

ARTPOWER! PRESENTS:



Sponsored by:
Sam B. Ersan

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

Friday, November 7, 2014 / 8pm

Department of Music's Conrad Prebys Concert Hall

PROGRAM

Franz Josef Haydn 1732-1809

String Quartet in C major, Op. 76, No. 3 "Emperor"

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante
- III. Menuetto and Trio. Allegretto
- IV. Allegretto ma non troppo

Erwin Schulhoff 1894-1942

Five Pieces for String Quartet (1923)

- I. Alla Valse viennese (allegro)
- II. Alla Serenata (allegretto con moto)
- III. Alla Czeca (molto allegro)
- IV. Alla Tango milonga (andante)
- V. Alla Tarantella (prestissimo con fuoco)

INTERMISSION

Antonin Dvorak 1841-1904

String Quartet in C-Major, Op. 61

- I. Allegro
- II. Poco adagio e molto cantabile
- III. Scherzo - Allegro vivo
- IV. Finale: Vivace

Geoff Nuttall: violin

Mark Fewer: violin

Lesley Robertson: viola

Christopher Constanza: cello

PROGRAM NOTES

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Quartet in C, Op. 76 No. 3 (Hob.III:77) ["Emperor"] (1797)

In 1796, the city of Vienna was under threat of invasion from Napoleon. French troops led by

Napoleon were advancing from the Po valley into Styria. Other troops were advancing from the East and both were closing in on Vienna in a pincer-like move. Vienna was in a state of emergency and a civilian militia had been mobilized to protect the city. Following a state commission, Haydn, a strong nationalist, contributed a beautiful, heartfelt national song to the cause. *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* [God Protect Emperor Franz] echoes the patriotism of the British God Save the King. It was a bold challenge to the Marseillaise and was instantly adopted as the Austrian national anthem. In fact, so universal was the appeal of Haydn's melody that it was later to be used as the 'Brotherhood' anthem of Freemasonry, as the German national anthem *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, and even as the Protestant hymns *Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him* and *Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken*.

The slow movement of the Op. 76 No. 3 String Quartet is a set of variations on this celebrated, dignified tune. Hence the quartet's nickname Emperor, or Kaiser. Each instrument in turn introduces the solemn melody, while the other three instruments weave an increasingly intricate web around it. In the early 1900s, an English music critic, Cecil Gray, commented: "One cannot imagine the Marseillaise or any other anthem serving as the thematic basis of a movement of a string quartet. It inhabits all three worlds – the world of religion, the world of national politics, and the world of pure art. It is perhaps true to say that it is the greatest tune ever written."

Haydn goes further than basing his slow movement on this famous melody. He structures the entire work around the slow movement, making it the focal point of the quartet. The melody also finds its way into the first movement. Its five-note theme derives from the German title of Haydn's patriotic song: G

PROGRAM

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