

# PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

a life more beautiful

PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Musicians from Marlboro I**  
**Tuesday, October 19 – 7:30 PM**  
*Perelman Theater, Kimmel Center*

## **PROGRAM**

### **Ellens Gesänge, D. 837-839**

**Franz Schubert**

*Born: January 31, 1797, Himmelfortgrund, Vienna, Austria*

*Died: November 19, 1828, Vienna, Austria*

*Composed: 1825*

*Duration: 16 minutes*

This song is a setting of text from near the closing of Canto III from Sir Walter Scott's *The Lady of The Lake*, in a translation by Adam Storck. It was composed in April, 1825, when Schubert also fashioned *Ellens Gesang I* and *Ellens Gesang II*. This third effort is probably the most successful and most popular. Even the composer spoke of its immediate widespread appeal in a letter to his parents in July, 1825, shortly after its first performances. He also indicated that he felt a certain religious devotion when he wrote it, one that came to him naturally and effortlessly. *Ellens Gesang III* was first published in 1826.

### **Quartet No. 1, *Kreutzer Sonata***

**Leoš Janáček**

*Born: July 3, 1854, Hukvaldy, Czechia*

*Died: August 12, 1928, Ostrava, Czechia*

*Composed: 1923*

*Duration: 18 minutes*

Leoš Janáček's String Quartet No. 1 is subtitled "The Kreutzer Sonata," after the story by Leo Tolstoy upon which it is based; the title of Tolstoy's story, of course, is taken from Ludwig van Beethoven's ninth violin sonata. This was not the first work Janáček wrote based on this Tolstoy story; a piano trio from 1908 is now lost. According to Josef Suk, who led the premiere of the quartet on October 17, 1924, Janáček wished with this work to protest the tyranny of men over women; in the story, a female heroine seeks refuge from an unhappy marriage in the arms of an amoral seducer, and dies tragically after doing so. Although Janáček did not attempt a line-by-line re-creation of Tolstoy's story, the music clearly suggests certain programmatic correspondences.

### ***Soliloquy of the Unnamed* [Philadelphia Premiere]**

**Aïda Shirazi**

*Born: 1987, Tehran, Iran*

*Composed: 2021*

*Duration: 12 minutes*

Aïda Shirazi says, "Soliloquy of the Unnamed is a collection of four miniatures for voice and violin in response to Leo Tolstoy's novella, *The Kreutzer Sonata*. I was introduced to Adelaide Crapsey's (1878-1914) poetry by Lucy Fitz Gibbon, and we selected four of Crapsey's cinquains for this piece. Although not directly related to *The Kreutzer Sonata*, I believe the cinquains capture the emotional and psychological state of Pozdnyshev's wife, whom he murdered in Tolstoy's story. While reading *The Kreutzer Sonata*, it struck me that Pozdnyshev never reveals the name of his wife. Historically, erasing the name of women has been a common trait of patriarchy, and it still takes place in our time. I hope that the title *Soliloquy of the Unnamed* sheds some light on this form of violence and oppression."

### **Quartet in A Minor, Op. 41, No. 1**

**Robert Schumann**

*Born: June 8, 1810, Zwickau, Germany*

*Died: July 29, 1856, Endenich, Bonn, Germany*

*Composed: 1842*

*Duration: 26 minutes*

1842 was the year of chamber music for Robert Schumann, and he commenced his remarkable instrumental explorations with the three string quartets eventually published together as Opus 41. While it is true that the pianistic figurations and general lack of independence between the voices do prevent these works from comparing favorably with works of the two great chamber masters on either historical side of Schumann (Beethoven on the one, Brahms on the other), their total lack of dependence on the dry clichés of the mid-19th century and their intensely expressive musical poetry compensate for such flaws as would be insurmountable in the music of a lesser composer. The three Opus 41 string quartets, then, are entirely successful on their own terms.