

Musicians from Marlboro

Sunday, March 2, 2003, 3 pm
Hertz Hall

Che-Hung Chen, viola
Hsin-Yun Huang, viola
Jonathan Karoly, cello
Soovin Kim, violin
Paula Robison, flute
Scott St. John, violin

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Quartet for Flute, Violin, Viola,
and Cello in D major, K. 285
Allegro
Adagio
Rondeau
Paula Robison, flute
Soovin Kim, violin
Hsin-Yun Huang, viola
Jonathan Karoly, cello

Bohuslav Martinu Trio No. 2 for Violin, Viola, and Cello
Allegro
Poco moderato – Allegro
Scott St. John, violin
Che-Hung Chen, viola
Jonathan Karoly, cello

Alberto Ginastera Impresiones de la Puna
for Flute and String Quartet
Quena
Cancion
Danza
Paula Robison, flute
Scott St. John, violin
Soovin Kim, violin
Che-Hung Chen, viola
Jonathan Karoly, cello

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms Quintet No. 1 for Two Violins,
Two Violas, and Cello in F major, Op. 88
Allegro non troppo ma con brio
Grave ed appassionato – Allegretto vivace –
Tempo I – Presto – Tempo I
Allegro energico
Soovin Kim, violin
Scott St. John, violin

Che-Hung Chen, viola
Hsin-Yun Huang, viola
Jonathan Karoly, cello

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Quartet for Flute, Violin, Viola,
and Cello in D major, K. 285

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

During his stay in Mannheim early in 1778, Mozart met “a gentleman of means and a lover of all the sciences,” one Willem Britten de Jong (which came out as DeJean in Mozart’s letters) who numbered among his accomplishments a certain ability on the flute. De Jong had heard of the 21-year-old musician’s extraordinary talent for composition from a mutual friend, Johann Baptist Wendling, the flutist with the Mannheim orchestra, and he commissioned Mozart to write three concertos and at least three quartets with strings for his instrument. Since he was, as always, short of money, Mozart accepted the proposal to help finance the swing he was then making through Germany and France in search of a permanent position. The next leg of the journey was to lead from Mannheim to Paris, and these flute pieces would help to pay the bills.

Mozart could not generate much enthusiasm for the project. Already the trip was six months old, and he had not had so much as a hint of a firm job offer. He was flustered over a love affair recently hatched with a local singer, Aloysia Weber (whose sister he eventually married when this first choice became unavailable), and letters from his father in Salzburg persistently badgered him about his lack of a dependable income. Most of all, however, these flute works took time that he wanted to spend composing opera, the most alluring avenue to success for an 18th-century musician. He vented his frustration on the closest target—the flute—and vowed how he disliked it, and what a drudgery it was to have to write for an instrument for which he cared so little, and how he longed to get on with something more important. Still, Mozart was too full of pride and good taste to make hack work of these pieces, and he wrote to Papa Leopold, “Of course, I could merely scratch away at it all day long; but such a thing as this goes out into the world, so it is my wish that I need not be ashamed that it carries my name.” He managed to finish three of the quartets (K. 285, 285a, and 285b) but completed only two of the concertos (the second one is actually just a transposition of the Oboe Concerto from the preceding year) by the time he left Mannheim. He settled with De Jong for just less than half of the original fee, and let it go at that. Despite his disparagement of the instrument, Mozart’s compositions for flute occupy one of the most delightful niches of his incomparable musical legacy—Rudolf Gerber characterized them as combining “the perfect image of the spirit and feeling of the rococo age with German sentiment.”

The Quartet in D major (K. 285) opens with a crystalline sonata-form movement that the flute initiates with the presentation of the dashing principal melody. By the time the music has arrived at the second theme, a rising scalar configuration in triplet rhythms, it is clear that Mozart has endowed the flute with concerto-like prominence in this movement—only in the central development section does it relinquish its leadership in favor of some more democratic motivic discussion with its companions. The Adagio, in the expressive key of B minor, is a nocturnal cantilena for the flute couched upon a delicate cushion of plucked string sonorities. In his biography of the composer,

Alfred Einstein wrote that this movement, suffused with “the sweetest melancholy, [is] perhaps the most beautiful accompanied flute solo that has even been written.” This irresistible quartet closes with a buoyant rondo enlivened by frequent dialogues of the flute and the first violin.

Trio No. 2 for Violin, Viola, and Cello

Bohuslav Martinu (1890–1959)

Bohuslav Martinu was born in the village of Policka, Czechoslovakia, in the church tower where his father was watchman and keeper. As a boy, Bohuslav took violin lessons, but his real interest was in composition. He started composing at age 10, and studied first at the Prague Conservatory (from 1906 until 1910) and then privately with Josef Suk before winning a small scholarship that enabled him to settle in Paris in the summer of 1923. Martinu lived there in great poverty for 17 years, but he was invigorated by the heady artistic atmosphere of the French capital. One of the surprising results of his Parisian residence was a new-found interest in the music of his

homeland—ironically, it was only when Martinu left Czechoslovakia that he became a nationalist composer. Blacklisted by the Nazis, he fled from Paris in June 1940, and emigrated to America the following year. Though his popularity and the demand for new works spread quickly in the New World, Martinu’s heart remained in Czechoslovakia. An invitation to teach at the Prague Conservatory came after the War, but he was unable to accept it because of the establishment of the communist regime in 1947. Instead, he took a summer teaching post at Tanglewood, and joined the music faculty of Princeton University the following year. He left that post in 1953, and moved to Nice for two years, but returned in 1955 to teach at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. The following year he accepted a faculty position at the American Academy in Rome. He died in Liestal, Switzerland, in 1959.

The String Trio No. 2 was composed in 1934, during Martinu’s years in Paris. Like other of his compositions from that time, this one displays neo-classical characteristics of florid instrumental writing, rich contrapuntal textures, and driving rhythms influenced by the music of the Late Baroque. Critic Joseph Stevenson noted that “the writing in this Trio is so brilliant it can almost be regarded as a triple concerto without the accompaniment of other instruments.” The first of the work’s two movements takes a vibrantly rhythmic strain as its main theme and a lyrical melody in more relaxed tempo as its subsidiary subject. The development section includes an ethereal passage floated high in the violin’s harmonics and a long, thoughtful episode before a return of the main theme rounds out the movement. Threads of solo cello and viola melody at the start of the finale comprise a sort of vestigial slow movement as introduction to the sonata form—driving main theme, lyrical second subject—that occupies the remainder of the trio.

Impresiones de la Puna

for Flute and String Quartet

Alberto Ginastera (1916–1983)

Alberto Ginastera, Argentina’s most famous and widely performed composer, was the outstanding creative figure in South American music following the death of Villa-Lobos in 1959. Ginastera’s career was divided between composition and education, and in this latter capacity he held posts at leading conservatories and universities in Argentina and at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. His musical works, many written on American commissions, include three operas, two ballets, six concertos, 11 film scores, eight orchestral works, various vocal and choral compositions, and much music for chamber ensembles and piano. Ginastera traveled extensively to oversee the presentation of his scores and to adjudicate major musical competitions. For his contributions to music, he was honored with many awards, including memberships in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Ginastera divided his works into two stylistic categories. The first (“Nationalism”) includes his music before the mid-1950s, which displays overt influences of Argentine musical traits and themes. He modeled the rhythms and melodies of these works on the folksongs and dances known as *musica criolla*, though he seldom used literal quotations. This nationalistic music is imbued with the symbolism of the pampas and the “gauchesco” tradition, for which Ginastera became the leading

musical spokesperson. Ginastera's second style ("Neo-Expressionism") began around 1958, and encompassed most of his later compositions, works characterized by such modernist devices as polytonality, serial writing, use of quarter-tones and other micro intervals, and an extension of instrumental resources. All of this technical jargon sounds rather imposing, but these techniques lend to the music a power of expression reinforced by expert craftsmanship that is always tantalizing to the ear. Ginastera's later works bear a strong affinity with the expressionism of Schoenberg and Berg, which was itself an extension of the great European Classical-Romantic tradition. Ginastera's compositions mark him as one of the most important members of the international community of composers, and demonstrate the manner in which he was able to combine the melodic and rhythmic resources of the folk music of his native Argentina with the compositional idioms of the great modern masters. The *Impresiones de la Puna* of 1934, composed soon after Ginastera entered the National Conservatory in Buenos Aires, is one of his earliest important works. The title refers to the high mountain valleys, the puna, of the northern Andes, and the music is imbued with the spirit and idioms of Ginastera's homeland. The opening movement takes its name and mood from the quena, a traditional flute made of cane or clay or bone by the South American Indians, often used to accompany songs of lost love. The second movement is a sad, sweet song. The closing movement is a vibrant danza that recalls the melancholy spirit of the earlier movements in its center section.

Quintet No. 1 for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Cello in F major, Op. 88
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

"What brought you to Bad Ischl?" inquired Elisabeth von Herzogenberg of her regular correspondent Johannes Brahms in the summer of 1882. "Doesn't half of Vienna stay there?" The composer, who had become extremely fond of the relaxed Viennese lifestyle since settling there permanently in 1869 (including the local gentry's custom of spending summers at the comfortable resort towns of the Austrian Salzkammergut—the Emperor Franz Josef himself maintained a holiday residence at Ischl), replied, "That half of Vienna comes to Ischl does not, at present, spoil it for me—even the whole of Vienna would fill me with anything but repugnance. Indeed, half of Berlin or Leipzig would probably put me to flight, but half of Vienna is quite pretty and need not be ashamed of itself." The regular practice of Brahms' mature years was to spend his summers composing at Baden and at other countryside retreats, since his winters had become increasingly full with concert tours and guest appearances as conductor and pianist in his own music. During his first summer at Ischl, in 1880, he wrote the tandem overtures *Academic Festival* and *Tragic*. He was primed for further creative work during his second stay at the fashionable spa two years later by a happy trip to Italy in the spring of 1882, and the first product of that holiday proved to be one of his sunniest inspirations: the String Quintet in F major.

The work was completed by the end of June. (The Op. 87 Piano Trio and the *Gesang der Parzen* for Chorus and Orchestra followed later that summer.) The piece was played in Ischl at a private gathering before Brahms' return to Vienna in the fall, upon which occasion he jokingly tried to pass it off as the work of his close friend, the pianist and sometime composer Ignaz Brüll. Brahms later amended this statement by claiming that the first movement had actually been composed as congratulations upon Brüll's recent betrothal. The quintet's public premiere was given in Frankfurt in December.

"The F major Quintet for Strings is like the meadows at Ischl in the sunshine," according to the composer's biographer Richard Specht. Indeed, Brahms himself emphasized the verdant quality of this music by inscribing after each movement in the manuscript, "[written] in the Spring of 1882." The first movement follows traditional sonata form, with a main theme that the composer's biographer Walter Niemann believed "might almost be taken for a more sophisticated arrangement of a folk song" and a lilting complementary melody in superimposed triple meter reminiscent of the Viennese waltz. (Brahms greatly admired both Johann Strauss and his music.) The second movement is a bold formal experiment in which the functions of slow movement and scherzo are juxtaposed. The structural pillars of the music rest on the three occurrences of the opening section, marked *Grave ed appassionato*, which Brahms based on a sarabande (a slow, dignified, 17th-century dance form in triple meter) that he had composed for piano in 1855. Between the returns of

this somber strain are placed two light-hearted paragraphs, both utilizing the same basic melody: the first, in 6/8 time, is rather delicate and kittenish; the other is more robust and energetic. The last movement, a whirling study in counterpoint perhaps modeled on the fugal finale of Beethoven's Quartet, Op. 59, No. 3, brings to mind the comment of Elisabeth von Herzogenberg when she first heard the passacaglia from the Fourth Symphony three years later: "Who can resist an emotion strong enough to penetrate all that skillful elaboration?"

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Che-Hung Chen (viola) was recently awarded First Prize at the Seventh Banff International String Quartet Competition as a member of the Daedalus String Quartet. He was also awarded the Pièce de Concert Prize and the Székeley Prize for the best performance of a Beethoven quartet. Chen joined the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2001, and is the first Taiwanese citizen to become a member of that ensemble; at age 22, he is also the Orchestra's youngest member. He began his studies at the age of eight with Ben Lin in Taipei, Taiwan, and made his solo recital debut at age nine. He later performed as soloist with the Taiwan Writers' & Artists' Association Chamber Orchestra and the Tun-Hwa School Orchestra. Chen has also appeared as soloist on tour with the Chinese Daily News Orchestra throughout Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. A three-time top prize winner at the Taiwan National Instrumental Competition (from 1991 to 1993), Chen entered the Curtis Institute of Music at age 14, where he studied with Joseph de Pasquale and served as principal violist of the orchestra. In addition to touring with Musicians from Marlboro, he has also participated in such chamber music festivals as Ravinia, Marlboro, Angel Fire, and the Isaac Stern Chamber Music Workshop at Carnegie Hall.

Hsin-Yun Huang (viola) won the top prize in 1993 at the ARD International Music Competition in Munich, as well as the Bunkamura Orchard Hall Award, which included a scholarship grant and concerto and recital appearances in Japan. Huang was also the youngest-ever gold medalist in the 1988 Lionel Tertis International Competition. As a result of these successes, she has been telecast in concerto appearances with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra in Munich, the Zagreb Soloists in Paris, and the Tokyo Philharmonic in Tokyo. Other appearances include performances with the Berlin Radio Symphony, Russian State Philharmonic, and National Symphony of Taiwan, among others. A native of Taiwan, Huang currently resides in New York and is an active soloist and chamber musician in the United States, Far East, and Europe. She performs annually in Taiwan and recently appeared in a nationally televised solo recital for President Chen Shui-Bian. Huang has participated in the Spoleto, Marlboro, Prussia Cove, El Paso, Vancouver and Newport music festivals, and at Chamber Music Northwest and Festival de Divonne (France). As a chamber musician, she has collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma, Jaime Laredo, Joshua Bell, Joseph Suk, Menahem Pressler, Joseph Silverstein, Gary Hoffman, and Michael Tree. From 1994 to 2000, Huang was a member of the Borromeo String Quartet, which was awarded the prestigious Cleveland Quartet Award in 1998 and was chosen by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center to be members of Chamber Music Society Two. Huang went to England at age 14 to study at the Yehudi Menuhin School with David Takeno and continued her studies at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia with Michael Tree, where she earned her bachelor of music degree. She subsequently earned her master's degree at The Juilliard School with Samuel Rhodes and currently serves on the faculties of Juilliard and Mannes College of Music in New York.

Jonathan Karoly (cello) has been a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra since 1997. Following his studies in Chicago with Karl Fruh and Nathaniel Rosen, and in New York with Zara Nelsova, Karoly received a bachelor of music degree with honors from the University of Southern California, where he was a pupil of Ronald Leonard. Active as a solo and chamber musician, he has participated in the Marlboro, Verbier, and Sarasota festivals; Music Academy of the West; the International Laureates Chamber Music Festival in Los Angeles; and the Aspen Festival, where he was a fellowship recipient. In 1999, Karoly was invited to perform several chamber music concerts with Pierre Boulez at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. As a concerto soloist, he has performed with numerous orchestras throughout the country, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and has

served as principal cellist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and the Debut Orchestra of Los Angeles, among others. Karoly has appeared in live radio broadcasts in Chicago and Los Angeles, both in solo recitals and chamber music performances, and his recording of piano trios by Tchaikovsky and Mendelssohn was released on Telos Records.

Soovin Kim (violin) performs around the world as both a soloist and chamber musician. He captured first prize at the 1996 Paganini International Violin Competition and was also awarded the Henryk Szeryng Foundation Career Award in 1997, leading to performance and recording engagements across Europe. He has also been honored with the Avery Fisher Career Grant. Kim's various activities display his wide range of musical interests. He has appeared in recent seasons with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, among others. He has performed the 24 Paganini Caprices to critical acclaim in both the United States and Europe, and this season will perform the six Bach Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin. He also received critical praise on his first CD of duo works by Schubert, Bartók, and Strauss with pianist Jeremy Denk. Kim devotes part of each season to touring with the Johannes Quartet, which includes the concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony and associate principal players of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Highlights of this season include performances with the San Francisco Symphony and Hong Kong Philharmonic, a tour with the Syracuse Symphony, and a debut recital at the Seoul Cultural Art Center.

Paula Robison (flute) performs regularly both as a soloist and chamber musician. Her appearances include tours of the United States, Far East, and Australia; concerts at New York's Mostly Mozart Festival and Avery Fisher Hall; residencies at the Marlboro and Seattle music festivals; recitals in London, Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and Washington, DC; concertos with the London, San Francisco, Detroit, National, Vermont, New World, North Carolina, and Louisville symphony orchestras; and her annual series at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Robison also performs regularly as a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, of which she was a founding member, and has appeared on television on CBS Sunday Morning, Live from Lincoln Center, and Christmas at the Kennedy Center. She was for 10 years co-director of chamber music at the Spoleto Festival and is currently co-director of Boston's Gardner Chamber Orchestra. In addition to her classical performances, Robison has recorded two CD's of Brazilian music and performed on a "Brazilian Beat" program with the New York Pops and Skitch Henderson at Carnegie Hall. She has also commissioned concertos by Leon Kirchner, Toru Takemitsu, Oliver Knussen, Robert Beaser, and Kenneth Frazelle, and her books are published by Universal, Schott, and European-American Music. Robison was born in Tennessee and grew up in California. She began playing the flute at age 11, and at 19 she moved to New York to study with Julius Baker at The Juilliard School. The following year, she was invited by Leonard Bernstein to be guest soloist with the New York Philharmonic. She then studied with Marcel Moyse and became the first American to win First Prize at the Geneva International Competition. Other awards include honors from Young Concert Artists International and the 1987 Adelaide Ristori Prize for her contribution to Italian cultural life. She continues her association with Spoleto as a player and host of the popular noontime concerts, and records exclusively for Arabesque.

Scott St. John (violin) is a regular participant at the Marlboro Music Festival. Born in London, Ontario, St. John and his sister Lara began violin studies at age three with Richard Lawrence. His other teachers include David Cerone, Arnold Steinhardt, and Felix Galimir, and in 1990 he graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music. Winner of the Young Concert Artists Award, St. John made his New York recital debut in 1991 at the 92nd Street Y. In 1993, he made his Washington, DC, recital debut at the Kennedy Center, playing violin, viola, and MIDI violin. Recent and forthcoming appearances include NPR's Performance Today and CBC broadcasts, as well as concertos with the Calgary Philharmonic, and the symphony orchestras of Cincinnati, Grand Rapids, Montreal, Toledo, Utah, and Winnipeg. He has performed as a soloist around the globe, from Japan's Casals Hall to New York's Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. An avid chamber musician, St. John frequently plays with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and Da Camera of Houston, as well as at the

Seattle, Spoleto, and Vancouver music festivals. European festival engagements include France's Evian Music Festival and the Spoleto Festival in Italy. From 1994–1997, St. John was founder and artistic director of Millennium, a contemporary music ensemble for top young chamber musicians. In 1998, his "Chamber Music Company" launched a new series that included world premieres and multi-media collaborations in New York City's Merkin Hall. St. John currently serves on the faculty of the University of Toronto. Salon Parisien, on CBC Records, is his newest release.

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