



MSM ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

# AMERICAN STRING QUARTET

**Peter Winograd** and **Laurie Carney**, violin

**Matthias Buchholz**, viola

**Wolfram Koessel**, cello

With Guest Artist **Timothy Cobb**, Bass

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026 | 3 PM  
GORDON K. AND HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL



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## PROGRAM

JOSEPH HAYDN

(1732–1809)

String Quartet in D Major, Op. 76, no. 5

*Allegretto*

*Largo cantabile e mesto*

*Minuet - Trio*

*Finale. Presto*

BÉLA BARTÓK

(1881–1945)

String Quartet No. 6 in D Minor, Sz. 114

*Mesto - Vivace*

*Mesto - Marcia*

*Mesto - Burletta. Moderato*

*Mesto*

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

(1841–1904)

String Quintet No. 2, Op. 77

*Allegro con fuoco*

*Scherzo. Allegro vivace*

*Poco andante*

*Finale. Allegro assai*

**Timothy Cobb**, bass

# PROGRAM NOTES

## String Quartet in D Major, Hob. III/79, Op. 76, no. 5 Joseph Haydn

Born in Rohrau, Lower Austria, March 31, 1732; died in Vienna, May 31, 1809

When Count Joseph Erdödy commissioned the Opus 76 Quartets in 1796, Haydn had recently returned to Vienna from the second of his highly successful London visits. He had always composed with confidence, but a certain new boldness in his style may have come from the realization that all of Europe considered him the greatest living composer. The six “Erdödy” Quartets show formal experiments in or instead of sonata-form movements, a new profundity in their extremely slow-paced *Adagios*, fast “modern” *minuets*—*scherzos* in all but name—and more weight and novel tonal approaches in their finales.

In June 1797 Haydn played some or all of the Opus 76 Quartets on the piano for Swedish diplomat Frederik Silverstolpe, who considered them “more than masterly and full of new thoughts.” The Quartets were completed in time for a September 1797 performance at Eisenstadt as part of the grand festivities surrounding the visit of the Viceroy of Hungary, Palatine Archduke Joseph. Count Erdödy’s rights to the Quartets precluded their being published until 1799. That year English music historian Charles Burney wrote to Haydn that he “never received more pleasure from instrumental music: [the Quartets] are full of invention, fire, good taste, and new effects.”

The most striking aspect of the D major Quartet, Op. 76, no. 5, is its expansive slow movement, which is how the work is often singled out among the plethora of Haydn Quartets. In order to lead up to this extraordinary movement and not rob it of its weight, Haydn decided he needed a form other than the conventional sonata form for his first movement. Thus he devised a form—not obviously marked out in the music with double bars and labels—that unfolds as a theme and variations, with enough contrasts to also suggest ternary form. A lyrical melody with rocking accompaniment is transformed in the “first variation” or middle section, depending on one’s perspective, into an agitated contrapuntal minor-mode section in which the cello begins the melody. The return to major signifies a return to the opening as in ternary form, but this turns out to be a further variation. Yet another variation then begins, but this turns into a lengthy and intriguing coda.

For the famous slow movement Haydn chooses a key relationship that jumps him ahead several generations. The Romantics later liked to juxtapose movements by the interval of a major third up, but in Classic times such a novelty surely must have made ears prick up. The bright key of F-sharp major—with six sharps in the key signature—is certainly rare in pieces of the period. Haydn fashions a main theme with two basic ideas, each presented by the first violin—a gracious arpeggiated melody and a more jagged gesture featuring dotted rhythms over pulsing accompaniment. These he combines and distributes in ingenious ways through the course of the movement, which unfolds in a kind of sonata form based only on this two-part theme. A memorable hushed passage in the development has the lower voices eerily doubling the underlying stepwise descent of the melody, which results in parallel octaves—a part-writing taboo, but something Haydn knew he was using to great effect.

The *Minuet* swings along with good cheer and impish off-beat accents. Its contrasting trio has the cello rumbling mysteriously with delicate accompaniment from the higher strings.

Haydn's sense of humor bubbles over in the *Presto* finale with its “closing” chords as an opening, its high-spirited dance tune, and its impudent harmonic clashes and unexpected turns. Employing a compact sonata form, Haydn cleverly varies the start of the recapitulation, wisely omitting his opening joke and sending the second violin into a tizzy of fast passage work. At the very end Haydn places the “closing” chords with which he began in their proper place.

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## String Quartet No. 6, BB 119 (Sz. 114)

### Béla Bartók

Born in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Sînnicolau Mare, Romania), March 25, 1881; died in New York, September 26, 1945

In August 1939 Bartók was composing in seclusion at Paul Sacher's mountain chalet in Saanen, Switzerland, where he rapidly completed Sacher's commission, the *Divertimento* for strings. Without any delay he then started his Sixth Quartet, which had been commissioned by Zoltán Székely for the Hungarian String Quartet. Called back to Hungary by political events and the illness of his mother, Bartók completed the Quartet there. He had, however, lost contact with Székely—his letters to him went unanswered. Bartók's mother died in December and without that strong tie to his homeland, he left for an American tour in the spring of 1940 with the hope of settling there until the War ended. He brought the score of the Sixth Quartet with him, and still not having heard from Székely and needing to have his works heard in America, he offered the premiere to the Kolisch Quartet, who presented it in New York on January 20, 1941.

The work is in four movements, but unlike his most recent quartets that had been unified by an arch form and monothematic structure, the Sixth Quartet is held together by a motto, which introduces each movement and expands to form the entire last movement. The motto, marked *Mesto* (Sad) is presented in a soulful viola solo at the outset of the first movement, setting a melancholy mood that will be interrupted at times, but which ultimately becomes even darker. The main portion of the movement adheres to a fairly straightforward sonata form, contrasting an energetic main theme and a more lyrical second theme. The *pesante* (weighty) passage that had connected the *Mesto* with the *Vivace* main theme returns to begin the development. The coda brings the movement to a quiet close in D major.

At the outset of the second movement Bartók gives the motto a two-part setting—the cello plays the melody against counterpoint in the other instruments. The main part of the movement is a march in ternary form, of which the first section has reminded many commentators of the *verbunkos* (recruiting) music that Bartók wrote for his Contrasts the preceding year. A wild trio, full of exaggerated trills, glissandos (slides), and strumming—perhaps parodying the style of urban Romani bands—interrupts the march.

The next appearance of the motto is set in three-voice counterpoint, with the first violin now taking the lead. Bartók's stomping, grotesque, sardonic-but-humorous Burletta employs all manner of technical devices,

including passages for one violin to play a quarter tone flat while the other violin simultaneously plays the unflattened pitch. This movement, too, adopts ternary form with a rather wistful, somewhat folklike trio. The return of the opening material is altered, as one would expect from Bartók—*pizzicato* articulations prevail, including a “snap” *pizzicato* so strong that the string actually slaps the fingerboard.

The sketches for the Quartet reveal that Bartók had at one time planned a cheerful folk-dance finale, but whether because of thoughts of his mother’s illness, or of war, or of premonitions of hard times away from his native land, he abandoned that scheme in favor of a statement of despair and resignation that grows entirely out of the *Mesto* motto. Bartók recalls the two main themes from the *Vivace* first movement, but they are now transformed by nostalgic reflection. The work closes quietly when, after the viola reminds us of the opening, the violins sustain open fifths while the cello begins the motto in *pizzicato* triple stops. The conclusion on an upward turn of the motto might provide an unfailing optimist with a glimmer of hope.

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## String Quintet in G Major, B. 49, Op. 77

### Antonín Dvořák

Born in Nelahozeves, near Kralupy, September 8, 1841; died in Prague, May 1, 1904

In 1874 Dvořák submitted fifteen compositions—symphonies, overtures, chamber music, and songs—to be considered for the new Austrian State Stipendium for poor, young, talented artists. After first obtaining an official document confirming that he was poor, he sent the compositions off to the illustrious panel of judges that included director of the court opera Johann Herbeck, influential critic Eduard Hanslick, and the celebrated Johannes Brahms. The committee was impressed by the work of this young Czech composer, particularly Brahms, who went out of his way to recommend him to Simrock, his own publisher.

Notification that Dvořák had won the award arrived in February 1875, which unleashed a spate of compositions. First he completed the present G Major String Quintet (for quartet plus bass), which he had already begun for a chamber music competition sponsored by the Umělecka Beseda (Artistic Society). Then he wrote his *Moravian Duets*, Op. 20, his B-flat Piano Trio, the beloved String Serenade in E Major, the D Major Piano Quartet, and his Fifth Symphony in F Major—all by mid-July. Meanwhile, the Quintet was unanimously chosen by the judges for the prize of five ducats in view of its “distinction of theme, the technical skill in polyphonic composition, the mastery of form, and . . . the knowledge of the instruments.” The first performance took place at one of the Society’s concerts, on March 18, 1875, in Prague.

Originally the Quintet contained a slow movement adapted from the *Andante religioso* of Dvořák’s E Minor String Quartet, and later published separately as *Nocturne* for strings, Op. 40. Dvořák revised the Quintet in 1888 and in this definitive four-movement version it was first played in Boston on November 25, 1889. Simrock published the work with the Opus number 77 over the composer’s vigorous protests that as an early work it should have been assigned number 18.

After a quiet, hesitant beginning the first movement takes off at a merry gallop. With the use of the bass as the lowest line, the cello is frequently free to display its upper register, imparting a distinctive timbre already apparent in the dancelike main theme. A pervasive short-short-short-long rhythmic motive pervades the equally cheerful second theme, whereas the development begins with haunting counterpoint before expanding into a densely “grandioso”

passage based on the second theme. Dvořák lightens the texture though not the development's darker mood to build to another climactic passage that brings a startling harmonic shift. The recapitulation also contains its share of harmonic adventures before an emphatic coda polishes off the movement.

The *Scherzo* sounds most prophetic of the composer's works to come with its folklike modal inflections, quick shifts between major and minor, and rhythmic play. The slower trio gives a gracefully decorated melody to the first violin.

The gentle *Poco andante* has the four upper instruments entwining in poignant counterpoint over *pizzicato* bass. In the middle section the first violin soars above a pulsing accompaniment, eventually joined by the cello and second violin in counterpoint. This pulsing takes center stage with some restless rising lines until the cello takes over the violin's melody. A shortened version of the opening section closes the movement.

The main theme of the *Finale* is remarkable for its quick turning figures and pressing, accented unisons. Every time these threaten to become overly weighty Dvořák brings in his more lyrical secondary theme, and these two ideas alternate through most of the movement, with each appearance varied and for the most part in a new key. The final statement of the main theme accelerates to provide a brilliant ending.

—©Jane Vial Jaffe

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## American String Quartet

Internationally recognized as one of the world's foremost quartets, the American String Quartet marks its 51st season in 2024–25. Critics and colleagues hold the Quartet in high esteem and many of today's leading artists and composers seek out the Quartet for collaborations. The Quartet is also known for its performances of the complete quartets of Beethoven, Schubert, Schoenberg, Bartók, and Mozart. The Quartet's recordings of the complete Mozart string quartets on a matched set of Stradivarius instruments are widely held to set the standard for this repertoire. To celebrate its 35th anniversary, the Quartet recorded an ambitious CD, *Schubert's Echo*, released by NSS Music. The program invites the listener to appreciate the influence of Schubert on two masterworks of early 20th-century Vienna. In addition to quartets by European masters, the American naturally performs quartets by American composers. Their newest release, *American Romantics* (Apple Music, 2018), is a recording of Robert Sirota's *American Pilgrimage*, Dvořák's "American" quartet, and Barber's *Adagio for Strings*. The American also champions contemporary music. The Quartet has commissioned and premiered works by distinguished American composers Claus Adam, Richard Danielpour, Kenneth Fuchs, Tobias Picker, Robert Sirota, and George Tsontakis. The Quartet has recorded on the Albany, CRI, MusicMasters, Musical Heritage Society, Nonesuch, RCA, and Apple Music labels. The Quartet's discography includes works by Adam, Corigliano, Danielpour, Dvořák, Fuchs, Prokofiev, Schoenberg, Sirota, and Tsontakis. The Quartet's innovative programming and creative approach to education has resulted in notable residencies throughout the country. The Quartet continues as artists in residence at Manhattan School of Music (1984–present) and the Aspen Music Festival (1974–present). The ASQ also teaches in Beijing, China, and travels widely abroad. Formed in 1974 when its original members were students at the Juilliard School, the American String Quartet was launched by winning both the Coleman Competition and the Naumburg Chamber Music Award in the same year.

## Peter Winograd, violin

Peter Winograd joined the American String Quartet, Artists in Residence at Manhattan School of Music, in 1990. He gave his first solo public performance at the age of 11, and at age 17 he was accepted as a scholarship student of Dorothy DeLay at the Juilliard School. Recognized early as an exceptionally promising young artist, Winograd was a top prizewinner in the 1988 Naumburg

International Violin Competition. He then made his New York debut to critical acclaim and has since appeared as a guest soloist with numerous orchestras and in recital across the country and abroad, including annual collaborative performances with cellist Andrés Díaz at the Florida Arts Chamber Music Festival. In 2002 Winograd performed the Sibelius Violin Concerto with the Hartford Symphony; his father, Arthur Winograd, was the featured guest conductor. Peter Winograd has been a member of the violin and chamber music faculties of the Manhattan School of Music and the Aspen Music School (where the American is Quartet in Residence) since 1990. Born into a gifted musical family, Winograd began his studies with his parents. His mother was a professional pianist, and his father was the founding cellist of the Juilliard Quartet and a conductor of the Hartford Symphony in Hartford, Connecticut, where Winograd grew up. He holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Juilliard. His wife, violinist Caterina Szepes, is a regular participant in the Marlboro Festival and a member of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. His violin is by Giovanni Maria del Bussetto (Cremona, 1675).

## Laurie Carney, violin

A founding member of the American String Quartet, Laurie Carney comes from a prodigious musical family. Her father was a trumpeter and educator, her mother a pianist, and her siblings all violinists. She began her studies at home and at the age of 8 became the youngest violinist to be admitted to the Preparatory Division of the Juilliard School. At 15 she was the youngest to be accepted into Juilliard's College Division. Ms. Carney studied with Dorothy DeLay and received both Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Juilliard. She has shared the stage with many of the world's leading artists, including Isaac Stern, Yefim Bronfman, Pinchas Zukerman, and Frederica von Stade, and been featured in Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with the Bournemouth Symphony and the Basque (Spain) Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Carney frequently performed duo recitals with Guarneri Quartet violist Michael Tree. She was featured in the New York premiere of Giampaolo Bracali's *Fantasia*. Robert Sirota wrote his Sonata No. 2, *Farewell*, for Ms. Carney in 2013. She recorded it in 2014 along with an earlier work, *Summermusic*, with pianist David Friend on a CD of Sirota's music entitled *Parting the Veil: Works for Violin and Piano* (Albany Records).

Since receiving the Walter W. Naumburg Award in 1974 with the American String Quartet, Ms. Carney has performed across North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Israel, including special projects with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Montreal Symphony, New York City Ballet, and Mark

Morris Dance Group. The quartet has an extensive discography, ranging from the complete Mozart quartets to the many contemporary works written for them. A member of the faculty of Manhattan School of Music since 1984 and of Aspen Music Festival since 1974, she has held teaching positions at the Mannes College of Music, Peabody Conservatory, the University of Nebraska, and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. Her frequent master classes have taken her to California, Colorado, Indiana, Michigan, and New Mexico. Ms. Carney performs the duo repertory with her husband, cellist William Grubb. Her nonprofessional interests include animal rights and environmental concerns. Her violin is by Carlo Tononi (Venice, 1720).

## **Matthias Buchholz, viola**

Matthias studied in his hometown Hamburg, in Cincinnati, Detmold, and at the renowned Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Among his teachers were Bruno Giuranna, Michael Tree, Alexander Schneider, and Karen Tuttle.

He won top prizes at the Deutscher Musikwettbewerb Bonn 1978, the Fischhoff and the Coleman competition in Los Angeles 1982, as well as the International Viola Competition Budapest 1984.

Since 1976, Buchholz has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in most European countries, in Canada and the U.S.A., as well as in South America, Russia, India, and Asia. He was a member of the Brahms Quartet (Hamburg), the Ridge Quartet (New York), and the Heine Quartet (Cologne). Since 1991 he has performed in numerous concerts and recorded more than 25 recordings with the Linos-Ensemble, who was awarded an ECHO-KLASSIK 2017 for their recording of the Franz Schmidt Quintet.

He was invited to perform at the Marlboro Festival, at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, the Salzburg Festwochen, Rheingau Festival, Library of Congress (Washington D.C.), Tokyo- and Seoul Spring Festival, Hitzacker, Mondsee, Este, Lyon Musicades and Warsaw Spring Festival, where he shared the stage with the Vermeer-, the Petersen-, the Auryn- and Fine Arts Quartet, as well as being inspired by musicians like Benny Goodman, Heinz Holliger, Rainer Kussmaul, Anner Bylsma, Viktor Tretjakov, Christian Polterá und Cecile Licad and members of the Guarneri Quartet.

From 1990-2024 he held a position as Professor for Viola at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz in Cologne and at the HEM Genève 2013-2018. A passionate teacher since very early on, he has given masterclasses in the United States, Korea, China, Japan, and most European countries. His former students are

working today successfully as orchestra members, principal violists, and teachers at major conservatories around the globe.

In September 2024 he joined the American String Quartet as their violist and as part of the quartet's residency at Manhattan School of Music. He is also a member of the teaching faculty at Manhattan School of Music in New York City. Matthias plays on a viola made by Pietro Ferati in Siena from 1785, as well as an anonymous instrument from 1730, presumably made by a Flemish luthier.

## **Wolfram Koessel, cello**

Since his Carnegie Hall debut in 1994, cellist Wolfram Koessel has performed as a chamber musician, recitalist, and soloist throughout the world. *Strad* magazine praised his “exceptionally attractive cello playing.” As a soloist he has performed concertos throughout the United States as well as with Japan’s Osaka Symphony Orchestra and orchestras in Germany and South America. Cellist of the American String Quartet, Artists in Residence at Manhattan School of Music, he also has appeared often with the New York Metamorphoses Orchestra, which he cofounded in 1994. His collaborations include performances with the legendary tabla virtuoso Zakir Hussain, dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov, and cellist Yo Yo Ma, among many others. Koessel also appears with a wide range of ensembles, including the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Trio+ (a group he formed with violinist Yosuke Kawasaki and pianist Vadim Serebryani), which performs creative and collaborative concerts throughout Japan, the United States, and Canada. Koessel served as music director of the Mark Morris Dance Group from 2004 to 2008 and has toured extensively with the company both nationally and internationally, performing in several performances. In 2018 he travelled with them to Israel performing Bach’s Third Cello Suite in several performances. He resides with his wife, pianist and writer J. Mae Barizo, and his daughter in Manhattan.

## **Timothy Cobb, Bass**

Bassist Timothy Cobb joined the New York Philharmonic as Principal Bass in May 2014, after serving as principal bass of The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and principal bass of the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra since 1989. He has appeared at numerous chamber music festivals worldwide, including the Marlboro Music festival, through which he has toured with the Musicians from Marlboro series. A faculty member of the Sarasota Music Festival, he is helping to launch a new bass program for the Killington Music Festival in Killington, Vermont. Cobb also serves as principal bass for Valery Gergiev’s World Orchestra for Peace, an invited group of musicians from around the world who

donate their time biannually and perform to promote international harmony. Cobb has been designated a UNESCO Artist for Peace from his affiliation with the World Orchestra.

He has an ongoing collaboration with actor Stephen Lang, for whom he recorded a solo bass sound track for Lang's animated short film *The Wheatfield*, which depicts a human drama from the Battle of Gettysburg. The two were invited to Gettysburg in July 2013 on the 150th anniversary of the battle to perform in the Salute to the States event held there, and they will continue to collaborate for future events.

Cobb serves as bass department chair for The Juilliard School as well as on the faculties of Manhattan School of Music, Purchase College, and Rutgers University. He is also a distinguished visiting artist for Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida. A native of Albany, New York, Timothy Cobb graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music, where he studied with Roger Scott. While at Curtis, Cobb was a substitute with The Philadelphia Orchestra and in his senior year became a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Georg Solti.

Cobb can be heard on all Metropolitan Opera recordings released after 1986, as well as on a recording of Giovanni Bottesini's duo bass music with bassist Thomas Martin on the Naxos label.

# ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 8 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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