

Sunday, October 6, 2024

BORROMEO STRING QUARTET

Nicholas Kitchen, violin
Kristopher Tong, violin
Melissa Reardon, viola
Yeesun Kim, cello
with special guest

PAUL NEUBAUER, VIOLA

String Quartet No. 6 (1960)

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969)

- I. Andante–Allegretto–Allegro
- II. Vivace
- III. Grave
- IV. Tempo comodo

String Quartet No. 2, Variations on “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” (2013)

Adolphus Hailstork

INTERMISSION

String Quintet No. 4 in G minor, K. 516 (1787)

W.A. Mozart (1756–1791)

- I. Allegro
- II. Menuetto: Allegretto
- III. Adagio ma non troppo
- IV. Adagio–Allegro

with Paul Neubauer, viola

The Borromeo String Quartet appears by arrangement
with Dinin Arts Management & Consulting.

NOTE FROM THE CURATOR

The wonderful Borromeo Quartet are longtime and beloved members of the Gardner Museum's musical family. I was thrilled to learn that they were joining Paul Neubauer to perform one of Mozart's delicious string quintets, which one gets to hear too seldom in concert. Through his six string quintets, Mozart revived five-part string writing, which had been much more common in the Baroque period. The addition of two quartets made this program irresistible to me: one showing the tart Slavic modernism of Polish master Grażyna Bacewicz, whose music is only now finding the wide audience it deserves; and the gorgeous spiritual-based work by American composer Adolphus Hailstork. We included excerpts of this work in our video series "Witness: Spirituals and the Classical Music Tradition," which you can find online at youtube.com/watch?v=TpC2GDGJCE4.

—George Steel, *Abrams Curator of Music*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Each performance of the award-winning **Borromeo String Quartet** strengthens its reputation as one of the most important ensembles of our time. Admired and sought after for both its fresh interpretations of the classical music canon and its championing of works by 20th- and 21st-century composers, the ensemble has been hailed for its "edge-of-the-seat performances," by the *Boston Globe*, which called it "simply the best."

Inspiring audiences for 35 years, the Borromeo has been the ensemble-in-residence at New England Conservatory for over three decades, and at the Taos School of Music since 2005. The Borromeo also serves as quartet-in-residence at the Heifetz International Music Institute, where first violinist Nicholas Kitchen is Artistic Director. The Quartet has performed on major concert stages across the globe, including appearances at Carnegie Hall, the Berlin Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, Suntory Hall, the Concertgebouw, Seoul Arts Center, and the Shanghai Oriental Arts Center, and performed for many years with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Highlights of the Borromeo's 2024-25 season include performances at Korea's Changwon Festival, Auburn University's Gogue Performing Arts Center, Clemson University's Utsey Chamber Music Series, Palm Beach's Flagler Museum, UCLA's Clark Library, Music at Kohl Mansion, Eureka Chamber Music Series, Dumbarton Concerts, Summit Chamber Music, Chamber Music Raleigh, Celebrity Series of Boston's Neighborhood Concerts, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, where it has enjoyed a long-term relationship since 1991. Beyond the Quartet's standalone performances, they tour this season with violist Paul Neubauer, pianist Henry Kramer, and in a new octet program with the Verona Quartet.

The Borromeo regularly engages in residencies with universities, conservatories, and educational institutions all over the world. In addition to serving as the 2024-25 Visiting Quartet in Residence at Arizona State University, the Quartet has served in recent seasons as the Hittman Ensemble in Residence at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore and engaged in residencies at the Curtis Institute, San Francisco Conservatory, UCLA, Amherst College, Colorado State University, Kansas University, University of Georgia, University of Winnipeg, and Musik-Akademie Basel. The Quartet has worked extensively as both performers and educators with the Library of Congress, highlighting both its manuscripts and instrument collections. In addition to its extensive performance and academic engagements throughout Asia, the Quartet has also conducted an extensive series of workshops with Triton Arts Network in Japan.

The Quartet has a long history performing at top festivals worldwide, including performances at Spoleto USA and Spoleto Italy, Busan Music Festival, Hong Kong Chamber Music Festival, Incontri in Terra di Siena Chamber Music Festival, Kammermusik Basel, Eisenstadt's Haydn Festival, Prague Spring Festival, Stavanger Festival, Ravinia Festival, Tippet Rise, and a special feature by Tanglewood in 2020 celebrating Beethoven's 250th anniversary through performance and a focus on the composer's manuscripts. The Borromeo has collaborated with many of the most recognized names in classical music, including Joshua Bell, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Jeremy Denk, Jonathan Biss, Leon Fleisher, Menahem Pressler, Christoph Eschenbach, Anne-Marie McDermott, Gary Graffman, Josef Suk, Peter Serkin, Kim Kashkashian, Richard Stoltzman, Larry Lesser, Paul Katz, Michael Tree, Midori, Shmuel Ashkenazi, and even major figures beyond the classical sphere including Branford Marsalis, Christian McBride, and Audra McDonald.

The Quartet has also collaborated with some of this generation's most important composers, including Gunther Schuller, John Cage, György Ligeti, Steve Reich, Aaron Jay Kernis, Osvaldo Golijov, Jennifer Higdon, Steve Mackey, John Harbison, Sebastian Currier, Pierre Jalbert, and Leon Kirchner, among many others. In addition to regularly premiering new works, including a new quartet by composer Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol that was commissioned by the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art for the 2024-25 season, the ensemble regularly performs violinist Nicholas Kitchen's transcriptions of Bach's Goldberg Variations and *The Well-Tempered Clavier* Books I and II, the former of which is part of the Quartet's extensive discography.

The Borromeo continues to be a pioneer in its use of technology and has the trailblazing distinction of being the first string quartet to utilize laptop computers on the concert stage, leading the way for the widespread use of iPads to perform from four-part scores. Among its wide range of approaches with mixed media, the Borromeo also paved the way for artist-led media by becoming the first classical ensemble to make its own live concert recordings and videos. The Quartet often leads discussions enhanced by projections of handwritten manuscripts, investigating with the audience the creative process of the composer as highlighted in an April 2024 feature in *The Atlantic*.

"Nothing less than masterful" (*Cleveland.com*), the Borromeo Quartet has received numerous awards throughout its illustrious career, beginning with top prizes at the International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France, and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions and subsequently Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Career Grant and Martin E. Segal Award, and Chamber Music America's Cleveland Quartet Award.

Violist **Paul Neubauer's** exceptional musicality and effortless playing led the *New York Times* to call him "a master musician." He recently made his Chicago Symphony subscription debut with conductor Riccardo Muti as well as his Mariinsky Orchestra debut at the White Nights Festival. He also gave the U.S. premiere of the newly discovered *Impromptu* for viola and piano by Shostakovich with pianist Wu Han. In addition, his recording of the Aaron Kernis Viola Concerto with the Royal Northern Sinfonia was released on Signum Records, and his recording of the complete viola and piano music by Ernest Bloch with pianist Margo Garrett was released on Delos. Appointed principal violist of the New York Philharmonic at age 21, he has appeared as soloist with over 100 orchestras including the New York, Los Angeles, and Helsinki philharmonics; National, St. Louis, Detroit, Dallas, San Francisco, and Bournemouth symphonies; and Santa Cecilia, English Chamber, and Beethovenhalle orchestras. He has premiered viola concertos by Bartók (revised version of the Viola Concerto), Friedman, Glière, Jacob, Kernis, Lazarof, Müller-Siemens, Ott, Penderecki, Picker, Suter, and Tower, and has been featured on CBS's *Sunday Morning*, *A Prairie Home Companion*, and in *Strad*, *Strings*, and *People* magazines. A two-time GRAMMY® Award nominee, he has recorded on numerous labels including Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, RCA Red Seal, and Sony Classical. Mr. Neubauer is the artistic director of the Mostly Music series in New Jersey and is on the faculties of The Juilliard School and Mannes College.

Kindly turn off all electronic devices during the concert and refrain from any photography or filming in the hall. Also, please note the location of the emergency exit doors: across the hall from the doors through which you entered.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES:

AWADAGIN PRATT, PIANO

Sunday, October 20

SPHINX VIRTUOSI

WITH BRITTON-RENÉ COLLINS, PERCUSSION

Sunday, October 27

MUSIC OF THE BELLE ÉPOQUE AND THE GREAT WAR

Sunday, November 3

BOSTON CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Saturday, November 9 at 2:00 PM

RAPHAËL FEUILLÂTRE, GUITAR

Sunday, November 10

FAZIL SAY, PIANO

Sunday, November 17

JULIUS EASTMAN X KYLE MARSHALL

Sunday, November 24

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum resides on the homelands of the Massachusetts Tribe, who belong to this place and continue to regard these lands and waters as sacred.

Music at the Gardner is supported by Nora McNeely Hurley / Manitou Fund. Hemenway & Barnes LLP is the lead corporate sponsor of the Weekend Concert Series. The Museum thanks its generous concert donors: The Coogan Concert in memory of Peter Weston Coogan; Fitzpatrick Family Concert; James Lawrence Memorial Concert; Alford P. Rudnick Memorial Concert; David Scudder in memory of his wife, Marie Louise Scudder; Wendy Shattuck Young Artist Concert; and Willona Sinclair Memorial Concert. The piano is dedicated as the Alex d'Arbeloff Steinway. The harpsichord was generously donated by Dr. Robert Barstow in memory of Marion Huse, and its care is endowed in memory of Dr. Barstow by The Barstow Fund. Music at the Gardner is also supported in part by New Music USA's Organization Fund, Nicie and Jay Panetta, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which is supported by the state of Massachusetts and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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