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PREVIEW  
NOTES

## Johannes Quartet

Sunday, February 13 • 3:00 PM — *American Philosophical Society*

### Background

The Johannes Quartet brings together the principal cello of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (Peter Stumpf); the principal viola of the Philadelphia Orchestra (Choong-Jin Chang); the first American to win the Paganini Violin Competition in 24 years (Soovin Kim); and a Concert Artist Guild International Competition Winner (Jessica Lee). The group has spent numerous summers together at the Marlboro Music Festival and has been praised for its special combination of passion, warmth and elegance.

### Program

#### Quartet in D Major, K. 499

##### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

*Born: Jan. 27, 1756 in Salzburg, Austria*

*Died: Dec. 5, 1791 in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1786*

*Last PCMS performance: Miró Quartet in 2007*

*Duration: 27 minutes*

Among Mozart's last string quartets, this work owes its nickname to the Viennese publisher Franz Anton Hoffmeister, who first issued it. It is an exceedingly beautiful piece, with an Adagio of great profundity and a final Molto Allegro which treads the ambiguous line between tragedy and comedy that so often characterizes Mozart's later works. The Minuet has also elicited particular attention from Mozart's biographers; H.C. Robbins Landon described it as "one of the most original in eighteenth century music."

#### Quartet No. 2, Op. 13

##### György Kurtág

*Born: Feb. 19, 1926 in Lugoj, Romania*

*Composed: 1977-78*

*Last PCMS performance: Johannes Quartet in 2010*

*Duration: 10 minutes*

Kurtág's first composition for string quartet in nearly 20 years consists of 12 microludes. Ranging between 18 and 82 seconds in length, they are edgy and intense and reflect the influence of Webern and Bartók.

#### Five Movements, Op. 5

##### Anton Webern

*Born: Dec. 3, 1883 in Vienna, Austria*

*Died: Sept. 15, 1945 in Mittersill, Austria*

*Composed: 1909*

*Last PCMS performance: Hagen Quartet in 2010*

*Duration: 12 minutes*

This work finds Webern continuing his explorations of the atonality also being employed by Alban Berg and Arnold Schoenberg, while beginning to incorporate the spare gestures and concision of thought which became so pronounced in his works of the next decade. A talented cellist, Webern also had a full knowledge of the techniques available to string players, and these movements feature all manner of pizzicati, harmonics, tremolos, and other textures.

#### Quartet in E-flat Major, K. 428

##### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

*Composed: 1783*

*Last PCMS performance: Juilliard Quartet in 2006*

*Duration: 27 minutes*

Of Mozart's six quartets dedicated to Haydn, this is one of the most genial and, in some respects, most Haydn-esque in its delight in unexpected shifts of harmony. For example, the opening Allegro ma non troppo movement initially seems to ease itself in, Haydn style, with a slow introduction, but this turns out to be merely a somewhat broad, harmonically teasing short statement that rambles straight into the cheerful first subject.