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PRESENT THE

EMERSON STRING QUARTET

Eugene Drucker, *violin*

Philip Setzer, *violin*

Lawrence Dutton, *viola*

David Finckel, *cello*

*The Emerson String Quartet appears by arrangement with
IMG Artists and records exclusively for Deutsche Grammophon.*

Thirty-fourth Season — Ninth Concert

Stude Concert Hall Alice Pratt Brown Hall
Rice University
April 21, 1994 8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Quartet in B Minor, Op. 64, No. 2 (1790)
Allegro spirituoso
Adagio ma non troppo
Menuetto: Allegretto
Finale: Presto

Charles Ives
(1874-1954)

Quartet No. 1, "A Revival Service" (1896)
Chorale: Andante con moto
Prelude: Allegro
Offertory: Adagio cantabile
Postlude: Allegro marziale

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 130 (1825)
Adagio ma non troppo; Allegro
Presto
Andante con moto, ma non troppo
Alla danza tedesca: Allegro assai
Cavatina: Adagio molto espressivo
Grosse Fuge (Op. 133)
Overtura
Fuga: Allegro - Meno mosso e moderato
Allegro molto e con brio - Meno mosso e moderato
Allegro molto e con brio

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Paging arrangements may be made with the ushers.

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PROGRAM

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN Quartet in B Minor, Op. 64, No. 2

Franz Joseph Haydn was born in 1732 in the little Austrian village of Rohrau, near the Hungarian border. Born to humble parents who came from a line of artisans and farmers, Haydn's musical experiences during his youth were in the choir of St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna from age eight to seventeen. He had a few lessons in violin, harpsichord and voice, and only rudimentary instruction in Latin and other subjects, but Haydn used his interest, experience and keen powers of observation to continue to teach himself throughout his life. Haydn did not seem to experience as much inner turmoil, nor was he as rebellious, as many of the other great creative artists. He was not happy in his marriage to his wife, however, who was reportedly quite shrewish and did not show any appreciation for his music. Haydn spoke as though he took this in stride, explaining simply, "I was therefore less indifferent to the charms of other women."

Haydn only began to be known as a major musical figure in his thirties and did not really attain his full stature for another decade, yet he was incredibly prolific from the time he began composing. In fact, given fifty years of creative musical activity, from approximately 1750 to 1800, Haydn averaged one movement per week for half a century.

The B minor quartet, which enjoys much popularity in today's quartet repertoire, reveals the increased technical mastery and creativity that Haydn began to exhibit with his works in *Op. 64*. At the same time, his familiar *Sturm und Drang* style from two decades earlier can be heard in this dark, passionate work. Haydn exhibits much emotional versatility in this quartet, balancing serious intensity for most of the quartet with a more light-hearted *finale*.

Op. 64, No. 2 begins with the first violin stating the opening theme. While the second theme is lighter in character, the movement is quite dramatic with some mysterious touches before it concludes defiantly. A sharp contrast in mood is apparent in the second movement, "the most beautiful *adagio* movement Haydn ever wrote," according to H.C. Robbins Landon. The first violin plays a lovely melody throughout the movement, as three variations follow the theme. A serious, rather sardonic *Menuetto* begins the third movement, giving way to a relaxed, melodic trio. A bright, witty and humorous *Finale* concludes the work.

CHARLES IVES Quartet No. 1, "A Revival Service"

Charles Ives was born in 1874 and raised in Connecticut by his father, a bandmaster. Brought up mainly on Bach and Stephen Foster, Ives learned several instruments, became a church organist at age twelve, and went on to study music at Yale. Upon graduating from the university, Ives opted against a musical career, instead establishing

a successful life as an insurance businessman. Ives had felt discouraged by his Yale composition teacher, Horatio Parker, from writing the kind of music he really wanted to compose, and he believed he could not earn a living by writing such works. Nonetheless, he ended up devoting evenings, weekends, vacations, and many early morning hours to writing compositions of his liking. His wife, whose name was Harmony, gave much of her energy to further these endeavors. Ives adapted well to his dual career, striving to use all of his experiences to enhance his creations. "There can be nothing 'exclusive' about a substantial art," said Ives. "It comes directly out of the heart of experience of life and thinking about life and living life. My work in music helped my business and my work in business helped my music."

Ives is known to have composed some extraordinarily difficult music. In responding to the question of how the piano part of his song, *Soliloquy*, can be performed so that the right sound is achieved, Ives is said to have responded, "My God! What has sound got to do with music?" Ives is known for his dissonant, highly original style, in which he uses polytonality, atonality and elements of serial writing as illustrated in his two string quartets, a piano trio and several violin sonatas, composed between 1896 and about 1920.

Ives completed his *String Quartet No. 1*, which was his first major work, in 1896. The first movement was inspired by a fugue that Ives had prepared for his very conservative college composition teacher, Parker. He had originally composed the remaining movements during the same period for New Haven's Centre Church, where he was employed as organist. The second and fourth movements were written specifically for a revival meeting — thus the subtitle, "A Revival Service." While the first movement is based on two simple hymns and not particularly distinguished, Ives uses the remainder of the quartet to display his more musically adventuresome side. His church minister in fact encouraged him, saying "Never you mind what the ladies' committee says, my opinion is that God gets awfully tired of hearing the same thing over and over again." Thus Ives' music grows more free and dissonant, with several interruptions of the rhythmic flow as the quartet progresses, building to a very rousing conclusion.

Ives' *String Quartet No. 1* was not performed until 1917, and was not published until 1961, seven years after his death. Now Charles Ives is recognized as one of the premier pioneers of contemporary American music.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 130 (with *Grosse Fuge*, Op. 133)

Ludwig van Beethoven, born in 1770 in Bonn, Germany, is perhaps the most influential and revolutionary composer of all time. Beethoven wrote nine symphonies and thirty-two piano sonatas filled with power,

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majesty and emotional depth. It is in his seventeen string quartets, from *Op. 18 to 135* that he is said to reveal the greatest intimacy, the finest shades of emotion, and the greatest technical refinement.

In 1823, Beethoven wrote to his friend, the Archduke Rudolph, to whom he had just dedicated the *Missa Solemnis*, "There is no loftier mission than to come nearer than other men to the Divinity, and to disseminate the divine rays among mankind." According to many musicologists, Beethoven accomplished this mission in his last six quartets, which he composed between 1824 and 1827, the year of his death. In these quartets, Beethoven defies many musical rules that had heretofore governed his works. The fluidity that replaces previous concepts of harmony, form and melody has led one musical expert to describe Beethoven's late quartets as "the most divinely inspired music in the literature."

Op. 130 consists of six movements. The first movement combines *adagio* and *allegro* tempos in a remarkable way, described by Aldous Huxley in his novel, *Point, Counter Point*, as "majesty alternating with a joke." A brief second movement follows with humor and charm. Beethoven then dramatically juxtaposes joy and melancholy in the *Andante* before presenting a whimsical German dance. He next presents the *Cavatina*. According to his friend, violinist Karl Holz, Beethoven "composed the *Cavatina* of the quartet in B-flat amid sorrow and tears; never did his music breathe so heartfelt an inspiration, and even the memory of this movement brought tears to his eyes."

In tonight's performance, the *Grosse Fuge* ("Great Fugue"), which is the original *finale* of *Op. 130*, will be performed. This *finale* initially met with so much criticism that Beethoven, upon the recommendation of his publisher and many others, replaced it in the published version of the quartet. The *Grosse Fuge*, published separately as *Op. 133*, has nonetheless come to be recognized for the extraordinary work that it is. In describing the *Grosse Fuge*, Homer Ulrich states:

The whole movement is an excellent example of thematic conflict unsurpassed in the literature. It is the kind of conflict in which a theme, though beaten to earth, rises to fulfill its destiny...In short, it is the kind of conflict Beethoven himself lived in; he, too, though beaten to earth, rose again to fulfill his destiny.

Program notes by Susan Maise Strauss

Program notes were written with reference to the following sources:
Guide to Chamber Music, Melvin Berger
History of Western Music, Christopher Headington
Haydn, His Life and Music, H.C. Robbins Landon
& David Wyn Jones
Chamber Music, Homer Ulrich

The Emerson String Quartet is one of the premier chamber ensembles of our time. Acclaimed for its musicianship, artistry and dynamic performance style, the Quartet has appeared regularly with virtually every important series and festival world-wide. They have established an international reputation as a quartet that approaches both the classics and contemporary music with equal mastery and enthusiasm.

During the 1993-1994 season, the Quartet will perform in virtually all of the world's music capitals, including New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Pittsburgh, Toronto, San Francisco, Salzburg, Milan, Vienna, London, Paris and Berlin. They will also be featured concerto soloists with the Richmond Symphony and Hartford Symphony. In the summer of 1994, they will tour Japan and the Far East.

In 1987, the Emerson signed an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon, which brought the release of their Grammy Award-winning recording of Bartok's complete string quartets. In 1990, the Emerson received a Grammy for Best Classical Album and *Gramophone Magazine's* Record of the Year Award. This was the first in the history of these awards that a chamber music ensemble had ever received the top prizes. Forthcoming releases for Deutsche Grammophon include the Dvořák and Schumann piano quintets and quartets with pianist Menahem Pressler, Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach* with Thomas Hampson, and the complete string works of Anton Webern. During the 1994 calendar year, the Emerson will record the complete string works of Beethoven, scheduled for release as a set in late 1995.

The Emerson String Quartet took its name from the great American poet and philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, in the U.S. Bicentennial year. Violinists Eugene Drucker and Philip Setzer were founding members and alternate in the first chair position. Lawrence Dutton joined the ensemble as violist in 1977, and David Finckel became cellist of the Quartet in 1979. The Emerson Quartet has performed many benefit concerts for causes ranging from nuclear disarmament to the fight against AIDS, world hunger and children's diseases. The Quartet has been the topic of two award-winning films, is featured on a *Teldec* laser disc and holds residencies at the Hartt School of Music and the Smithsonian Institution.

Eugene Drucker plays an *Antonius Stradivarius* violin, made in Cremona in 1686.

Philip Setzer plays a *Nicolas Lupot* violin, made in Orleans in 1793.

Lawrence Dutton plays a *P. G. Mantegazza* viola, made in Milan in 1796.

David Finckel plays a *J. B. Guadagnini* cello, made in Milan in 1754.