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PREVIEW
NOTES

Brentano Quartet w/ Ignat Solzhenitsyn, piano
Sunday, February 19 – 3:00 PM
Perelman Theater

Background

Named after Antonie Brentano, whom many scholars believe to have been Beethoven's mysterious "Immortal Beloved", the Brentano Quartet has been singled out for its technical brilliance, musical insight and stylistic elegance since its inception in 1992. An "ensemble of exceptional insight" (*Daily Telegraph*), they'll perform a modern masterpiece – Ginastera's piano quintet – with Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia conductor laureate Ignat Solzhenitsyn in an exciting program that also includes quartets by Haydn and Beethoven.

Program

Quartet in D Minor, Op. 103

Franz Joseph Haydn

Born: Mar. 31, 1732 in Rohrau, Austria

Died: May 31, 1809 in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1803

Last PCMS performance: Emerson Quartet in 2010

Duration: 11 minutes

Haydn was in failing health when he accepted a commission in 1803 for six quartets. He began this work with the less demanding inner movements, intending to write the more mentally taxing outer movements when he felt stronger. However, he soon realized that his health would not improve and had the two finished movements published on their own and announced that they should be considered his farewell.

Quintet, Op. 29

Alberto Ginastera

Born: April 11, 1916 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Died: June 25, 1983 in Geneva, Switzerland

Composed: 1963

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 21 minutes

This quintet is thoroughly avant-gardist with serialist and aleatoric elements coexisting rather convincingly

within a classical structure. It is a rather stirring work, and the technical demands on the players are quite substantial, especially the otherworldly scherzo and the lively finale.

Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 130

w/ Grosse Fuge, Op. 130

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died: March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1825-26

Last PCMS performance: Belcea Quartet in 2011

Duration: 58 minutes

This piece is among Beethoven's final works and is the last of the three quartets he composed to meet the commission of Prince Nikolai Golitzin. Its original finale was replaced by a new one finished in late 1826—said to be Beethoven's last completed composition. Beethoven agreed to replace the original, the so-called Grosse Fugue, Op. 133, at the behest of his publisher, as it proved quite difficult for the performers and audience who heard it at its premiere. Beethoven probably recognized that the Grosse Fugue was a rather outsized piece, too grand to serve as the finale for this quartet, a great piece in its own right but a work whose character in the preceding five movements is less epic-sounding.