



Concerts at the Point

23RD SEASON 2019-2020

presents ...

ATTACCA QUARTET

December 8, 2019, 3:00 pm

1912 MAIN ROAD, WESTPORT POINT, MA



THE IMAGES ON THE FRONT AND BACK COVERS ARE TWO UNNAMED ACRYLIC paintings on paper by Tiverton artist Kathrine Lovell. There have been artists and entrepreneurs in Ms. Lovell's family for centuries. She continues this tradition and has pursued various paths of creativity that lead to making a living as an artist. After graduating from RISD in painting, she began teaching and developed new programs and expanded existing curriculum for her students to encourage creative thinking, problem solving and collaboration, for both adults and children. Ms. Lovell applies her keen eye and experience working in collage/assemblage where she honed her skills in composition and editing, including fabrication of backdrops, hard scenery, prop elements and other scenic decorative painting for theaters, private commissions for businesses, and paintings for commercial reproduction. She currently maintains a studio in the Tower on Old Westport Harbor Road in Adamsville, RI.

Ms. Lovell explained that these paintings were among the tall stack of small images on paper that she produced while leading an exercise in small scale nonrepresentational work for her students. She found herself engaged by the mix of freedom and constraints such work requires. www.klovell.com

We chose these paintings because they look like what the Caroline Shaw composition *Entr'acte* sounds like—contrasting rhythmic strictness with free riffing style. The paintings share and make visible the energy, dynamics, structure and freshness of *Entr'acte*. We found it hard to choose between them, so we decided to use them both.

Concerts at the Point

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2019

ATTACCA QUARTET

Amy Schroeder, violin

Keiko Tokunaga, violin

Nathan Schram, viola

Andrew Yee, cello

STRING QUARTET NO. 3 IN D MAJOR, OP. 18, NO.3

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

I. Allegro

II. Andante con moto

III. Allegro

IV. Presto

ENTR'ACTE

CAROLINE SHAW

INTERMISSION . . .

STRING QUARTET NO. 14 IN C# MINOR, OP. 131

(played attacca, or without pause)

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

I. Adagio ma non troppo e molto espressivo

II. Allegro molto vivace

III. Allegro moderato – Adagio

*IV. Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile – Più mosso –
Andante moderato e lusinghiero – Adagio – Allegretto –
Adagio, ma non troppo e semplice – Allegretto*

V. Presto

VI. Adagio quasi un poco andante

VII. Allegro

THE PERFORMERS



Now in its fifteenth season, the internationally acclaimed Attacca Quartet has become one of America's premiere young performing ensembles. They were formed at the Juilliard School in 2003, and made their professional debut in 2007 as part of the Artists International Winners Series in Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall.

From 2011-2013 they served as the Juilliard Graduate Resident String Quartet, and for the 2014-2015 season the Attacca Quartet was named the Quartet in Residence for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The Attacca Quartet recently completed a recording project of Haydn's masterwork "the Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross" arranged by Andrew Yee and the Attacca Quartet. In 2016 the Quartet completed a six year project in which they performed all 68 of Haydn's String Quartets. The group is currently presenting two projects in New York: "Based on Beethoven," a series featuring the string quartets of Beethoven alongside new works, and "Recently Added," a series on which they perform the complete string quartets of living composers.

In the 2019-2020 season, the Attacca Quartet will be touring extensively throughout the United States and abroad. Highlights of the season will include appearances at the White Lights Festival

in Lincoln Center, the MiTO Festival in Italy, the Sydney Festival in Australia, and tours throughout North and South America, Asia, the UK, and Norway. The group currently serves as the Ensemble-in-Residence at the School of Music at Texas State University.

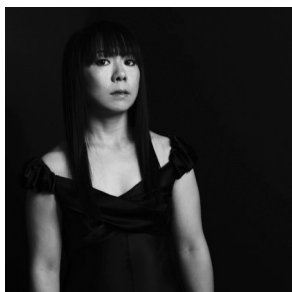
The Attacca Quartet has engaged in extensive educational and community outreach projects, serving as guest artists and teaching fellows. The members of the Attacca Quartet currently reside in New York City. They are represented by Polyarts.



AMY SCHROEDER, VIOLIN

In addition to being a founding member of the Attacca Quartet, she is proud to have recently joined the music faculty at Vassar College where she will teach violin students as well as chamber music. She also recently formed the Schroeder Umansky Duo with her husband Felix Umansky, internationally celebrated cellist and member of the Harlem Quartet. In New York, Ms. Schroeder teaches violin and piano to students of all ages, and in her spare time she enjoys composing, traveling with her husband, and scuba diving.

Ms. Schroeder currently plays on two different violins, a Fernando Gagliano made in 1771 on loan to her from the Five Partners Foundation, and a violin made by Nathan Slobodkin in 2012.



KEIKO TOKUNAGA, VIOLIN

Ms. Tokunaga holds an Artist Diploma, a Masters and a Bachelor of Music from Juilliard. She joined the group that became the Attacca Quartet in 2005.

Ms. Tokunaga released her debut solo album, "Jewels," from New York Classics in 2016. When she is not on the road, Ms. Tokunaga enjoys her career as an educator. She has been on faculty at The Juilliard School's Pre-College Ear Training Division since 2008, and she has served as violin faculty at Fordham University, Hunter College of New York, Port Townsend Chamber Music Festival, and Boston University's Tanglewood Institute.

Ms. Tokunaga' plays a Stefano Scarampella violin from 1900 and Nicolas Maire bow from circa 1850.



NATHAN SCHRAM, VIOLA

Nathan Schram is a sought after violist, composer, and arranger. Working with many of today's great composers, he has premiered music by Steve Reich, Nico Muhly, Becca Stevens, Timo Andres, David Bruce, Elliot Cole and others. Mr. Schram is also a founding member of Speed Bump, an ensemble devoted to improvisation and their own compositions. Apart from performing, he is the Founding Director of Musicambia, a New York based initiative establishing a network of

music conservatories within prisons and jails in the United States. Musicambia currently runs a music conservatory in the Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York and is developing a school in South Carolina as well as programs overseas.



ANDREW YEE, CELLO

Andrew Ye is a founding member of the Attacca Quartet, and received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Juilliard School. Mr. Yee has appeared with the International Sejong Soloists, and has played solo and chamber music recitals across the United States. His many engagements include the Concert Hall, Terrace Theatre, and Millennium stages in the Kennedy Center of Washington D.C., Alice Tully Hall, the Spoleto Festival, Carnegie Hall, and other venues including performances of Popper's Hungarian Rhapsody, Vivaldi's Concerto for two cellos, and Dvorák's Cello Concerto.

Mr. Yee plays on a 2002 Nathan Slobodkin cello modeled after the 1731 "Ex Messeas" Guarneri "del Gesu" cello.

PROGRAM NOTES

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

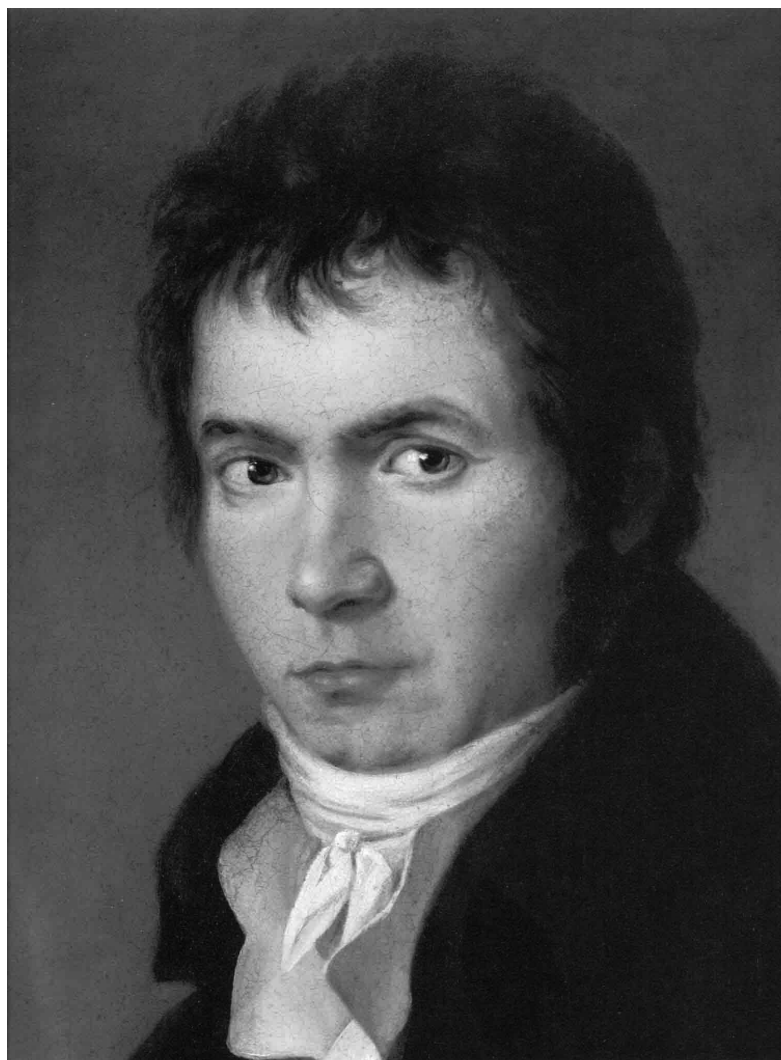
STRING QUARTET NO. 3 IN D MAJOR, OP. 18, NO.3

- I. *Allegro*
- II. *Andante con moto*
- III. *Allegro*
- IV. *Presto*

Beethoven is one of the most widely recognized and admired composers in the history of Western music, and served as an important bridge between the Classical and Baroque era styles he admired and the Romantic style his music would come to personify.

Beethoven was an admirer of two of the most important figures of the Classical era: Franz Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Haydn in particular became a fundamental influence in Beethoven's early career. Moving to Vienna in 1792 proved fruitful to Beethoven, being surrounded by Mozart's music, his other Classical-era idol.

A virtuoso pianist and an often difficult man, Beethoven nonetheless impressed with his fierce individualism and determination. His legend grew as he kept performing and composing while becoming fully deaf, a handicap he would carry for the last 30 years of his life. He is also credited with fully embracing the expanding range of the piano in his sonatas and concertos, and for inadvertently popularizing steel-framed keyboards, as he would often leave a stream of broken wooden pianos on stages wherever he performed. The emotional depth, expanded orchestration, and immense length of his works (for his time) were all hallmarks of what would come to be known as the Romantic era; yet all of Beethoven's works were rooted in a Classical era aesthetic of clear form and function—just through a much more emotional (and unpredictable) filter.



Before turning to the composition of string quartets, Beethoven devoted his first years in Vienna to mastering the genres popular in that city: piano sonatas, string trios, duo sonatas for piano and violin or cello, and short songs and opera arias. No doubt Beethoven's apparent trepidation when approaching the string quartet medium was a result of the immense shadow cast by Haydn. Though placed third in the Op. 18 set of six quartets published in 1801, No. 3 was the very first string quartet that Beethoven composed.

Of the six quartets in Op. 18, No. 3 in D major is certainly the most genial and, in a sense, relaxed. Its mood is bright, lyrical and humorous with just a touch of poignancy in the slow movement. The scherzo is quite mild by Beethoven's standards and, equally uncharacteristically, there are no formal fugues nor a brilliant set of variations, no earth shattering destruction nor euphoric hymns of otherworldly grace. If there is any place where this "excellent, fine" quartet tips into the realm of genius, it is the fantastic finale, a tour de force of ingenious vivacity and wit.

Sources: allmusic.com; philharmonia.org; earsense - quoting Kai Christiansen



CAROLINE SHAW (1982-)

ENTR'ACTE

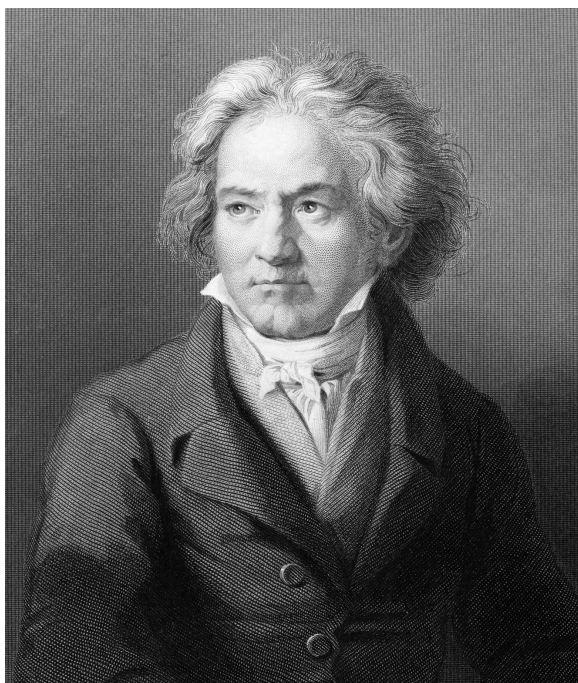
Caroline Shaw was born in North Carolina, and began violin lessons with her mother when she was two. In addition to composing, Shaw is active as a violin soloist, chamber musician, and ensemble singer. Her recent commissions include works for Carnegie Hall, Guggenheim Museum, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter. She has also collaborated frequently with Kanye West. Before doctoral studies at Princeton, Shaw studied violin at Rice and Yale Universities.

It was as a singer that she first gained mainstream attention, as a member of the adventurous, experimental vocal group “Roomful of Teeth.” Shaw is the youngest composer ever to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music (at age 30) for her *a cappella* vocal work “Partita for 8 Voices” composed for this vocal group.” The honor—and the attention—were a launchpad, but for a thoroughly individual trajectory. Shaw has moved between the traditional classical world of orchestral commissions and artist residencies and more changeable media, popular music, television, and film. Rather than a deliberate strategy, the path seems instead to chart a natural and personal curiosity. It is music that encounters the canon as an opportunity for new experiences.

The Attacca Quartet, like Shaw, lives in the present aesthetically, without rejecting the virtues of the musical past. Shaw worked closely with the Attacca Quartet on their most recent CD—“ORANGE,” which features six of Shaw’s pieces for string quartet. Shaw signals this perspective by opening the CD with Entr’acte, a piece whose title is the term for an interlude between acts in a play. It’s a sly gesture, one that seems to say that what came before this was centuries of string quartet music, and what follows will be genuinely new.

Entr’acte develops a refreshing blend of traditional harmony, contrasting dissonance, and impressive string effects. The piece also contrasts rhythmic strictness (minuet) with free riffing style, riffing against the viola’s strict broken chord repetitions. Entr’acte has a haunting, surreal quality. Taking his cue from Shaw’s own words, musician/writer Timothy Judd commented “throughout the piece we get subtle glimpses of classical and baroque music that has suddenly found itself in the wrong century.”

Sources: www.caramoor.org/blog/spotlight-on-caroline-shaw; www.thenation.com/article/caroline-shaw-attacca-quartet-orange-review



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

STRING QUARTET NO. 3 IN D MAJOR, OP. 18, NO.3

(played attacca, or without pause)

- I. *Adagio ma non troppo e molto espressivo*
- II. *Allegro molto vivace*
- III. *Allegro moderato – Adagio*
- IV. *Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile – Più mosso –
Andante moderato e lusinghiero – Adagio – Allegretto –
Adagio, ma non troppo e semplice – Allegretto*
- V. *Presto*
- VI. *Adagio quasi un poco andante*
- VII. *Allegro*

In the fall of 1825, Beethoven completed the commission for three string quartets he had received from Prince Galitzin of Russia. Work on these magnificent compositions resulted in a proliferation of ideas for string quartets that compelled Beethoven to continue writing in this medium, and in the following year he proceeded to compose two more quartets - Op. 131 and 135.

In Op. 131, Beethoven moved further away from the conventions of quartet-writing than he had ever done before. An external sign of this is the layout in seven movements, played without a break, certainly a major departure from the norms that leaves the listener totally unable to predict the course the work will take at the next turn. But form in Beethoven is always inseparable from content, and the revolutionary structure of this quartet was made necessary by the exceptional emotional range of what Beethoven had to say.

Beethoven's late quartets went far beyond the comprehension of musicians and audiences of the time. One musician commented that "we know there is something there, but we do not know what it is." Opinion has changed considerably from the time of their first bewildered reception: these six quartets (counting the *Große Fuge*) comprise Beethoven's last major, completed compositions and are widely considered to be among the greatest musical compositions of all time. Igor Stravinsky described the *Große Fuge* as "an absolutely contemporary piece of music that will be contemporary forever."

The quartet begins with a fugue. The mood throughout is somber, but with a religiosity and tenderness that seem to suggest the composer's sense of his own mortality. Near the end of this movement the music fades, then leads directly into the second movement, which begins at pianissimo. A transitional theme appears next, and eventually we arrive at a second subject. The material is reprised but afterward there follows no actual development section. Instead, an expanded coda develops the transitional theme.

The third movement begins without pause, and actually serves as a brief interlude to the long slow fourth movement. The fourth movement consists of a theme and six variations, most of which involve harmony rather than the essence of the melody itself. This movement is one of the most profound and complex Beethoven ever fashioned in the chamber genre. Each variation is played in a different tempo, thus creating a true "variety" that, to some ears, may seem at first to impart a disjointed quality. Yet, his invention and cleverness are

present everywhere. The fifth variation, for instance, with its deftly-wrought syncopation, is wonderfully mysterious and the coda slyly starts off as if it will become yet another variation, but it subtly returns to the main themes, then brings the movement to a close with a gentle fade.

The Presto fifth movement is brimming with energy and charm. It is an attractive, humorous Scherzo with a trio section and may be, despite a few innovative touches, the most traditional of the movements comprising this quartet. Its rather abrupt and harsh ending leads to a brief interlude-like Adagio quasi un poco andante. The sixth movement, like the third, is very brief.

The finale begins with a gruff theme, that is immediately followed by a less fierce but darker theme. A third melody is introduced shortly afterward, closer in character to the last, but expressing sadness and melancholy. The themes reappear, with the form thus far seeming to suggest the movement could be a Rondo. But Beethoven veers toward thematic development, as if to say he has finally found his way to the sonata-allegro form. There follows a recapitulation but with many highly imaginative changes in the previous material. A powerful and tragic coda closes what many consider Beethoven's greatest quartet.

Source: Allmusic.com

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