Perelman Theater program with one the Austro-Hungarian master’s “Sun” quartets followed by Mozart’s relaxed “Hunt” quartet and culminating with seminal late Beethoven.

**Program**

**Quartet in G Minor, Op. 20, No. 3**

**Franz Joseph Haydn**

*Born: March 31, 1732 in Rohrau, Austria*

*Died: May 31, 1809 in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1772*

*Last PCMS performance: Brentano Quartet in 2009*

*Duration: 23 minutes*

Like the other quartets in this series, this work offers a wealth of new musical devices to listen to. The first movement has irregular rhythmic structures that seem to peer deeply into the future, perhaps even as far as the late Romantic period. Its allegro theme opens exultantly and after two minutes has undergone several rhythmic shifts. The recapitulation does not really restate what we have heard in the exposition, but instead slathers a new coat of tone color onto it. It may be impossible to hear this dazzling display of invention once and absorb all of its entrancing complexity.

**Quartet in B-flat Major, K. 458, “Hunt”**

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

*Born: January 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria*

*Died: December 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1784*

*Last PCMS performance: Belcea Quartet in 2005*

*Duration: 26 minutes*

Nicknamed the “Hunt” because of the hunting-call motif that opens the work, the B-flat quartet is the fourth of six string quartets Mozart composed between 1782 and 1785. A direct impetus for Mozart’s return to quartet writing seems to have come from Haydn, who in 1781 published a new set of six as his Op. 33. Mozart almost certainly met Haydn shortly after settling in Vienna in

1781, and the two men soon established a friendship based on mutual admiration. The inspiration provided by Haydn is clearly apparent in the quartets Mozart composed in the wake of these encounters. It is therefore hardly surprising that on completing six quartets of his own (K. 387, K. 421, K. 428, K. 458, K. 464, and K. 465) Mozart’s publication would bear a famous dedicatory preface to Haydn that has led to them becoming somewhat confusingly known as Mozart’s “Haydn” quartets. In the course of Mozart’s touching tribute to the older master, he refers to the “long and laborious endeavor” that had gone into them, a unique admission from a man who normally composed with extraordinary facility, and a pointed reminder of the extreme challenge posed by this most pure of musical forms.

**Quartet in F Major, Op. 135**

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

*Born: December 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany*

*Died: March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1826*

*Last PCMS performance: Miró Quartet in 2010*

*Duration: 23 minutes*

Beethoven’s final quartet is surprisingly small-scaled, finding inspiration in the quartets of his one-time teacher Haydn. Beethoven wrote the bulk of it in a two-month burst of activity amid health problems and shortly after his nephew’s attempted suicide. There’s not a hint of self-pity or anguish, however, in this compact, good-natured work.