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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Juilliard Quartet II**  
**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."

**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: Juilliard Quartet in 2013*

*Duration: 25 minutes*

Beethoven wrote the bulk of this, his final quartet, in a two-month burst of activity amid health problems and shortly after his nephew Karl attempted to commit suicide. But there's not a hint of self-pity or anguish in this compact, good-natured work. The first movement, Allegretto, takes standard sonata form. Its principal theme in 2/4 hints at a march; this, the light textures, and Beethoven's reliance on very short phrases give the movement a playful nature that is emphasized by Beethoven's abrupt melodic and harmonic shifts and frequent interruptions in mid-phrase. Beethoven carries this unpredictability over to the second movement, Vivace, which is a scherzo and trio. The finale initially seems to be a great, tragic utterance; Beethoven casts the introduction, Grave ma non troppo tratto, in F minor. At the head of the score Beethoven has written, in German, "The difficult decision," and next to the tempo indication are the words "Muss es sein?" (Must it be?). The cello and viola seem to be asking that question in the introduction, but soon the music breaks into an F major Allegro; here, Beethoven has written "Es muss sein!" (It must be!). Those three syllables form the rhythmic basis of the main theme, and seem to be inspired by an exchange between Beethoven and a friend regarding payment of money. The movement proceeds according to sonata structure, spirits remaining high right through the whimsical pizzicato passage that leads to the affirmative final bars.