Concerts at the Point

presents ...

The Dover Quartet

March 13, 2016, 3:00 PM

1912 Main Road, Westport Point, Massachusetts
THIS CONCERT IS SUPPORTED BY GRANTS FROM CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS AND BY GIFTS FROM OUR GENEROUS AUDIENCE MEMBERS AND BUSINESS SUPPORTERS.

WWW.CONCERTSATTHEPOINT.ORG
EMAIL: POINTCONCERTS@GMAIL.COM   TEL: 508-636-0698
Concerts at the Point

Sunday, March 13, 2016

The Dover Quartet
Joel Link, violin
Bryan Lee, violin
Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola
Camden Shaw, cello

Quartet in B flat Major, K458
Allegro vivace assai
Menuetto & Trio: Moderato
Adagio
Allegro assai

Ansi la Nuit
(movements played without a break)
Nocturne
Miroir d’espace
Litanies
Litanies II
Constellations
Nocturne II
Temps suspendu

Intermission

Quartet No. 2
Overture: Moderato con moto
Recitative and Romance: Adagio
Valse: Allegro
Theme with Variations: Adagio (with no pause after 3rd movement)
The Dover Quartet catapulted to international stardom following a stunning sweep of the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Competition, becoming one of the most in-demand ensembles in the world. The *New Yorker* recently dubbed them “the young American string quartet of the moment,” and *The Strad* raved that the Quartet is “already pulling away from their peers with their exceptional interpretive maturity, tonal refinement and taut ensemble.” All members are Curtis graduates and in 2013-14, the Quartet became the first ever Quartet-in-Residence for the venerated Curtis Institute of Music. In October, 2015 The Quartet started a three-year residency at the Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music.
The Quartet also won top prizes at the Fischoff Competition and the Wigmore Hall International String Quartet Competition, and has taken part in festivals such as Chamber Music Northwest, Artosphere, La Jolla SummerFest, Bravo! Vail, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. Additionally, members of the Quartet have appeared as soloists with some of the world’s finest orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Tokyo Philharmonic.

above, left to right:
Joel Link, violin; Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola; Camden Shaw, cello; and Bryan Lee, violin.
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)
Quartet in B flat Major, K458
Allegro vivace assai
Menuetto & Trio: Moderato
Adagio
Allegro assai

This is the fourth quartet in the series of six quartets dedicated to Haydn that Mozart wrote during November 1784. Its nickname “the Hunt” was supplied by someone other than Mozart, and refers to the opening theme of the first movement that suggests the shape, open harmony and clarity of a simple hunting call. This warm clarion motif launches one of Mozart’s finest sonata movements. The luxurious elegance of this first theme gives way to the second theme vividly “tagged” by simple five-note motif like a trill or a “shake.” This deceptively simple musical figure saturates the movement, fuels the development and provides the chief contrast to the first theme. The wealth of musical material built from these simple elements is astonishing and comprehensive.
The second movement is a moderate and stately minuet with a more animated trio featuring delicate clockwork in the inner voices, a singing first violin with canonic echoes from the cello in a pleasing polarity of treble and bass. The third movement adagio is long, tender and intense. As with many of Mozart’s finest slow movements for string chamber ensemble, a delicate, spacious poise deepens into a fragile vulnerability with the exposed cello lines.

The initial theme of the energetic finale seems to echo the simple triadic character of the opening motif. The supercharged drive of this shimmering, nervous conclusion bounds over the river and through the woods in a fleet, fluid hybrid of sonata and rondo forms, the first contributing a tense developmental climax, the second a lively recurring refrain. Source: www.earsense.org
HENRI DUTILLEUX (1916 - 2013)

Ainsi La Nuit
Nocturne
Miroir d’espace
Litanies
Litanies II
Constellations
Nocturne II
Temps suspendu

Henri Dutilleux was a French contemporary composer who emphasized quality over quantity, shunned systems of formal organization, and wrote rock-solid music tailored to the needs of specific ensembles. Dutilleux’s independence of spirit set him apart from many of his colleagues in France. His concern for instrumental color, spatial relationships among instrumental groups, and heterodox sense of spirituality maintains the French lineage of modernism that stems from the music of Debussy through the work of Messiaen. His voice, marked by sensuously handled harmony and color, was his own. He transformed his astonishing compositional refinement and willingness to take inspiration from other art forms into works of real emotional immediacy.

In addition to his activities as a composer, he worked as the Head of Music Production for Radio France for 18 years. He also taught at the École Normale de Musique de Paris, at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique and was twice composer in residence at the Tanglewood music centre.

Ansi La Nuit (1976) was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation and was intended for performance by the Juilliard Quartet. It is based on a series of studies which focus on different aspects of sound production: pizzicatos, harmonics, dynamics, contrasts, opposition of
register. This piece displays progressive growth, a technique frequently used by Dutilleux, through which musical motifs can both recall music that was heard in earlier sections or hint at music that will be fully developed in later movements.

The final version of the piece has seven movements with four “parentheses” lying in between the first five movements. The “parentheses” are mostly used to recall or foreshadow musical material in the rest of the work. For this reason, Ainsi la nuit is often associated with the idea of memory.
DIMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Quartet No. 2

Overture: Moderato con moto
Recitative and Romance: Adagio
Valse: Allegro
Theme with Variations: Adagio

Forced to live for most of his life under a totalitarian regime—one moment in favour with Soviet leaders, then just as quickly out of it again—for much of his career, Shostakovich was judged by political rather than musical criteria. He risked execution or deportation to the Gulag yet played the system just carefully enough to survive, publishing music that earned him praise for “not having given in to the seductive temptations of his previous ‘erroneous’ ways”; at least until his second denunciation for “formalism” and “western influences” in 1948, after which most of his music was banned. Following Stalin’s death in 1953 you can almost feel, in his music, the gigantic breath of relief, as he could start to publish not just the “desk drawer” works he’d kept under wraps for years, but also works in which he could openly give musical expression to the brutalities he and his contemporaries had endured under Stalin’s purges.

When Shostakovich began writing his Second String Quartet in the last years of the Second World War, he had already completed eight of his fifteen symphonies. He was also half-way through his life. Another thirteen quartets, however, remained to be composed, and they would come in rapid succession. Typical traits of Shostakovich’s style include short, reiterated melodic or rhythmic figures, motifs of one or two pitches or intervals, and lugubrious and manic string writing.

The first movement, the ‘Overture’, is a robustly energetic and densely written double-exposition sonata with displaced rhythms.
It begins with a bold, triumphant theme played on the first violin in A major with cello accompaniment in E, whilst the second subject, at first uncertain and nervous, becomes increasingly strident.

The second movement, the ‘recitative and romance’ is austere and pensive in sentiment with a spiritual expressiveness reminiscent of Beethoven’s last quartets. The lengthy recitative, which surrounds the romance, is a monologue sung by the first violin accompanied by simple, sustained lower chords from the other instruments. After the movement has terminated in a classical cadence, there linger feelings of profound sincerity.

The third movement in E flat minor is a menacing, mechanized waltz based on the second subject of the first movement. Except for agitated moments, the four instruments are muted, ghostly, shadowy and full of mystery; causing the pensive tone left after the previous movement to be slightly lightened.

The final movement begins without a pause. Shostakovich took the beautiful folk-like theme of the finale from his Second Piano Trio. This very Russian-sounding theme (and one fully conforming with the demands of Socialist Realism) is explored in thirteen variations. The ending firmly in the key of A minor is unusual for a work in the major key.  

Sources: AllMusic guide; bbc/culture.com
Concerts at the Point

19th Anniversary Season  2015-2016

Emil Altschuler & Thomas Pandolfi  April 24, 2016

20th Anniversary Season  2016-2017

Muir String Quartet  September 2016
The Neave Piano Trio  October 2016
Johannes Fleischmann & Philippe Raskin  November 2016
Frederick Moyer  December 2016
The Claremont Trio  February 2017
Musicians from the Handel & Haydn Society  March 2017
Ryu Goto with Carmen Rodriguez-Peralta  April 2017

...