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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Juilliard Quartet w/ Leon Fleisher, piano**  
**Sunday, January 25 – 8:00 PM**  
*Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center*

**Program**

**Quartet in G Major, Op. 33, No. 5**

**Joseph Haydn**

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

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

*Composed: 1781*

*First PCMS performance*

*Duration: 19 minutes*

The first movement starts with a buoyant and brisk vivace opening, with a twitchy seven-note figure that disappears and unexpectedly reappears. Just before the recapitulation, the movement's dynamics drop to pianissimo, but only briefly. In a few seconds the antic declamations are back again, in full force, only to end the movement pianissimo again. The similarity between the finale of this quartet and of Mozart's K. 421 is no mere coincidence. True, the easiness and good spirits of this siciliano movement are not as innovative and startling as the rest of the quartet. Haydn had to have known this because he offered these non-idiosyncratic, pleasant variations as contrast. His audience could go home smiling instead of scratching their heads.

**Quartet No. 2, Vistas**

**Shulamit Ran**

*Born: October 21, 1949 in Tel Aviv, Israel*

*Composed: 1989*

*First PCMS performance*

*Duration: 25 minutes*

Commissioned by C. Geraldine Freund for the Taneyev String Quartet of St. Petersburg, Shulamit Ran's String Quartet No. 2 was the first U.S. commission to a Soviet chamber group since the 1985 Reagan/Gorbachev accord. The work is described by the *Chicago Tribune* as having ideas that "are forcefully stated and sharply contrasted, set forth in clear textures and resonant timbres that reveal a deep understanding of the mediums expressive possibilities."

**Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34**

**Johannes Brahms**

*Born: May 7, 1833, in Hamburg, Germany*

*Died: April 3, 1897, in Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1861-64*

*Last PCMS performance: Guarneri Quartet in 2006*

*Duration: 43 minutes*

Brahms introduced this work as a string quintet in 1862, but violinist Joseph Joachim found the music too weighty to be supported by strings and suggested recasting it for piano. So Brahms fashioned it into a sonata for two pianos, but this version didn't satisfy pianist Clara Schumann, who persuaded Brahms to bring strings back into the picture. The final transformation, for piano and string quartet, was finished in the fall of 1864. Brahms begins by lulling listeners into complacency with a restrained statement of the first movement's initial theme. Soon, though, the theme erupts with energy, whereupon the music slips into the unexpected key of C-sharp Minor for the second subject. Brahms subjects this material to a wayward development, and in the recapitulation he shifts the second theme into F-sharp Minor. The second movement, Adagio, is an episode of serenity, although it is always open to harmonic instability; it's based on a faintly Slavic melody with a wistful harmonization. The Scherzo begins with low pizzicato cello notes, a launching pad for the syncopated main theme that creeps up through the strings and soon explodes into a robust, minor-key march. The contrasting trio section is in the comforting key of C major and manages to create a flowing, lyrical interlude out of what is essentially a fanfare figure. After an ominous introduction, the finale builds into a fast rondo with the arrival of an impetuous but quiet theme over a nervous, almost galloping accompaniment. The first violin ushers in a second subject, slower and somewhat pleading. Brahms knocks these themes back and forth rather than supplying a formal development section, and then overlaps many of the movement's—and the entire quintet's—principal motifs in a Presto coda.