

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW  
NOTES

## Musicians From Marlboro I

Lauren Pearl, *soprano* • Abigail Fayette, Alina Kobialka, Anna Lee, & Scott St. John, *violin*

Kei Tojo & Sharon Wei, *viola* • Tony Rymer & Judith Serkin, *cello*

Wednesday, November 2 – 7:30 PM

*Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center*

### PROGRAM

#### *Il Tramonto*

Ottorino Respighi

*Born: July 9, 1879, Bologna, Italy*

*Died: April 18, 1936, Rome, Italy*

*Composed: 1914*

*Duration: 14 minutes*

Respighi's string quartet with soprano from 1914 is based on a tragic poem by Percy Bysshe Shelley, "The Sunset" ("Il Tramonto" in Italian). The music closely follows the trajectory of the poem starting, after an operatic recitative, with the soft, flowing sounds of a summer's eve. The movement builds steadily to a passionate climax resulting in, the next morning, her horror upon the grim discovery. It then slips slowly into sad resignation at the cruelty of fate. At the end one hears church-like chanting and the baroque influence of Monteverdi with the unmistakable dramatic passion of Puccini mixed with a Debussy-like texture in the lilting arpeggios of the viola throughout. The music and words are perfectly intertwined telling the story in two complete and identical arcs.

#### **String Quartet No. 3 in B-flat Major, Op. 67**

Johannes Brahms

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

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

*Composed: 1875*

*Duration: 35 minutes*

The engaging qualities of the work are immediately apparent in the opening *Vivace*, as a bucolic "hunting-horn" theme with triplet rhythms reveals the light-hearted side of Brahms. A serenely flowing *Andante* follows, although not without some dramatic interruptions. In the third movement, a minuet marked *Agitato*, Brahms creates an unusual texture by muting the two violins and the cello. The unmuted viola leads the way, producing a haunting ensemble sonority. In the final movement, during the course of eight variations, we witness the mastery Brahms could display in this most deceptively simple of musical forms.

#### *You Shattered My Deafness*

Rene Orth

*Born: 1985*

*Composed: 2013*

*Duration: 17 minutes*

Rene Orth is a composer that "breaks new ground" (*Opera News*), writing music described as "...always dramatic, reflective, rarely predictable, and often electronic" (*Musical America*). Her music focuses on dramatic and lyrical storytelling, and she takes a keen interest in blending electronic soundscapes and beats with acoustic music. Rene Orth's *You Shattered My Deafness* incorporates text by St. Augustine in a dramatically reflective work.

#### **String Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20**

Felix Mendelssohn

*Born: February 3, 1809, Hamburg, Germany*

*Died: November 4, 1847, Leipzig, Germany*

*Composed: 1825*

*Duration: 32 minutes*

In the first two movements, Mendelssohn pens a first-violin part filled with virtuosity. The *Allegro moderato ma con fuoco* tumbles forth with blistering energy, and the second movement injects deeply felt emotional undercurrents beneath the imaginatively scored ambling. The *Scherzo*, which became celebrated as a stand-alone piece during Mendelssohn's lifetime, is a cousin to the analogous section of the composer's famous *Midsummer Night's Dream* music. The music of the *Scherzo* makes a further appearance as a passing allusion in the finale, which is overwhelmingly worked out through fugal procedures, in which themes are introduced one after the other by various instrumental voices and then combined.